

**COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY DISASTER MANAGEMENT:
THE IMPACT OF LEADER BEHAVIOR ON RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
FROM DISASTER**

by

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“When preparing for a crisis, it is instructive to recall that Noah started building the ark before it began to rain...”

– Norman Augustine

Chair, American Red Cross (1992 - 2001)

Undersecretary, U.S. Army (1975 - 1977)

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DEDICATION

**To my family and friends
for their inspiration, support and love...**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the outset of a Doctoral program, many, if not most students view “the dissertation” primarily as an “obstacle” or “final barrier” standing between them and that doctoral degree – a degree for which they have already sat through years of classes, taken at least one qualifying exam, and otherwise fought long and hard to earn. While that mindset is understandable, and certainly did not escape me – well, from time to time – through the process of collecting, reviewing, analyzing, learning and writing, I came to view “the dissertation” presented in the chapters that follow as much more than just an “obstacle” to be overcome.

In this case, “the dissertation” presented a rare opportunity to learn from and share the stories of others who had experienced one of the worst disasters in United States history – Hurricane Katrina. More specifically, it provided an opportunity to explore and uncover the successful actions and mistakes of university leaders as they sought to guide their institutions’ disaster response and recovery efforts – lessons that not only have the potential to facilitate the survival of some of our most cherished institutions when faced with future disaster, but could very well save the lives and/or livelihoods of those who work, study and reside within them. Additionally, on a personal note, “the dissertation” came to represent the culmination of a long and fulfilling chapter of my life, educationally, and the start of what I hope will be a much longer and even more rewarding journey, professionally.

This chapter began at the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE) at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. While the quality of the institution, the

strong reputation of the graduate program, and promise of a solid educational experience led me to trade the sands of California for the snow of Michigan, ultimately – and most importantly – what kept me in the Midwest and made my graduate student experience such an incredible one was, and continues to be, the quality of the people I had the opportunity to get to know.

Throughout my time pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Higher Education, I was blessed to be surrounded by an incredible group of students (both Doctoral and Master's), faculty, and staff – who not only nurtured and encouraged my professional/research interests in college and university leadership and crisis/disaster management, but with whom I also feel fortunate to have developed friendships that I hope will last a lifetime.

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The “people of New Orleans” includes Chief Richie Hampton and Chief Tim McConnell for their contributions and willingness to share their story of the days leading up to Hurricane Katrina, along with a detailed timeline of events that took place both during and in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. They, along with fellow members of New Orleans Fire Department (and other local first responders) not only remained in New Orleans during the disaster, but in the immediate aftermath led a number of rescue efforts and helped maintain some semblance of order in a city that early on seemed to be heading towards chaos.

Their courage and determination, as well as those of the university leaders, faculty and staff members who contributed to this study, was both educational and inspiring. I hope that the resulting dissertation will provide helpful lessons to and serve as an inspiration for others who

may one day find themselves faced with the need to respond to and facilitate recovery from disaster.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	xix
LIST OF TABLES	xx
LIST OF APPENDICES	xxii
ABSTRACT.....	xxiii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Prevalence of Disasters in the United States	1
Colleges, Universities, and Disaster	3
<i>As Unique Entities.....</i>	3
<i>Natural Disasters.....</i>	4
<i>Human-caused Disasters</i>	6
<i>The Impact of Hurricane Katrina</i>	8
Statement of Purpose	9
Primary Research Question and Sub-Questions	10
Key Operational Definitions	11
<i>Leadership.....</i>	11
<i>Leader Behavior.....</i>	13
<i>Disaster.....</i>	14
<i>Disaster Management</i>	16
Conceptual Framework	17
Chapter Summary	19
CHAPTER II: INTERDISCIPLINARY LITERATURE REVIEW & THEMATIC ANALYSIS	20
Approach to the Literature & Emerging Conceptual Framework	20
Criteria for Inclusion in the Literature Review	21

Theme 1: Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics	22
<i>Structure vs. Flexibility</i>	24
<i>Organizational Reliability</i>	27
<i>Mindfulness</i>	28
<i>Financial & Relational Reserves</i>	29
Theme #2: Exhibited Personal Attributes	31
<i>Competence (Technical and Social)</i>	32
<i>Charisma & the Ability to Inspire</i>	34
<i>Authenticity/Trustworthiness</i>	35
<i>Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness</i>	36
<i>Self-awareness/Self-control</i>	39
<i>Resourcefulness/Adaptability</i>	40
Theme #3: Leader Thinking/Decision Making Processes	41
<i>Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames</i>	43
<i>Contrarian & Janusian Thinking</i>	44
<i>Devils Advocacy & Scenario-based Thinking</i>	46
<i>Viewing Disasters as Opportunities</i>	47
<i>Instinctive & Vigilant Decision Making</i>	49
<i>Avoiding Common Decision-Making Traps</i>	51
Theme #4: Leader Communication Style	53
<i>Facilitating Awareness</i>	55
<i>Clarity of Terminology and Message</i>	56
<i>Symbolic Actions</i>	58
<i>Creating A Context for Meaning and Action</i>	61
Theme #5: Managing Human Reactions.....	64
<i>Common Responses to Traumatic Events</i>	65
<i>Emotional Competence/Intelligence</i>	67
<i>Spirituality</i>	69
<i>Dealing with Resistance</i>	71
Critical Analysis of the Literature Base.....	72
<i>Gaps & Limitations</i>	72

<i>Participant-related Limitations</i>	73
<i>Differing Definitions & Outcome Measurements</i>	74
<i>A Lack of Communication</i>	75
<i>A Lack of Diversity</i>	76
<i>Flawed Assumptions & Assertions</i>	77
<i>Research on Higher Education Settings</i>	78
Towards a Holistic Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior	79
Chapter Summary	82
CHAPTER III: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	84
Prior Conceptualizations of the Disaster Management Process	84
A New Model of the Disaster Management Process	89
Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior in the Midst of Disaster.....	91
Chapter Summary	96
CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY	98
Comparative Case Study	98
<i>Document Selection & Analysis</i>	102
<i>Development of the Interview Protocol(s)</i>	105
<i>Recruitment and Consent of Participants</i>	106
<i>Site Visits & Observations</i>	107
<i>Coding System (Interviews and Field Notes)</i>	108
<i>Data Storage and Analysis Tools</i>	110
Potential Challenges and Ethical Considerations	110
Limitations & Validity Concerns.....	113
Selecting the Appropriate Case Study Setting(s).....	115
Key Variable: Defining “Recovery”	116
Presentation of the Data.....	117
Chapter Summary	118

CHAPTER V: SETTING AND CONTEXT: THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS AND HURRICANE KATRINA	120
A Brief History of New Orleans	120
<i>Unique “Immigrant” Population.....</i>	<i>122</i>
Modern Day New Orleans	124
<i>Population Shifts.....</i>	<i>126</i>
The Story Behind Hurricane Katrina	126
<i>A Series of Challenges</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>5 Years After Katrina: A Tale of Two Cities.....</i>	<i>132</i>
<i>Disproportionate Impact.....</i>	<i>135</i>
Katrina’s Impact on Colleges and Universities	138
Chapter Summary	142
CHAPTER VI: UNIVERSITY A & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF HURRICANE KATRINA	144
Background – A Major Research University.....	144
Katrina’s Impact on University A.....	147
<i>Damage Summary.....</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>A Plan for Recovery.....</i>	<i>153</i>
<i>Has University A Recovered?</i>	<i>155</i>
<i>Contrary Evidence</i>	<i>157</i>
Leader Behavior at University A	161
<i>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics.....</i>	<i>165</i>
Structure vs. Flexibility.....	166
Financial & Relational Reserves.....	167
<i>Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes</i>	<i>170</i>
Competence (Technical & Social)	172
Charisma/Ability to Inspire.....	173
Trust/Authenticity	175
Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness	177
Self-awareness & Self-control	178
Resourcefulness/Adaptability	180

<i>Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making</i>	182
Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames	184
Contrarian & Janusian Thinking.....	186
Viewing Disasters as Opportunities.....	187
Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making.....	189
Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps.....	191
<i>Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style</i>	193
Facilitating Awareness.....	195
Clarity of Terminology and Message	196
Symbolic Actions.....	198
Creating A Context for Meaning and Action.....	200
<i>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</i>	201
Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing	
Emotional Competence/Intelligence.....	203
Spirituality.....	210
Overcoming Resistance	211
<i>Potential New Subthemes</i>	214
Navigating the External Environment	215
Sense of Humor.....	216
Emphasizing the University’s Mission	216
Chapter Summary	217

CHAPTER VII: UNIVERSITY B & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF HURRICANE KATRINA 221

Background – A Catholic University with a 100-year History.....	221
Katrina’s Impact on University B.....	224
<i>Damage Summary</i>	229
<i>University B’s Plan for Recovery</i>	232
<i>Has University B Recovered?</i>	234
<i>Contrary Evidence</i>	236
Leader Behavior at University B	243

<i>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</i>	246
Structure vs. Flexibility.....	246
Financial & Relational Reserves.....	249
<i>Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes</i>	253
Competence (Technical & Social)	254
Charisma/Ability to Inspire.....	257
Trust/Authenticity	258
Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness	260
Self-awareness & Self-control	262
Resourcefulness/Adaptability	263
<i>Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making</i>	266
Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames	270
Contrarian & Janusian Thinking.....	272
Viewing Disasters as Opportunities.....	274
Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making.....	276
Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps.....	278
<i>Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style</i>	281
Facilitating Awareness.....	284
Clarity of Terminology and Message	287
Symbolic Actions.....	289
Creating A Context for Meaning and Action.....	291
<i>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</i>	294
Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing	
Emotional Competence/Intelligence	297
Spirituality.....	303
Overcoming Resistance	305
<i>Potential New Subthemes</i>	309
Navigating the External Environment	310
Emphasizing the University’s Mission	312
Timing.....	314
Chapter Summary	315

CHAPTER VIII: UNIVERSITY C & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF HURRICANE KATRINA	318
Background: A Renowned HBCU	318
Katrina’s Impact on University C	320
<i>Damage Summary</i>	322
<i>A Plan for Recovery</i>	325
<i>Has University C Recovered?</i>	328
<i>Contrary Evidence</i>	331
Leader Behavior at University C	335
<i>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</i>	338
Structure vs. Flexibility	339
Financial & Relational Reserves	342
<i>Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes</i>	345
Competence (Technical & Social)	347
Charisma/Ability to Inspire	349
Trust/Authenticity	351
Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness	353
Self-awareness & Self-control	353
Resourcefulness/Adaptability	355
<i>Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making</i>	358
Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames	362
Contrarian & Janusian Thinking	365
Viewing Disasters as Opportunities	368
Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making	370
Avoiding Common Traps	371
<i>Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style</i>	373
Facilitating Awareness	377
Clarity of Terminology and Message	379
Symbolic Actions	381
Creating A Context for Meaning and Action	385

<i>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</i>	387
Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing Emotional Competence/Intelligence	390
Spirituality.....	398
Overcoming Resistance	400
<i>Potential New Subthemes</i>	402
Navigating the External Environment	402
Emphasizing the University’s Mission	405
Timing.....	407
Chapter Summary	410
CHAPTER IX: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS	414
Chapter Overview	414
Institutional Comparison.....	415
<i>University A – A Major Research University</i>	415
<i>University B – A Catholic University with a 100-year History</i>	416
<i>University C – A Renowned HBCU</i>	418
Cross-Case Comparison: Leader Behavior in the Aftermath of Katrina	420
Profile of Contributors	421
<i>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</i>	423
Structure vs. Flexibility.....	424
Financial & Relational Reserves.....	428
<i>Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes</i>	431
Competence (Technical & Social)	432
Charisma/Ability to Inspire.....	434
Trust/Authenticity	436
Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness	439
Self-awareness & Self-control	441
Resourcefulness/Adaptability	443
<i>Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making</i>	446
Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames	447

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking.....	450
Viewing Disasters as Opportunities.....	455
Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making.....	457
Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps.....	460
<i>Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style</i>	<i>463</i>
Facilitating Awareness.....	464
Clarity of Terminology and Message	468
Symbolic Actions.....	471
Creating A Context for Meaning and Action.....	474
<i>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</i>	<i>478</i>
Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing	
Emotional Competence/Intelligence.....	479
Spirituality.....	484
Overcoming Resistance	487
<i>New Subthemes of Leader Behavior</i>	<i>491</i>
Navigating the External Environment	492
Emphasizing the University’s Mission	496
Importance of Timing	499
Chapter Summary	504
CHAPTER X: KEY FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION.....	506
Summary of the Study	506
Key Findings.....	508
<i>Finding #1 - Applicability of the Prior Conceptual Framework.....</i>	<i>508</i>
<i>Finding #2 - Revised Definition of Disaster Management</i>	<i>510</i>
<i>Finding #3 - Linkage between Preparedness and Recovery: Plan for the</i>	
<i>Worst Case-Scenario</i>	<i>511</i>
<i>Finding #4 - Interrelatedness of Themes & Subthemes</i>	<i>514</i>
<i>Finding #5 - Organizational Flattening: Fewer Decision Makers Involved</i>	
<i>Post-Disaster.....</i>	<i>515</i>

<i>Finding #6 - Disaster Response/Recovery Teams Must Evacuate to a Common Location(s)</i>	517
<i>Finding #7 - Recovery Efforts May Benefit From Leaders with a Sense of Humor</i>	519
<i>Finding #8 - Role of the University President is Magnified Post-Disaster</i>	520
<i>Finding #9 - College and Universities Present a Unique Organizational Context for Managing a Disaster</i>	521
Revised Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior.....	527
Limitations	531
Implications & Application of the Conceptual Framework.....	534
<i>Implications for Practice</i>	535
<i>Implications for Research</i>	543
Conclusion	547
APPENDICES	550
REFERENCES	562

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: National Map Showing Spatial Distribution of Billion Dollar Climate and Weather-related Disasters by State.....	551
(Referenced in Chapter VI, Appears in Appendix A)	
Figure 3.1: Herrmann’s Conceptualization of the Disaster Management Process (as cited in NYDIS Manual, 2007).....	552
(Referenced in Chapter VI, Appears in Appendix B)	
Figure 3.2: FEMA’s (2007) Conceptualization of the Disaster Management Process.....	552
(Referenced in Chapter VI, Appears in Appendix B)	
Figure 3.3 Framework of the Disaster Management Process.	91
Figure 3.4 Conceptual Framework for Examining the Impact of College and University Leadership in the Midst of Disaster.	95
Figure 5.1: Approximate location of New Orleans-Based Colleges and Universities in relation to Katrina-induced Flood Levels.	555
(Referenced in Chapter VI, Appears in Appendix E)	
Figure 10.1 Conceptual Framework for Examining the Impact of College and University Leadership in the Midst of Disaster.	530

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Diagram of the Thematic Coding Process.	109
Table 4.2 Site Selection: Context Specific Options for Current Study.	116
Table 5.1: Population by Age, Race, and Ethnicity Groups by parish, New Orleans Metro, 1980 – 2010. (Referenced in Chapter V, Appears in Appendix C)	553
Table 6.1: University A Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data). (Referenced in Chapter VI, Appears in Appendix F)	556
Table 6.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University A.	161
Table 6.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University A.	163
Table 6.4: Leader Behavior at University A: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.	164
Table 7.1: University B Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data). (Referenced in Chapter VII, Appears in Appendix G)	557
Table 7.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University B.	242
Table 7.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University B.	243
Table 7.4: Leader Behavior at University B: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.	245
Table 8.1: University C Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data). (Referenced in Chapter VIII, Appears in Appendix H)	558
Table 8.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University C.	336
Table 8.4: Leader Behavior at University C: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.	337

Table 9.1: Institutional Profile Comparison: University A, University B, & University C (includes recovery data).....	559
(Referenced in Chapter IX, Appears in Appendix I)	
Table 9.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University A, University B & University C.....	420
Table 9.3 Leader Behavior Across Institutions: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts at University A, University B and University C.....	423
Table 10.1: Site Selection: Context Specific Options for Future Studies.	544
Table 10.2: Differences between Educational and Commercial Organizations.....	560
(Referenced in Chapter X, Appears in Appendix J)	

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Billion Dollar Climate and Weather Disasters.....	551
Appendix B: Prior Models of the Disaster Management Process	552
Appendix C: New Orleans Demographics	553
Appendix D: Official Hurricane Katrina Weather Forecast	554
Appendix E: Location of New Orleans-Based Campuses in Relation to Katrina-Induced Flooding	555
Appendix F: University A: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data	556
Appendix G: University B: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data.....	557
Appendix H: University C: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data.....	558
Appendix I: Institutional Comparison	559
Appendix J: Differing Features of Educational and Commercial Organizations.....	560

ABSTRACT

The word *disaster* evokes vivid and painful memories for most U.S. citizens. While for many the word brings to mind images of September 11th, for others it might trigger memories of a major earthquake, oil spill, or even recollections of a localized tornado or mass-shooting. Regardless of the type of disaster, and the differing memories each may evoke, citizens of the United States inevitably revert back to one central question: “Why weren’t we better prepared?” In response, scholars have increasingly begun to explore the area of *disaster management*.

Several such examinations have focused on the role that *leaders* can and do play in fostering (and/or inhibiting) the preparedness, response, and recovery efforts of disaster-afflicted organizations and communities. Unfortunately, however, to date, the research community has largely neglected the subject of disaster management in the context of some of our largest and most cherished institutions – our colleges and universities (Stein, Vickio, Fogo & Abraham, 2007). Nor have scholars proposed a broad, interdisciplinary, conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster. Thus, the study that follows seeks to fill this void by proposing a *holistic conceptual framework for leader behavior* in a disaster management context and utilizing this framework to examine (via a comparative case study) the behavior of college and university leaders at three institutions, as they responded to and sought to facilitate recovery from a catastrophic disaster – Hurricane Katrina.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Prevalence of Disasters in the United States

Each year, citizens of the United States are forced to respond to a myriad of natural, man-made, and technological disasters (Ballard, Smith, Johnson & Range, 1999). While such disasters may vary by type, size and scope, they commonly represent *large-scale threats to public safety* (CA Government Code 8680.3) and necessitate the allocation and utilization of *extraordinary resources* to return conditions to normal (NARA, 2005). According to the National Climatic Data Center (2010), 99 *weather-related natural disasters*¹ occurred between 1980 and 2010 with total unadjusted damages/costs to the United States exceeding \$725 billion (see *Figure 1.1, Appendix A*). During the 1990's alone, the average cost of all natural disasters in United States more than doubled from nearly \$25 billion to \$50 billion a year. (Ballard et al., 1999; Parfit, 1998). Even accounting for the exponential rise in GDP, over the last four decades, the cost of natural disasters as a percentage of GDP has more than tripled (Van der Vink, 2005).

Human-caused disasters – a term that encompasses large-scale domestic violence, terrorist attacks, and technological failures, emanating from human action/inaction – have also had rather dramatic humanitarian and economic impacts on the United States over the past few decades. The April 19, 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, which resulted in 168 deaths, 850 injuries, and damages of several million dollars, provides a

¹ Each disaster considered had associated costs/damages of at least \$1 Billion.

² As this section was being written, a severe tornado narrowly missed the University of Alabama -- battering the surrounding Tuscaloosa community and taking the lives of 5 students (CW Staff, 2011). Stillman and Shelton State

tragic case in point (Oklahoma City National Memorial, 2011). As do the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 – which resulted in the loss of nearly three-thousand lives – thousands more injuries and pollutant-induced illnesses, dramatic shifts in national security policy, and economic damages that have yet to be fully realized (New York Magazine, 2012).

In recent years, the potential for human and/or animal-spread *global pandemics* have also become of the topic of significant attention and public concern. The *severe acute respiratory syndrome* (SARS) outbreak in 2002 and 2003, – which is believed to have originated in Guangdong province of China before spreading to Hong Kong (a major destination for international business) and subsequently to countries all over the world – was a major impetus for such heightened concerns (Zelicoff and Bellomo, 2005). As was the 2009 outbreak of the *Swine Flu* or *H1N1*, which began in Mexico and quickly spread to the United States, Canada and some 211 other countries and overseas territories (World Health Organization, 2011). While the SARS outbreak proved to be far more limited in scope than initially feared (with 8,450 cases of SARS reported in 30 countries), and H1N1 much less deadly (out of tens of millions of projected cases, roughly 18,500 laboratory confirmed deaths were reported), the incidents have revealed new societal vulnerabilities stemming from technological advancements and an increasingly globalized economy, which enables and necessitates more frequent travel from one nation or region of a country to the next (Zelicoff and Bellomo, 2005; World Health Organization, 2003; World Health Organization, 2011).

While such advancements and global connections have yielded a host of economic and social benefits, they have also increased the potential for exposure to a variety of contagious ailments, and made them more difficult to contain. Before symptoms are even apparent, an exposed individual or *carrier* may have left the region of origin, exposing new populations to the

pathogen of concern. Thus, citizens of the United States and other nations are vulnerable to an ever-evolving assortment of *natural*, *man-made* and *human spread* disasters.

Colleges, Universities, and Disaster

As Unique Entities

Colleges and universities – as “relatively self-contained communities” which offer housing, food services, academic and recreational facilities, libraries, and (often) medical centers – can be uniquely and disproportionately impacted by natural and man-made disasters (University of Washington, 2003, Introduction). Mitroff, Diamond and Alpaslan (2006) compare universities to “small cities,” and found that the University of Southern California alone operates close to 20 different businesses, including hotel services, retail outlets, health-care facilities, sports related organizations, and distance education units, each of which are associated with varied levels of risk. If or when realized, these risks can have a major impact on multiple constituencies. As such, disasters commonly serve as “markers in the life of an institution” whereby their leaders, faculty, staff, students and other constituents “talk about a campus before the flood, and after the flood” (Rinella in Carlson, 2008, p. 1).

Distinct from other organizational types, postsecondary institutions commonly operate around the clock (versus a set 9-to-5 schedule), are spread out over hundreds if not thousands of acres of land, and serve populations that can change to some extent, each day, and quite significantly, each year (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Frequently depicted as *loosely coupled systems*, the linkages between college and university academic and/or administrative departments may be circumscribed, infrequent, and/or weak in their mutual effects (Weick, 1976; Deal, 1986; Birnbaum, 1988). Their lines of authority can be unclear, with responsibility for day-to-day decisions and operations spread out amongst multiple parties with different

obligations or commitments, including trustees, presidents, administrators and faculty members (Birnbaum, 1988). Hence, the decentralized and often rather disconnected operational structures at colleges and universities can pose pre- and post-disaster communication and coordination challenges beyond those of the typical non-profit organization or private corporation, with clear chains-of-command and tighter linkages between departments (Weick, 1976).

While the financial impact of disasters on colleges and universities can be dramatic, other institutional costs – in terms of time, physical and technological infrastructure, reputation, and ultimately the ability to conduct daily operations – can be equally devastating (Stein, Vickio, Fogo & Abraham, 2007). Even more important (and often ignored) are the potential human costs to postsecondary institutions as a result of such disasters, in terms of: injuries and deaths; the need for students and employees to (temporarily or permanently) relocate; the ability to maintain current levels of employment; and the short and long-term capability of students, faculty, and staff members to recover from physical or psychological trauma. Moreover, in the event that a college or university’s surrounding community faces similar devastation, campus leaders can expect (but have on occasion failed to anticipate) that their institution will: 1) be temporarily isolated and self-dependent until it is deemed safe to venture onto and off of campus; and/or 2) serve as a place of *convergence*, whereby members of various constituencies arrive in droves, with community residents seeking or hoping to provide assistance, emergency personnel seeking to establish command posts, members of the media searching for answers, and others with varied motives joining in the mix (Fritz & Williams, 1957; Fritz & Mathewson, 1957).

Natural Disasters

On January 17, 1994 members of the campus community at the *California State University, Northridge (CSUN)* learned firsthand “that a university with facilities for over 25,000

students can be changed in less than thirty seconds into a university with no usable buildings, no electrical power, no water and no telephone service” (Finley, 1999, p. 1). The costs to CSUN resulting from the 6.8 magnitude earthquake, which struck campus that morning, ultimately exceeded \$400 million (Finley, 1999). Fortunately, the earthquake occurred on a national holiday, during a semester break, and very early in the morning (at 4:31 a.m.); thus, few people were on campus and no one (on campus) was seriously injured. However, as a result of damage caused by the initial quake and a series of strong aftershocks, the university remained closed for four weeks, and for the next several years was relegated to conducting operations out of hundreds of temporary structures and trailers located on lawns, athletic fields, and parking lots (Finley, 1999).

Similarly, on March 29, 1998, members of the *Gustavus Adolphus College* community in St. Peter, Minnesota, suffered through a natural disaster of their own. At 5:25 p.m., a devastating tornado ripped through the private liberal arts institution’s 340-acre campus, leaving no building untouched (Gustavus Adolphus College, 2007). Fortunately, the majority of Gustavus Adolphus’s 2,400 students were on spring break, and no injuries were suffered by the few who remained on campus (Jaschik, 2005). However, the roof of every campus facility, 85% of campus windows, and nearly all of its 2,000 trees required replacement (Jaschik, 2005). In total, the campus suffered \$50 million in damage, the college was forced to extend spring break for an additional three weeks, and similar to CSUN, had to conduct operations out of trailers and other temporary structures for the next several months (Jaschik, 2005).

More recently, on September 13, 2008, the *University of Texas – Medical Branch* (UTMB) headquartered in Galveston, felt the brunt of *Hurricane Ike*. A category 2 storm, accompanied by winds, and a storm surge 15 to 20 feet above normal tide levels (National

Hurricane Center, 2011), Ike left much of campus in nearly 8 feet of water, and resulted in approximately \$710 million in facility, infrastructure, equipment, and clean-up related costs, along with an estimated \$276.4 million in lost revenues due to initially ceased (and subsequently limited) operations (Mytelka, 2008). In an effort to withstand current and projected shortfalls, UTMB laid off roughly 3,800 employees (almost one-third of its total staff), reduced hospital beds from 550 to 200 (Keever & Latson, 2008), while many of its students were temporarily housed at Texas A&M's Galveston campus.²

Human-caused Disasters

While perhaps less common and generally more localized in their effects, colleges and universities have been far from immune to human-caused disasters, and if anything, given their status as rather open, unmonitored, easily accessible entities – post-secondary institutions are exceedingly vulnerable to such catastrophes. The widespread student uprisings of the 1960's and 1970's, which at some campuses (*e.g.* UC Santa Barbara and UC Berkeley) resulted in community disruption and destruction, and at Kent State pitted students against National Guard troops, resulting in nine injuries and four student deaths (Fittrakis & Wasserman, 2007), provide unfortunate examples of such scenarios.

As does the 2007 mass-shooting at Virginia Tech University (commonly referred to as the *Virginia Tech Massacre*), which resulted in the killing of 32 people (mostly undergraduates) and injuries to 17 others at the hands of a student in his senior year, who had exhibited serious

² As this section was being written, a severe tornado narrowly missed the University of Alabama -- battering the surrounding Tuscaloosa community and taking the lives of 5 students (CW Staff, 2011). Stillman and Shelton State Colleges also each lost a student in the tragic event. Just days later, a powerful tornado struck Joplin, Missouri, prompting the conversion of *Missouri Southern State University's Health Sciences and Athletic Centers* into emergency response headquarters for first responders, while its football field was transformed into a makeshift morgue. At the same time, much of the higher education community around the world remained focused on helping students, faculty, and staff in the Sendai region of Japan cope with the devastating earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear power plant failures that have devastated the island nation.

warning signs of mental illness throughout his years at Virginia Tech (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). The violent rampage prompted federal and state investigations (Leavitt, Spellings & Gonzales, 2007; Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007), tremendous internal and external scapegoating at Virginia Tech (aimed in particular at campus leaders for not having prevented such a scenario), and psychological trauma throughout the campus community. The disaster also led to a nationwide debate about the role of faculty and staff in reporting “suspected” mental illnesses on the part of students and peers, the confidentiality of student medical records, and whether security personnel (along with students, faculty and staff) should be permitted to carry guns on campus, while spurring internal policy reviews and preparedness assessments for a variety of “active shooter” scenarios at campuses throughout the country (Cornell, 2008; Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007; Leavitt et al., 2007).

The FBI’s inconclusive investigation of a spike in nationwide campus bomb threats coinciding with start of the Fall 2007 semester, the housing of hazardous materials (including nuclear technology) at a few “supposedly anonymous” institutions, concerns regarding international terrorism, and the well-publicized possibility of a pandemic flu outbreak (*e.g.* Avian flu), have also spurred increased federal pressure on colleges and universities to prepare their campuses for a variety of human-caused (or spread) disaster scenarios (Miller, 2007, H.R. 4137; Leavitt et al., 2007). As stated by Hoverland, McInturff and Rohm (1986), “once a collegiate institution is caught in the position of filing for bankruptcy or using other extreme survival strategies, it is probably too late...” (p. 34). Hence, it is imperative that college and university leaders learn to recognize, prepare for, appropriately respond to, and (where possible) prevent disasters before finding themselves in the midst of one (Hoverland et al., 1986; Chertoff, 2007).

The Impact of Hurricane Katrina

On August 29, 2005 at 6:10 a.m., an event began that would forever change colleges and universities in New Orleans, their students, faculty and staff members. For several hours, *Hurricane Katrina*, with its torrential rains and sustained winds in excess of 160 mph (at the storm's peak strength) hammered the New Orleans-based institutions, and their surrounding communities. This was followed shortly thereafter by dozens of levee breaches throughout the city and the overflow of the nearby Mississippi River, which in combination, devastated New Orleans and drove out the majority of its half-million inhabitants.

The damage to postsecondary institutions that were directly in Katrina's path ranges from millions to hundreds of millions of dollars per institution. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (2005), thirty-one postsecondary institutions were in areas directly impacted by Katrina (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2005), two dozen of which were in the New Orleans Metropolitan area (Suitts, 2007). At *Xavier University* alone, officials estimate that it will ultimately cost more than \$90-million to rebuild its campus, pay additional financial aid to students whose parents lost their homes and jobs as a result of the hurricane, and recover lost tuition and other revenues for the fall 2005 semester and future semesters (Mangan, 2005). *Delgado Community College* estimates that its campus has suffered at least \$58.9 million in physical damage, with its Slidell Learning Center (or Slidell/Northshore Campus) initially declared a "total loss" after being inundated with 8 feet of flood water (Delgado, 2006). Thus, while most members of each campus community were fortunate enough to have evacuated prior to Katrina's arrival (minimizing loss of life), local colleges and universities suffered massive structural damage resulting in significant operational, economic, and ultimately human costs (e.g., jobs, mental health and physical well-being).

However, even those regional postsecondary institutions that were spared a direct hit from Hurricane Katrina and/or did not suffer debilitating structural damage, found themselves directly impacted, and forced (at least temporarily) to abandon their academic missions in favor of public service (Monday, 2006). *Our Lady of Holy Cross College*, which suffered an estimated \$2.5 million in physical damage (Mangan, 2010), served as a local makeshift operations center and staging ground for the National Guard, military and government officials, while providing food and lodging to emergency personnel (Our Lady of Holy Cross College, 2011). Additionally, Louisiana State University's (LSU's) main campus in Baton Rouge (roughly 90 miles from New Orleans) became a regional hub for Hurricane relief efforts (Monday, 2006). The university became a landing zone for helicopters, its gymnasium was converted into an 800-bed field hospital, its Veterinary School and Agricultural Center were converted into animal shelters, and its 5,000 watt campus radio station became a major source of news for the surrounding community (Bacher et al., 2005; Monday, 2006). Over the next several days at LSU, thousands of meals were served, some 15,000 patients were triaged (6,000 on site), more than 2,000 prescriptions for medication were filled, and housing was provided for more than 450 campus visitors (including emergency medical personnel, relief workers and members of the FBI) (Bacher et al., 2005; Monday, 2006).

Statement of Purpose

This post-Katrina context highlighted above has informed and continues to inform nearly every strategic decision made by college and university leaders in New Orleans since August 2005. Unfortunately, however, to date, the research community has largely neglected the subject of disaster management in the context of some of our largest and most cherished institutions – our colleges and universities (Stein, Vickio, Fogo & Abraham, 2007). Nor have such scholars

proposed a broad, interdisciplinary, conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster. The following study seeks to fill this void by:

- 1) Presenting a *holistic conceptual framework for leader behavior* in a disaster management context;
- 2) Utilizing the newly developed framework to examine (via a comparative case study) the behavior of college and university leaders at three postsecondary institutions in New Orleans which suffered a direct hit from Hurricane Katrina – with a particular focus on identifying leader behaviors pertinent to disaster response and recovery;
- 3) Revising and reproducing the aforementioned conceptual framework in conjunction with the results of the current study; and
- 4) Highlighting implications for practice and research.

Primary Research Question and Sub-Questions

Consistent with the desire to fill the aforementioned research void, this analysis is guided by the following critical research question: *How does “leader behavior” impact college and university disaster response and recovery efforts?* Sub-questions integrated into and addressed via this analysis include the following:

1. What was the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the postsecondary institutions examined in this study?
2. Which themes and subthemes of leader behavior were apparent in the response and recovery efforts engaged in by college and university leaders in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina?
3. Were differences in the degree to which various themes and subthemes were exhibited associated with different levels of institutional recovery (from the perspective of leaders, faculty and staff at three universities in a comparative case study)?

4. Based on case study results, what themes and subthemes of leader behavior can be incorporated into the conceptual framework to enhance its utility for college and university administrators, faculty members and researchers?

Key Operational Definitions

Prior to integrating and analyzing the literature on the subject of *leader behavior in the midst of disaster*, there are four key terms/phrases that require additional clarification given: 1) the varied manner in which they have been defined and applied by scholars of differing academic and professional backgrounds; and 2) the fact that a lack of commonly understood definitions was (in part) to blame for communication failures between government and intelligence agency leaders in the days leading up to 9/11 (Kean, 2004), and were an obstacle to certain aspects of the government response to Hurricane Katrina (*e.g.*, in Louisiana interpretations varied regarding which citizens should be deemed “special needs”) (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006). The key terms for which operational definitions are presented are: *leadership*, *leader behavior*, *disaster*, and *disaster management*.

Leadership

A recent Internet search under the keyword “leadership” yielded roughly 129,000,000 references to the topic (Google, 2011). Hence, not surprisingly, definitions of the term *leadership* differ rather extensively, primarily in accordance with the context under which the behavior (or the lack thereof) is exhibited and/or the perspective of the individual utilizing the term. As an *exhibited personal attribute*, Barnard (1938) views *leadership* as consisting of two primary components – a *technical component* reflected “in skill, in technology, in perception, in knowledge,” and a *moral component* as evident in “responsible behavior” or conduct that “commands respect, [and] reverence” (p. 268) (as cited in Fernandez, 1991, p. 38). Whereas,

Blake and Mouton (1985) argue that *leadership* (or *leadership style*) can be viewed as varying in terms of one's degree of *concern for task* and their degree of *concern for people* (represented by two axis), other scholars (e.g., Cartwright, 1965; Etzioni, 1965; Burns, 1978; and Fernandez, 1991) have suggested that *leadership* can be understood as possessing the *power to influence* others via the legitimate authority associated with one's position in a formal or informal organizational structure or hierarchy.

In contrast, Sample (2003) depicts *leadership* as consisting of *situational/contextual* components, and contends that a "leader who succeeds in one context at one point in time won't necessarily succeed in a different context at the same time, or in the same context at a different time" (p. 1). To that end, several scholars (e.g., French & Snyder, 1959; Hollander, 1964; and Burns, 1978) suggest that the context for leadership only exists insofar as there is some *relationship* between the leader and those being led. Fernandez (1991) adds that "leadership, particularly that aspect of leadership which is reflected in respect, is inherent in the *relations* among individuals, not in the individuals themselves" (p. 37). Moreover, according to Sample (2003), "effective leadership almost always involves a symbiotic relationship between the leader and the led" (p. 150).

Thus, *leadership* can be viewed as the product of an individual's exhibited personal attributes, their position related authority, their relationship with followers, and the setting (e.g., type of organization) or context (e.g., rapidly changing times) in which leadership takes place. In the context of this investigation, *leadership* or *leaders* (as the units of analysis) refer to: *those individuals who bear primary decision-making authority and accountability for the overall management, coordination, and consequences of an organization's, community's, nation's, or other well defined entity's – disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts.* In the college

or university context, *leaders* would include: campus presidents, chancellors, members of the president's cabinet, and others who possess both decision-making authority and overall accountability for the results of their institution's disaster management efforts. Moreover, while individuals at lower levels of a formal hierarchy may play critical roles in the success or failure of an organization's disaster management processes, if their responsibilities are limited to the execution (rather than the formulation) of strategies and decisions made by higher ranking executives, and/or they bear little, if any, accountability for the overall success or failure of an organization's efforts, then they are not considered *leaders* for the purposes of this investigation.

Leader Behavior

Closely related to concept of *leadership* is that of *leader behavior*. The definition of *leader behavior* proposed in this analysis is as follows: *conscious and unconscious actions, processes, and exhibited personal attributes, through which leaders influence organizations and/or the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of others, often in an intentional effort to facilitate a particular outcome* (adapted from Sekiguchi, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). In essence, *leader behavior* involves the *execution of leadership*, which can vary by *amount exercised*, *type(s)*, *level of impact* (e.g., limited or significant) and ultimately in terms of overall *results* (e.g., positive or negative, successful or unsuccessful). Moreover, *leader behavior* includes activities and processes that are not necessarily visible to those being led (e.g., leader thinking and decision-making processes) (Bolman & Deal, 2003), as well as more overt attributes that are not necessarily apparent (or *conscious*) to the individual doing the leading (e.g., the leader's ability to foster trust) (Sosik & Megerian, 1999). Additionally, when an organizational leader's behavior is conscious he/she may seek to influence others *directly* through some form of personal engagement (e.g., via reward or punishment) or *indirectly* by "changing the group

context so that the context influences group members' attitudes and behaviors..." (Sekiguchi, 2005, p. 81).

There is also evidence to suggest that some specific types of *leader behavior* may have more of an impact in some contexts than in others (e.g., times of certainty versus uncertainty). For example, Waldman, Ramirez, House & Puranam (2001) found that *charismatic leader behaviors* (e.g., vision, determination, and a sense of mission) are more effective than *transactional leader behaviors* (e.g., focusing on procedures and the strengthening of existing systems) in times of uncertainty. The impact of *leader behavior* – in a disaster context, on fostering (and/or inhibiting) the disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts of a variety of organizational types – will be explored in great detail in *Chapter II: Literature Review and Thematic Analysis*.

Disaster

The term *disaster* (often viewed synonymously with the terms/phrases: *catastrophe*, *calamity*, *emergency*, and/or *severe crisis*) has been defined in a number of ways. Kreps (1984) adopts a systemic viewpoint, and defines *disaster* as an “[event], observable in time and space, in which societies or their larger subunits (e.g., communities, regions) incur physical damages and losses and/or disruption of their routine functioning” (p. 312). In contrast, the *United Nation’s International Strategy for Disaster Recovery* (2003) examines *disaster* at the community level, defining it as “a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.” The *Information Technology Department at John’s Hopkins University* (2006) takes an organizational level approach, and

refers to disaster as “any event that creates an inability on an organizations part to provide critical business functions for some predetermined period of time.”

From a public policy perspective, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (2007) (via amendments to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act), defines *disaster* (or *major disaster*) as “any natural catastrophe... or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion, in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance” (42 U.S.C. 5122, Sec 102). Finally, the *Multilingual Dictionary of Disaster Medicine and International Relief* (1990), highlights disaster from a human (or humanistic) perspective – depicting it as a phenomena that results from “a vast ecological breakdown in the relations between man and his environment, a serious and sudden event (or slow, as in drought) on such a scale that the stricken community need extraordinary efforts to cope with it, often with outside help or international aid” (in *Journal of Pre-hospital and Disaster Medicine*, 2004).

While each of the aforementioned definitions for the term *disaster* are informative, individually, they fall short of illustrating that disasters are complex-phenomena which: 1) simultaneously affect people, organizations, communities, and societies at multiple levels (versus one area in isolation); 2) have durations which typically extend well beyond the event itself (given advanced warnings and/or lingering after-effects); and 3) in many respects can be prepared for. Thus, for the purposes of this study, *disaster* will be used to refer to *a natural or human-caused calamity* that meets the following four criteria:

1. The event presents a large threat to public safety;
2. The event necessitates the allocation and utilization of extraordinary resources;

3. The event effects individuals, organizations, communities and/or societies at multiple levels; and
4. The event can to at least some extent be prepared for (CA Government Code 8680.3; NARA, 2005; Erickson, 1976).

Extending the aforementioned definition to a college or university setting, a *disaster* includes *any event that poses an immediate, large scale threat to the physical or psychological health of its constituents (e.g., a major campus shooting, versus a brief well-contained dorm room fire) and/or threatens the continued operation of an institution or the continued employment of individuals on a significant-scale (e.g., a 20 percent campus-wide workforce reduction, versus the elimination of a small 5-person campus unit deemed “redundant”), but can at least in part be prepared for.*

Disaster Management

Just as there are multiple definitions of the term *disaster*, the phrase *disaster management*, technically a type of *crisis* or *emergency management* (sometimes misleadingly referred to as *disaster preparedness*, or *hazard mitigation*, which are stages in the aforementioned processes), has been defined in a variety of ways. Contrary to popular belief, *disaster management* is not merely the process of allocating human and material resources in accordance with various checklists (Moseley, 2004, p. 29). As a means for coordination, *disaster management* is defined by the *United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Recovery* (2003) as a set of “plans, structures and arrangements established to engage the normal endeavors of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to respond to the whole spectrum of emergency needs (UN-ISDR, Terminology).” Keeney (2004) highlights *disaster management* as a *perpetual course of action*, or “ongoing process of

assessment, planning, and training to prepare a well-coordinated plan of action... [including] measures to predict, prevent, and respond to disasters (p. 3). Finally, Moseley (2004) depicts *disaster management* as a *human endeavor*, requiring actors “who are properly equipped to consider in depth the range of technical, human and logistical problems before, during and after disaster strikes” (p. 28).

In combination, the aforementioned definitions depict *disaster management* as a set of actions taken before, during and after a catastrophe, which affects individuals, organizations and wider society. Moreover, they highlight *disaster management* as a process (e.g., a set of activities, responses, or stages) attached to a goal (e.g., to prepare, to engage, or ensure effective responses), rather than a solitary action or activity independent from some broader objective. Thus, *disaster management* can perhaps be more comprehensively defined as *a set of (ideally pre-established) routines, organized behaviors, and collective beliefs, that together enhance the capacity of an individual, organization, or other societal entity to: 1) prepare for; 2) minimize the damage from; 3) effectively respond to; and 4) bounce back from a disaster or trauma*. The formal expression of *disaster management* is referred to as a *disaster management plan* (also occasionally referred to as a *disaster preparedness plan, emergency management plan, hazard mitigation plan, or crisis management plan*).

Conceptual Framework

As noted above, *disaster management* is an ongoing *process* that encompasses a series of *phases* or *stages*. To successfully navigate and manage such *phases* in the midst of disaster, organizational leaders should not only possess a thorough understanding of each stage of the process, but also should have an understanding of the types of behaviors that leaders facing

similar circumstances have found effective (or contrarily ineffective) and at what points in the process such behavior has been shown to yield successful (or contrarily unsuccessful) results.

This dissertation advances a *holistic conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior* in a disaster management context. This new model is intended for 1) college and university leaders seeking guidance as to how they might facilitate campus disaster management efforts (ultimately achieving a level of sustainability), 2) college and university leaders and disaster management experts seeking a holistic tool for educating others (*e.g.*, faculty members, emergency response trainees, and/or students in a relevant course) on the subject of disaster management, and 3) researchers seeking a holistic model for examining the impact of leader behavior in a disaster/crisis context.

This *framework for disaster management* will 1) emerge from the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified through the ensuing literature review process; 2) specify the disaster management stages during which the identified leader behaviors have been found to be influential; 3) take into account the features of post-secondary institutions as *self-contained communities*, the feelings and emotions of people within them, and their role in facilitating (and/or inhibiting) the efforts of organizational leaders in a disaster management context; and 4) integrate the leadership behaviors identified as important by scholars and researchers from a *variety of disciplines* who have in turn explored leader behavior in a *variety of organizational settings* (both inside and outside higher education) – providing a broad foundation from which to study leader behavior at colleges and universities in New Orleans in the midst of Hurricane Katrina, and from which postsecondary institutions can yield information to more comprehensively prepare for disasters.

Chapter Summary

Each year, colleges and universities throughout the United States are confronted with a variety of natural, man-made, and/or technological disaster scenarios. Such events typically result in millions to hundreds of millions of dollars of damages (both physical and operational) per institution, uproot campus and surrounding communities, and can (as in the case of the Virginia Tech shooting and 2011 Tornado season) result in human casualties. Unfortunately, however, to date, the research community has largely neglected the subject of disaster management in the context of some of our largest and most cherished institutions – our colleges and universities (Stein, Vickio, Fogo & Abraham, 2007). Nor have such scholars proposed a broad, interdisciplinary, conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster.

This dissertation seeks to fill the aforementioned research void by proposing a new *holistic conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior* in a disaster management context. The key themes and subthemes of leader behavior underlying this emergent framework are identified and discussed in *Chapter II: Literature Review & Thematic Analysis*. It is this framework or model that will be utilized to explore the impact of leader behavior on colleges and universities in New Orleans that were severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina, and will be modified in accordance with new discoveries resulting from this study.

CHAPTER II

INTERDISCIPLINARY LITERATURE REVIEW & THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Approach to the Literature & Emerging Conceptual Framework

Researchers from a variety of disciplines – including sociology; business; psychology; medicine; education; engineering; political science; military science; and intelligence/homeland security – have sought to identify *leader behavior* that can contribute to (and contrarily inhibit) disaster management efforts. The types of leaders, organizational settings, and disasters (or other forms of *severe crises*) that have been investigated by such scholars vary dramatically. Amongst the categories of leaders previously studied in various disaster management contexts and incorporated into the subsequent literature review and resulting conceptual framework are U.S. Presidents, international leaders, mayors, college and university presidents, Antarctic explorers, corporate CEO's, K-12 administrators, military commanders, religious leaders, trauma center directors, and many others. The settings explored include, but are not limited to, college and university campuses, K-12 institutions, Fortune 500 Corporations, international energy companies, government agencies, municipalities, hospitals, and nuclear aircraft carriers. Moreover, the types of disasters and crises examined span from major hurricanes and terrorist attacks, to severe financial crises and contaminated product recalls.

Yet despite the differing subjects, settings, and crisis scenarios investigated by researchers, some significant patterns emerge from the literature base. First, the relevant books, journal articles, and published reports, examining leader behavior in the midst of disaster,

consistently fall into one of three categories: 1) research that focuses on identifying leader behavior that must be cultivated prior to a disaster to enhance organizational preparedness and/or resilience (*e.g.*, Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001; Harrald, 2006); 2) research that focuses primarily on uncovering leader behavior that can facilitate (and/or has been found to inhibit) successful disaster response and recovery efforts (*e.g.*, Tierney, 2003; Gittell, Cameron & Lim, 2005); and 3) research that focuses on uncovering leader behavior that must be applied (or avoided) throughout the disaster management process (albeit a bit differently at various phases) (*e.g.*, Fritz & Williams, 1957; Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Additionally, within and across the three categories highlighted above, based on their prevalence in the literature and prior studies of various crisis scenarios, several key *themes* and *subthemes* of leader behavior in the midst of disaster emerge. These themes include *leader-driven organizational dynamics; exhibited personal attributes; thinking and decision making; communication; and managing human reactions*. It is these themes – and their underlying *subthemes* highlighted in the subsequent *interdisciplinary literature review* and *thematic analysis* – that in combination with the previously illustrated disaster management process, will enable a *holistic disaster management conceptual framework* for: 1) facilitating campus disaster management efforts; 2) educating others; and/or 3) conducting further research examining leader behavior in a disaster/crisis context. This framework is presented after the literature review and analysis that follow.

Criteria for Inclusion in the Literature Review

Given the broad array of journal articles, books, periodicals, and government reports on the topic of leadership – many of which claim to address leadership in the face of disaster, crisis, change, uncertainty, or otherwise challenging circumstances, but either do so minimally (*e.g.*, via

a few paragraphs out of an entire book) or with an exceedingly broad interpretation of the meaning of disaster or crisis (*e.g.*, focusing on infighting over the commercialization of higher education or a more limited policy matter, rather than on recovery from a hurricane, severe financial decline, or contaminated product recall) – three specific criteria were adopted to determine whether a literary work should be included in this analysis and the subsequent conceptual frameworks. First, each book, article, or report must have as a stated primary intent – the exploration of a leader, leader behavior, a group of people impacted by and/or subject to those in leadership roles, or an organization in a disaster/crisis avoidance, preparedness, response or recovery context. Second, each literary work must make a noteworthy contribution to contemporary knowledge in the field of organizational leadership or disaster (or crisis) management by either: 1) identifying specific leader behaviors that appear to impact (either positively or negatively) an organization’s movement through pre and/or post-disaster management stages; or 2) providing recommendations for how leaders might best exhibit (or avoid) such behaviors (*e.g.*, by eliminating obstacles). Third and finally, given dramatic shifts in the complexity of society and more recent shifts in our understanding of how people and organizations function in times of crisis, items published prior to 2005 (the year Hurricane Katrina took place) that are not merely utilized as background or contextual pieces (*e.g.*, newspaper clippings, press releases, or web-based reports) must have been cited by at least one other scholar investigating the topic at hand, to be included in the literature review that follows.

Theme 1: Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

Synopsis. Leader behavior in the midst of disaster can be understood against a background of a number of interacting factors, including the personal attributes of the leader, perceptions of the leader prior to the crisis, and structural features of the organization (Larsson,

Johansson, Jansson & Grönlund, 2001). The interplay between these factors can determine the degree to which an organization will be able to meet the demands of a severely stressful situation (Larsson et al., 2001). Caza and Milton (2008) further contend that the degree to which organizations foster practices, symbols, language, and narratives aligned with resilience, the organization itself will become more resilient. Yet many studies of leader behavior and/or disaster management focus on leader attributes or tactical responses without considering the context in which the leader operates. This is unfortunate as leadership does not take place within a vacuum (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bryman, 1992; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Pettigrew, 1987). Effective disaster management efforts require “organizational and policy synergies which extend beyond the ‘rule books’ to the seriousness by which individuals are prepared to think about potential threats and adapt their systems and behaviors in order to prepare for them” (McConnell & Drennan, 2006, p. 60). While disasters commonly result in “dramatic organizational change,” according to Allison and Zelikow (1999), the direction of such changes are influenced by “existing organizational capabilities and procedures” (p. 144). Moreover, evidence strongly suggests that leaders may have the ability to influence, reshape, and refine processes in ways that can enhance the organization’s preparedness, and/or facilitate desirable response and recovery efforts.

Thus, several scholars have highlighted the importance of understanding organizational context in seeking to avert disaster and/or manage those that cannot be averted (e.g. Dynes, 1970, Kreps & Bosworth, 1993; Weick, 1993; Allison & Zelikow, 1999). Collectively, they have uncovered several important *organizational features* that leaders can influence in seeking to facilitate an organization’s disaster management efforts. These features include *balancing*

structure with flexibility, organizational reliability, mindfulness, and financial & relational reserves.

Structure vs. Flexibility

The first subtheme stems from a long-standing debate over whether *structure* (discipline, centralization, top-down, or command and control) or *flexibility* (adaptability, decentralization, agility, or creativity) is better suited for cultivating disaster management efforts (Arquilla and Rontfelt, 1996; Cameron, 1984; Harrald, 2006; Stephenson and Bonabeau, 2007). Ultimately, most scholars recommend balancing both features, but with an emphasis on structure in preparing for a disaster and flexibility in responding to it. For example, Comfort, Dunn, Johnson, Skertich and Zagorecki (2004) argue that complex systems should maintain a structure for the timely exchange of information with practicing managers, while fostering the flexibility necessary to adapt to emerging threats and changing conditions when encountering an environment under threat. Meisinger (2006) similarly contends that “an effective crisis management plan – incorporating emergency response, disaster recovery, communications, business continuity and other programs – can help organizations be better prepared to react quickly and flexibly when an unforeseen, potentially catastrophic, event occurs” (para., 5).

However, a balanced approach to managing disasters has not historically been the norm. In his examination of U.S. efforts to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, Harrald (2006) reveals a “limiting doctrine” that he believes may have resulted in the failed emergency response to Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, Harrald maintains that for the past 30 years, the emergency management community has been so overtly (and almost exclusively) focused on creating policies and procedures to help *structure, control, and manage* a large-scale disaster response – that they have neglected nonstructural elements such as *improvisation, adaptability,*

and *creativity* which he believes “are [also] critical to coordination, collaboration, and communication, and to successful problem solving,” particularly in the aftermath of a disaster (p. 256). According to Harrald, this one-sided focus on structure has resulted in an emergency response enterprise that “could not adapt to unprecedented challenges and failed catastrophically during the initial response to Hurricane Katrina” (p. 270).

Thus, Harrald contends that those responsible for designing and coordinating organizational systems of emergency management should take a more balanced approach to preparing for disasters, by emphasizing both *discipline* (structure, doctrine, and process) and *agility* (creativity, improvisation, and adaptability) at the organizational and logistical levels (p. 257). According to Boehm and Turner (2004) (in Harrald, 2006) *agility* and *discipline* are counterparts “where discipline ingrains and strengthens, agility releases and invents... agility applies memory and history to adjust to new environments to react and adapt... to take advantage of unexpected opportunities” (p. 263).

Along the same line of argument, Kendra and Wachtendorf (2002) shed light on the role *creativity* played in the tactical decisions of individuals and agencies that responded effectively to the September 11th disaster in New York. They contend that “while advance planning and preparedness serve as the backbone of disaster response efforts, creativity enhances the ability to adapt to the demands imposed upon individuals and organizations during crises and bolsters capacities to improvise in new physical and social environments” (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2002, p. 121). They depict *creativity* “as a process undertaken by organizations and emerging collectives that respond to new or changing situations,” and utilize Amabile’s (1997) framework for categorizing creativity in private sector firms (which she refers to as *entrepreneurial creativity*) to illustrate various forms of creativity evident in the activities of those leading New

York's response to September 11th (e.g. *adapting* to the inaccessibility of New York's Emergency Operation Center by *empowering those in the field* to make decisions), and that one can expect will be needed to effectively respond to future disasters (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2002, p. 121).

To maximize *organizational flexibility* and *adaptability* in the face of disaster, several scholars recommend that leaders facilitate a decentralized, *network-style response* (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 1996; Stein, Vickio, Fogo & Abraham, 2007; Stephenson & Bonabeau, 2007).

According to Moynihan (2007), via his case studies of various incident command systems utilized in responding to 1993 and 2003 California Forest Fires, the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing, the 2001 attack on the Pentagon, and Hurricane Katrina, crises require the effective coordination of a mix of skills, capacities and personnel which, in combination, fall beyond what a single hierarchy can effectively manage. Yet they also require "rapid decision making, and decisive, coordinated action, characteristics associated with hierarchies" (p. 6). Thus, Moynihan recommends that leaders facilitate a more blended "hierarchal network" approach to disaster management which, while offering a level of structure, provides responding entities with a level of autonomy intended to enable action.

Similarly, Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996), via a study prepared for the U.S. Defense Department entitled "The Advent of Netwar," shed light on challenges faced by the U.S. in responding to the *network structure* adopted by various terrorist organizations, which have enabled them to communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns in dispersed small groups, presenting them with an advantage over less flexible, hierarchical opponents (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 1996; Stephenson & Bonabeau, 2007). Ultimately, Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996) contend that fighting a networked enemy requires the adoption (by the U.S. and its allies) of a similarly decentralized, network-oriented military structure.

Stephenson & Bonabeau (2007) extend Arquilla and Ronfeldt's study by advocating for the application of the *network concept* in responding to both domestic terror attacks and natural disasters. In support of their argument, they highlight the post-Katrina efforts of the U.S. Coast Guard (one of the only government agencies regularly praised for its response to the Hurricane), which did not wait for Presidential authorization before beginning search and rescue operations, given pre-existing organizational principles that empower individuals to act by "promot[ing] leadership, accountability, and enabl[ing] personnel to take responsibility and action, based on relevant authorities and guidance"(GAO, 2006 in Stephenson & Bonabeau, 2007, p. 3).

Organizational Reliability

A second key subtheme of leader driven organizational attributes is referred to as *organizational reliability*, and is based on multiple studies of *High Reliability Organizations (HRO's)* (Robert's 1990; Roberts, Stout & Halpern, 1994). Specifically, HRO's are characterized by highly complex and interdependent technology, with high damage potential, yet very few errors in operations (e.g. military facilities and nuclear aircraft carriers) (Roberts 1990; Roberts et al., 1994). Through her investigation of HRO's, Roberts (1990) reveals a potential dysfunction in the way scholars, and organizational leaders of non-HRO's have traditionally viewed human error. In particular, prior studies (e.g., Perrow 1984; Schwartz, 1987 in Roberts, 1994) "generally assume a crisis or major accident has or will happen and address damage control," rather than prevention (p. 161). Moreover, Roberts et al. (1994) contend that "existing decision-making theories typically accept error or at least sub-optimization as relatively unproblematic," and that by examining and taking on the attributes of near failure free organizations it might be possible to avert some types of disasters (Roberts et al., 1994, p. 614).

Hence, through their investigation of nuclear aircraft carriers, Roberts et al. (1994) discovered that in order to assure that decisions are made accurately and quickly in an uncertain environment, organizational decision making processes are decentralized, “so that individuals who are closest to the problem stimuli can react and make better informed decisions” (p. 616). Moreover, each person is held responsible for any problem he/she finds. By holding individuals accountable for their decisions, Robert’s et al. (2004) contend that Navy personnel are more likely to engage in “cognitively complex decision making,” increasing the reliability of decisions throughout the organization (p.615). Additionally, when a correct decision is not known or an event is unfamiliar, given concerns over personal accountability, “the decision *ratchets* up the hierarchy, looking for the person who is ultimately *accountable*” and more qualified to make a decision in that circumstance (Robert’s et al., 2004, p.620).

Mindfulness

Similarly, through their investigation of HROs, Weick and Sutcliffe (2001), highlight the concept of *mindfulness* and how the exhibition and cultivation of this trait at the leadership and organizational levels can result in entities that are able to avoid (where possible), resist, and/or successfully manage the unexpected. Specifically, Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) define *mindfulness* as “an underlying style of mental functioning that is distinguished by continuous updating and deepening of increasingly plausible interpretations of what the context is, what problems define it, and what remedies it contains” (p. 3). They suggest five techniques that leaders of organizations should adopt to facilitate mindfulness, including a *preoccupation with failure(s)*; a *reluctance to simplify interpretations*; a *sensitivity to operations*; a *commitment to resilience*; and a *deference to expertise*. It is the combination of the aforementioned traits that

Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) believe assures strong performance in organizations where high damage potential exists.

This is further illustrated by Veil (2011), who demonstrates that *mindful learning* at an organizational level can not only minimize the impact of a crisis but also potentially prevent a crisis from occurring in the first place. Hence, as stated by McConnell and Drennan (2006), while crises managers at public institutions have the very difficult task of persuading politicians and bureaucrats to invest the necessary resources and training for “low probability events,” those who are able to successfully navigate such waters and/or work in “high preparedness organizations,” the task of crisis management is much easier “...because they do not have to battle strongly against a culture that buries its head in the sand” (p 69). As stated via the 9/11 Commission Report, “it is therefore crucial to find a way of routinizing, even bureaucratizing, the exercise of imagination” (Kean, 2004, p. 344) in anticipating and preparing for potential threats.

Financial & Relational Reserves

Gittell, Cameron and Lim (2005), also shed light on how the activities of leaders can foster *organizational resilience* and *recovery*, through their study of the airline industry’s response to the economic devastation caused by the September 11th attacks. Specifically, they examine the experiences and responses of 10 major U.S airlines to the crisis, and how the different responses of these companies led some to “emerge from the crisis resilient and strong,” while others languished and (in certain cases) even filed for bankruptcy (Gittell et al., 2005, p. 1). They found that two key factors (over which organizational leaders have some control) were largely responsible for the difference between successful and failed responses.

The first key factor identified by Gittell et al. (2005) is the presence or absence of *relational reserves* – or the “maintenance of positive employee relationships” (p. 1). Layoffs and broken employer commitments in the face of crisis can negatively impact relational reserves by: 1) damaging interpersonal relationships; 2) reducing information sharing; 3) increasing secrecy, deception and duplicity; 4) increasing formalization, rigidity, and resistance to change; 5) increasing conflict and feelings of victimization; and 6) reducing teamwork and cooperation (Gittell et al., 2005). In contrast, organizational leaders who avoid laying-off workers and protect employee benefits during times of crisis can have a dramatic positive effect on relational reserves and enable an organization to “bounce back from crises, maintain desirable functions and adjust positively to unexpected aberrations” (Gittell et al., 2005, p. 17).

The second key determinant of disaster recovery identified by Gittell et al. (2005) (over which organizational leaders maintain some control) involves the extent to which a company possesses *financial reserves* (characterized by low levels of debt and high amounts of cash-on-hand). As “a fixed cost that must be paid regardless of revenues,” debt can become a major constraint in the event of a crisis (Gittell et al., 2005, p. 8). Likewise, cash-on-hand provides “flexibility in the face of crises” enabling an organization to pay off immediate expenses often without having to take on debt and/or reduce the size and scope of operations (Gittell et al., 2005, p. 8). The potential positive impact of financial reserves on organizational resilience is further supported by Latham and Braun (2008), who found that *financial slack* can serve an effective discretionary tool – enabling quicker strategic reactions to environmental shifts while also positioning the organizations more favorably for economic recovery. In combination, organizational leaders who encourage both low debt and high cash-on-hand (financial reserves) can enable a company to maintain contractual commitments to employees and avoid employee

layoffs all together, thereby increasing relational reserves and ultimately facilitating recovery from a disaster.

Theme #2: Exhibited Personal Attributes

Synopsis. House, Spangler and Woycke (1991) argue that “in an age of complexity, change, large enterprises, and nation states, leaders are more important than ever” and that their effectiveness largely depends on their personality and charisma (p. 36). Through their examination of past presidents, corporate giants, and international humanitarians who found themselves in circumstances which required difficult or risky decisions, McCain and Salter (2007) contend that the best decision-makers typically possess some combination of *awareness, foresight, timing, confidence, humility and inspiration* (e.g., a moral obligation or sense of a higher calling) to make a particular decision or set of decisions. Giuliani and Kurson (2007) stress the importance of *leader consistency* in the face of disaster by “letting those who work for you and others you lead know that you’ll be there for them through good times and bad” (p. 362). Larsson et al. (2001), on the other hand, highlights the importance of “good physical and psychological capabilities” on the part of leaders (p. 443).

Hence, a number of authors have sought to shed light on the *personal attributes* of leaders that can influence disaster management processes. Yet as important as the identification of such leader attributes might be, their implications for disaster management are limited if such attributes are not exhibited in the midst of crisis and/or perceived to have been exhibited (by those being led). There is a reason we tend to remember those who have filled leadership roles (successfully or unsuccessfully) in the midst of crisis, as such circumstances can bring attention to previously unperceived attributes of such leaders (House, Spangler & Woycke, 1991). The subthemes identified by scholars in the area of *exhibited leader behavior* are as follows:

competence; charisma and/or the ability to inspire; trust/authenticity; ethics/morality/virtuousness; self-awareness/self-control; and resourcefulness/adaptability.

Competence (Technical and Social)

The first and perhaps most obvious (yet central) personal attribute that must be exhibited by leaders to facilitate both pre and post-disaster management efforts is *competence*. As stated by Klann (2003), “No amount of personality, political skills, or cracker-barrel wit can disguise or overcome a deficit in basic technical and managerial competence. And almost nothing can multiply employee anxieties and reduce confidence more during crisis than a leader who is perceived to be marginally competent” (in Gauvin, 2006, p. 20). Larsson, et al. (2001), go a step further by identifying two forms of competence that must be exhibited by leaders (based on their study of military activity in stressful environments). First, they contend that leaders must exhibit *personal, task-related competence* – or specific technical knowledge related to the task at hand. Second, they must exhibit *social, task related competence*, which involves the ability to “read” one’s own group members in relation to a given task, and to compile the right team in order to maximize group performance (Larsson et al., 2001).

The development of *competence* stems in part from the ability to learn from prior experiences and those of others, yielding insights from both successes and failures. Through his impressive account of the many life successes and occasional failings of Winston Churchill, Johnson (2009) illustrates the importance of learning from prior experience, particularly when it involves the need to lead in midst of great crisis. By the time Churchill was elected prime minister of Great Britain, in the midst of World War II, he had already served for decades in a variety of military (combat soldier, Lieutenant-Colonel, Minister of Munitions and First Lord of the Admiralty) and governing capacities (*e.g.*, Member of Parliament, and “Chancellor of the

Exchequer” or Treasury Secretary) within both liberal and conservative administrations, and had risen and fallen from grace multiple times (Nobel Lectures, 1969; Johnson, 2009; Churchill Centre and Museum, 2011). However, according to Johnson (2009), Churchill learned a great deal from his both his successes and failures, and upon taking office in a time of great peril (after several years of prophetically warning about Hitler and the growing threat of Nazi Germany). He clearly sensed that he was uniquely prepared to carry the weight that would soon fall on his shoulders, stating: “I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial” (p. 106).

Additionally, Mitroff et al. (2006) stress the importance of learning from the disaster-based experiences of others (both individuals and institutions). More specifically, they recommend that college and university leaders and disaster managers analyze and learn from crises that have occurred on other campuses to more comprehensively prepare for a variety of disaster scenarios. Unfortunately, however, Mitroff et al. found that a common reaction of campus actors to crises occurring at other institutions is "This could never happen on our campus - we have a different situation" (Mitroff et al., 2006, p. 8). The potential impact of this pattern of denial is evident via survey of 350 major U.S. colleges and universities (of which 117 provided usable data), where Mitroff et al. discovered that respondents “were generally prepared only for those crises that they had already experienced” (p. 5). In other words, many institutions remain unprepared for potentially devastating events because a given type of disaster (which they may very well be vulnerable to) has yet to take place on their campuses, which as a side-effect, limits the perceived urgency of campus leaders learn and apply lessons from crises that have taken place elsewhere.

Charisma & the Ability to Inspire

A second key subtheme of exhibited attributes involves the degree to which a leader displays *charisma* and/or is able to *inspire* others in times of crisis (Weber, 1947; Bradley, 1987; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; House, Spangler & Woycke, 1991). According to House, Spangler and Woycke (1991), the importance of leadership increases during periods of “complexity, change, large enterprises, and nation states,” and leader effectiveness depends largely on personality characteristics and *charisma* (p. 368). As defined by Waldman, Ramírez, House, and Puranam (2001), *charisma* involves the degree to which a leader is visionary, shows strong confidence in oneself and others, communicates high performance expectations and standards, personally exemplifies the firm's vision, values, and standards, and demonstrates personal sacrifice, determination, persistence, and courage. In their study of CEO's at 48 of the Fortune 500's largest manufacturing companies, House et al. (1996), sought to determine the degree to which such attributes affect organizational performance (as measured by net-profit margins) during certain versus uncertain times. They found that CEOs who exhibited behavior defined as “charismatic” made a significant difference during times of change and uncertainty.

Similarly, Harris (2003) depicts *inspirational leadership* as both an art and a science – a blended approach – that “Gives people the ability and desire to exceed expectations.” (p. 11). As an art, inspirational leadership involves motivating and energizing the group, addressing conflicts and promoting teamwork, and successfully managing a variety of personalities. As a science, such leadership entails honesty, communication, competence, motivation, and successful planning, programming, and prioritizing. Harris (2003) elaborates on the concept of inspirational leadership by revisiting Ernest Shackleton's famous 1914 attempted expedition to Antarctica. Shackleton's attempted expedition, left him and his 27 men fighting for their lives

after their boat became stuck in the icy waters of the Weddell Sea (part of the Atlantic Ocean) on the way to their intended destination (Rubin via MSN Encarta, 2007). For twenty-two months, the men endured sub-freezing temperatures, yet due to Shackleton's inspirational leadership (characterized by pre-planning, team building, flexibility, good communication skills, conflict resolution, and the exhibition of behaviors he wished to see in others) every man survived the crisis (Harris, 2003).

Authenticity/Trustworthiness

Authenticity is frequently discussed in studies of organizational leadership during certain (e.g., Burns, 1978; Bennis, 1999) and uncertain times (e.g., Naduea, 2002; Larsson et al., 2001). Burns (1978) depicts *leader authenticity* as a collective process emanating from the relationship between leaders and followers. Bennis (1999) and Pittinsky et al. (2004) have found that such *perceived authenticity* (on the part of followers toward their leader(s)) is a key factor in facilitating and sustaining trust in those who lead. Moreover, according to Moynihan (2007), the prevalence of *trust* "...facilitates coordination and the assignment of responsibility, reduces conflict and blame shifting, and speeds decision making" (p. 7).

In their grounded theory study of military officers from Norway and Sweden, and subsequent consultations with three psychologists from the *Norwegian Underwater Technology Center*, Larsson et al. (2001) identified personal attributes on the part of military leaders that can facilitate positive outcomes in *stress-related environments*. Prominent amongst the many traits identified was the ability to foster *mutual trust* between the leader and their followers. *Trust*, Larsson et al. (2001) argue is an attribute one builds up on a day-to-day (pre, during and post-crisis) "leadership basis" and is enhanced by five elements: 1) *perceptibility* – which involves the intentional or unintentional messages sent to others by a leaders actions (e.g. how the leader

acts when they or others make a mistake), 2) *respectful treatment* of those being led, 3) providing the *freedom to speak one's mind*, 4) the degree to which leader action is *consistent with their stated values*, and 5) whether the leader *exhibits competence* within their own "area of expertise." Ultimately, however it is a *basic interest in people* (exemplified by taking the time to interact and develop relationships with followers) that Larsson et al. (2001) believe can enhance a leader's perceived authenticity and improve group performance in stress-related environments.

James and Wooten (2011) contend that *trust* is a two-way street. Hence, in order to foster trust amongst organizational actors towards the leader, a leader must exhibit such trust towards stakeholders. Leaders who successfully demonstrate a *crisis leadership orientation*, which James and Wooten refer to as the "expectation of trust," are characterized by the following: 1) they *communicate effectively*, or in a way that the organization's values can be recognized and understood, 2) they *demonstrate concern for others*, rather than merely focusing on one's own well-being, and 3) they *act reliably*, and in a consistent fashion, while which helps to establish a sense of normalcy (p. 889). According to James and Wooten, by engaging in the behaviors above, over time, stakeholders will begin to recognize the leader as someone who can be counted on and trusted, which can pay dividends in organizational efforts to foster recovery and resilience.

Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness

Closely related to the subtheme of leader *trust* and *authenticity* are the *ethics* and *morals* exhibited by leaders prior to and in the midst of crises. Several scholars have highlighted the importance of *morality*, as it can provide a guiding framework for decision-making and communication under difficult circumstances (Mitroff & Pauchant, 1990; Hill & Wetlaufer, 2000; Sample, 2003). According to Sample (2003) the "goodness of a leader involves the

quality of one's moral values" (p. 118). However, there is a "fine-line" between moral-tolerance and moral-relativism. To navigate this so-called "fine-line," Sample (2003) recommends that organizational leaders develop and hold their moral convictions constant, "while being as open as possible to the strongly held moral beliefs of others" (p 118). Similarly, Bernabe (who is responsible for the massive turnaround of Italy's largest energy supplier *Eni*) contends that leadership "is fundamentally about humanity... [and] morality. [One's] primary job as a leader is to see what is good for [the] organization and what is good for the people ... and to create something for the well-being of your fellow citizens" (as cited in Hill & Wetlaufer, 2000, p. 195).

Mitroff and Pauchant (1990) illustrate the centrality of *ethics* to the origination and management of crises, through their examination of a series of human-caused environmental disasters (e.g. a deadly gas release at a Union Carbide plant in lease Bhopal, the Exxon-Valdez oil spill, and Chernobyl nuclear disaster) and more than 350 interviews of senior executives charged with overseeing crisis management efforts of their organizations. Specifically, they found that the vast majority of human caused crises stem from "emotional and ethical limitations" versus "rational or intellectual limitations" (p. xiii). More specifically, they contend that crises typically result from people and institutions that are "bounded emotionally and ethically," and "limited in their ability to acknowledge situations fraught with extreme conflict, anxiety and uncertainty." Thus, by adopting *unconscious psychological fallacies*, they find ways to deny a crisis situation exists and/or that they might be personally responsible for its occurrence (or for not facilitating its prevention) (p. xiii).

The importance of considering *ethics/morality* in the management (and in certain cases prevention) of crises is further supported by Abshire (2002) via his series of 76 case studies of

the U.S. Presidency during periods of both triumph and tragedy. He contends that a leader must not only exhibit personal character, but must seek to establish an *atmosphere of integrity*, which he refers to as a *community of character* (Abshire, 2002, p. 11). To do so, Abshire maintains that leaders must develop an understanding of how character might be tested in the midst of crisis, by reviewing case studies, engaging in role playing exercises and helping sort out any moral ambiguities (which he refers to as *morality plays*) such that when a crisis indeed emerges, they will be handled ethically and in manner that does magnifying already challenging circumstances.

Closely related to the leader exhibited trait of *ethics/morality* is that of *virtue* or *virtuousness*. According to Powley and Cameron (2005), the key element underlying organizational healing in the aftermath of a crisis is *virtuousness*, which involves the expression of (deeply imbedded organizational values) and “caring, concern, compassion, and social support for the organizations members” (p. 19). Moreover, they argue that to facilitate organizational healing, this sense of virtuousness must be evident in both individual and collective actions, in the actions of organizational leaders and those who fill positions at lower levels of the organizations hierarchy, as it is the virtue in those social relationships and connections that “enable an organization to re-establish a sense of identity, strengthen values, and restore relationships that were ruptured by a harmful event” (Powley & Cameron, 2005, p. 19).

Chun (2005 & 2009) contends that there are six *virtue character dimensions*, including both moral and non-moral components – integrity, warmth, empathy, zeal, conscientiousness, and courage. Through her examination of the merger of or two companies (one American and the other German) – which resulted in an organizational crisis, as evidenced by high employee turnover and the loss of clients to competitors – Chun (2009) found that two elements of virtue on the part of corporate leaders – *empathy* (e.g., supportive and sympathetic) and *warmth* (e.g.,

friendly and open) – had the most significant effect on the employee reactions to the merger. Moreover, she contends that ultimately success or failure of mergers more broadly (where the potential for crisis is rather high) is largely predicated on how much managers are perceived to “pay attention to the human side of the psychological integration processes that are beyond such obligatory responsibilities” (p. 479).

Self-awareness/Self-control

A key, but only modestly highlighted subtheme of exhibited personal attributes in the midst of disaster, is that of leader *self-awareness*. According to Larsson et al. (2001), *self-awareness* involves: 1) *managing one’s personal feelings* – by being “adequately vulnerable” versus stoic, or conversely, out of control; 2) *not taking excessive risks with courage* – noting that some leaders with an infallible belief in themselves will react in a one-track dysfunctional manner under high stress; and 3) *knowing and being honest about one’s strong and weak points* – relying on others in situations when they have more expertise and vice versa. According to Rolston and McNerney (2003), when leading the midst of crisis, such *self-awareness* must extend to *self-control*, by taking the time “...to become calm and clear about what they want to lead their people to do and how they want them to view the situation... [as] every word, deed or motion a leader makes in a time of crisis is more highly scrutinized than usual” (para. 8 & 9) and can impact others perceptions of the situation and the leader.

Additionally, underlying the issue of *self-awareness*, a number of scholars have recommended that leaders familiarize themselves and prepare for the possibility of *compassion fatigue* in the midst of crisis (Newell, 2007; Holaday & Smith, 1995 in Thompson, 2003; Sage, 2007). As stated by the Department of Homeland Security’s Inspector General, Richard Skinner, in the aftermath of Katrina, relief workers “were often unprepared for the psychological demands

they encountered working in a disaster environment” (Newell, 2007, p 2). Specifically, *compassion fatigue* is the “emotional residue of exposure to working with the suffering, particularly those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events” (p. 1-2). Such “emotional residue” can lead to poor decision-making, psychological withdrawal, and a variety of other behaviors incongruent with effective leadership. Holaday and Smith (1995) (in Thompson, 2003) contend that to protect their emotional well-being, those assisting with disaster recovery efforts could benefit from five categories of coping strategies: *social support, task focused behaviors, emotional distancing, cognitive self-talk, and altruism* (p. 360).

Resourcefulness/Adaptability

Similar to *creativity* at the organizational level, several scholars have recently highlighted the importance of leader *resourcefulness* and *adaptability* in the midst of crisis. In her study of New York’s response to the September 11th terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, Kathleen Tierney (2003) highlights exhibited leader attributes that can contribute to *organizational* (and in this case a local government/community) *resilience* in the face of a disaster. Tierney (2003) defines *organizational resilience* as “a property of physical and social systems that enables them to reduce the probability of disaster-induced loss of functionality, respond appropriately when damage and disruption occur, and recover in a timely manner” (p. 1). She further conceptualizes resilience as consisting of the four properties (p. 2): *Robustness, Redundancy, Rapidity, and Resourcefulness* (also in Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2001). However, it is this last trait, *resourcefulness* or “the capacity to identify problems, establish priorities, and mobilize resources to avoid or cope with damage or disruption” (p. 2) on the part of New York’s leaders, that Tierney (2003) contends contributed to the city’s resilience after 9/11. As evidence Tierney notes: 1) the ability of New York’s leaders to adapt to a rapidly changing and uncertain

environment (*e.g.*, destruction of their Emergency Operation Center); 2) their successful management of converging resources; and 3) their ability to transition into a loosely-coupled, network form of organization, which empowered constituent agencies and groups to act and focus more effectively on specific aspects of the disaster response for which they bore responsibility.

According to Gonzales (2003), studies (rooted in psychology) focused the survivors of various accidents and disasters have found that “the most successful are open to the changing nature of their environments” (p. 80). In other words, they possess and have shown the ability to let go of pre-established plans when/if the situation dictates, accurately perceive what is happening in the environment, and successfully to adapt to it. Colten, Kates and Laska (2008) point out that in every disaster “creativity and improvisation are required as hazard events occur that have not been anticipated or the magnitude of such events is greater than anticipated and overwhelms planned-for responses” (p. 4). Unfortunately, leaders too often limit their options in the midst of crisis, and “suffer from suppressed resourcefulness” (Muffet-Willett, 2010, p. 47; Rosenthal & Hart, 1991), yet the ability of a leader to adapt to a complex and rapidly changing environment is a key component of crisis leadership (Muffet-Willett, 2010).

Theme #3: Leader Thinking/Decision Making Processes

Synopsis. According to James and Wooten (2011), every leader is guided by a *crisis leadership orientation*, or a “frame of mind accompanied by a key set of behaviors” (p. 884). More specifically, each orientation incorporates cognitive capabilities that are developed before, during, and after a crisis, and stem from a combination of experiences, preparation, information gathering, and feedback from external sources (Weick, 2003; Schoenberg, 2004; James & Wooten, 2011). As such, *crisis leadership orientations* play a major role in a leaders outlook in

the midst of a disaster (*e.g.*, catastrophe or opportunity), the decisions they make (*e.g.*, rigid or adaptable), how they make them (*e.g.*, alone/authoritatively or after listening to the perspectives of others), and with what factors taken into account (*e.g.*, concern for oneself or concern for others) (James & Wooten, 2011).

In his case study of Philadelphia's 1985 MOVE catastrophe – wherein a confrontation between city police and a militant activist group (MOVE) resulted in an inferno that destroyed 61 homes and left 250 people homeless – Nagel (1991) uncovers a set of cognitive errors on the part of Philadelphia's Mayor W. Wilson Goode, which he indicates resulted in the mismanagement of the crises. Specifically, Nagel notes that Goode's behavior toward the disruptive extremist group followed two patterns, both paradoxical: *protracted delay* followed by *excessive haste*. Nagel (1991) contends that “both paradoxes resulted from unresolved decisional conflicts and other universal tendencies well understood by psychologists of decision-making that impede responsible and rational handling of the problem” (p.1).

While most critics of the MOVE disaster focused on the outcome of the conflict and attributed blame to the mayor and police force for their actions, ultimately, according to Nagel (1991), such mismanagement can be traced back to flawed thinking patterns on the part of Philadelphia's leader. Thus, as the incident above illustrates, it is critical that any in depth examination of leader behavior in the context of disaster management, explore the area of *leader thinking/decision making processes*. Several key subthemes of leader thinking/decision making emerge from the literature base including: *utilizing multiple mental frames; contrarian and Janusian thinking; devils advocacy and scenario-based planning; viewing disasters as opportunities; and instinctive & vigilant decision-making*.

Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames

Through their investigation of a vast array of crises spanning from the *Challenger Disaster* to 9/11, Bolman and Deal (2003) shed light on *mental processes* organizational leaders must cultivate prior to disasters in order to function effectively during and in the aftermath of such events. Specifically, Bolman and Deal (2003) contend that effective leaders (particularly in times of crisis) possess the ability to examine circumstances through multiple mental frames and make decisions in accordance with the frame(s) that is (are) most relevant to the situation at hand. Four specific frames are identified by the researchers, including:

- 1) the *structural frame* – which focuses on the “architecture of an organization – the design of units and subunits, rules and roles, goals and policies” (p. 18);
- 2) the *human resource frame* – which “emphasizes an understanding of people, with their strengths and foibles, reason and emotion, desires and fears” (p. 18);
- 3) the *political frame* – which “sees organizations as competitive arenas characterized by scarce resources, competing interests, and struggles for power and advantage” (p. 18);
and
- 4) the *symbolic frame* – which “puts ritual, ceremony, story, play and culture at the heart of organizational life” (p. 19).

Bolman and Deal (2003) indicate that by balancing the frames and recalibrating in response to new circumstances, leaders can facilitate successful disaster response and recovery efforts, as exemplified by Rudy Giuliani (former Mayor of New York) in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. More specifically, they contend that Mayor Giuliani rapidly shifted from a predominantly *structural frame* (e.g., by emphasizing command and control and top-down leadership) to a more *symbolically centered frame* (e.g., by using words and genuine emotion to

inspire and connect with fellow New Yorkers), resulting in what most American's viewed as a successful response to an unprecedented disaster. Even as recently as 2008, Giuliani (a Republican) received standing ovations at both Republican and Democratic National Conventions when he appeared.

The importance of considering complex circumstances from multiple angles is supported by Allison and Zelikow (1999), who, through their extensive exploration of the Cuban Missile crisis, found that government leaders, policymakers and foreign affairs analysts commonly “think about problems of foreign and military policy in terms of largely implicit conceptual models that have significant consequences for the content of their thought” (p. 3). Unfortunately however, government leaders and analysts have a tendency to adopt (and in many respects limit themselves to) a single *model* or *pattern of thinking* while seeking to predict the actions of foreign leaders and/or explain why they acted as they did in the midst of earlier events. However, when navigating complex circumstances, if a simplified or solitary way of thinking has become the norm, “it is even more essential to have at hand one or more simple but competitive conceptual frameworks to help remind the questioner and the answerer what is omitted” (Allison and Zelikow, 1999, p. 8). According to Allison and Zelikow (1999), such alternative ways of exploring and understanding circumstances not only results in greater comprehension of the “neglected dimensions of the underlying phenomenon,” but are also crucial “as a reminder of the distortions and limitations” that can result from adopting just one way of viewing a given situation (p. 8).

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking

Drawing from his experiences leading the University of Southern California through a series of crises during the early 1990's (*e.g.*, the Northridge Earthquake, the L.A. Riots, and

extreme budgetary challenges), and from the experiences and principles of other prominent 20th century leaders who have had to make difficult decisions in the midst of disaster/crisis, Sample (2003) sheds light on modes of thinking and decision making that can enable organizations to overcome adversity. He refers to this enabling style of mental processing as the *Contrarian* means of thinking. The goal of *Contrarianism* “is to break free from the bonds of conventional black and white binary thinking” (p.3) by doing the following: 1) *thinking gray* – by seeing the middle-ground inherent in a situation (p. 7); 2) applying a *creative imagination* – by envisioning different organizational combinations (and contingencies) and seeing how they might play out in one’s mind prior to implementing such changes; and 3) *seeing double* – by examining events through the eyes of followers, while at the same time examining things from one’s own unique perspective.

Along the same line of reasoning, Cameron (1984) recommends that leaders adopt *Janusian* thinking patterns, which he conceptualizes as being able to hold two contradictory thoughts in one’s mind as simultaneously true. Paparone and Cupri (2002) similarly recommend that in an increasingly complex global environment, leaders (military and government in this case) “move beyond linear thought and action to a realm of thinking and acting that recognizes and accepts paired yet opposite ideas and actions” (p. 38). As an example of Janusian thinking, in the context of the global *war on terrorism*, Paparone and Cupri point out the importance of leaders understanding the need to protect our nation and defend the admirable values which were attacked on 9/11, while also being cautious we ourselves do not destroy them in the name of defense and neutralizing the enemy. The ability to hold onto such seemingly contradictory thoughts “engenders the flexibility of thought that is a prerequisite for individual creativity... and problem solving” (Cameron, 1984, p.136). Moreover, according to Cameron (1984), “for

managers and administrators in higher education to assure capacity for survival, strength and soundness, adaptability to sudden change, and the ability to take advantage of new opportunities in a postindustrial environment with turbulence...” (p. 135), such leaders will need to adopt Janusian thinking patterns and seek to develop Janusian institutions.

Devils Advocacy & Scenario-based Thinking

After the 2003 SARS outbreak in Southeast Asia and parts of Europe was contained, the federal government (in the United States) began more aggressively recommending that private businesses, postsecondary institutions, government agencies, and non-profits begin planning for the possible outbreak of a pandemic flu. Many if not most of these plans are based on the assumption that people or at least a reasonable percentage of them will show up to work. There is, however, recent evidence to suggest that many of those who are being counted on to continue operations in the midst of a health emergency may simply stay at home. In their survey of 5 European countries and 3 East Asian regions that had been impacted by SARS (3,436 respondents total), Sadique et al. (2007) found that of 35% European and 52% of Asian respondents do not plan to show up for work in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak. Hence, the question needs to be asked “What if people simply don’t show up?”

Closely related to the subtheme of *contrarian thinking* is what can be referred to as the *devil’s advocacy approach* to crisis management. Several scholars recommend that leaders challenge their conventional thinking by surrounding themselves with an inner circle of trusted advisors who are instructed to speak honestly and candidly on all matters, especially when/if they disagree with the current course of action (Sample, 2003). According to Mitroff and Pauchant (1990), “crisis prepared organizations... are constantly surfacing and testing their most cherished beliefs and assumptions with regard to their continued validity” (p. 117). Augustine

(2002) recommends that organizational leaders place *devil's advocates* on their crisis management teams to challenge plans before they are put into place.

A primary element of the devil's advocacy approach involves asking *what-if questions* and planning for *worst-case scenarios* that go beyond generally accepted norms. In preparing for the possibility of a nuclear attack, policy-thinkers commonly frame the issue with the following questions: "On the day after a nuclear weapon goes off in a U.S. city, what will we wish we had done to prevent it?" (Nunn, 2005 in Carter, May & Perry, 2007, p. 20) and "What will the United States do on the day that prevention fails?" (Carter, May & Perry, 2007, p. 20). According to FEMA (2003), much of the devastation caused by the *100 Year Flood of 1993* (which affect nine states in the Midwest) resulted largely from flooding that exceeded the (overly conservative) presumed "worst-case" design specifications. Hence, in crafting *worst-case scenarios* Fink (1986) recommends going "all out" by performing exercises and hypothetical damage assessments (within various ranges of confidence) before a potential crisis strikes. However remote the possibility a worst-case scenario might be, "thinking the unthinkable," and crafting well-designed contingency plans can save lives and even promote a quicker recovery (Carter, May & Perry, 2007, p. 31).

Viewing Disasters as Opportunities

According to Augustine (2000), "almost every crisis contains within itself the seeds of success as well as the roots of failure" (p. 2). This is illustrated in Ripley's (2009) critique of Samuel Henry Prince's (1920) dissertation "Catastrophe and Social Change" (one of the first systemic analyses of human behavior in the midst of a major crisis on record), wherein Prince deconstructs the 1917 *Halifax disaster*. Considered the largest manmade explosion on record, during which a French cargo ship full of wartime munitions, exploded off the coast of Nova

Scotia, Canada, taking the lives of nearly 2,000 people, Ripley notes that in analyzing a great tragedy, Prince was careful to point out that disasters do present inherent opportunities, stating that the “awful catastrophe [was] not the end but the beginning, History does not end so. It is the way chapters open” (vii).

This is supported by Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003) and James and Wooten (2011), who argue that adopting an overarching positive orientation in times of crisis, by seeing the opportunity(ies) within them, enables leaders and their organizations to achieve *resilience*, or the ability to bounce back following a threatening event. The goal of crisis management, then, is to find, cultivate, and harvest that potential success (Augustine, 2000). Fink (1986) makes a similar contention, stating that “with proper advance planning there can be a positive side to a crisis” (p1). He goes so far as to point out that the [Chinese] symbol for their word “crisis”– called “wei-ji” – is actually a combination of two words, “danger” and “opportunity” (Fink, 1986, p. 1). Moreover, Mitroff and Pauchant (1990) suggest that leaders look at crises as “fundamental opportunit[ies] both to learn and to change significantly” (p. 18).

According to Rinella (in Carlson, 2008), who served as President of Austin Peay University in 1999, when the institution was hammered by a tornado, viewing disasters as opportunities and a chance to potentially bring benefits to an organization enables leaders to take advantage of them. While no scholar included in this analysis suggests that leaders should be celebratory in the event of a calamity, nor utilize the crisis as a mere quest for personal fame or advancement, several recommend that leaders develop an understanding of the *power of momentum*, and utilize such energy and authority to pursue long-desired organizational changes and initiatives (e.g. Brenneman, 2000 & Fink, 1986). Rinella (as cited in Carlson, 2008) recommends that the crisis be used to “harness public sympathy for fund raising, with a pitch

that speaks to the long-term vision and recovery of the college” (p. 2). Bernabe (2000) emphasizes the importance of *timing*, stating that “when a window of opportunity opens, you have to dive through it” (as cited in Hill & Wetlaufer, 2000, p 188). Therefore, as stated by Monday (2005), leaders who wish to successfully manage a crisis should “not fail to use the long-term and holistic approach needed to capitalize on the opportunities... the period of recovery after a disaster is a good time to start, because disasters shake-up the status quo and present opportunities to build back in a better way” (p.2).

Instinctive & Vigilant Decision Making

Closely related to *leader thinking* is *decision making*. Based on his study of the trials and tribulations of Chicago’s Cook County Hospital’s Emergency Clinic, and his analysis of a set of military exercises, Gladwell (2005) sheds light on important decision-making processes he believes yield positive results for leaders in the midst of crisis and uncertainty. Specifically, he found that medical personnel (evaluating potential heart attack victims), as well as military leaders and others whose responsibilities involve making challenging decisions, tend to gather and consider far more information than is truly necessary, “because it makes them feel more comfortable – and when someone’s life is in the balance they need to feel more confident” (Gladwell 2005, p. 140). Moreover, he discovered that once processes were simplified such that decisions could be made more rapidly, doctor-errors decreased, while military leaders who relied more on *instinctive thinking* than data gathering and analysis conducted more successful exercises. Thus, while Gladwell does indicate that “successful decision making relies on a balance between deliberate and instinctive thinking” (p. 139) in times of crisis and/or where time limitations exist, he points to the merits of *instinctive thinking*.

In partial contrast with Gladwell, Fink (1986) recommends that leaders engage in *vigilant decision-making* processes during times of crisis. Specifically, he refers to *vigilance* as an adaptive style, whereby, “a decision maker objectively collects information, weighs it, searches for possible options and makes...well-balanced, stable decisions that have the best chance of meeting [the leaders] strategic objectives” (p. 138). According to Fink (1986), the key to achieving a *state of vigilance* is to manage one’s stress and anxiety. To do so he recommends the following: 1) recognize that all crises are (to some extent) stressful, 2) realize that some feelings of anxiety may actually be excitement over the opportunity that is inherent in a crisis situation versus more negative sources (*e.g.*, fear over making the “wrong-decision”), and 3) be aware that a crisis “holds out to you the potential for achievement; for obtaining personal and business goals; for receiving admiration from your peers” (p. 134). Thus, by deliberately managing one’s stress and anxiety, it appears that the *state of vigilance* recommended by Fink (1986) may actually enable the quicker (and less deliberative) decision-making processes advocated by Gladwell (2005).

Ultimately, both Gladwell and Fink view *instinctive* and *vigilant decision making* processes as means to positive ends or *good judgments*. Tichy and Bennis (2007) refer to *good judgments* as “well-informed, wise decisions that produce the desired outcomes” and as “leader’s most important role in any organization” (p. 94). This is particularly the case in times of crisis when such decisions or judgments can count the most, make the difference between recovery and lack thereof, and significantly impact the livelihoods of organizational members (Tichy & Bennis, 2007). Hence, similar to *vigilant decision making*, Tichy and Bennis view good judgments as the result of a process. In this case the process involves three stages: 1) *preparation*, during which leaders sense and frame the issue that will soon demand a judgment

call, aligning their team to help ensure that key players understand the importance of the issue and facilitate a good decision; 2) *making the call* or the moment of decision; and 3) *execution*, or implementing the decision while learning and making adjustments along the way. Leaders likely to be effective in the midst of crisis, have previously "... [made] a habit of sensing, framing and aligning so they are prepared for the call which can arise at any moment" (Tichy and Bennis, 2007, p. 99) Moreover, according to Tichy and Bennis, when good leaders notice that they are having difficulty mobilizing an organization behind a decision (and/or that they may not have framed the issue effectively or correctly), they take advantage of "redo loops," whereby they reframe the issue and re-set the context before making the call.

Avoiding Common Decision-Making Traps

In addition to uncovering leader thinking and decision making styles and processes viewed as effective in the midst of crisis, scholars and practitioners have revealed *decision making traps* and *cognitive errors* which can be common factors in poorly managed crises. For example, Fink (2002) recommends that leaders avoid the following maladaptive decision making behaviors: *unconflicted inertia* or *unconflicted adherence*, which is characterized by a leader who ignores all information about risks and simply sticks to the current game-plan; *analysis paralysis*, whereby a leader overanalyzes a crisis to the point of being unable to make a decision and/or act on one; *unconflicted change*, which involves continually taking action on the last advice he or she hears; *defensive avoidance*, whereby the leader delays important decisions in an effort to avoid potential conflict or to continue on with an unrealistic quest to find the perfect solution; and *hyper-vigilance*, whereby the leader becomes so stressed or overwhelmed, that they select one strategy to deal with the crisis, then quickly abandon it in favor of another, then another.

Via his examination of three major national crises or *fiascos* – the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the decision to expand military involvement in the Korean War, and the Bay of Pigs misadventure – Irving Janis (1983) sheds light on how *group-think* that can contribute to poor analysis and decisions on the part of leaders in the midst of crisis. Specifically, Janis refers to *groupthink* as “a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures,” (p. 9) particularly prevalent in high-stress or time sensitive situations. For instance, leading up to the Bay of Pigs invasion, Janis contends that Kennedy’s inner circle had a *concurrency-seeking tendency* that resulted from “shared illusions and other symptoms, which helped the members to maintain a sense of group solidarity” and were manifest in “the group’s tendency to seek concurrence at the expense of seeking information, critical appraisal, and debate” (p. 48). Janis contrasts this with Kennedy’s later efforts during the Cuban Missile Crisis, whereby the President waited to make a decision until a full-range of possible actions and the potential impact of such actions (*e.g.*, projected reactions by the Soviet Union) were considered and challenged. Conscious of flaws in the collective thinking methods that resulted in the Bay of Pigs fiasco, during the subsequent Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy encouraged debate and critical analysis at various stages throughout the process, leading to more informed decisions and a successful end result.

Sample (2003) highlights additional dysfunctional decision making patterns on the part of leaders including: *flip-flopping*, *believing the last thing you heard* (even when/if contradicting prior information), and/or *believing that which is most strongly believed by others*. Mitroff and Pauchant (1990) caution leaders to avoid the tendency towards adopting *defensive behavior* or *thinking patterns*, whereby concerns become more inwardly focused than outwardly. They note that *defensive behavior* or *thinking* can stand in the way of preparedness efforts, particularly

when a leader (and/or a leadership team) believes that engaging in such activities somehow implies that their organization is not of the highest quality and/or its leaders are not “good professionals” (Mitroff & Pauchant, 1990, p. 130). During or post-crisis, such maladaptive processes can trigger *irrational decision making*, *paralysis*, and *efforts to explain the crisis away* and/or *blame others* for it (Mitroff & Pauchant, 1990). By recognizing that the pressure and time-sensitive nature of various disaster scenarios can result in a series of *cognitive errors* and *decision making traps*, leaders can potentially avoid falling into them during similar circumstances.

Theme #4: Leader Communication Style

Synopsis. After 9/11, much of the blame for our nation’s inability to avert disaster fell on the U.S. intelligence community, which (among other things) was criticized for poor information sharing, competitiveness between agencies, and the lack of a *common procedural or technical language* – such that even those departments which did share information often did not accurately interpret or understand the urgency of various inter-agency messages (9/11 Commission, 2004; Odom, 2003). Thus, after 9/11, the federal government created and adopted the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)* and began requiring those responsible for emergency management at all local, state, and federal agencies, hospitals, college and university campuses, and other types of organizations to become familiar with the system and adopt the language and communication policies of that system (Dept. Homeland Security, 2003, HSPD-5; Jackson, 2007).

However, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina (and the subsequent levee breaks) overwhelmed emergency management agencies in Louisiana and Mississippi, and it became clear that many citizens did not receive, did not heed, or did not have the means to evacuate. Moreover, the

adoption of a common language and rather rigid communication procedures were not sufficient to rectify emergency-related communication challenges. Ultimately political leaders at the local, state, and federal level were blamed for the ineffectiveness of such systems, and criticized for failed evacuation policies, a slow emergency response, poor coordination, and (at the Presidential level) for not visiting the disaster stricken area until 17 days after the Katrina (Jackson, 2005).

Similar criticisms of the federal government and associated agencies (*e.g.*, Department of the Interior) emanated in the wake of the 2010 *Gulf Oil Spill* (also referred to by some as the “BP” or “Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill”). Local leaders in Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, and elsewhere, expressed frustration over the slow federal response to requests for assistance, as well as the overall lack of clarity regarding which federal officials were responsible for making, approving and/or overturning local decisions. In combination, such challenges delayed efforts to protect the marshlands and coastline from the oil which at the time was continuing to flow freely from the ocean floor.

Ultimately, despite changes made in the aftermath of 9/11, each of the crises noted above were exacerbated by continued failures to communicate effectively in the midst of disaster. Hence, it became quite clear that other aspects of communication not addressed by NIMS (and/or not incorporated successfully) must be understood and utilized by leaders to facilitate more effective preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Fortunately, a number of scholars have identified key subthemes underlying *leader communication skills* that can be particularly crucial in the midst of a disaster. These subthemes include: *facilitating awareness (balancing attention with cry wolf syndrome)*; *clarity of terminology and message*; *symbolic actions*; and *creating context for meaning and action*.

Facilitating Awareness

In the aftermath of the previously mentioned 2007 *Virginia Tech Massacre*, President Bush appointed a task force to examine the issue of campus safety. According to Leavitt et al. (2007), through the task force's meetings with educators, mental health experts, law enforcement agencies, and state and local officials, a commonality of themes emerged. Prominent amongst those themes was the recognition that campuses (and the constituencies served by those campuses) lack reliable information, and lack awareness of issues related to campus safety and security. Moreover, the task force indicates that it "repeatedly heard reports of *information silos* within educational institutions and among educational staff, mental health providers, and public safety officials" (Leavitt et al., 2007, p. 7). Such *information silos* impede effective sharing of information in ways that are similar to the often-criticized *stovepipes* that exist between U.S. intelligence agencies, in which information often only flows to those within a given agency, within a specific department, or to those at a similar levels within the organizational hierarchy (Odom, 2003; Lowenthal, 2003).

Hence, the lack of effective communication can increase a group's vulnerability to disruption (Weick, 1993). Bolman and Deal (2003) contend that a key factor in Enron's collapse was that no one understood its financial picture – from its Board of Directors, to its auditors, to employees at all levels. Similarly, Gershon (2007) found (in her study) that 94% of the World Trade Center employees who survived the 9/11 terrorist attacks had not previously exited their building as part of a drill, and only 11% had even entered a stairwell. Ripley (2009), Dynes (2002) and Tierney (2002) have established that such a lack of information sharing stems largely from of a fear of causing panic. However, according to Ripley, information, training and drills can help the subconscious mind work more effectively in time of duress. While Tierney (as cited

in Dynes, 2002) contends that “the real danger is that crucial information on risks and on recommended practice may not be available to people in a form they can use when they actually need it” (Tierney, 2002, p. 3).

Also, running counter to concerns regarding awareness-driven panic, Asmussen and Creswell (1995) indicate that faculty and staff actually want and need to know that a campus is properly prepared to prevent disaster, and need to have a sense of what is expected of them in the event that prevention fails. Otherwise, as illustrated via their investigation of a near fatal shooting at a Midwestern campus, faculty and staff may act passively due to being “unsure of what to do or whom to ask for assistance” (p. 587). Hence, the Center for Study of Traumatic Stress recommends that organizational leaders take advantage of “teachable moments” (*e.g.*, at the time of hiring) to involve employees in drills and inform them of workplace disaster protocol (Center for Study of Traumatic Stress, 2006), while Kotter (2001) notes the importance of tailoring messages to each audience by “understand[ing] the people they are trying to reach and what they can and can’t hear” (para. 6). Moreover, Fink (1986) contends that during and in the aftermath of major crises, organizational leaders should immediately and continuously strive to manage their organization’s message (both internally and externally), as they have the ability to shape the public’s perception over what is and is not happening rather than allowing the media or others to do it for them.

Clarity of Terminology and Message

Another key subtheme of leader communication involves the clarity of communications emanating from a leader during crises scenarios. According to Reed (2006), the lack of a clearly defined message and understanding of the phrase “war on terror” is hampering U.S. efforts to achieve desirable outcomes from the conflict. From an operational perspective, Reed (2006)

contends that such a vaguely defined phrase has led to a “lack of focused national effort along with its attendant risk of failure” (p. 6). Recent efforts to replace the phrase “war on terror” with what was intended to be a more benign expression of “overseas contingency operation,” not only added to the confusion, but had the unfortunate effect of causing many critics to question the commitment of the U.S. government to continuing the fight against Al Qaida and other terrorist networks. The similarly well-intended color coded alert system developed by the Department of Homeland Security in the aftermath of 9/11 (with the goal of facilitating situational awareness and readiness) also lacked clarity, which limited its envisioned effect, and resulted in its recent replacement with a new system (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011). As stated by Lurie (in RAND, 2007), in relation to the threat of bioterrorist attacks, pandemic flu outbreaks and other large-scale public health emergencies, “without a clear definition of what a public health emergency is and how to prepare for one, communities and states cannot assess whether or not they are prepared” (p. 1).

Similarly, in their investigation of weather-related disasters, Wolshon, Urbina, and Levitan (2001) found that emergency management terminology and preparedness activities vary significantly from state-to-state, even resulting in different meanings for the same evacuation orders (*e.g.*, voluntary, recommended, full-voluntary and partial-voluntary). Colleges, universities, and other decentralized organizations commonly consist of multiple units, which each possess their own cultures, definitions, and policies and procedures, which can pose particular communication challenges. Hence, whether the entity is a state, community, or university, leaders must utilize multiple channels and modes of transmission and “enable repeated transmission of clear, concise and consistent messages” (Kiefer et al., 2006, p. viii) during all phases of the disaster management process, or they risk losing the respect of those

being led and of lessening the likelihood of having a desirable effect on the outcome of a crisis (Larsson et al., 2001).

An added benefit of seeking to ensure the clear, accurate, and targeted dissemination of information is that a leader(s) can reduce the likelihood of generating a *false alarm effect* or *cry-wolf syndrome* (Simmons & Sutter, 2009; Breznitz, 1984; Smith, 2005; Wolshon et al., 2001). As argued by Breznitz (1984), “each false alarm reduces the credibility of a warning system...” which can have “...serious ramifications to behavior in a variety of response channels” (Breznitz 1984, p. 11). According to the Miami Herald (2005), “in nearly half of the 29 hurricanes that struck the United States since Hurricane Andrew in 1992... three-quarters of the warning areas per storm were ultimately left untouched” (para. 7). In addition to resulting in multimillion dollar evacuations and the mass closings of schools, companies and governments (Miami Herald, 2005), regular false alarms or exaggerations can trigger complacency amongst community members, and decisions to avoid heeding future warnings, which can have serious consequences. Recent evidence suggests that those regions most likely to suffer heavy casualties from tornados are those that had most frequently received false alarms (Simmons & Sutter, 2009). Thus, when the potential for a disaster emerges, leaders should provide clear, consistent, easily understood information on the potential crisis (*e.g.*, the risk of it occurring, and its potential impact), and indicate what should be done and why, so individuals can make informed decisions based on the context of the crisis as to their next steps.

Symbolic Actions

Perhaps one of the least publicly understood, yet most important ways a leader can impact a disaster management context is through various *symbolic* forms of communication. As a masterful orator and celebrated leader in the midst of World War II (indeed many argue that he

was more skillful during crisis), Winston Churchill made skillful use of *symbolic communication* in an effort to inspire and motivate his fellow citizens and allies around the world to defeat fascism. He recognized that he had two audiences – the House of Commons and those around the world who heard his regular radio broadcasts. Thus, Churchill sought to connect with both audiences, by crafting and repeating intentionally memorable phrases (e.g., “We shall fight on...,” “We shall never surrender...”), while occasionally stealing and utilizing German terms/phrases against the Germans. Additionally, in public appearances, Churchill became notorious for flashing his index and middle fingers in the shape of a “V” as a symbolic gesture or call for “Victory” (Johnson, 2009, p. 116).

Brenneman (2000) also sheds light on the importance of symbolic action on the part of leaders via his experience working with Gordon Bethune during his surprising turnaround of Continental Airlines. Specifically, soon after Bethune’s arrival in 1992, he had the airline’s maintenance department paint the exterior of every airplane the same (matching all the interiors) and ordered new carpeting for all the airport terminals. Additionally, he had 650 bulletin boards displayed, “contain[ing] everything an employee needs to know about the company, from a daily news update, to Continental’s operating results over the last 24 hours” (Brenneman, 2000, p. 108). The goal was to symbolically communicate to employees that senior management was finally taking the action necessary to move the company in a more positive direction, while engaging employees in the turnaround process.

A particularly effective form of *symbolic communication* during times of trauma involves a leader(s) merely *being present*. According to the University of Southern California’s President, Steven Sample (2003), in the midst of disaster, there is “a need on occasion for a leader to appear to be making a decision when in fact he is not” (p. 79). Thus, during the 1992

Los Angeles Riots, Sample walked around campus, shook hands, chatted with students and staff, asked questions, listened to people tell their stories, and provided reassurances. Sample was similarly *present* after the 1994 Northridge Earthquake. Everyone assumed that he was “in charge, and making constant decisions... yet... all the decisions were being made by people who had been trained for months [prior to Sample’s arrival] in the handling of a catastrophic emergency” (p. 80). However, Sample’s mere presence gave everyone a sense of security.

Similarly, Governor Bobby Jindal, who maintained a constant presence along the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of the 2010 BP Oil Spill, received high praise from residents of New Orleans and pundits on both sides of the political spectrum for his performance and perceived aggressive response to the disaster (Navarette Jr., 2010; Woltering, 2010; Pagani, 2011). Governor Jindal was noted by residents and the national media for at times manually assisting crews with clean-up and sandbag related efforts, monitoring efforts with his own eyes (*e.g.*, riding along on boats utilized to assist with containing the loose crude) while pressuring BP and the federal to respond more aggressively (Pagani, 2011).

The actions depicted above run in direct contrast with the decision by the Bush administration to have the President merely fly over Louisiana and Mississippi versus take a land-based tour of those areas ravaged by Katrina (until 17 days after storm). The “flyover” sent a number of unintended signals to the region (*e.g.*, that he was not taking action and/or did not care about their well-being) – without the President even uttering a word (Jackson, 2005). In what seemed like *déjà vu* for many in the region, President Obama was heavily criticized for taking more than two-weeks to visit New Orleans following the 2010 *Gulf Oil Spill* (Woltering, 2010; Condon, 2010). Hence, as stated by Augustine (2000), “the CEO may know less about the

details of the situation than the local management, but his or her physical presence sends two important messages: I care, and I am accountable” (p. 24).

Creating A Context for Meaning and Action

In their study examining organizational leadership in times of trauma, Dutton, Worline, Lilius, and Kanov (2002) found that the actions of leaders could be a decisive factor in determining an entity’s (*e.g.*, a company, postsecondary institution, or entire country) capacity to heal, learn, adapt, and even excel in the face of difficult circumstances. Specifically, Dutton et al. (2002) contend that in times of pain and confusion a leader’s ability to enable a compassionate response by opening up possibilities for communication and connection throughout an organization “not only lessens the immediate suffering of those directly affected by trauma, it enables them to recover from future setbacks more quickly and effectively, and it increases their attachment to their colleagues and hence to the company itself” (p. 56).

Specifically, Dutton et al. (2002) assert that leaders can and should foster a *compassionate organizational response* on two levels: 1) *context for meaning* – which involves creating an environment in which people can freely express and discuss the way they feel, helping them make sense of their pain, allowing them to seek and/or provide comfort, and imagine a more hopeful future; and 2) *context for action* – which involves creating an environment in which those who have experienced or witnessed pain can find ways to alleviate their own and other’s suffering. To enable such contexts, Dutton et al. (2002) contend that effective leaders should: 1) openly reveal their own humanity, by publicly displaying their own grief; 2) be present for the organization’s employees both physically and emotionally; and 3) regularly communicate and reinforce the organization’s values to remind members “about the larger purpose of their work even as they struggle to make sense of major life issues” (p. 59).

Ultimately, Dutton et al. (2002) contend that such leadership activities result in “positive spirals of compassion,” facilitating individual healing and organizational recovery in the face of traumatic events (p. 61).

Along the same lines as setting a *context for meaning and action*, Powley and Cameron (2005) uncover human-centered behaviors that should be engaged in and/or enabled by an entity’s leaders, in an effort to facilitate *organizational healing* (which they define as “the work of repairing and mending the collective social fabric of an organization after some threat or shock to its system” [p. 1]). Specifically, Powley and Cameron examine the responses of students, faculty and staff members at a mid-western private university in the United States to a series of connected traumatic events including a break-in, murder, and seven-hour gun battle in a new business school building. In doing so, they present reveal four means by which leaders can help restore their organizations back to health after a disaster, including:

- 1) reinforcing the *priority of the individual* – via communication before, during, and after a crisis (p. 10);
- 2) deliberately fostering *high quality (or deep personal) connections* between members of the organization – increasing the desire to assist one another through difficult times;
- 3) generating or *strengthening a family culture* within the organization – providing employees with opportunities to share their experiences with co-workers at informal family style gatherings; and
- 4) *initiating ceremonies and rituals* – enabling the organization to return to a sense of “order and wholeness in the aftermath of the incident,” by reorienting its internal constituents to fundamental organizational purposes (Powley & Cameron, 2005, p. 17).

Mayor Giuliani and President Bush each received widespread praise for helping *create a context for meaning and action*, and helping the nation come to grips with the terrorist attacks of 9/11 by openly expressing grief (in a controlled fashion), acknowledging and echoing the thoughts and feelings of many Americans in the disaster's aftermath, providing regular updates on progress, encouraging appropriate citizen action (*e.g.*, philanthropic efforts and national unification), facilitating and attending ceremonies to memorialize those who had lost their lives, and directing attention towards response and recovery efforts. Similarly, President Obama received support from both sides of the aisle for helping the nation draw meaning from and heal in the aftermath of the tragic January 8, 2011, *Tucson Shooting Rampage*, which took the lives of 6, and wounded 13 others, including Arizona Congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords, the initial target of the horrific attack (Arizona Republic/12News Breaking News Team, 2011). Rather than mischaracterizing the tragedy in an effort to scapegoat political opponents (as some at the time some had shamefully chosen to do), President Obama instead offered a unifying memorial speech, prompting his former opponent in the 2008 general election, Sen. John McCain, to write a praise-filled editorial for *The Washington Post*, supporting the President's efforts to help bring a sense of calm and level-headedness to a still evolving tragedy (McCain, 2011).

Closely related to *creating a context for meaning and action* is the concept of *sensemaking*. In Weick's (1993) re-examination of the *1949 Mann Gulch* fire disaster in Montana, which resulted in the deaths of 13 firefighters, he uncovers strategies leaders can utilize to forestall the disintegration of *sensemaking* (in organizations or groups) in the midst of *cosmology episodes*. Specifically, *cosmology episodes* refer to situations in which "people suddenly and deeply feel that the universe is no longer a rational, orderly system" and temporarily lose the ability to make sensible decisions (p. 633). This can result in a "state of

helplessness, or feeling that one's actions have no bearing on the outcome of one's life" (Van der Kolk, as cited in Sage, 2007, p. 15). Such concerns are magnified in circumstances where a humanitarian crisis emerges and those responding to the needs of the affected population do not have a common conceptual framework for interpreting information, or possess several competing or contradictory frames, resulting in ambiguity and/or equivocality (Muhren & Van De Wall, 2009; Zack, 2007).

To prevent a deterioration in organizational or group *sensemaking during a disaster*, Weick (1993) recommends that leaders adopt the following four key strategies: 1) *improvisation and bricolage* – which he equates with Bruner's (1983) description of *creativity*, namely, "figuring out how to use what you already know in order to go beyond what you currently think" (p. 639); 2) *virtual role systems* – whereby each individual at a particular organizational level mentally takes on all roles, enabling adaptation in the event that a group member is not able to fulfill their responsibilities (Schutz, 1961); 3) an *attitude of wisdom* – by avoiding extremes (*e.g.*, overly cautious or overly confident) and recognizing what one does not know; and 4) *respectful interaction* – by reporting honestly to group members, respecting the reports of others, being willing to base beliefs and actions on the reports of others, and by giving credence to your own perceptions and beliefs while seeking to integrate them with the reports of others (adapted from Campbell, 1990, 45-46).

Theme #5: Managing Human Reactions

Synopsis. Several scholars have highlighted the need for leaders to possess a conceptual understanding of human beings in the context of disasters. According to Bothwell (1986), having an understanding of "human nature," and the ability to resolve people issues, are perhaps the most important skills for leaders to possess, as people can be an organization's "greatest

asset” or its most “significant liability” (p. 74). This is particularly the case during crisis situations wherein people are likely to exhibit a broad array of behaviors, attitudes, and emotions. According to Fritz and Williams (1957), pervasive popular belief is that people will “panic, trampling each other and [lose] all sense of concern for their fellow human beings. After panic has subsided... they turn to looting and exploitation, while... large numbers of people are left permanently deranged mentally” (p.22). While not entirely without merit, assumptions of panic present only a partial reality and can limit effective preparations and responses on the part of leaders (Fritz & Williams, 1957). By accepting popular culture’s narrow conceptualizations of disaster as fact, leaders have inadvertently limited their capacity to identify crisis-based opportunities, and inhibited the adoption of leader behavior appropriate for situations where people exhibit more common or conventional reactions (*e.g.*, freezing-up, gathering belongings rather than evacuating, or converging on a scene, rather than running hysterically from it). This is unfortunate, because as stated by Bothwell (1986), “people, properly managed, can go a long way toward coping with chaos” (p. 74).

Thus, in examining the literature on leader behavior in a disaster management context, several subthemes of *managing* (and *navigating*) *human reactions* emerge as important, including recognizing *common responses to traumatic events*, possessing *emotional competence/intelligence*; *spirituality*; and *overcoming resistance* (typically in the process of seeking to facilitate action and/or organizational change).

Common Responses to Traumatic Events

In their rather comprehensive investigation of human reactions throughout the lifecycle of a disaster, Fritz and Williams (1957) challenge conventional thinking by identifying “more general, typical, and recurrent forms of behavior found in disasters” rather than focusing on

popular conceptualizations of panic and hysteria (p.43). In doing so, Fritz and Williams (1957) made two key discoveries. First, they found that there tends to be a *dramatic increase in social solidarity* during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, which is then followed by the *return of social differentiation* when “standards of reference change from values of survival to values associated with continuity and stability” (p. 13). This rapid shift from social differentiation to social homogeneity and back again can pose challenges for organizational leaders who fail to keep abreast of changing circumstances, and/or who rigidly apply existing policies and procedures regardless of shifting conditions. According to Fritz and Williams (1957), many of the problems associated with disaster management “result from the temporary lack of ‘fit’ between the conceptions of need of the victim population and of the organizations attempting to administer to this population” (p. 13).

The second key finding of Fritz and William’s (1957) investigation stems from the “misconception that a disaster struck population automatically panics and flees wildly from the disaster area.” This common misconception has resulted in an exaggerated focus (by both emergency response agencies and researchers) “on the victim population as the source of control problems” (p. 12). In actuality, Fritz and William’s (1957) contend that *convergence* or movement toward the disaster afflicted area is the scenario leaders are more likely to face, and poses major coordination and control problems given the potentially varied motives of the convergers (also in Fritz & Mathewson, 1957). Colleges and universities are particularly prone to such convergence behavior given their status as *self-contained communities*, with resources far beyond that of the typical household (University of Washington, 2003; Monday, 2006).

Ripley (2009) takes Fritz and William’s (1957) analysis a step further through her detailed account of common human reactions to a series of noteworthy disasters, from fires and

stampedes, to terrorist attacks and hurricanes, and contends that all victims of disaster go through a three-stage process (which vary in length by individual). The process begins with *denial/delay* wherein those confronted with a sudden crisis are hesitant to act, and look to one another, hoping to convince themselves that everything is okay (referred to as *normalcy bias*). For example, according to a study by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (2005), 9/11 survivors waited an average of 6 minutes to begin evacuating the World Trade Center, while others waited as long as 45 (as cited in Ripley, 2009). The first stage (which can vary significantly in length for each individual) is followed by *deliberation*, during which those facing disaster begin to recognize that something is horribly wrong and wonder and/or look to determine what they should do next. The third and final stage is referred to as the *decisive moment* wherein victims have accepted that they are in danger, deliberated on their options, and take action.

Ripley illustrates through a variety of scenarios that it is the speed by which people transition through these phases that can make the difference between those who survive and those who lose their lives in the midst of disaster. Rather than panic, “many if not most people tend to shut down entirely in a disaster... they go slack and seem to lose all awareness (p. xvii).” Thus, leaders who understand and have success moving people through these phases can have the effect of saving lives, by reducing the tendency for (or length time spent in) denial, shock and paralysis, and quickly moving them towards taking necessary action.

Emotional Competence/Intelligence

While as indicated above, assumptions of panic do not necessarily manifest themselves in actual disaster scenarios, most human-beings do have some form of *emotional response* to disasters (Harding, 2007; Harvard, 2003; Fritz & Williams; 1957; Sage, 2007). According to the

National School Safety Center (2007), a key challenge facing leaders of educational enterprises is the need to “respond to the on-going emotional effects of terrorism, trauma and war,” and protect the “emotional well-being” of their constituents (p. 4). To do so, however, requires an understanding how human beings typically react to change or trauma.

In their analysis of various organizational change endeavors (prompted by crisis and non-crisis situations), Harvard Business School Press (2003) outlines a four-stage process (adapted from Jick, 1990) of typical emotional reactions to change. These stages include: 1) *shock* – whereby individuals feel threatened by an anticipated change, may deny its existence, and/or mentally shut down in an effort to shield themselves from a situation where change is occurring or has occurred; 2) *defensive retreat* – in which those affected by a given change become angry and lash out at what they perceive “has been done to them;” 3) *acknowledgment* – as most people eventually cease denying that change has occurred; and 4) *acceptance and adaptation* – whereby those affected, internalize the changes that have taken place, adapt, and ideally move on (p. 87).

Through their exploratory case study of reactions to a near disaster (an attempted mass-shooting, wherein the assailants gun jammed) at a large Midwestern public university, Asmussen and Creswell (1995) shed light on several other possible reactions to psychological trauma. Specifically, they found that initial reactions to the event were characteristic of *denial* – as students stood around after class looking around in a surrealistic fashion, making jokes. Not long after, however, the severity of the situation hit them as they became fearful that that the shooter might make bail and/or a different shooter might take aim at the school (Asmussen & Creswell, 1995). However, perhaps most significant was Asmussen and Creswell’s (1995) finding that eight months later, many students were suffering from a psychological phenomenon referred to as *retriggering* – whereby new incidents of violence, the anniversary date of the

attack, or other similar events – caused individuals to “relive the feelings of fear, denial, and threats to personal safety that they had experienced in connection with the original event” (p. 584).

According to Arond-Thomas (2004), “at its core, resilience is built on a foundation of emotional competence...it is what gives outstanding leaders their edge and what differentiates them from average or typical leaders” (p. 2). Gaufin (2006) depicts *emotional intelligence* (synonymous with *emotional competence*) as having three components: 1) the ability and capacity to recognize one’s personal feelings and the feelings and emotional reactions of others (also in Goleman, 1998); 2) the ability of leaders to manage their personal emotions and feelings, particularly in their post-disaster interactions with others (also in Rowitz, 2006); and 3) the ability to balance the heart and mind in post-disaster actions. Consistent with this line of thinking, a key element of military training includes teaching soldiers about the range of emotions they will likely experience before, during, and in aftermath of a combat situation (Gaufin, 2006). She recommends that civilian leaders similarly prepare themselves and their employees to more effectively manage their emotional reactions and prevent a difficult situation from becoming worse (Gaufin, 2006). As noted by Kotter and Cohen (2002) “in large scale change if fear is not converted to a positive urgency and with some speed, it can be a significant liability” (p. 27), as it can continue to take root, cause some to freeze, and others to focus on self-preservation rather than organizational recovery and/or transformation.

Spirituality

Closely tied to human emotional reactions are human *spiritual reactions* to disaster-induced trauma (Harding, 2007; Sage, 2007). Building off of their experiences helping community members deal with spiritual and emotional challenges in the aftermath of 9/11, the

National Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster (NVOAD), compiled a detailed manual (entitled *Light our Way*) to assist those leaders who bear responsibility for helping organizations and/or communities heal post-trauma with managing future disasters (Massey, 2006; Vestin, 2007). As has the *New York Disaster Interfaith Services Organization* (NYDIS) (in response to both 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina) with its manual entitled *Spiritual Care and Mental Health for Disaster Response and Recovery* (Harding, 2007). According to both the NVOAD and NYDIS, victims and their families can be extremely vulnerable in the aftermath of disasters, often turning towards or away from religion during the process of healing, and need support for whatever their belief systems are at that time (Harding, 2007). Vestin (2007) further notes that in dealing with pain, confusion and loss, victims may need assistance wrestling with the broader questions of why they were harmed, or why they were spared. Thus, leaders (whether religiously oriented or not) need to be cognizant of and support the potentially shifting spiritual thought processes of the victim population.

As stated by Sage (2007), “complex, catastrophic disasters create great emotional and spiritual upheaval for survivors and victims, as well as for their families, neighborhoods, and communities” (p. 17). He recommends that those responding to the spiritual needs of victims understand and know how to address common spiritual reactions to disaster, including: a *crisis of faith* in which there are feelings of being abandoned by God; *despair, loss of hope*, and a prolonged state of hopelessness; *disengagement* from religious practices and from interaction with faith leaders and faith communities; the *need to perpetually ask “why”* a compassionate God would allow such suffering and pain to happen; and a *search for continuous reassurance* that God will provide safety and security, and re-establish goodness in life (Sage, 2007, p. 17).

Ultimately, it is “essential that each person’s belief is accepted, respected, and supported without judgment or question and without proselytization” (Harding, 2007, p. 10).

Dealing with Resistance

A final key subtheme of *understanding human reactions* involves *dealing with resistance*. While leaders who successfully demonstrate the behaviors previously outlined in this chapter may find that they encounter less resistance in the disaster management process than those who fail to do so successfully, major organizational changes affecting multiple constituencies (and some departments, units and people disproportionately) will inevitably encounter some level of opposition – a dynamic that skilled organizational leaders anticipate. According to Harvard Business School Press (2003), “resistance is a part of the natural process of adaptation to change—a normal response of those who have a strong interest in maintaining the current state and guarding themselves against loss” (p. 97). Fritz and Williams (1957) warn leaders to beware of "issue makers" or “opportunists” who “oftentimes utilize newspaper editorials, feature articles, letters to the editor, and other media of mass communication to express themselves, thereby creating a misleading picture of the generality and representativeness of their viewpoints” (p. 50). Harvard Business School Press (2003), on the other hand, depicts *resisters* “as a potential source[s] of energy,” and (once they have been identified) recommends a set of strategies for overcoming their resistance (p. 97). These strategies include: 1) explaining the urgent need to change, 2) describing how change will produce benefits for them, 3) finding new ways in which they can contribute to the change process, 4) providing opportunities for people to vent their feelings, and 5) if all else fails moving them out of their current unit.

According to Kotter and Cohen (2002) "... in large scale, change if fear is not converted to a positive urgency and with some speed, it can be a significant liability" (p. 27), and can continue to take root, cause some to freeze, and others to focus on primarily on self-preservation rather than organizational recovery and/or transformation. When on top of fear, there are no economic rewards available to encourage those affected by major organizational changes (e.g., the elimination or consolidation of departments post-disaster) to embrace them, leaders can face powerful opposition to their efforts (Kotter & Cohen, 2002, p. 111). Hence, Kotter and Cohen contend that "the core of the matter is always about changing the behavior of people," and doing so successfully rests largely on a leader's ability to tap into organizational members feelings, by finding ways to help others see problems or solutions in ways that influence both emotion and thought.

Critical Analysis of the Literature Base

Gaps & Limitations

Each study highlighted above has made a noteworthy contribution to contemporary knowledge in the field of organizational leadership and disaster (or crisis) management by: 1) identifying specific leader behaviors that appear to impact (either positively or negatively) an organization's movement through pre and/or post-disaster management stages, and/or 2) providing recommendations for how to leaders might exhibit such behaviors (e.g., by eliminating obstacles). However, in revisiting the thematic analysis, some significant gaps and limitations in the literature base become apparent. The gaps and limitations (discussed in detail below) have been divided into the following categories: 1) *participant-related limitations*, 2) *inconsistent definitions and (outcome-related) measurements*, 3) *communication-related limitations*, 4) *a lack of diversity*, 5) *flawed assumptions and assertions*, and 6) *limited research on higher education*

settings. In combination, these gaps and limitations further illustrate the need to advance a holistic conceptual framework for leader behavior in a disaster management context and the need to test the efficacy of such a framework at some of our most cherished institutions – our colleges and universities.

Participant-related Limitations

One key limitation to existing research on the subject leader behavior in the midst of disaster involves the “central subjects” of the studies themselves – organizational leaders. Unfortunately, it does not appear that many in-depth personal interviews have been conducted with organizational leaders who were themselves unable to successfully manage major crises and/or willing to candidly reflect on their major mistakes. Instead the majority of scholars who have sought to examine flawed leader behavior seem to rely upon heavy document analysis (both primary and secondary sources), after-the-fact interviews with “experts” on a given topic, interviews with those who work closely with and/or are consultants to leaders, a re-analysis of the work of fellow scholars, and/or measurements of the impact and varying outcomes of a given disaster or crisis. The lack of direct first-hand accounts of organizational leaders could be the result of any of a number of factors including: a lack of access to leaders (as in the case of 19th century presidents); an unwillingness on the part of leaders to share information due to security concerns; a desire to maintain organizational competitiveness (which revealing a weakness could threaten); concerns over confidentiality; or an attempt to protect themselves and their companies from the embarrassment or liability that comes with acknowledging that a crisis was not handled properly. Regardless of root cause, the extent to which an *atmosphere of secrecy* does exist amongst leaders who have failed to successfully manage crises (as those who have been successful tend to write books about their experiences), researchers are left to rely on their own

perceptions and analyses of events, and/or the second-hand accounts of those who may not have adequate insight into the specific behaviors (including mental processes) exhibited by leaders that may have contributed to various failed crisis responses. This is a key and seemingly unrecognized limitation of research in the area of disaster management, as we can learn a great deal from leaders willing to openly reflect upon the mistakes they have made and lessons they have learned in responding to a major organizational crisis.

Differing Definitions & Outcome Measurements

Another key limitation to the current literature base involves the difficulty in drawing comparisons between studies both within and across various research traditions, given varying definitions of key terms and vastly differing outcome-related measurements. As stated by Kreps (1984), “part of the reason that debates about mental health consequences [of disasters] remain hopelessly confused is that proponents on each side draw on different conceptions of impacts (*i.e.*, mental illness vs. problems of living), different methods of measuring them, and often different types of events” (p. 319) (a challenge also noted by Perry, 1983). The problem is compounded when/if the researcher and interviewees differ in their conceptualizations of “successful” or “failed” outcomes, as the terms are largely subjective, and both institutionally and situationally specific. For example, Gittel Cameron & Lim (2005) use quantitative measures such as stock value and layoff figures as measurements of the degree to which airline leader behavior helped facilitate (or inhibit) recovery from 9/11. While certainly a worthwhile measure from the perspective of a shareholder, to airline industry CEOs, success after 9/11 may merely have been defined as “staying in business” – an objective that most met. In contrast, Wallace and Suedfeld (1998) decided on “avoidance of war” as the primary (successful) outcome variable for their study of international leaders in the midst of 20th century crises. Yet

the skill such leaders showed in avoiding war may have also resulted in outcomes that in the long run were less favorable than an actual military conflict. For instance, when European nations were reluctant to heed Winston Churchill's recommendation to consider pre-emptive action against Germany, the leaders of such nations successfully avoided war in the short term, only to be attacked years later, at a time when the German military had become more powerful and its leaders even more ruthless. Thus, while the previously noted measurement decisions are not without merit, they are rather subjective and context specific, as no specific conventions exist for measuring "true success" or "true failure" of an organization's or country's disaster management efforts. Moreover, the transferability of such measures across economic sectors is rather limited. For example, colleges and universities (which as an industry appears to entirely lack reasonable measures for determining a "successful" or "failed" disaster response) would find it difficult to justify adopting outcome variables such as "avoidance of war" or "post-disaster profit" as measures of leader behavior in the midst of disaster.

A Lack of Communication

An additional limitation of the literature base stems from a research tradition focused on examining the topic of *leader communication* almost entirely from the *top-down* versus the *bottom-up*. In other words, rather than interviewing rank-and-file employees (or faculty and staff members at a college or university) to determine what aspects of their organizational leader's communication style resonates with them, and/or has previously facilitated their (or their organization's) healing from trauma (or proved counterproductive), researchers have instead relied on interviews with high-level executives (often just a few top-leaders), after-the-fact observations and/or document analyses focused on leader behavior. Yet given the massive size and the multitude of national and international cultures represented at many corporations and

postsecondary institutions, relying exclusively on interviews with top level executives and/or conducting various analyses from the outside looking in (and only at the top) may not be sufficient to determine which communication styles, processes, and patterns are most likely to resonate with employees and others they serve (*e.g.*, students), and help facilitate disaster management efforts. For example, in the event of an earthquake, constituents from distinct geographic regions may react differently to and/or benefit from divergent types of leader communication in accordance with their previous experience or lack of experience with such incidents. Hence, not including “followers” or representatives of the “rank-and-file” in research studies examining leader communication processes in the midst of crisis represents a significant limitation of the current literature base.

A Lack of Diversity

A particularly unfortunate gap in the literature on crisis management is the failure of most studies to shed light on the leader behavior and experiences of groups historically underrepresented in studies of leadership, disaster, and/or crisis management. Currently, the vast majority of published books and peer-reviewed journal articles on the subject of leader behavior (generally and in the midst of crisis) have been written from the perspective of white male researchers, examining the actions of white male leaders and the impact they have had on predominately white (male and female) followers. While it would be imprudent to assume that researchers of different genders or racial/ethnic backgrounds will uncover leader behaviors distinct from those revealed by their white male counterparts – or to presume that different leader behavior will be exhibited by (or desired by) women and/or members of different racial and ethnic groups – there is evidence to suggest that at a minimum, groups have been impacted differentially by disasters. For example, accordingly to Huntley (2007), just one year after

Katrina, the number of high school students in New Orleans who took the ACT for college entry dropped by roughly one-sixth, with African American students accounting for nearly 60 percent of the decline. Moreover, Asmussen and Creswell (1995) found that female college students are generally more likely than men to quickly seek out counseling in the aftermath of a “near disaster,” a discovery which could have implications for the allocation of an institution’s resources in a post-disaster environment. For the aforementioned reasons, Bromet (1990) suggests that the socio-cultural needs of populations with different mores should be taken into account when assessing reactions to trauma (Asmussen and Creswell, 1995). Hence, the relative absence of women and members of various underrepresented groups in studies of leader behavior during times of crises are major gaps in the current literature base.

Flawed Assumptions & Assertions

Several other noteworthy gaps and limitations are present in the literature on leader behavior in the midst of disaster. For instance, many, if not most, researchers and organizational leaders seem to imply, if not state, that the goal of disaster recovery is to *return to pre-disaster normalcy* (albeit with different measurements of *normal or normalcy*). This is problematic, because if existing research is focused on merely returning organizations to normal, then such studies may be inadvertently replicating vulnerabilities by setting the bar for recovery too low. This unfortunate paradigm is reinforced by FEMA, which through its various federal aid programs focuses (primarily) on returning individuals and organizations back to a *sense of normalcy*, and no further. In other words, the vulnerabilities in existence before a disaster are frequently replaced with the same vulnerabilities in the event’s aftermath. Thus, as argued by Monday (2005), and noted in Chapter I, scholars must move away from traditional notions of recovery towards *sustainability* – to enable the discovery of leader behavior that can move

organizations and communities to positions of greater resilience post-disaster than had ever existed pre-disaster.

There are also some questionable assertions made by scholars, who in the process of identifying crisis-relevant leader behavior, seem to disregard various political and legal constraints, and skill-set distinctions. For example, Gladwell (2005) suggests that in times of crisis leaders are most effective when they follow their instincts or intuition and making *snap decisions*. While Gladwell's (2005) contention may ring true in the circumstances he depicts (*e.g.*, military exercises and emergency medicine) implied in his recommendation is a rather strong assumption that leaders naturally have "good intuition." However, in the event that an organizational leader lacks such "instincts" and makes a severely misguided "snap-decision" in the midst of crisis, the leader may unnecessarily expose him or herself to the legal consequences of "perceived negligence" (by not having formally taken the time to consider alternatives), and risks exposing the organization (and the individuals within it) to any negative consequences of his/her misguided "snap decision." Moreover, military leaders and emergency medical professionals have been specially trained to operate in high stress environments, providing them with a skillset or starting point for making "snap decisions" that may not translate to professionals who have not been exposed to such training.

Research on Higher Education Settings

A final important critique suggested at the outset of this investigation and confirmed via the *literature review and thematic analysis* involves the surprisingly limited number of journal articles, books, and reports on college and university leader behavior in a disaster management context in comparison to the number of such studies in other organizational settings (*e.g.*, private corporations, K-12 institutions, government agencies and military organizations). In their 2006

report on the state of the presidency in American higher education entitled “The Leadership Imperative,” the *Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges* failed to even acknowledge that Katrina took place during the prior year. Along the same line, in 2008, the *American Association of State Colleges and Universities* (AASCU) ranked campus security a surprisingly distant #5 amongst state policy issues for higher education, and that is with the organization’s acknowledgement of the “unprecedented Virginia Tech tragedy” and series of other violent acts on or near campuses that took place during the prior year (p. 3). The need to prepare for any type of natural or human-caused disaster (unrelated to state budgets) did not even make the Association’s most recent list of key policy issues (AASCU State Relations, 2011). Recognizing this unfortunate lack of coverage of university leader behavior in the midst of crisis (more than a decade ago), Asmussen and Creswell (1996) remarked that “aside from an occasional newspaper report, the postsecondary literature is silent on campus reactions to these tragedies; to understand them one must turn to studies about gun violence in the public school literature” (pp. 575-576). Hence, researchers and college/university administrators are left to rely primarily on disciplines and research conducted on organizational settings outside of higher education, in seeking to uncover key leader behavior that may also influence campus disaster management efforts.

Towards a Holistic Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior

Despite the gaps and limitations identified in the preceding critique of the literature, a number of crucial themes and subthemes for leader behavior in a disaster management context have emerged through this analysis. These key themes and their underlying subthemes are as follows:

Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

Subthemes include: *structure vs. flexibility; organizational reliability; mindfulness; and financial & relational reserves.*

Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes

Subthemes include: *competence; charisma/ability to inspire; trust/authenticity; ethics/morality/virtuousness; self-awareness & self-control; and resourcefulness.*

Theme #3 – Thinking & Decision Making

Subthemes include: *utilizing multiple mental frames; Contrarian and Janusian thinking; devils advocacy & scenario-based planning; viewing disasters as opportunities; and instinctive & vigilant decision-making; avoiding decision making traps.*

Theme #4 – Communication

Subthemes include: *facilitating awareness; clarity of terminology and message; symbolic actions; and creating context for meaning and action.*

Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions

Subthemes include: *common responses to traumatic events; emotional reactions; spirituality; and overcoming resistance.*

While each of the aforementioned themes and subthemes of leader behavior have been identified by scholars as (potentially positive) influencers of organizational disaster management processes, a leader who exhibits the characteristics highlighted in just one study or stemming from just one theme or subtheme (*e.g.*, someone with significant *technical knowledge* who lacks *emotional intelligence*), or who exhibits such behavior during the wrong phase for the disaster management process (*e.g.*, too much *flexibility* in preparedness efforts, followed by too much *structure* in the response) – will likely find it difficult to facilitate disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Thus, in Chapter III, a new *holistic disaster management conceptual framework* is presented, which: 1) integrates the themes and subthemes of leader behavior

identified as important by scholars and researchers from multiple disciplines; 2) specifies the disaster management stages for which scholars have found specific leader behaviors to be influential; 3) takes into account the unique features of post-secondary institutions (as self-contained communities with multiple constituencies), the feelings and emotions of people within them, and their role in facilitating (and/or inhibiting) the efforts of organizational leaders in a disaster management context; and 4) integrates the findings of research exploring leader behavior in a variety of organizational settings (both inside and outside higher education) – providing a broad foundation from which postsecondary institutions can yield information to more comprehensively prepare for disasters.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of college and university leaders to guide their institutions through each phase of the disaster management process, by implementing and executing the *five critical themes of leader behavior* and *key underlying subthemes of leader behavior* uncovered in this chapter (and highlighted in *Figure 3.4* of the chapter to follow) in accordance with their pre and/or post-disaster relevance. By doing so, college and university leaders drive the overall process forward, and enable their institutions to emerge more resilient and better prepared to deal with, alleviate the impact of, and/or (where possible) altogether avoid the impact of similar events in the future. This adaptive process – in which an institution utilizes prior experience to develop new routines or behaviors to create opportunities for enhanced performance, while eliminating those linked to prior failures – has been referred to by researchers as *organizational learning* (e.g., Levitt & March, 1998; Cyert & March, 1963; James & Wooten, 2011). It is through such a process that leader behavior can transform (at least in part) an otherwise traumatic situation into an opportunity for organizational improvement (Monday, 2005).

Chapter Summary

Researchers from a variety of disciplines, including: sociology, business, psychology, medicine, education, engineering, political science, military science, and intelligence/homeland security – have sought to identify *leader behavior* that can contribute to (and contrarily inhibit) disaster management efforts. The types of leaders, organizational settings, and disasters (or other forms of *severe crises*) that have been investigated by such scholars vary dramatically. However, despite differences by academic tradition and/or unit(s) of analysis noted above, in analyzing the findings of scholars and practitioners from variety of disciplines, it quickly becomes clear that books, journal articles, and published reports, examining leader behavior in the midst of disaster, consistently fall into one of three categories: 1) research that focuses on identifying leader behavior that must be cultivated prior to a disaster to enhance organizational preparedness and/or resilience (*e.g.*, Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001; Harrald, 2006); 2) research that focuses primarily on uncovering leader behavior that can facilitate (and/or has been found to inhibit) successful disaster response and recovery efforts (*e.g.*, Tierney, 2003; Gittell, Cameron & Lim, 2005); and 3) research that focuses on uncovering leader behavior that must be applied (or avoided) throughout the disaster management process (albeit a bit differently at various phases) (*e.g.*, Fritz & Williams, 1957; Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Moreover, within the three categories noted above, several common overarching *themes* of leader behavior in the midst of disaster emerge. These themes include: *leader-driven organizational dynamics; exhibited personal attributes; thinking and decision making; communication; and managing human reactions*. It is these *themes* (and their underlying *subthemes*) evident in the literature base, that in combination enable a *holistic disaster management conceptual framework for leader behavior* in seeking to: 1) facilitate campus

disaster management efforts, 2) educate others, and/or 3) conduct further research examining leader behavior in a disaster/crisis context. This important new framework is presented in Chapter III to follow.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Prior Conceptualizations of the Disaster Management Process

As suggested by the definition of *disaster management* proposed in Chapter I [*a set of (ideally pre-established) routines, organized behaviors, and collective beliefs, that together produce the capacity of an individual, organization, or other societal entity to: 1) prepare for; 2) minimize the damage from; 3) effectively respond to; and 4) bounce back from a disaster or trauma*], disaster management is an ongoing process that encompasses a series of *phases* or *stages*. Hence any conceptualization or model of leader behavior in the midst of disaster requires an understanding of the process and/or series of stages during which such behavior can or should take place.

In what has been referred to as a seminal work on the topic at hand, Fink (1986) examines *crisis/disaster management* from a medical perspective. Specifically, Fink argues that a *crisis* (an umbrella term he uses to incorporate emergencies varying in size and scope) should be viewed as “a fluid, unstable, dynamic situation – just like an illness,” and one to which an individual or organization can build some level of immunity, and from which an individual or organization can recover (p. 20). In accordance, he proposes the following four-stage conceptualization of the disaster management process: 1) the *prodromal crisis (or warning) stage* – whereby warning signs of a possible disaster emerge and leaders take action to prevent and/or prepare for its occurrence; 2) the *acute crisis stage* – by which time some damage has

already been done and organizational leaders must respond; 3) the *chronic crisis stage* – wherein the a clean-up and recovery process must begin; and 4) the *crisis resolution stage* – at which point organizational leaders seek to efficiently and effectively resolve and move the organization beyond the crisis at hand (p. 25).

Similarly to Fink, Augustine (2000) proposes a model intended for the management of all forms of crisis, from corporate product-related contamination to larger-scale disasters. As such, he recommends that leaders learn and embrace the following six-stage process: 1) *avoidance/prevention* – which involves taking steps to evade and/or lessen the likelihood of a crisis; 2) *preparing to manage the crisis* – which entails planning to deal with a variety of undesirable outcomes in the event that disaster cannot be prevented; 3) *recognizing and identifying the “real crisis”* – as leaders sometimes misclassify a problem, focusing on the technical aspects rather than issues of public perception; 4) *containment* – or taking action to stop the hemorrhaging; 5) *resolving the crisis* – by engaging in activities designed to foster recovery and move the organization forward; and 6) *profiting from the crisis* – whereby, if a predicament has been handled properly, resulting in public sympathy and/or goodwill, leaders can seek “opportunity to recoup some losses at least partially and begin to repair the dislocations” (Augustine, 2000, p. 27).

In contrast with Fink and Augustine, the *United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)* (2007) recommends that government agencies and organizational leaders adopt a framework more specifically tailored towards managing large-scale disasters. As such, FEMA suggests (and in certain circumstances legally requires) that leaders become proficient with the following four stages: 1) *mitigation* – which involves activities designed to eliminate or reduce the chance of occurrence or the effects of a disaster (*e.g.*, building reinforcements); 2)

preparedness – whereby leaders and agencies determine how to respond when an emergency or disaster occurs and marshal the resources needed to respond effectively; 3) *response* – which incorporates the period during and immediately following a disaster in which emergency assistance is provided to victims and officials try to reduce the likelihood of further damage; and 4) *recovery* – which entails the rebuilding of systems and facilities, until they have reached a normal or near-normal state of operations (FEMA, 2007).

Drawing some parallels to FEMA’s model, Herrmann (2007) proposes a five-stage disaster management framework, beginning with the *planning and preparedness phase*, which involves evaluating a community’s potential disaster risks, vulnerabilities, and determining the likelihood of a disaster occurring. This is followed by the *mitigation, response and recovery phase*, which are closely aligned with those previously outlined by FEMA. Additionally however, Herrmann proposes an *evaluation phase*, whereby organizational, community, and/or multi-agency efforts are evaluated in a systematic manner for efficiency and effectiveness in the aftermath of a disaster. According to Herrmann, those who fail “to implement an evaluation phase in the context of their disaster management process find they are no better prepared the next time disaster strikes” (p. 14).

James and Wooten (2011) also propose a five-stage model for crisis/disaster management. The first phase, *signal detection*, involves recognizing early warning signs that lead an “enlightened manager” to know that something is wrong. The second phase combines *preparation and prevention*, wherein leaders engage in “realistic planning” to better position the organization to prevent some crises and manage (by developing policies and procedures) those that are unavoidable (also in Pearson and Mitroff, 1993). In the next phase, *containment/damage control*, the objective is to limit and counter potential threats to firm survival (*e.g.*, reputational

and financial) as a result of the crisis, which tends to be the most demanding phase of the disaster management process. After containing the situation, attention shifts to the fourth phase – *business recovery* – in which the crisis managers design and execute a set of short and long-term initiatives designed to return the business to normal (pre-disaster) operations, which James and Wooten (2011) describe as one of the “ultimate goals of any crisis situation” (p. 884). The model concludes with a fifth stage, *organizational learning*, or “the process of acquiring, interpreting, acting upon, and disseminating new information throughout a firm” (p. 884). The objective of this phase is for organizational leaders to avoid taking a defensive/reactive posture in response to the crisis (which can prevent learning) and instead leverage any insights gleaned from the events to facilitate fundamental change in firm systems and procedures (Wooten & James, 2004; James & Wooten, 2011). Ultimately, through this adaptive process, leaders can utilize their experiences to develop new routines or behaviors in an effort to create opportunities for enhanced performance, while eliminating those linked to prior failures (*e.g.*, Levitt & March, 1998; Cyert & March, 1963; James & Wooten, 2011).

Several other scholars have focused more specifically on outlining (and further subdividing) the *disaster response* and *recovery* stages. For example, Powley and Piderit (2010) refer to the early stages of response and recovery as a *healing process*, where by an individual (or organization) is wounded, and the initial response is *inflammation* – which is characterized by “stopping the bleeding” or responding to a crisis with the intent of preventing further damage to the organization. This is followed by the *proliferation* phase – whereby skin cells produce new connective tissue build new networks of capillaries, or an organization deploys its key resources and units begin to reconnect. The healing response concludes with the *remodeling phase* – wherein collagen is drawn to the site of the wound, improving flexibility, while marking

the body's return to normal functioning. At the organizational level, damage is repaired, as the organization prepares for a return to normal functioning. Long-term recovery (or *rehabilitation*) is viewed by Powley and Piderit as distinct from the immediate healing process they outline.

Keeney (2004) recommends that leaders conceptualize the *response stage* as consisting of three temporal phases: 1) the *acute disruption phase* – whereby response efforts are aimed at addressing the immediate needs of the affected population; 2) the *chronic phase* (starting approximately 1 to 6 months after disaster) – wherein the primary objective is the restoration of normal social functions; and 3) the *developmental phase* (starting nearly 6 months after disaster occurs) – during which the overarching goal is reconstruction, the full resumption of socioeconomic activities, and the development of preventive policies and procedures to avert future disruptions (p. 3).

Monday (via the Public Entity Risk Institute) (2005) takes the *developmental phase* a step further by suggesting that *sustainability*, or enhancing an organizations “ability or capacity... to persist over time,” should be the ultimate goal of disaster recovery efforts, rather than merely restoring functions and facilities back to “normal” pre-disaster levels (PERI, Ch. 1, p. 7). This notion of *sustainability* is supported by Mitroff and Pauchant (1990), who argue that “every major crisis demands that something fundamental be changed; at the very least a serious re-examination of the organization should take place” (p. 17). Closely related to the concept of *sustainability*, is that of *organizational resilience*, which involves the positive adaptation(s) of an organization as a result of having faced a significant negative stressor or threat (Garmezy, 1991; Luthar & Cushing, 1999; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000; Masten & Reed, 2002; Caza & Milton, 2010). As depicted by Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003), “*organizational resilience* is anchored in organizational processes aimed at enhancing an organization’s overall competence

and growth (especially the ability to learn and to learn from mistakes), and restoring efficacy through enhancing the ability to quickly process feedback and flexibly rearrange or transfer knowledge and resources to deal with situations as they arise” (p. 103-104). In essence, an organization that demonstrates resilience will emerge from a disaster strengthened and with added capabilities for dealing with future challenges (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Caza & Milton, 2010). Thus, by seeking to achieve long-term *sustainability* (or *enhanced resilience*) versus merely returning to *normalcy*, the disaster management process is transformed into a potential opportunity for leaders to improve their organizations and lessen the likelihood of disaster-induced suffering in the future (Monday, 2005).

While the single and multi-stage models described above provide valuable insights into the disaster management process, each conceptualization appears to be based on an overly-rational set of assumptions, namely, that organizational leaders will or should compartmentalize and focus on a single subset of activities prior to seamlessly shifting to the next subset (e.g. completing mitigation related endeavors prior to moving on to the preparedness stage, versus working on both elements simultaneously); and that direct linkages only exist between immediately adjacent stages of the disaster management process, suggesting that there is limited connection between pre and post disaster activities. Please see *Figures 3.1 and 3.2, Appendix B* for pictorial representations of FEMA (2007) and Herrmann’s (2007) models of the disaster management process.

A New Model of the Disaster Management Process

Given the limitations of the aforementioned multi-stage approaches to disaster management, a new conceptualization of the disaster management process is needed and illustrated below (*Figure 3.3*). The proposed model takes into account the temporal sequencing

of events highlighted by the previous authors, without implying that linkages only exist between immediately adjacent phases of the disaster management process. Moreover, the circular pattern (with each phase situated on a continuous line versus a set of separate lines/arrows) illustrates the fluidity or interconnectedness between phases, and depicts disaster management as a process (with a clear goal in mind), that upon completion begins anew.

Thus, the disaster management process flows clockwise as follows: → a potential *risk* or *hazard* (or set of *risks* and *hazards*) is (are) determined to exist via formal research and planning efforts → leadership takes action to both *mitigate* (e.g., reinforce facilities) and *prepare* (e.g., conduct practice exercises) for the possible effects of the previously identified hazards (a process that should begin long before and ideally independent of a specific ensuing disaster) → a *disaster strikes* → organizational leaders and emergency management agencies *respond* (both during and after the disaster) → the institution enters the *short* followed by the *long-term recovery phase* (e.g., restoring critical infrastructure prior to repainting facilities) → while engaged in the *recovery process*, a post-disaster *evaluation* of the organization's disaster preparedness and response efforts should take place – to facilitate *organizational learning* and improve upon flawed processes, reduce vulnerabilities, and prevent a repeat of mistakes (while also clearly identifying “what worked” to better ensure that such activities are repeated under similar future circumstances) → organizational leaders seek to achieve *sustainability* or *enhanced organizational resilience* – by moving beyond pre-disaster normalcy and reducing/eliminating the flawed processes and vulnerabilities identified in the post-disaster *evaluation phase* (prior to *re-engaging* in the disaster management process – starting with the *hazard or risk assessment phase*).

Hence, as illustrated via the newly proposed framework for disaster management below, each time an organization cycles through the entire disaster management process, the entity (and its leaders) will emerge more resilient and better prepared to deal with future crises (both similar to and distinct from the initial disaster). It is in this sense, that an otherwise traumatic situation can (at least in part) be transformed into an opportunity for leaders to improve their organizations and lessen the likelihood or extent of future disaster-induced suffering (Monday, 2005).

Figure 3.3 Framework of the Disaster Management Process.



Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior in the Midst of Disaster

While each of the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified via the interdisciplinary literature review and thematic analysis presented in Chapter III have been

identified by scholars as (potentially positive) influencers of organizational disaster management processes – a leader who exhibits the characteristics highlighted in just one study or stemming from just one theme or subtheme (*e.g.*, someone with significant *technical knowledge* who lacks *emotional intelligence*), or who exhibits such behavior during the wrong phase (*e.g.*, too much *flexibility* in preparedness efforts, followed by too much *structure* in the response) will likely find it difficult to facilitate disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Hence, the need for an additional conceptual framework for leading college and university disaster management efforts is clearly evident.

As such, this section presents a new *holistic conceptual framework for disaster management* intended for: 1) college and university leaders seeking guidance as to how they might facilitate campus disaster management efforts (ultimately achieving a level of sustainability); 2) college and university leaders and disaster management experts seeking a holistic tool for educating others (*e.g.*, faculty members, emergency response trainees, and/or students in a relevant course) on the subject of disaster management; and 3) researchers seeking a holistic model for examining the impact of leader behavior in a disaster/crisis context.

Most importantly, this new framework: 1) integrates the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified as important by scholars and researchers from multiple disciplines; 2) specifies the disaster management stages for which scholars have found specific leader behaviors to be influential; 3) takes into account the unique features of post-secondary institutions (as self-contained communities with multiple constituencies), the feelings and emotions of people within them, and their role in facilitating (and/or inhibiting) the efforts of organizational leaders in a disaster management context; and 4) integrates the findings of research exploring leader behavior in a variety of organizational settings (both inside and outside higher education) – providing a

broad foundation from which postsecondary institutions can yield information to more comprehensively prepare for disasters.

By applying the key interdisciplinary themes and subthemes of leader behavior to the model of the disaster management process previously proposed in *Figure 3.3*, a new *holistic conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* emerges. This framework builds upon the earlier model (*Figure 3.3*) by listing the key *themes* and *subthemes* of leader behavior (as identified via the *literature review and thematic analysis* in Chapter II) in a table format, while indicating whether such behaviors have been identified as potential influencers of *pre-disaster phases* (e.g., disaster preparedness and mitigation), and/or *post-disaster phases* (e.g., response and/or recovery). Given that this study focused on examining leader behavior during university response and recovery efforts, the post-disaster column is highlighted in accordance. The proposed *conceptual framework for examining the impact of college and university leadership in a disaster management context* appears in *Figure 3.4* and is described in more detail below.

Consistent with *Figure 3.3*, the disaster management process flows clockwise as follows: → a potential *risk* or *hazard* (or set of *risks* and *hazards*) is (are) determined to exist via formal research and planning efforts → leadership takes action to both *mitigate* (e.g., reinforce facilities) and *prepare* (e.g., conduct practice exercises) for the possible effects of the previously identified hazards (a process that should begin long before and ideally independent of a specific ensuing disaster) → a *disaster strikes* → organizational leaders and emergency management agencies *respond* (both during and after the disaster) → the institution enters the *short* followed by the *long-term recovery phases* (e.g., restoring critical infrastructure prior to repainting facilities) → while engaged in the recovery process, a post-disaster *evaluation* of the organization's disaster

preparedness and response efforts takes place – to improve upon flawed processes, reduce vulnerabilities, and prevent a repeat of mistakes, while also clearly identifying “what worked,” to better ensure that such activities are repeated under similar circumstances → organizational leaders seek to achieve *sustainability* – by moving *beyond pre-disaster normalcy* and reducing/eliminating the flawed processes and vulnerabilities identified in the post-disaster *evaluation phase* (prior to *re-engaging* in the disaster management process – starting with the *hazard or risk assessment phase*).

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of college and university leaders to guide their institutions through the aforementioned phases, by considering and applying the *five critical themes of leader behavior* (at the center of *Figure 3.4*) to each phase of the disaster management process, by incorporating and executing the *key underlying subthemes* (as identified below the flow chart) in accordance with their pre and/or post-disaster relevance. By doing so, college and university leaders drive the overall process forward, and enable their institutions to emerge more resilient and better prepared to deal with, alleviate the impact of, and/or (where possible) altogether avoid the impact of similar events in the future. This adaptive process, in which an institution utilizes prior experience to develop new routines or behaviors to create opportunities for enhanced performance, while eliminating those linked to prior failures, has been referred to by researchers as *organizational learning* (e.g., Levitt & March, 1998; Cyert & March, 1963; James & Wooten, 2011). It is through such a process, that leader behavior can transform (at least in part) an otherwise traumatic situation into an opportunity for organizational improvement (Monday, 2005).

Figure 3.4 Conceptual Framework for Examining the Impact of College and University Leadership in the Midst of Disaster.



<u>Leader Behavior</u>	<u>Pre-Disaster (Preparedness & Mitigation)</u>	<u>Post-Disaster (Response & Recovery)</u>
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>		
<i>structure vs. flexibility</i>	X (primarily structure)	X (primarily flexibility)
<i>reliability</i>	X (to avert disaster)	
<i>mindfulness</i>	X (to avert disaster)	
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	X (both financial and relational cultivated)	X (both applied)
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>		
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	X	X
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>		X
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	X	X
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	X	X
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	X	X
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>		X
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>		
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	X	X
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	X (to avert disaster)	X (to solve problems)
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	X	
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	X	X
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	X (balance both)	X (emphasis on vigilance)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	X (cultivated here)	X (applied here)
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>		
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	X (most important here)	X
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	X	X
<i>symbolic actions</i>		X
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	X (cultivated here)	X (applied here)
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>		
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>spirituality</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)

It is this new conceptual framework presented above that this comparative case study employs in exploring the impact of leader behavior on colleges and universities in New Orleans that were severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina, and will be modified in accordance with new discoveries resulting from this study.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, a new model of the disaster management process was presented (see *Figure 3.3*). This new conceptualization takes into account the temporal sequencing of events highlighted by the previous authors, without implying that linkages only exist between immediately adjacent phases of the disaster management process. Moreover, the circular pattern (with each phase situated on a continuous line versus a set of separate lines/arrows) illustrates the fluidity or interconnectedness between phases, and depicts disaster management as a process (with a clear goal in mind), that upon completion begins anew.

By applying the key interdisciplinary themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified in Chapter II to the model of the disaster management process presented in *Figure 3.3*, a new *holistic conceptual framework for facilitating campus disaster management efforts via leader behavior* emerges (see *Figure 3.4*). This framework builds upon the earlier model, by listing the key themes and subthemes of leader behavior (as identified in the *literature review and thematic analysis* section) in a table format, while indicating whether such behaviors have been identified as potential influencers of *pre-disaster phases* (e.g., disaster preparedness and mitigation), and/or *post-disaster phases* (e.g., response and/or recovery).

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of college and university leaders to guide their institutions through the aforementioned phases, by considering and applying the *five critical themes of leader behavior* noted (at the center of *Figure 3.4*) to each phase of the disaster

management process, by incorporating and executing the *key underlying subthemes* (as identified below the flow chart) in accordance with their pre and/or post-disaster relevance. By doing so, college and university leaders drive the overall process forward, and enable their institutions to emerge more resilient and better prepared to deal with, alleviate the impact of, and/or (where possible) altogether avoid the impact of similar events in the future. It is through such a process that leader behavior can transform (at least in part) an otherwise traumatic situation into an opportunity for organizational improvement (Monday, 2005).

Chapter IV provides a detailed description of the *comparative case study methodology* employed to test the efficacy of the aforementioned framework by exploring the behavior of college and university leaders at three institutions in New Orleans as they responded to and sought to facilitate recovery from one of the most catastrophic disasters in U.S. history – Hurricane Katrina.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Comparative Case Study

A *comparative case study* (also referred to as a *multiple-case*, *multi-case*, *multi-site*, *cross-case*, *collective case study*) is a methodological approach that involves collecting and analyzing data from more than one setting or scenario in an effort to “suggest generalizations” and yield insights beyond that which could be generated from a single case (Merriam, 1998). According to Merriam (1998), “the more cases included in a study, and the more variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be” (p. 40). Moreover, if evidence from multiple cases is generally considered “more compelling” than data from single-case, it follows that multiple-case studies are therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; Yin, 1994 & 2009). That being said, *multiple-case studies* share many features with and largely build upon the *single-case study* design, as both are but variants of the overall case study methodology (Yin, 1994 & 2009). Thus, prior to laying out the *multi-site design* employed in this study, it is important to highlight both the utility and key features common to case studies of varied typologies.

According to Creswell (2003) and Stake (1995), *case studies* involve the in-depth exploration of a program, an event, activity, process or individual(s), in which data are collected via a variety of methods, over a sustained period of time. The method is commonly employed to gain an in depth understanding of the situation and meaning from the perspective of those

involved (Merriam, 1998). The case(s) are said to be bound by time and place (*e.g.*, conducted over a certain number of days/months/years, within a specific setting(s) and include a *rich thick description* of the setting(s) and context for the case(s) (Creswell, 1998 & 2003). Yin (1994 & 2009) contends that the case study can have distinct advantages over other research methods in situations where “a how or why question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 1994, p. 9; Yin, 2009, p.13). In the current context, the case study methodology is utilized to address the aforementioned primary question, namely, *How does “leader behavior” impact college and university disaster management efforts?*

Yin (1994, p. 13; 2009, p. 18) further defines the *case study* as an empirical inquiry that:

- 1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident;
- 2) copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points;
- 3) relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion; and
- 4) benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

Hence, with regard to the current topic of leader behavior (*phenomena*) in the midst of Hurricane Katrina (*real life context*), nearly every post disaster decision (*phenomena*) and/or significant leader influenced change (*phenomena*) to New Orleans based universities, has been in some way influenced (and/or perceived to have been influenced) by the devastating events that took place (*real-life context*). The types of leader behavior exhibited before, during and after

Katrina, and the impact that such behavior has had on institutional recovery, may vary by leader, the characteristics of the university, the extent of the damage suffered, internal and external constraints, and other factors (*unclear boundaries*). Thus, to get a sense of the types of leader behavior that truly impact preparedness and recovery in the aforementioned context, multiple sources of evidence have been collected and a variety of research methods employed including *document analysis, observation* and *one-on-one interviews (triangulation)*. Moreover, in doing so, this study draws from prior examinations and theoretical constructs as guides for data collection and analysis, as the previously highlighted literature review, conceptual framework, and subsequent interview protocol illustrate (*benefiting from prior theoretical propositions and conceptualizations*).

Where *multiple-site case studies* differ from their more commonly understood single-case counterparts (aside from the previously noted benefits of *more compelling interpretations* and *enhanced robustness* of studies involving more than one site) primarily involves the format by which the context and data are presented and analyzed. In addition to presenting the context and resulting data from each site separately (*within-case analysis*), a key feature of multiple-site case studies involves an analysis across the cases in the study (*cross-case analysis*), in which data are typically coded, aggregated and presented thematically (Creswell, 1998). Upon completion of the thematic analysis, the write-up/presentation can conclude with a modified theory, policy implications, lessons learned and/or an interpretation of the overall meaning of the study (Yin, 1994; Creswell, 1998).

Thus, to test the efficacy of the previously designed and discussed conceptual framework, and identify additional leader behaviors that are more (or contrarily less) likely to facilitate resilience and recovery at colleges and universities when faced with a disaster, this project

consists of a *comparative (or multiple-site) case study* of three colleges and universities in New Orleans which suffered a “direct hit” from Hurricane Katrina, on August 29, 2005. To protect the anonymity of these institutions (helping facilitate information sharing), the universities in this study are referred to as *University A*, *University B* and *University C*.

Specifically, the study began in 2010 with document collection and analysis, and concluded in 2012. The postsecondary institutions selected for examination vary (in some respects) by size, type, and the extent to which they were impacted by and have recovered from Katrina in an effort to: 1) better determine whether the elements included in the previously developed conceptual framework for leader behavior bear relevance in more than one setting; and 2) uncover linkages between differing leadership traits, behaviors, and decision-making processes, and the extent to which each postsecondary institution has (or elements of each institution have) recovered from Katrina.

The study employs a variety of traditionally qualitative techniques for data gathering and analysis consistent with the *comparative case study* approach, including: 1) heavy document collection and review; 2) formal in-person (and possibly) phone interviews; 3) site visits/observations; and 4) a multi-stage coding process (Cresswell, 2003; Yin, 1994). The aforementioned combination of methods were selected to allow for the emergence of themes and subthemes of leader behavior above and beyond those highlighted in the previously developed conceptual framework (to the extent that such “new concepts” exist in the data), and to facilitate an understanding of college/university leadership in the midst of disaster from the words of those (postsecondary leaders) who have experienced such an event – in this case Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath – firsthand (Merriam, 1998).

Document Selection & Analysis

The data selected for analysis in association with this research project includes local, state, and federal government reports; college/university disaster preparedness/recovery documents; emergency procedures manuals; occupational safety and environmental health guidelines; business continuity plans; hazard vulnerability analyses; college/university press releases, web-based videos, and DVD's; student newspapers; reports by local, state and national media outlets (in print and on video); photographs, emergency response organization and association reports; reports from professional higher education organizations (*e.g.*, the American Association of University Professors) and think-tanks (*e.g.* Brookings and RAND), archival records, and other relevant documents. Important documents were *analyzed* and *coded* thematically (with the exemption of those that were used solely for background and/or contextual purposes), to identify key themes and subthemes of leader behavior in a disaster management context addressed by the leaders of the participating institutions (Creswell, 2003). Images and video clips were similarly reviewed for elements of leader behavior. The themes and subthemes identified through the document analysis process were then compared with the leadership traits and behaviors outlined in the previously crafted conceptual framework – to not only determine the extent to which university leaders in New Orleans exemplified the behaviors identified in the framework in preparing for and responding to Katrina, but also to uncover additional important leader behaviors that should be added to the framework – given their potential to impact disaster preparedness, response and/or recovery efforts.

Additional goals of the pre-interview *data* (primarily *document*) *analysis* process were as follows: 1) to develop a deeper understanding of the participating postsecondary institutions and the impact of Hurricane Katrina on those institutions (*e.g.*, pre versus post-Katrina campus

facilities); 2) to prepare a *timeline of events* regarding the development of each institution's disaster preparedness plan, major pre and post-Katrina leader behaviors, and the identifiable impact of such behaviors on personnel and their respective institutions; 3) to identify major organizational players in each Katrina-related decision and assist with identifying key college and university leaders for subsequent interviews; 4) to assist in determining the extent to which each institution has recovered from Katrina; and 5) to identify leader behaviors that have received significant positive attention and/or appear to have generated significant controversy in connection with pre and/or post Katrina-related activities. Such preliminary efforts not only assisted in developing a deeper understanding of the participating universities, but also resulted in a more informed and effective set of interviews.

Interview Process

After completing the document gathering and analysis processes, this study transitioned to the formal interview phase. Fourteen to sixteen interviews were conducted at each of three New Orleans-based institutions that were directly and severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina: *University A*, *University B* and *University C*. Interview participants include current (and past) university officials who were responsible for leading various aspects of the disaster response, and/or recovery efforts at their respective institutions in New Orleans (that), as well as those who were witnesses to and/or impacted by the activities of college and university leaders (*e.g.*, faculty, staff) as the effectiveness of leadership is in large part based on the perceptions of those being led.³ Five to seven participants from each institution were purposefully selected to serve as interview participants based on their clear role as university leaders at the time of Katrina, and/or their appearance in various media publications as institutional actors (faculty or staff)

³ Where applicable, experts outside the context of those institutions (*e.g.*, representatives from FEMA, Homeland Security, or the broader Louisiana higher education system) will also be interviewed for added context, fact checking, and to enhance the overall validity of the study.

willing to speak openly about the institutions response and recovery efforts – in a manner that shed light on leader behavior and institutional changes deemed favorable, as well as those that encountered resistance and or did not have the intended impact. Other participants were selected based on their identification as key actors in the context of earlier interviews, direct referrals, or their role in departments heavily impacted by the disaster or post-disaster institutional changes (e.g., admissions units, and departments from which programs were eliminated). Interviews were also conducted with at least one external expert regarding the response and recovery efforts of leaders at each institution.

As noted in Chapter I, for purposes of this investigation, *leadership* or *leaders* (as the units of analysis) refers to *those individuals who bear primary decision-making authority and accountability for the overall management, coordination, and consequences of an organization's, community's, nation's, or other well defined entity's disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts.* In the college or university context, *leaders* would include campus presidents, chancellors, members of the president's cabinet, and others who possess both *decision-making authority* and *overall accountability* for the results of their institutions disaster management efforts. Given their status as overall institutional leaders, the experiences and actions of college and university presidents will be of particular emphasis in this study.

The interviews were *semi-structured*, conducted in-person and via phone, tape-recorded, and were designed to last between 45 to 90 minutes. A semi-structured interview format was selected to allow for elaboration on the part of participants and follow-up questions (on the part of the interviewer) in light of information revealed by the contributors. Each contributor was asked a series of open-ended questions (followed by sub-questions as determined by participant responses) which, in combination, addressed the following themes: descriptive/background

information on the leader, faculty, or staff member (*e.g.*, their current or former role at the institution); their experiences with and role at the time of Katrina; shifts in responsibilities post-Katrina related to response and recovery; leader behavior before, during, and in the aftermath of Katrina (*e.g.*, decision-making and communication style); an assessment of leadership and where relevant personal performance (as well as that of other leaders); mistakes, successes and lessons learned; measurements of institutional recovery; noteworthy institutional changes; and readiness for future similar events.

Development of the Interview Protocol(s)

Two distinct (albeit related) protocols were developed for the purposes of conducting interviews. The first such protocol served as a guiding framework for interviews conducted with university leaders. The second protocol was tailored towards interviews with university faculty, and staff who were witnesses to and/or directly impacted by the behavior of institutional leaders in the midst of Hurricane Katrina. Both protocols were designed with the previously mentioned conceptual framework as the primary foundation, in an effort to determine whether the major themes and subthemes of leader behavior (as identified via an extensive interdisciplinary literature review) indeed bear relevance at colleges and universities in New Orleans affected by the 2005 disaster, while also allowing for the emergence of new themes via open-ended questions of a broader nature. The protocols were reviewed by and pilot interviews were performed with three individuals who were affiliated with California State University, Northridge in 1994, when the institution suffered \$400 million in damages as the result of major 6.9 earthquake. The pilot interviewees included a former Vice President, a former Treasurer of the university's student government, and a former Director of its community advisory board. The purpose of the pilot interviews was two-fold: 1) to enhance the clarity and validity of the

protocols (*e.g.*, helping ensure that the set of questions asked are resulting in content relevant to the study); and 2) strengthen the ensuing study by having an opportunity to go through the interview process multiple times prior to conducting interviews with university leaders, faculty and staff in New Orleans, whose institutions suffered a “direct hit” from Hurricane Katrina. Modest changes and additions were made to the interview protocols in the aftermath of the pilot interviews.

Recruitment and Consent of Participants

Interview participants (or contributors) were recruited by phone, email and at times in person (when introduced by another interviewee upon conclusion of an interview). Outreach to select members of the initial group of purposefully identified participants (*e.g.*, university presidents) commenced after identifying at least one shared contact that could make the appropriate referral. Generally, in an effort to arrange interviews the initial contact was made by phone (unless a referral source recommended email first). Shortly after the initial call, a follow-up email with more details was sent to contributors. Roughly 48 hours prior to scheduled interviews, a follow up email was sent confirm and thank individuals for their participation, as well as provide them with a copy of the *Interview Consent Form* and *Consent to be Tape Recorded*.

Where possible, interviews were conducted in-person, in New Orleans, and at the offices of the participants. In a few circumstances, post-interview, an institutional leader (interviewee) chose to introduce me to another campus official in-person, whereby the initial recruitment related contact was made with a future participant. Since the focus of this study is on the behavior of institutional leaders at the time of a specific event at a specific location, participant selection was determined (in part) by the continued accessibility of those who led at the time and

in the aftermath of Katrina. Thus, the extent to which a particular demographic (*e.g.*, gender, race or religion) is (or is not well) represented in this study – was dependent upon the demographics of the institution at the time of Katrina, current demographics, and degree to which members of various groups were involved with leading institutional disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in the wake of the disaster, as well as the extent to which they were accessible for interview purposes.

Each participant that was interviewed in person was presented with a comprehensive written *consent form* for signature (which had previously been distributed to interviewees via email) and given an opportunity to raise any questions they had about the document prior to the interview commencing. The consent form accurately depicted: the purposes of the study, the role of participants, expectations of confidentiality, and other topics design to protect the interests and rights of participants. A separate signature was requested to indicate each participant's *consent to be tape recorded*. While participants were encouraged to share their perceptions freely, interviewees were able to refuse to answer any question or decline to participate in any portion of the study with which they felt uncomfortable. Moreover, participants were given the opportunity to follow-up by phone or email to provide additional insights, amend statements, and /or refer additional participants. Had a participant elected to withdraw from the interview, their responses would not have been included in the study's results.

Site Visits & Observations

Each university included in this study was visited in-person, toured and photographed both prior to and during the interview process. The primary purposes of the observation stage(s) are as follows: 1) to develop familiarity with each campus, 2) to compare pre and immediate post-Katrina photos (collected during the document gathering stage) with the current appearance

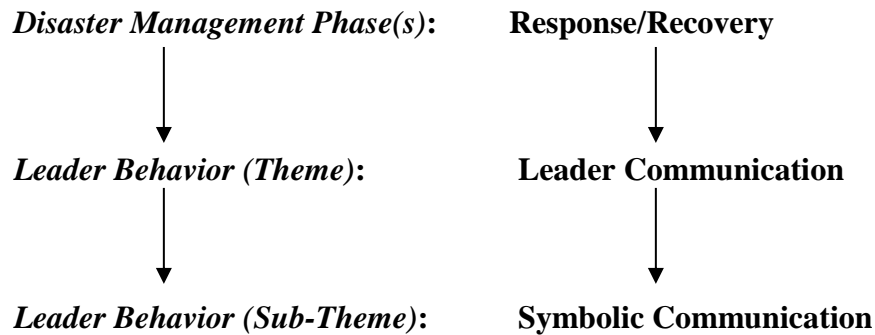
each campus, 3) to determine the extent to which post-Katrina re-construction has been completed, 4) to identify Katrina-induced structural changes to each campus designed to enhance resilience if faced with future disasters or to serve as reminders/artifacts of the devastating events (*e.g.*, memorials and/or other tributes) and, 5) to observe sites referenced by participants in the interview process. Field notes were taken at each noteworthy site and focused primarily on the extent to which campus facilities have been repaired and/or otherwise altered since Katrina. To the extent permitted by the participating institutions, photographs were taken of key sites (via digital camera). The photographs were catalogued by institution (utilizing *Adobe Photoshop Lightroom*) and served as an effective visual reminder of each campus setting and an important accompaniment to my field notes.

Coding System (Interviews and Field Notes)

While the themes and subthemes identified through the in depth literature review and document analysis served as a helpful tool for identifying the themes and subthemes uncovered via an analysis of the interview transcripts and field notes, as is traditional in qualitative research, I remained open to new themes/subthemes, codes, and interpretations as they emerge from the data. *Coding* specifically refers to the process of breaking data into “chunks” before attributing labels to those chunks and eventually meaning (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 1998). It involves taking data in the form of text or images, segmenting sections (*e.g.*, sentences or paragraphs) or images into categories, and labeling each category with a term/phrases intended to highlight common features of the data within that category (Creswell, 2003). The specific coding process employed in this study is *hierarchical* and focused on identifying major themes and sub-themes of leader behavior in the disaster management process. For example, if a leader stated that he/she gave an address to the campus community one year after Katrina, wherein

he/she committed to accept a reduced salary until enrollment figures returned to 2005 levels, the thematic coding process looked similar to the following:

Table 4.1: Diagram of the Thematic Coding Process.



Consistent with the process depicted in *Table 4.1* above, all interviews and relevant field notes for each university (or *case study setting*) in this study were transcribed, analyzed, and coded thematically to identify key themes and subthemes of leader behavior evident in the aftermath of Katrina as highlighted by interview participants, as well as observed directly through site visits. The themes and subthemes identified through the coding process at each institution, were then separately compared with the leadership traits/behaviors outlined in the previously crafted leadership framework for disaster management – to not only determine the extent to which leaders at each New Orleans-based university exemplified (or were perceived by fellow leaders, faculty, staff to have exemplified) the characteristics in the framework when responding to and seeking to facilitate recovery from Katrina – but also to discover whether additional important leader behavior has emerged from the data. After uncovering the degree to which key themes and subthemes of leader behavior were evident at each institution (as separate cases) in the aftermath of Katrina, the data were compared across cases, to determine whether such themes and subthemes of leader behavior were evident and important within a variety of university settings. Each new subtheme of leader behavior that emerged from this study and the

coding process employed was then added to the *conceptual framework for college/university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* in accordance with their role in facilitating disaster response and/or recovery at each of the New Orleans based campuses.

Data Storage and Analysis Tools

While all themes and subthemes of leader behavior were initially sought and identified through a manual review of interview transcripts (versus through a computer-based automatic search function), for purposes of storage, organization, and secondary analysis, and comparison across interviews, the primary software tools utilized for this study were *Microsoft Word 2010* and *Microsoft Excel 2010*. Data analysis worksheets and templates were crafted to assist with collecting immediate noteworthy post-interview thoughts and data, as well as to catalogue or track themes and subthemes of leader behavior as they appeared in interview transcripts and supporting documents. To protect the security and confidentiality of study materials all file folders and documents were password protected with letter and number combinations.

Potential Challenges and Ethical Considerations

While potential obstacles and ethical questions are worth considering and addressing in any study, of particular concern with respect to participation in this project was the issue of *confidentiality*. Specifically, in describing their institution's response to Katrina, some participants inevitably (and perhaps inadvertently) mentioned the names/positions of those involved in the preparedness response or recovery efforts. Moreover, some participants were asked to share information on both personal and institutional mistakes in preparing for and responding to Katrina. While most participants did not express confidentiality related concerns, given the stigma attached to FEMA, the Bush Administration, Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco and former New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin – as a result of what was widely perceived as

a flawed governmental response to Katrina – a couple of participants did request and appreciate reassurance (via the consent form and in direct conversation) that there would be a very high-level of *source-based confidentiality*, as such reassurances (along with the fact that many were referred by associates for participation) likely further alleviated concerns of breaches in confidentiality, and/or that chance that a similar stigma could be attached to them as individuals and/or to their institutions. Thus, the names (and other identifiers) of these individuals (and those mentioned in the course of interviews) are kept strictly confidential in the chapters to follow.⁴

As added measures of protection, the institutions themselves are referred to as *University A*, *University B*, and *University C*. Participant responses are aggregated by theme and subtheme of leader behavior, commonly attached to a group of respondents (*e.g.*, university leaders or faculty) versus individuals, and traceable identifiers are not disclosed in conjunction with the presentation of such thematic discoveries. Moreover, documents and recordings that could potentially be linked to the source of that information have been stored in a secure offsite location, with identifiers removed and replaced with 10+ digit letter and number combinations.

An additional ethical concern involves the *mental/emotional health* of participants. While the study provided university leaders with an opportunity to reflect upon the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina (which based on participant feedback proved cathartic for some), and to learn about additional leadership skills that have been shown to facilitate effective disaster response and recovery processes – having to re-call the events of Katrina was at times mildly emotionally difficult for some of the individuals interviewed. I anticipated that such emotional reactions would occur “rarely,” and would largely depend on the level of Katrina-related

⁴ Need to discuss the degree to which institutional confidentiality is important in this matter given that the impact of Katrina on colleges and universities in New Orleans is public knowledge.

personal/institutional loss and the degree to which each interviewee and their respective institutions have healed and recovered. This, in fact, turned out to be the case, as all “emotional moments” were short-lived and rarely resulted from revisiting negative feelings, but instead stemmed from recalling the laudable efforts of particularly individual(s), reflecting on the bonds that were built in the process of responding to Katrina, or from recalling a particularly amusing story or set of incidents that helped bring a sense of ease in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances.

Due to the fact that each participating institution has to date “survived” the disaster (albeit at varied levels of recovery, and with significant changes), the interviews were conducted roughly 6 years after Katrina, and did not specifically delve into issues of “personal loss” (*e.g.*, how their families and/or residences were impacted), the likelihood of these discussions triggering strong, lasting emotional reactions was quite limited. However, as a precaution, Katrina-based grief counseling references were brought to each interview, and would have offered to a participant(s) had a situation dictated the need for such a referral.⁵

In preparing for and conducting this study, the potential concerns of participants were strongly considered and address via the methods noted above. Ultimately, given a participation rate in excess of 90%, and comments from participants about how important they felt a study like this is, many seemed to believe that any unanticipated discomfort they experienced when asked to recall Katrina related events would be mild, short-lived, and outweighed by the potential benefits of the study to college and universities and the lives they serve (including the interviewees).

⁵ American Red Cross, Disaster Staff/Counselors; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010), *Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event*; National Institute of Mental Health (2010), *Coping with Traumatic Events*; U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs (2010), *Survivors of Natural Disasters and Mass Violence*.

Limitations & Validity Concerns

While a number of steps have been taken in an effort to ensure an accurate and informative dissertation (as discussed later in this section), the study does have some potential *limitations*, some of which concurrently represent *threats to validity*. Specifically, *validity* refers to how accurately an account (or study) represents participants' realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them (Schwandt, 1997; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Thus, a *threat to validity* is an issue that interferes with the ability to accurately portray events that took place and/or participants' perspectives of those events.

Perhaps the most significant *limitation* and *threat to validity* in this study involves the *atmosphere of secrecy* that frequently surrounds college and university disaster preparedness efforts. This *atmosphere of secrecy* can result in limited access to key documents and hesitance on the part of interviewees to share important information. Whether such concealment stems from the desire to hide institutional vulnerabilities (for security reasons) or to hide the possibility of inadequate planning or responses to the disaster, data gathering and interview processes can be constrained. While a lack of access to certain data can present a serious challenge to validity, it must first be proven that such "secret documents" or "hidden information" actually exists, otherwise it is equally plausible to assume that the institutions simply neglected certain key elements of disaster preparedness.

Potential *limitations* and *threats to validity* also stem from the *timing* of this study. For instance, since most interviews took place more than 6 years after Hurricane Katrina, it is possible that some of the intimate and/or accurate details of the decisions and events surrounding the disaster have been forgotten by interviewees. On the other hand, even with the passage of time and the benefit of hindsight, it is possible that the overall *consequences* or *results* of specific

(or collective) post-Katrina decisions and actions have yet to be fully realized. Thus, it is important to recognize that measures of the degree to which each institution has recovered since Katrina, represent a particular point in time, and could still potentially shift in a different direction as a result of actions taken not long after the disaster (e.g. program eliminations).

Additionally, the *personal dynamics* of participants are largely unaccounted for in this study. For example, institutional leaders may have different definitions or standards for what they consider to be “mistakes” and/or “successes” – as the definitions of these terms are largely subjective, institutionally specific, and dependent on the perspective of the participants. Vastly differing definitions of such key terms can pose validity related challenges, and can limit the ability to generalize to colleges and universities outside the participating institutions. Along the same lines, this study does not account for specific post-disaster challenges stemming from *personal circumstances* (e.g., family-related trauma) – which the leaders at some New Orleans-based institutions may have faced to a greater extent than those at others – impacting their post-Katrina decisions, actions and capabilities. Finally, as is common with most case studies (that have an interview component); the results of this study are largely reliant on the perceptions and interpretations of participants, which can vary in terms of how accurately they recall and depict actual events.

Thus, in response to such potential concerns, a number of specific actions were taken to enhance the validity of this study. First, the Interview Protocol was reviewed by set of college and university administrators, faculty, and staff to assist in ensuring that the interview questions were appropriately phrased, and encouraged open and informative responses, consistent with the purposes of the study. Secondly, this study utilized the technique of *triangulation*. Specifically, *triangulation* is a procedure used to enhance validity whereby “researchers search for

convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 126). The data gathered in this study were triangulated by comparing and contrasting: 1) the responses of interviewees with fellow interviewees; 2) the interview data with data revealed through document analysis; and 3) the data gathered through direct observation with that gathered via the interview and document analysis processes. Third, and consistent with the overarching purpose and iterative nature of this study, *disconfirming data* were actively pursued, in an effort to ensure the validity of individual accounts, and determine (and ultimately enhance) the efficacy of the previously proposed conceptual framework – as according to Creswell and Miller (2000), seeking disconfirming data can enhance a study’s validity. Finally, experts in the field of higher education, crisis management and on my dissertation committee were asked to review and critique the results of the study upon completion – a validity enhancing technique Merriam (1998) refers to as *peer examination*.

Selecting the Appropriate Case Study Setting(s)

Three primary variables were considered in selecting the appropriate settings for this comparative case study including: *institutional type* (e.g., public v. private, and secular v. religiously affiliated); *type of disaster* (e.g., in this case Hurricane Katrina); and *recovery status* (e.g., nowhere near recovered v. fully recovered v. recovered beyond pre-disaster status). These *context specific options* are displayed in the following diagram. The current study is consistent with options “e” and “f” in the chart below, which allows for the comparison of leader behavior exhibited at different types of institutions, having faced the same disaster, while the extent of recovery at each university (prior to the interview process commencing) had yet to be fully determined.

Table 4.2 Site Selection: Context Specific Options for Current Study.

Type of Institutions (x) Type of Disaster (x) Level of Recovery

- a) Similar types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Similar recovery results
- b) Similar types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Different recovery results
- c) Similar types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Different recovery results
- d) Similar types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Similar recovery results
- e) Different types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Similar recovery results
- f) Different types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Different recovery results
- g) Different types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Different recovery results
- h) Different types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Similar recovery results

As noted previously, this comparative case study examines leader behavior at three New Orleans based colleges and universities which were directly impacted by Hurricane Katrina: *University A, University B, University C*. These universities were selected from amongst several institutions based on preliminary research regarding availability of data, the accessibility of leadership and firsthand observation of each campus in July 2010. Two alternate locations were selected (*University D, and University E*) to prevent any unforeseen obstacles (had they occurred) from delaying the project.

Key Variable: Defining “Recovery”

For purposes of this study the variable *recovery* requires a clear operational definition and some measurable versus purely subjective components, in order to determine the progress each institution has made since Katrina (*level of recovery*). Based on available data, measures of recovery identified and utilized by university actors (leaders, faculty and staff), a combination of the following components are included as measures of *institutional recovery*:

- 1) Pre-disaster versus current financial viability (budgetary issues, endowment totals);
- 2) Pre-disaster versus current application totals and student enrollment figures;
- 3) Pre-disaster versus current number of faculty employed;
- 4) Assessment of campus repairs/development post disaster (status of facilities);

- 5) Assessment of changes made in preparation for future disasters (*e.g.*, has the institution moved to a state of enhanced preparedness for future similar disasters);
- 6) Pre-disaster versus current graduation rates; and
- 7) Participant self-assessment of institutional recovery.

Each of the aforementioned components was assessed via a combination of the document analysis, interview, and thematic coding processes depicted earlier in this chapter.

Presentation of the Data

The data and key findings of this comparative case study are organized and presented in Chapters V – X as follows:

- *Chapter V – Setting and Context: The City of New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina:* a brief history of New Orleans (along with its people and culture); depiction of present day New Orleans; the impact of Hurricane Katrina, and Katrina’s impact on Higher Education in New Orleans.
- *Chapter VI – University A & Leader Behavior in the Midst of Hurricane Katrina:* institutional background/history, experiences with Katrina, damage assessment, assessment of recovery, major themes and subthemes of leader behavior evident in disaster response and recovery (according to the perceptions of contributors – university leaders, faculty, staff, and external experts), and potential new subthemes of leader behavior.
- *Chapter VII – University B & Leader Behavior in the Midst of Hurricane Katrina:* institutional background/history, experiences with Katrina, damage assessment, degree of recovery, major themes and subthemes of leader behavior evident in disaster response and recovery, (according to the perceptions of contributors – university leaders, faculty, staff, and external experts), and potential new discoveries.

- *Chapter VIII – University C & Leader Behavior in the Midst of Hurricane Katrina:* institutional background/history, experiences with Katrina, damage assessment, degree of recovery, major themes and subthemes of leader behavior evident in disaster response and recovery (according to the perceptions of contributors – university leaders, faculty, staff, and external experts), and potential new discoveries.
- *Chapter IX – Comparative (Cross-Case) Analysis:* a brief comparison of participating institutions (e.g., history, extent of damage and level of recovery), an analysis of the major themes (and underlying subthemes) of leader behavior evident in (or absent from) disaster response and recovery – across university settings; new discoveries evident across universities (or across-cases).
- *Chapter X – Key Findings, Implications & Conclusion:* summary of study, presentation of revised conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster, application of the conceptual framework, limitations, future research, and concluding remarks.

Chapter Summary

Thus, to assess the utility of the new *conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster* depicted in Chapter III, and potentially identify additional leader behaviors and that are more (and contrarily less) likely to facilitate resilience and recovery at colleges and universities when faced with a disaster – I have conducted a *comparative (or multiple-site) case study* of three colleges and universities in New Orleans (identified as *University A, University B* and *University C*) which suffered a “direct hit” from Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005.

Chapter V illustrates the *context* and *setting* shared by the universities in this study. Chapters VI – VIII depict the experiences of each participating university (or case) and the

behavior of institutional leaders in responding to a major disaster. The data and findings are organized and presented by theme and subtheme of leader behavior (as previously identified in the conceptual framework presented Chapter III) in accordance with their presence during the response and recovery efforts at each institution. Potential new discoveries emanating from each case are highlighted towards the end of each chapter.

The *individual case analyses* presented in Chapters V-VIII are followed by a *cross-case analysis* (Chapter IX), where, as also noted previously, the discussion focuses on the degree to which the previously identified themes and subthemes of leader behavior were present or absent in midst of Hurricane Katrina across institutional settings, and introduces new themes and/or subthemes of leader behavior based on their emergence from the data and prevalence in the response and recovery efforts of the three universities included in this study. The analysis begins with a detailed (*rich, thick*) description of the setting (New Orleans) and context (Hurricane Katrina) from which this study has emerged.

CHAPTER V

SETTING AND CONTEXT:

THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS AND HURRICANE KATRINA

I think very surprising... was the resilience of the people and the quality of the people in New Orleans. In some ways, this is a city that's fraught with complexity, with difficulty in terms of racial strife and haves and have not's, people with very high income and people with very significant low incomes... It's the Deep South and in some ways there are aspects that would appear the civil rights movement that maybe passed New Orleans by. It did not flourish like other places... yet the strength of conviction of people's love for this city, and their determination to see it through – their strength in that regard I found to be unparalleled. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

A Brief History of New Orleans

Any present-day description of New Orleans would be incomplete without an understanding of how its rich history and unique blend of cultures have shaped the area so heavily impacted by Katrina (Hirsch & Logsdon, 2011; New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, 2011; Inter-American Development Bank, 2011). However, when the French explorer, Sieur de LaSalle explored the Mississippi/Gulf Coast region in 1682, claiming “all lands drained by the river” for France (NOMCVB, 2011), it is unlikely that he had anything resembling today's *City of New Orleans* in mind. The *Louisiana Territory* (named after then King Louis XIV) consisted of roughly 828,000 square miles – extending vertically from the Mississippi River to the Rockies, and horizontally from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada (NOMCVB, 2011). Over the next two centuries, French, Spanish, English, Independent, Confederate and Union flags would fly over Louisiana (NOMCVB, 2011).

Roughly 35 years after Sieur de LaSalle's claim, a second French explorer (born in

Montreal), Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville (also known as *Sieur de Bienville*) originated a strategic port city near the juncture of the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico (University of Toronto, 2000; NOMCVB, 2011, IADB, 2011). Situated roughly five feet below sea level, Bienville understood that the heavy silt at the mouth of the Mississippi River would present a challenge, but preferred dredging to maintain the depth needed for boats to enter and depart from the vicinity, rather than abandoning the advantages of a river and sea port (University of Toronto, 2000). In essence, starting in 1718, the new city or *ville*, “had to be reclaimed from a swamp” (NOMCVB, 2011, p. 1). Initially named *La nouvelle Orleans*, after Philippe II, a nephew of King Louis XIV, and *Duc d'Orleans* (a title given to select members of the French royal family), the young city centered around the *Place d'Arms* (later to be known as *Jackson Square*) and was confined to *Vieux Carre* (to become infamous as the *French Quarter* or *Old Square*) (NOMCVB, 2011; Jackson, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011). As of November 1721, New Orleans was estimated to have a population of just 470 people: 277 whites, along with 172 black and 21 Indian slaves (Jackson, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011).

The City would soon become the site of both tragedy and triumph – a site of great conflict but also great wealth – both monetarily and culturally. New Orleans would endure two major fires in 1788 and 1794, which caused great devastation to the City (Reeves, 2011). Moreover, given its rather perilous location on the subsiding delta of the lower Mississippi River, flooding and hurricanes have been commonplace since the city’s inception (Reeves, 2011; Colten et al., 2008). According to Kates, Colten, Laska, and Leatherman (2006), over the past 290 years, New Orleans has had to contend with 27 severe floods (as cited in Colten et al., 2008). The city has also had to contend with other hazards, from epidemics (*e.g.*, yellow fever and

Asiatic cholera), to armed invasions, to twentieth-century drinking water pollution (Colten, 2005; Colten et al., 2008; Reeves, 2011).

Historically, New Orleans has rebounded rather effectively from fires, floods, hurricanes and other calamities, often aided by favorable demographic and economic trends (Colten et al., 2008). As a matter of fact, just two decades after being devastated by the aforementioned fires, the same region served as the location of a major victory for the United States, in the infamous *Battle of New Orleans*, whereby a band of 4,000 militia, frontiersmen, former Haitian slaves, and French pirates, led by General Andrew Jackson outfought 8,000 invading British troops (as part of the War of 1812) – resulting in more than 2,000 British casualties, while losing just 8 American lives in the process (NOMCVB, 2011). Moreover, over the same time period (the 18th and 19th centuries), New Orleans became the most active port city and trade destination for Caribbean nations in the world, as many were heavily involved with importing/exporting indigo, tobacco, rice, vegetables, sugar cane, rum, fruit, and other products (Jackson, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011; NOMCVB, 2011, IADB, 2011). Add such economic activity to the thriving American cotton and tobacco trade, and the port city of New Orleans soon became the nation's second wealthiest city, behind only New York (NOMCVB, 2011).

Unique “Immigrant” Population

In terms of historical population dynamics, New Orleans is indeed unique. In addition to an already present Native American population, the influx of 17th-19th Century explorers and immigrants from a variety of European nations (France, Spain, England, and others), and Africans taken from their home countries to serve as forced laborers (slaves and some cases indentured servants), New Orleans became a refuge for thousands of Haitians seeking to escape the revolution taking place in their home country (between 1791 to 1804) (Hirsch & Logsdon,

2011). Thousands more free people of color (referred to as *gens de couleur libres*) arrived in New Orleans from Senegambia, now the area in Central Africa known as Benin (NOMCVB, 2011). New Orleans also became the first city in America to host significant settlements of Italians, Greeks, Croatians and Filipinos (Hirsch & Logsdon, 2011). Given such demographic trends, and a rather flourishing economy, by the mid-1800s, the city had become the fourth largest in the U.S. (NOMCVB, 2011).

Moreover, having existed under French, British, Spanish and American governance – the various European populations and traditions noted above, have gradually mixed with those from local Native American tribes, West Africans (both slaves and free people of color), Haitians, and populations from other parts of the Caribbean, creating a people and culture unique to New Orleans – which soon became well-known for its performing arts (French Opera House and later jazz music and Zydeco), local cuisine, architecture, and its *Creole* and *Cajun* populations (Owens, 1997; LCRA, 2008; Hebert, 2009; National Council for Social Studies, 2011). Specifically, the term “Creole,” was initially utilized as a way to distinguish between persons born in the colonies (at the time mostly the children of French aristocrats) and those who either immigrated to the region or were trafficked in as slaves (NOMCVB, 2011). Soon thereafter however, the term became used as a reference to those of mixed-race ancestry (particularly the “free people of color”) who were not considered fully a part of either the white or slave class (LCRA, 2003), as well as to a blended dialect which has French, Haitian, English, and West African roots. Today there are people of various combinations of French, African, Haitian, Spanish, and West Indian ancestry who proudly call themselves “Creole” (LCRA, 2008; NOMCVB, 2011; NCSS, 2011).

The *Cajuns*, on the other hand, are descendants from a group roughly 10,000 Catholic, French-speaking trappers and farmers (known as *Acadians*) who were exiled from Nova Scotia (Canada) by the ruling English-Protestants during the 18th century (NCSS, 2011). The Cajuns primarily settled in Southwest Louisiana, in what is now called Acadiana, and migrated to New Orleans over the decades to follow. Today over one million people of Cajun descent live in Louisiana. While still predominately European, those who claim Acadian-Cajun ancestry include French-Canadians, Spanish, British, Italian, Irish, French, German, Islenos (settlers from the Canary Islands), and American Indians (Hebert, 2009). Together, the blend of European, Caribbean and African influences, and the Creole and Cajun populations, have resulted in an architecture, dialect, cuisine, and culture (or “set of cultures”) unique to New Orleans.

Modern Day New Orleans

Today, New Orleans remains one the most distinguished and important cities in the United States. However, despite the city’s notoriety, there are common misconceptions amongst visiting media, tourists, and even some local residents as to what distinctive geographic area is in fact “New Orleans.” Hence, for governance and census purposes (as well as the remainder of this analysis), *New Orleans* and the *City of New Orleans*, refer specifically to the geographic region known as the *Orleans Parish*, which incorporates the French Quarter, Garden District, Warehouse District, Business District and other adjacent locales, while *Greater New Orleans* or the *New Orleans Metropolitan (Metro) Area*, consists of *New Orleans* (or the *Orleans Parish*) and its six surrounding parishes of *Jefferson*, *Plaquemines*, *St. Bernard*, *St. Charles*, *St. John the Baptist*, and *St. Tammany* (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009; Jackson, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011).

According to Dolfman, Wasser and Bergman (2007), the economy of New Orleans is largely reliant on three economic spheres: tourism (arts, entertainment, and recreation; accommodation and food service), port operations (mining; transportation and warehousing), and education (four-year colleges and universities, community colleges and vocational schools). As a tourist destination, noted for its famous French Quarter, internationally renowned restaurants, highly quality hotel accommodations and convention centers, as well as large-scale annual events (*e.g.*, Mardi Gras, the New Orleans Bowl, the Sugar Bowl, and the Jazz and Heritage Festival), New Orleans is among the most visited cities in the United States (Dolfman, Wasser & Bergman, 2007).

New Orleans also hosts one of the largest and busiest ports in the world (World Port Source, 2011, and Portno, 2011). It serves as a key transportation and distribution hub for water-borne commerce, accounts for much of the United States oil refining and petrochemical production, and is home to two of the nation's four Strategic Petroleum Reserve facilities (World Port Source, 2011). The Port area alone is estimated to be responsible for over 160,000 jobs and some \$8 billion in annual earnings (World Port Source, 2011; Portno, 2011; Martin Associates, 2004). The port hosts about 5,000 ships from nearly 60 countries each year and handles more trade with Latin America than any other U.S. gateway (Dolfman, Wasser & Bergman, 2007).

While, perhaps not as widely recognized as either its tourism or port-related activities, New Orleans also serves as “a center of higher education” (Dolfman, Wasser & Bergman, 2007). The *City of New Orleans* (or Orleans Parish) alone includes the following four-year institutions: Tulane University, the University of New Orleans, Loyola University New Orleans, Xavier University of New Orleans, Southern University of New Orleans, Dillard University, the Louisiana State University Medical School, and Our Lady of Holy Cross College. These

institutions are complemented by the multi-campus Delgado Community College and a number of vocational schools (*e.g.*, the Culinary Institute of New Orleans and the Charity School of Nursing) and seminaries (*e.g.*, New Orleans Baptist Seminary and Notre Dame Seminary) lie within the city's boundaries.

Population Shifts

Demographically, the City of New Orleans has undergone a rather significant shift since the mid-20th Century. While it has largely maintained its Creole and Cajun traditions, between 1960 and 2000, the city experienced both a general population loss and a significant shift from a predominately white (62% in 1960) to a majority black (67% in 2000) populace (Colten et al., 2008). General shifts in the US economy, modes of transportation, “white flight,” and the “oil bust” of the 1980's – along with the artificial barriers created both by the levees and the hurricane protection efforts of the U.S Army Corp of Engineers in the decades following Hurricane Betsy (which struck New Orleans in 1965) – produced a more dispersed and socially segregated city, along with a more concentrated poor population (Lewis, 2003; Brookings Institution, 2005; Colten, 2005; Burby, 2006; Colten et al., 2008). Moreover, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), as of 1999, roughly 28% of the New Orleans based community was considered below the poverty line. It is this more segregated, less affluent version of New Orleans that would face an unprecedented disaster. For more information on the current demographics of New Orleans, refer to *Table 5.1, Appendix C*.

The Story Behind Hurricane Katrina

On Friday evening August 26, 2005, while sitting at the Superdome in New Orleans (along with thousands of other New Orleans residents) watching the hometown Saints battle the visiting Baltimore Ravens, New Orleans Fire Chief, Tim McConnell received a call from a friend

in New York, indicating the odds of a strengthening storm (then crossing over Florida into the Gulf of Mexico) hitting the New Orleans area had increased (Hampton & McConnell, 2006). Soon to be infamous as “Katrina,” the hurricane’s path had previously been expected to turn northward a safe distance east of New Orleans. Unfortunately, the latest projection Chief McConnell received would prove accurate, and Katrina would soon be known as “...the most devastating disaster to ever hit the United States. Its path of destruction in Mississippi and Southeast Louisiana [was] unparalleled, only to be compounded by the near total inundation of the City of New Orleans” (Hampton & McConnell, 2006, p. 1). With direct and indirect economic costs ultimately exceeding \$200 billion, along with more than 1,500 fatalities, and evacuees dispersed throughout all 50 states, the magnitude of Katrina impact can be difficult to grasp (Smith, 2005).

Warnings about the possibility of such a severe storm and its potential destructive impact on New Orleans had persisted for several years (NOVA, 2005). Officials and scientists alike had cautioned that a severe storm would present the likelihood of severe flooding and wind damage in a city where the majority of its land lies below sea level and many buildings in the Historic French Quarter were nearly 300 years old (Van Heerden, 2004 as cited in NOVA, 2005; Hampton & McConnell, 2006). However, given that so many storms had entered the waters of the Gulf of Mexico in the years prior to Katrina, and that New Orleans had been fortunate to escape dire predictions time and time again, when Hurricane Katrina initially made its way across the Florida Keys as a *Category 1 Hurricane* (with winds from 74-95mph), it was not viewed by many as a serious threat (Hampton & McConnell, 2006).

That all changed a couple of days later though, as the storm grew significantly in size, and quickly strengthened into a *Category 2 Hurricane* (accompanied by 96-110 miles per hour

winds), followed a *Category 3* (with wind speeds between 111-130 miles per hour), shortly thereafter into a *Category 4* (with 131-155 miles per hour winds), and eventually into a full blown *Category 5* – the strongest hurricane classification – with winds in excess of 155 miles per hour) (FEMA, 2011a). Finally, on Saturday, August 27th, just two days before the storm’s expected arrival, most parishes in Greater New Orleans began issuing mandatory evacuation orders. In an apparent effort to avoid panic and/or a potentially unnecessary expense (in the event that the storm was over-hyped and/or evaded the city), Governor of Louisiana, Kathleen Blanco, and Mayor of New Orleans, Ray Nagin, delayed ordering a mandatory evacuation until the morning of August 28th – the eve of the storm (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006; Colten et al., 2008). For many of the estimated 57,000 families in New Orleans who did not own a motor vehicle (Van Heerden, 2004 as cited via NOVA, 2005), such warnings – to the extent that they would have been disseminated, heard and heeded – came too late (see *Appendix D* for an official “emergency weather statement” issued by the *National Weather Service* on the morning of August 28th).

When Katrina officially reached New Orleans on August 29, the storm was accompanied by 120 mph winds (which had actually begun causing damage the evening before) and 8-10 inches of rain (National Hurricane Center, 2011). Given the sheer size of the Katrina, hurricane force winds would ultimately extend 103 miles from its center (White House, 2006; Salvation Army, 2006), and would impact nearly 93,000 square miles of our nation – a landscape roughly the size of Great Britain (White House, 2006). New Orleans Fire Chiefs, Richard Hampton and Tim McConnell (2006), who would soon be designated *incident commander* and *deputy incident commander*, respectively (and along with much of the New Orleans Fire Department would be praised for their efforts in the midst of disaster), provide a harrowing account of their

experiences at the Hilton Hotel, which became a makeshift emergency operations center for local first responders:

Hurricane Katrina pounded the building. Power was knocked out before midnight [on the Sunday the 28th]. Windows were busted. Driving rains pierced frames and cracks. The skylights were blown off. Roofing materials and debris filled the stairwells. Water poured in from all directions. Some say they felt the building sway. Outside, trees and telephone poles snapped. Nearby homes, buildings, and roofs were ripped open. The area of last refuge for most of the 2nd District is a Hilton hotel located at the foot of Canal Street on the river. By early Sunday evening, the winds had increased to a point where it was no longer safe to respond, and the companies moved their apparatus to the elevated garage in the hotel... (p. 5)

The storm surge, which was estimated to have ranged between 10-20 feet above normal tides in various portions of Southeastern Louisiana (National Hurricane Center, 2011), alone likely would have caused significant flooding in eastern New Orleans, the 9th Ward, Mid-City as well as much of the West Bank, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard Parishes even without other sources of water and precipitation (Hampton and McConnell, 2006). However, by 10 a.m. on the 29th, prior to the *eye of the storm* and second wave even passing over New Orleans, emergency personnel began receiving reports of a second crisis – a series of breaches along the city’s 350 mile levee system (White House, 2006) – resulting in severe and widespread flooding well beyond what could already be attributed to the heavy rains, winds and the powerful storm surge which accompanied the hurricane. Soon there would be 28 different levee breaches, including some reaching hundreds of feet in length (*e.g.*, the 17th street canal breach) (Van Heerden, as cited in NOVA, 2005).

Hence, as with most major disasters, Hurricane Katrina was not an “isolated event,” but instead involved “a complex chain of crises that the originating catastrophe [set] off” (Mitroff, Diamond & Alpasian, 2006). In this case, what brought the severe storm to the level of a major disaster stemmed not merely from the impact of the hurricane itself (although it was powerful),

but from the combination of the massive storm with a series of engineering failures (Hampton & McConnell, 2006; and Gray Line, 2010), as well as an inadequate governmental response at the local, state and federal levels (Moynihan, 2007). According to Colten et al. (2008), with much of the city below sea level, the pre-Katrina population of New Orleans “lived in a bowl,” between the natural levees of the Mississippi River and the man-made levees (pierced by canals) along Lake Pontchartrain (p. 19).⁶ Ultimately, between the storm and the ensuing levee failures, roughly 80 percent of the city ended up underwater, with estimated depths ranging from several inches to over 20 feet (White House, 2006; Colten et al., 2008; Hampton & McConnell, 2006; and Gray Line, 2010).

A Series of Challenges

Complicating efforts to respond to the crisis were a slew of communications related failures and other largely unanticipated events. According to Hampton and McConnell (2006), on the emergency management side, the radio system for fire, police, and EMS went down for a period of three days, resulting in dependence on “runners” (who frequently had to travel via small boats) and the sporadically operational Federal Emergency channel. Additionally, much of the city's telephone lines were down, with wires literally resting in the water, while many radio and cell towers were severely damaged. Those cell phone towers that remained functional were subject to overwhelming demand (Colten et al., 2008). Due to high crime, the city remained on lock-down for several weeks, while looting persisted often (but not always) for the sake of mere survival (*e.g.*, breaking into markets for food, water and first aid which had yet to arrive from local state or federal agencies). Flood waters occupied portions of the city for several weeks, leaving hazardous forms of mold behind, and numerous facilities uninhabitable.

⁶ The U.S. Senate (2006) notes that New Orleans could be “... more accurately described as three distinct, large, urban bowls, and one very thin, elongated, predominantly rural bowl” (p. 52).

Hurricane Katrina was the first major crisis after the nation's adoption of a new incident management system for coordinating federal, state and local responses to disasters, proposed by the Department of Homeland Security in 2004 (Moynihan, 2007). Unfortunately, the disaster did not play out in a fashion consistent with the newly employed system, which lacked the flexibility and adaptability necessary to more effectively manage the crisis (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006). Thus, most major analyses of the efforts to prepare for and respond to Hurricane Katrina highlighted management failures at all levels of government (*e.g.*, Stephenson & Bonabeau, 2007; U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Office of the Inspector General, 2006; U.S. House of Representatives, 2006; U.S. Senate, 2006). Colten et al. (2008) note that most plans failed to anticipate: 1) widespread and massive levee failure, as most scenarios envisioned the levees holding and/or catching any water that spilled out over the top; 2) the wide array of communication failures; 3) that emergency vehicles could not be refueled (with the power off); 4) that the Red Cross would not be able to enter the city to aid victims of the storm; and 5) the desperation and looting that would follow the exhaustion of limited food supplies and water stockpiles. These factors ultimately, contributed to rumors and reports of “civil unrest, looting, and a city out of control” (Hampton & McConnell, 2006, p. 8).

Magnifying what already would have been a desperate situation as illustrated above was the sheer number of residents and tourists who remained in the city once the disaster struck. In the Orleans Parish alone, despite mandatory evacuation orders, some 130,000 residents and visitors to the city either ignored, did not receive, or could not follow the directive and “rode out the storm” (Laska 2004; Colten et al., 2008, p. 10). The city also found itself largely unprepared to facilitate the evacuation of and/or meet the specific medical care requirements of its “special needs” population – with state officials even lacking a common definition for the phrase “special

needs” (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006). Thus, many of those who remained in New Orleans spent the next several days trapped in their attics, their homes inundated with several feet of water. The rising waters (which took several weeks to drain from the City) would soon be filled with a variety of chemicals and other pollutants. The heat and humidity, lack of air-conditioning and clean drinking water for those awaiting rescue resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives due to heat stroke and dehydration. Others, including emergency response and recovery personnel, found themselves confronting snakes, mosquitos, and a variety of other biting animals and insects attracted to the polluted, swamp-like conditions. Ultimately, Hurricane Katrina would result in more deaths than any U.S. based natural disaster since Hurricane San Felipe (which occurred in 1928), and in more property damage than any known natural disaster in the nation’s history (White House, 2006).

5 Years After Katrina: A Tale of Two Cities

To an outsider visiting the most popular tourist destinations of New Orleans (*e.g.*, the bustling French Quarter with the infamous Bourbon Street, Riverwalk, Jackson Square, and/or various sporting venues within the Business District), it might appear that no event or “series of events” of significance had devastated the region just five years prior. However, a brief excursion away from the well-known tourist attractions reveals a deeper and much more mixed truth. On the one-hand, there are numerous examples of recovery throughout the city, unemployment is impressively low, the tourism industry had rebounded, many businesses have returned, new ones have emerged, and the levee system in many areas has been repaired and reinforced. Dysfunctional communication systems have been replaced, and the 2010 Super Bowl Champion, New Orleans Saints, have become a unifying source of pride throughout the city.

Musicians with New Orleans roots (*e.g.*, Harry Connick Jr. and Branford Marsalis) have come together with Habitat for Humanity to collectively build a new neighborhood known as the “Musician’s Village,” in an effort to attract other performing artists to (or back to) the city (Gray Line, 2010; Honoré, 2010). Film projects, including the *Curious Case of Benjamin Button* and *Deja Vu* were filmed in New Orleans within two years of Katrina, and the hit series *Treme* has utilized the aftermath of the disaster and the city’s efforts to recover from it as the foundation of its evolving storyline. Well-known Hollywood actors, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, have purchased a well-publicized residence in the French Quarter and are covering the costs of re-developing and designing an entire neighborhood with elevated, energy-efficient structures in one of the more heavily damaged areas of New Orleans (9th Ward). Other entertainers and athletes (particularly local teams – the New Orleans Saints, and Hornets) have sponsored and/or regularly participate “hands-on” in projects intended to help rebuild the city.

Once major portions of the city were again deemed “safe” to visit, nation-wide sympathy, and the desire to help New Orleans recover, has enabled its tourism industry to bounce back swiftly. According to the Brookings Institution (as cited in Colten et al., 2008), by early 2008, hotel and motel tax revenues had climbed to near or above pre-Katrina levels. Post-Katrina New Orleans has again become a desirable destination for conferences (from Emergency Management to Higher Education) and major sporting events (*e.g.*, the 2008 NBA All Star Game, 2012 NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship and the 2013 Super Bowl).

Additionally, the city, state and federal governments have utilized the disaster as an impetus for reassessing and revising emergency response plans, improving means of communication and coordination, revamping evacuation plans, and adding features that might enable more flexibility and resilience at the local level (White House, 2006; U.S. House of

Representatives, 2006; Honoré, 2010). Most new or rebuilt homes within the vicinity of levees (called “Levee Protected Areas”) that were deemed substantially damaged (51% or more) by Katrina are now required to be at least 3 feet above grade or to the *Base Flood Elevation*⁷, whichever is higher (Peck, 2008). Public infrastructure in many sections of the city have been improved, and the sewer, water, public service buildings, police and fire departments, and the local National Guard, now have new or refurbished buildings (Honoré, 2010).

On the other hand, Hurricane Katrina “prompted the largest mass migration in modern American history,” and many of these former residents have yet to return (Krupa, 2011, p 1). According to the 2010 U.S. Census, just 343,829 people now live in post-Katrina New Orleans, a 29 percent drop since such population data was gathered just a decade prior (Krupa, 2011). Abandoned homes continue to occupy many neighborhood, several of which maintain the now infamous “X” demarcation on their exterior walls – establishing four quadrants for emergency response personnel to note/relay pertinent information to fellow authorities, including: whether a house or building had been inspected, when (date and time), by what agency (*e.g.*, FEMA) and/or unit of the National Guard (as much of the Louisiana National Guard had been deployed to Afghanistan), whether survivors were found, how many (if any) deceased were located on the premises, and any additional hazard related information deemed relevant to those seeking to enter the premises (National Urban Search & Rescue, 2006; Gray Line, 2010).

In total, roughly 214,700 owner-occupied housing units in New Orleans suffered damage from Hurricane Katrina, prompting nearly 81 percent of all residents, to move away from the area for at least a couple of weeks, commonly relocating on more than one occasion (U.S. Census Bureau, Press Release, 2011). Hundreds of thousands of trees (which in Louisiana are

⁷ The Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is a regulatory requirement for the flood proofing of structures. The relationship between the BFE and a structure's elevation is utilized to determine an entities the flood insurance premium (FEMA, 2011b).

considered a crop and one of the state's most significant exports) were also casualties of the disaster (Gray Line, 2010). The severe damage inflicted on hospital and other medical facilities (several of which have remained closed) have left a major gap in health care, especially for those suffering from mental illnesses (Colten et al., 2008). Several local strip malls and grocery stores have yet to return to the region, reducing tax revenues and inconveniencing residents who now must commute longer distances to access living essentials (Gray Line, 2010).

Disproportionate Impact

While all residents and communities of New Orleans were impacted by Katrina, as with most major disasters, its effects were not equally distributed. According to Kiefer, Mancini, Morrow, Gladwin and Stewart (2008), "when disaster strikes it inevitably tends to impact most severely the portions of the population that are the least able to prepare for, respond to, or recover from its effects" (p. 1). This indeed turned out to be the case with Hurricane Katrina where the burden fell heaviest on the poor, elderly, African-American, and special needs populations (Sherman and Shapiro, 2005; Cutter et al., 2006; Colten et al., 2008; Kiefer et al., 2008). Multiple sources estimate that over 70% of those who perished as a result of Katrina were over 60 years old (White House, 2006; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005; Morrow, 2008; Bytheway, 2007), and more that 45% of that age group were at least 75 years old (White House, 2006; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005). Moreover, the city found itself largely unprepared to facilitate the evacuation of and/or meet the specific medical care requirements of its "special needs" population, with state officials even lacking a common definition for the phrase "special needs" (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006).

Katrina demonstrated how demographic and economic circumstances, historic patterns of discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities, and the artificial barriers created by the levee

system, have in combination resulted in certain groups (in this case African American and lower income populations) being located in highly segregated neighborhoods, often in the least desirable and most vulnerable areas of the city (Zedlewski, 2006; Cutter et al., 2006; Morrow, 2008). The poverty rate in New Orleans pre-Katrina was extremely high, with an estimated 19% living below the poverty line (Colten et al., 2008), along with roughly 50,000 residents living in neighborhoods with a poverty rate in excess of 40% (Morrow, 2008; Berube & Katz, 2005). Other sources indicate that the poverty rate in New Orleans may have been as high as 28% pre-Katrina (U.S. Census, 2000; Sherman & Shapiro, 2005), with the rate amongst children at roughly 38% (Zedlewski, 2006). Many of these individuals and families, found themselves encircled by and dependent on a rather rigid structural protection system, while lacking the time or resources to evacuate or adapt when the system failed (Colten et al., 2008).

Certain racial/ethnic groups were also impacted disproportionately by the disaster – a dynamic that in many ways became quite visible to external audiences, as live broadcasts via helicopter relayed images time and time again of African Americans stranded on rooftops, and/or being taken by small boats towards the Superdome – reflecting severe flaws in the evacuation and communication processes employed by all levels of government pre-Katrina. Such incidents also shed light on the overrepresentation of African Americans in the poorest communities and provided evidence that “urban blacks, compared to urban whites, are much more likely to be geographically and economically isolated from where jobs, services, and institutions are located” (Morrow, 2008, p. 7-8; Saenz, 2005). In pre-Katrina New Orleans, it is estimated that 40% of the African American community lacked private transportation (Morrow, 2008), making it extremely difficult to evacuate even when/if the mandatory evacuation order was received the day prior to Katrina. Hence, as prior research suggests, a lack of resources, geographic isolation,

along with a lack of political power, disadvantaged lower income African Americans at all stages of both preparedness and response (Morrow, 2008; Cutter et al., 2006; Elliott & Pais, 2006; Fothergill, Maestas & Darlington, 1999; Peacock, Morrow & Gladwin, 1997; Bolin & Bolton, 1986).

The overall “human impact” of Hurricane Katrina is perhaps most evident in recent population shifts. For instance, just one month before Katrina an estimated 455,000 to 460,000 people called New Orleans home, the following year, that figured had plummeted to between 210,000 and 230,000 residents (UNOP, 2007, Sec 3.1.1; Krupa, 2011). While a substantial number of residents have returned since 2006, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, just 343,829 people now live in Orleans Parish, a 24.4% drop since Katrina, and 29% decrease in population since the census was last conducted in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; Krupa, 2011). There have also been some significant shifts in the racial composition of New Orleans since Katrina. While nearly all demographic groups (both in terms of age and race) in New Orleans have experienced some level of outmigration, in terms of proportion, some groups have been impacted more than others. Blacks now comprise roughly 60% percent of the New Orleans population, a drop of roughly 7% since 2000, whereas the percentage of Whites has increased from 28 to 33% over that same time frame (Krupa, 2011). Also noteworthy however, is the increase in Hispanic residents, which not only shifted from 3% in 2000 to roughly 5.2% in 2010, but in terms of sheer numbers, is the only racial group in New Orleans to reflect a net increase, from 9,602 to 11,520 residents (Krupa 2011, GNOCDC, 2011, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Morrow (2008) and Schweikert (2011) (as cited in Hernandez, 2011) attributes the growth in the net number of Hispanics to the availability of post-Katrina construction labor as

the city seeks to rebuild. Whether such population shifts are likely to continue remains unknown.

As perhaps best summarized by Colten et al. (2008), Hurricane Katrina "... overwhelmed the hurricane protection levees in August 2005 and flooded approximately 80 percent of the city, forced a complete and extended evacuation, caused an extensive relocation of population (150,000 fewer residents 2.3 years later), disrupted basic municipal services for months, left over half the city's residences seriously damaged, derailed economic activity, disentangled social networks, and exposed the ineffectiveness of institutional and governmental capabilities to react promptly to such an event (pp.1 & 2)." Moreover, historically marginalized groups (with limited access to resources and information) were largely located in the most vulnerable of geographic regions, which in combination with a flawed local, state and federal response, has resulted in a disproportionate impact on these communities. Thus, in many ways, New Orleans remains a 'tale of two-cities,' much as it was before the disaster, but with increased attention on the region, the devastation, and the geographic division between the haves and have-nots. According to Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré (2010), who commanded the military response to Hurricane Katrina, "Enormous progress in the city's Business District overshadows the lingering blight in the 9th Ward and St. Bernard Parish, where folks are still struggling to rebuild and many lots remain empty" (as cited in CNN, 2010).

Katrina's Impact on Colleges and Universities

As stated by O'Neil et al. (2007) in a detailed report conducted on behalf the *American Association of University Professors (AAUP)*, "the devastation that Hurricane Katrina inflicted on the universities of New Orleans in late August 2005, is undoubtedly the most serious disruption of American higher education in the nation's history" (p. 61). According to

Louisiana's Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. E. Joseph Savoie, approximately 84,000 students and 15,000 faculty members were initially displaced by the hurricane, while the state's public colleges and universities suffered between \$500 and \$600 million in damage, lost more than \$150 million in revenue and tuition, and suffered \$75 million in immediate budget cuts (as cited in O'Neil et al., 2007). The combination of physical damages and revenue related losses reported at private universities in New Orleans, exceed \$1 Billion.

The *Louisiana State University's Health Sciences Center*, which houses a medical school and other health-related programs, was recently awarded approximately \$475 million from FEMA (after a long running dispute and arbitration hearing) to cover a portion of the Katrina related damage to its *Charity Hospital* (Time-Picayune Editorial Staff, 2011). As reported by the O'Neil et al. (2007), the basements and first floors of all Health Sciences Center's buildings were flooded following the storm, causing severe damage to electrical, mechanical, and communications equipment, while the lack of electrical power, air conditioning, and refrigeration ruined perishable medical and research related items. Moreover, roughly three months after the storm, 51 full-time and 34 part-time medical faculty members were placed on furlough, while an additional 10 full-time and 2 part-time faculty members would soon face similar fates (O'Neil et al., 2007).

Southern University of New Orleans (SUNO), a small, private, historically Black university (HBCU) estimates that Katrina-related damages (which continue to rise given reduced enrollments) to its campus will ultimately exceed \$300 million (Ralph, 2006). All eleven buildings located on its main campus, just south of Lake Pontchartrain, were severely damaged by flood waters that in some cases exceed 10 feet in height (SUNO, 2011; O'Neil et al., 2007). Campus closed for the entire Fall 2005 semester, and operations had to be conducted out of

trailers for several months after the university re-opened. In just one year, full-time enrollment at SUNO fell from roughly 3,600 to roughly 2,100 students (SUNO, 2011), while 45 of its roughly 160 full-time faculty members were placed on furlough within 6 months of the disaster (O'Neil et al., 2007).

Additionally, the *University of New Orleans (UNO)*, a mid-sized state university, suffered from damage estimates ranging from \$81.2 million (Mangan 2010) to over \$100 million (O'Neil et al., 2007) in physical damage as well as severe revenue losses as a result of reduced student enrollment figures (Mangan, 2010). Just prior to Katrina, UNO maintained a Fall 2005 enrollment total of 17,250 students. By the Fall 2006 that number had fallen to 11,700 – well below its post Katrina projection of 15,000 students (Provost Barton, as cited in Powers, 2007; Chancellor Ryan, as cited in O'Neil et al., 2007). As of 2010, that number has fallen to 11,276 (UNO, 2011). Given dramatically reduced enrollment figures, student activities fees have also plummeted, leaving the athletic department with a deficit of \$6 million, and prompting the UNO Privateers to move from Division I to Division III athletics (Holder, 2010; Associated Press, 2010). The continued struggles of UNO and SUNO have resulted in legislative proposals at the state level, to merge the institutions (Moller, 2011). To date such initiatives have been met with defeat.

Hence, Katrina-related challenges for colleges and universities in the New Orleans area involve far more than the physical damage, and include lost tuition revenues, the need to reinvent admissions/recruitment procedures, reconstruct lost student and faculty records and research data, rebuild research facilities, and retain and recruit faculty and staff, amongst other challenges (Mitroff, 2006, p. 3). While students were relocated all over the country, many faculty members and scientists who remained in the region lost their life's work in terms of research (Gardner,

2005). Others lost loved ones and or found themselves pulled between the at times competing objectives of family members seeking to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, a community seeking to clean up the visible devastation, and a college or university seeking to recover and resume “business as usual” as swiftly as possible.

It is important to recognize that colleges and universities are themselves largely reflections of the environments in which they exist, and as such are wrapped in the culture and history of the region that surrounds them (Corwin, 1987). Moreover, as expressed by Corwin (1987) “... environmental conditions and organizational strategies used to cope with them mutually influence one another” (Corwin, 1987, p. 158). Hence, as noted above, far from escaping the damage of Hurricane Katrina, colleges and universities in New Orleans faced severe devastation. Moreover, just as the previously highlighted economic disparities, historic patterns of discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities, and geographic barriers created by the levees, contributed to the disproportionate impact of Hurricane Katrina on various segments of the local populace (*e.g.*, African Americans and those near or below the poverty line), and posed unique obstacles to recovery, such dynamics were largely mirrored within the higher education community.

As such, New Orleans-based HBCU’s (*e.g.*, *Southern University*) were located in regions of city that proved to be particularly vulnerable to the impact of levee breaches, and as a result suffered disproportionate damages (*e.g.*, entire campus’s inundated with several feet of water) in comparison to most other postsecondary institutions in the region (who faced less severe or more confined flooding). Moreover, given the similarly disproportionate impact of Katrina on their predominately low-income, African American, surrounding communities, –HBCU’s faced barriers to response and recovery that extended beyond most other campuses in the region (*e.g.*,

fewer financial resources and a more limited local population from which to draw students). Such challenges and disparities are further highlighted in Chapter VIII, which discusses the experiences of University C (a highly regarded HBCU) with Katrina and its aftermath.

Ultimately however, while the devastation resulting from Katrina was not equally distributed, all campuses in the region faced severe challenges in the aftermath of the disaster, threatening the very survival of many colleges and universities (private and public, religiously affiliated and non-religiously affiliated, HBCU and non-HBCU). A diagram of the approximate location of New Orleans-based colleges and universities in relation to the flooding that resulted from Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee breaches can be found in *Figure 5.1, Appendix E*. As powerfully illustrated by Louisiana’s Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. E. Joseph Savoie:

The operations of every campus in the impacted area was totally disrupted. The colleges and universities that were intact after Hurricane Katrina were converted into medical triage centers, evacuee shelters, and support facilities for first responders and military personnel... Day-to-day decisions had to be made without the benefit of knowing if the physical structure of institutions still existed. It was nearly two weeks before special permission was granted by federal authorities to even access these damaged campuses in Black Hawk helicopters with military escorts due to looting and security concerns (Savoie, Response to AAUP Report, 2007; in O’Neil et al., 2007, p. 124).

Hence, the catastrophic impact of Hurricane Katrina on higher education in the state of New Orleans, “cannot be overstated” (Savoie, Response to AAUP Report, 2007; in O’Neil et al., 2007, p. 124).

Chapter Summary

Influenced by the City’s rich history, culture and demographic shifts, the Katrina-based context depicted above has informed and continues to inform nearly every important decision made by college and university leaders in New Orleans, while directly and/or indirectly

impacting all local university actors (faculty, staff and students), since it became clear that Hurricane Katrina would be that “devastating storm” residents of region had long feared.

The chapters to follow highlight the experiences of three New Orleans based universities (*University A*, *University B*, and *University C*) which suffered a direct hit Hurricane Katrina, while uncovering key leader behaviors that the data suggests had an impact on institutional efforts to respond to and recover from the devastating storm.

CHAPTER VI

UNIVERSITY A & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF

HURRICANE KATRINA

As we gathered in our hotel suite, I realized that since its founding in 1832, University A had survived yellow fever, civil war, numerous hurricanes and two world wars. This would be its greatest challenge by far, but we had to ensure that it survived Katrina and the levee breaks of 2005. I was bound and determined that the university would not go out of business on my watch. *President, University A, December 2006*

Background – A Major Research University

Located in New Orleans, *University A's* origins can be traced back to 1834 – with the founding of the Deep South's second oldest medical school. Roughly thirteen-years after its founding (in 1847), however, the medically-focused institution was incorporated into a newly established state system, the *University of Louisiana*. University C's status as a public institution would last until 1884, at which time the Louisiana state legislature reorganized and named the newly private institution in honor of a wealthy merchant who bequeathed more than \$1 million to endow a university "for the promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral and industrial education" (University A, 2011, History). Two years later (1886), a *Women's College* was established as part of the university, becoming the first degree-granting college for women to be founded within a university in the United States.

From its humble beginnings, *University A* has evolved into one of the most highly regarded and selective independent research universities in the nation. As a private, nonsectarian institution, the university is overseen by a Board of Trustees (with 38 current members). The university boasts membership in the *Association of American Universities* – a select group of the

61 leading research universities in the United States and Canada with “preeminent programs of graduate and professional education and scholarly research” (University A, 2011, History), and is categorized as a university with “very high research activity” by the *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching* (2011) – a classification that includes only 2 percent of universities nationwide.

University A’s main campus in New Orleans spans 110 acres, and consists of 80 buildings which house the majority of its schools and colleges. The university also jointly owns and operates a major *Medical School and Hospital* (in partnership with a major health care corporation) at a location in New Orleans a few miles from the institution’s main campus. Additionally, in other parts of the Gulf Coast, the university maintains a *National Primate Research Center* and a *Museum of Natural History*; a *Medical/Science focused Research Center*, with facilities specific to research in medicine as well as the environmental, behavioral and computer sciences; a *School of Continuing Studies*, with satellite campuses at three regional locations; and a *School of Business*, which offers Executive and Professional MBA programs at a regional satellite campus.

In pursuing its mission of *creating, conserving and communicating knowledge to further the capacity of individuals, communities and organizations to act, think, earn and lead with wisdom and integrity* (paraphrased from University A’s Mission Statement, 2011), University A’s schools and colleges offer degrees in the liberal arts, science and engineering, architecture, business, law, social work, medicine, and public health and tropical medicine – offering more than 2,500 undergraduate majors in the fine arts, social sciences and humanities alone. The university also provides opportunities for participation in men’s and women’s NCAA Division I athletics.

University A has long served as the largest private employer in New Orleans – consisting of approximately 1,100 full-time faculty and 1,540 full-time staff members, who together serve 8,338 undergraduate and 5,021 graduate and professional students, from all 50 United States and 40 different countries. Nearly 70% of University A’s current undergraduate population is from out-of-state (this includes international students from some 47 different countries), along with 71% of its graduate/professional student population (University A, Enrollment Profile, 2011). The university’s enrollment data further depicts a undergraduate population that is predominately female (58%) and Caucasian (70%), with roughly 8% of undergraduates identifying as African American, 4% Asian, 4% Hispanic, 2% Multi-racial, .5% American Indian, and 11% as “Other” (University A, Facts, 2011; University A, Enrollment Profile, 2011). The University’s graduate/professional student-body is roughly 51% female and its racial/ethnic breakdown closely parallels the institution’s undergraduate population, but with proportionally fewer Caucasians at 64%, and larger percentages of Asians at 7%, and “Other” at 16% (University A, Enrollment Profile, 2011).

*Other Facts and Figures*⁸:

- *U.S. News & World Report Rankings*: University A is ranked in the top 50 within the “Best National Universities” and “Great Schools/Great Prices” categories, and top 50 for its undergraduate offerings and its School of Law. The institution is also ranked in the top 25 for Environmental Law, Biomedical Engineering, its School of Public Health, and its Healthcare Management program. The university is also cited by *U.S. News* for its high-quality service learning programs and for having a Law School with a racially diverse student body.
- *Newsweek Rankings*: University A is ranked amongst the nation’s 25 “most service-minded schools.”

⁸ The university rankings listed below are based primarily on information presented online via “About University A.” Where possible, the rankings were verified by accessing the original source of the data.

- *Kaplan/Newsweek's College Guide Rankings*: University A has been named as one of the 25 “Hot Schools” in the nation twice in the past decade.
- *Highly Regarded Business School*: University A’s *School of Business* is highly ranked by *Forbes* magazine – top 50 overall ranking and top 35 amongst private universities; London's *Financial Times* ranks its MBA Program in the top 50, nationally, and top 75 globally, and its finance department as top 10 in the world; *America Economica* – lists its Executive MBA program as amongst the top 35 in the world; and *Entrepreneur Magazine* ranks the university amongst the top 25 graduate programs for entrepreneurs.
- *Renowned Latin American Studies Program*: University A’s Latin American Studies program is ranked within the top 5 by the *Gourman Report of Undergraduate and Professional Programs in American and International Universities*.

Katrina’s Impact on University A

On August 29, 2005 at 6:10 a.m., an event began that would forever change *University A*, its students, faculty and staff members. For several hours, *Hurricane Katrina*, with its torrential rains and sustained winds in excess of 160 mph, hammered the New Orleans based university, and its surrounding community. This was followed shortly thereafter by dozens of levee breaches throughout the city and the overflow of the nearby Mississippi River, which in combination caused heavy damage to University A, and as noted in Chapter V, devastated New Orleans and drove out the majority of its half-million inhabitants.

Over the week prior to Katrina arrival, while university leaders were monitoring the storm, few at University A were seriously concerned about the storm until just a couple of days prior to it ultimately making landfall in Louisiana (Contributor 3 – Leader, University A; Contributor 5 – Leader, University A). This was due, in part, to early projections (which proved inaccurate) of the storm’s path and strength; the fact that New Orleans had weathered many storms in the past (which were often “overhyped” pre-arrival); the university had a “hurricane plan” in place; and few, if any, had imagined the extent of damage that could take place in a

“worst-case scenario.” As a matter of fact, on Friday evening (just two days prior to the arrival of the front-end of storm) when the President’s Chief of Staff began taking historical architectural renderings of the university off of the walls of the President’s office for storage purposes (as was standard when concerns arose over a major storm), the President initial response was “What are you doing?” believing that his key assistant may have been overreacting (Contributor 5 – Leader, University A).

However, by that next morning (Saturday), projections of the massive storm’s path and strength had changed considerably, and the concerns of university leaders shifted in kind. On a day when incoming student typically attend Freshman orientation, flyers were instead distributed urging students to meet at a large auditorium, where the President of *University A* encouraged all students with means to do so to evacuate immediately, while announcing that the school would be closed until September 1st (Contributor 1 – Leader, University A; Contributor 2 – Leader, University A). Those unable to leave with parents, or secure shelter with friends or family a safe distance from New Orleans, were encouraged to contact designated university officials for evacuation to a previously designated evacuation shelter at a university in neighboring Mississippi. In total, roughly 650 students (including the football team and 150 first year students), along with a small group of university leaders (*e.g.*, the Vice President for University Relations), student affairs professionals, communications and public relations staff members were transported (primarily by bus) to the previously mentioned evacuation site in Mississippi (Multiple Contributors – University A).

Several key members of the university’s leadership team (including its President, Vice President for Communications, Chief Financial Officer, and Director of Public Safety), along with designated facilities and maintenance staff, remained on campus throughout the storm to

help ensure a rapid response to challenges as they emerged. Three days later, these same leaders and staff members would find themselves largely stranded on campus surrounded by a sea of oil-filled water, a lack of electricity, sporadic communication and running low on food and water. By Tuesday, the President's Chief of Staff, who had evacuated to Texas with her family on the eve of the storm (along with a pair of golden retrievers – one of which belonged to the President), had begun searching for ways to facilitate the evacuation of those stranded on campus. Communicating primarily via text message with those remaining at University A (one of the only means of communication still-operational after the levee breaches), the President's Chief of Staff arranged for key members of the leadership team to be rescued by helicopter two days later (on Thursday morning). The evacuees were then flown to Houston, where they would spend the next several weeks living in hotel rooms, joined by family members and pets, seeking status reports and putting together a plan to respond to rapidly changing circumstances – hoping to lead the institution towards full-recovery from the unprecedented disaster (Multiple Contributors – University A).

As noted previously, University A also jointly owns and operates a *Medical School and Hospital*, in partnership with a major for-profit health care corporation. Thus, at the same time that personnel affiliated with University A's primary campus were seeking to respond to Katrina and its devastating aftermath, faculty, staff and medical personal at its hospital/medical center (located closer to downtown New Orleans), were encountering their own set of rapidly shifting circumstances and challenges. Perhaps foremost amongst those challenges became the need to evacuate more than 1,000 inhabitants of its seven-story university hospital and clinic, who had waited out the storm, including 120 patients (along with an additional 58 patients that has been transported to the hospital by a federal agency just prior to Katrina's arrival), medical personnel,

faculty, staff, and family members of both patients and university/medical corporation employees (Carey, 2006; Gray & Hebert, 2006; North Hills Hospital, 2005; Multiple Contributors – University A).

As of mid-afternoon on Monday (the day of the storm's arrival), it initially appeared that a major post-Katrina evacuation from the medical school would not need to take place, as the medical center's multiple levels of emergency power were working effectively and hospital personnel began returning supplies and operations to the ground floor (Carey, 2006). By Monday evening, however, (after the storm had largely passed through New Orleans), it became clear that circumstances were beginning to take a dramatic turn for the worse, as the relatively modest flooding in front of the hospital (which could be attributed directly to the storm) had risen to ankle depth, and would double soon thereafter (Carey, 2006; Contributor 2 – Leader, University A; Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A). Hence, according to firsthand accounts, not only had it become clear that there were severe breaches in the levee system, but as reports began to surface that “the water was rising an inch every five minutes,” the medical center's emergency power system would soon be rendered inoperable (Carey, 2006, p. 7; Gray & Hebert, 2006).

Reports also spread that the security situation in New Orleans was beginning to deteriorate, and occasional gunfire could be heard in the distance, triggering concerns over the possibility that looters or residents seeking refuge might see the medical school as an attractive venue (Carey, 2006; Hampton & McConnell, 2006; CNN Health, 2005). Surrounded by several feet of water, a devastated city, a lack of electricity and scattered communications, over the next week, the hospital arranged and coordinated a major airlift, on a makeshift helicopter landing pad, established on the roof of a parking garage (Carey, 2006; Grey & Hebert, 2006; CNN

Health, 2005; Multiple Interviewees, University A). Hospital security personnel, armed with semiautomatic rifles and shotguns, patrolled and protected facilities while medical personnel and staff focused on evacuating patients (Carey, 2006).

After all patients had been evacuated, medical personnel, faculty and staff (and their family members) were similarly airlifted by helicopter to Louis Armstrong Airport, where they were to be transported by bus to Lafayette, Louisiana (Carey, 2006; Grey & Hebert, 2006; North Hills Hospital, 2005). Once in Louisiana, evacuees were taken to one of 39 hospital rooms for bathing and disinfection and taken to one of two air-conditioned shelters, with hundreds of air-mattress, cleans sheets and pillows, catered food, prepaid cell phones, and shuttle buses to take people where they needed to go – a striking contrast with where they had just been (Carey, 2006; North Hills Hospital, 2005).

Damage Summary

Fortunately, most members of the university community were able to evacuate prior to Katrina's arrival, and those without the means for evacuation (including about 650 students as noted above) were transported safely by bus to Mississippi prior to Katrina, preventing loss of life on campus. However, the damages sustained by the university (both to facilities and operations) were severe, as more than two-thirds of University A's facilities (including dormitories) were flooded significantly and/or impacted by hazardous mold – prompting the university to close campus for the entire Fall semester, while its students, faculty and staff members were dispersed to locations throughout the country. Such significant concerns, prompted some experts to question whether the university's main campus could ever reopen and resulted in serious discussion regarding whether the jointly owned Medical School (which on a

temporary and more limited basis had reconstituted at a Private University in Texas⁹) should be moved out of Louisiana permanently, particularly if many former and potential future hospital patients never return to New Orleans (Contributor 17 – External Expert, University A; Contributor 7 – Leader/Faculty, University A).

In total, the leaders of University A indicate that the university suffered upwards of \$400 million dollars in structural damage and \$600 million in total losses (structural damage + lost revenue) as a result of Katrina, prompting the institution to declare *financial exigency*.¹⁰ Moreover, when 27 massive freezers lost power in the aftermath of the storm, “the resulting heat destroyed 33 years’ worth of blood samples collected as part of a research project [looking] into adolescent heart disease...” (Kronholz & Fatis, Wall Street Journal, 2005). Hence, in the months following the disaster, citing (in part) the fiscal concerns and losses above, University A laid off several hundred employees, starting on September 30th with the release of all part-time faculty, part-time staff who were not eligible for benefits, and part-time staff who were hired after May 1 who were eligible for benefits (Mowbray & White, 2005). This was followed at the end of December with the layoffs of 234 staff members, and nearly 10 percent of its faculty (roughly 230 total – 65 of whom were tenured). Noting similar budgetary concerns, the debt rating agency, *Moody’s*, downgraded University A’s long term *bond rating* from A1 to A2, and its *rating outlook* from “stable” to “negative.”

Additionally, in conjunction with the university’s *Recovery Plan* (highlighted below), the university eliminated eight undergraduate and graduate-level engineering programs; phased out

⁹ During the months following Katrina, University A’s Medical School reconstituted in a more limited fashion at Private University in Texas, as the host institution’s School of Medicine generously shared its facilities with University A’s faculty, staff, and students until those affected by Katrina were able to return to their home university.

¹⁰ The specific breakdown of damages varies by reporting source. According to Mangan and O’Leary (2010): Total physical damage to University A reached \$480 million – \$129.7 million of which was covered by federal sources.

more than one-third its doctoral programs; and eliminated half of its athletic programs. As perhaps best stated by Terry Hartle (via The Michigan Daily, 2005), Senior Vice President of the *American Council on Education*, in noting the significant changes to University A in the aftermath of Katrina: “I have thought long and hard to see if I could identify a comparable change at another university in the last century, and I can’t.”

A Plan for Recovery

The unprecedented damage caused by Hurricane Katrina presented University A with extraordinary challenges. In response to the devastation, the University President (along with a team of both internal and external advisors) spent seven weeks (much of which in Houston) working on a detailed plan for recovery. The resulting recovery plan (referred to as the *renewal plan*) has two primary objectives: 1) short term – secure the immediate survival and recovery of the institution; and 2) long term – ensure the continued “academic ascendancy and financial health of the institution.” Central elements of the plan include the following:

- *Professors of Practice*: Rather than employing adjunct or part-time faculty as in the past, the Recovery Plan stipulates that (where needed) current faculty be supplemented with “Professors of Practice,” or full-time, non-tenured faculty members whose primary assignment is teaching and who are not expected to undertake regular service or research responsibilities. Additionally, all full-time faculty members are now required to teach undergraduates (Epstein, 2005).
- *Residential Colleges*: Starting with the freshman class of 2007, first and second-year students have been required to live on campus. The “residential colleges,” to which students belong throughout their undergraduate years, provide the opportunity to live in communities with faculty members and their families, as well as participate in new opportunities for study and extracurricular engagement.
- *Community Service*: To encourage its students to develop a commitment to community outreach and help New Orleans rebuild, University A has created a *Center for Public Service* – which will centralize and expand public service opportunities for University

A's students. A new graduation requirement in Public Service has been added to the student portfolio.

- *New Undergraduate College*: In an effort to “simplify the undergraduate academic organization, and consolidate the administrative structure that supports undergraduate education” – University A suspended admissions to its separate *Women’s College* and created a single *Undergraduate College* incorporating the name of the *Women’s College* with the name of the broader university – “*Women’s College-University A*”.
- *New Advising Structure*: In accordance with the Renewal Plan, the school-based advising system has been replaced by a *Center for Academic Advising* – to further consolidate administrative functions.
- *Program Eliminations*: Multiple academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels were phased out or suspended, including all Engineering majors (8 programs total) with the exception of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering; and more than one-third of its PhD programs (e.g. Law, Social Work, and various hard/soft Sciences).
- *Liberal Arts v. Hard Sciences*: The faculty of the *Liberal Arts and Sciences* and the *School of Engineering* were reorganized into two new schools: *The School of Liberal Arts* and the *School of Science and Engineering*.
- *Collaborative Ventures*: University A fostered a partnership with other universities in the region (including University B and University C) focused on facilitating efforts to *restore* and *transform* urban areas of New Orleans and the Southern Gulf Region that had been hard hit by the disaster.
- *Restructured School of Medicine*: At the medical center, clinical programs were dramatically reduced as university leaders’ foresaw a long-term reduction in the size of the population needing such services. More than one-third of Medical School’s faculty members (180 total) were laid-off.
- *Intercollegiate Athletics*: University A secured waivers from the NCAA (as well as the athletic conference to which the university retains membership) to exempt it from Division I membership requirements for a five-year period – allowing University A to continue as a Division I program while only competing in eight sports (half of its pre-Katrina total). A task force was appointed to develop a renewal strategy for intercollegiate athletics.

- *Graduate School Administrative Shift:* University A eliminated its *Graduate School* as an entity – shifting administrative responsibility for graduate programs to individual departments.

Has University A Recovered?

Just one day after Hurricane Katrina's departure from New Orleans, University A's President made the following declaration, in an email to students: "*We are determined to move forward as quickly as possible and make University A an even stronger and healthier institution. We have been in New Orleans for 171 years and we look forward to another century in this great city.*" For much of the past 6 years, University A's focus has been on implementing aspects of the aforementioned recovery plan and elements designed to strengthen the university beyond its prior status.

As of today, according to institutional data and all interviewees (leaders, faculty and staff), the University is at least very close to if not fully recovered. Several participants actually contend that the University has exceeded its status prior to Katrina, is now more efficient and better positioned to handle future disasters. In interviews with senior leaders, faculty and staff, the President and members of the University's leadership team received praise from nearly all participants (often repeatedly) and were credited time and time again for having rescued the university from potentially dire circumstances and for facilitating the institution's recovery. External audiences have taken notice, as in 2009 the *Carnegie Corporation* presented the President of University A with one of four *Academic Leadership Awards*, while in 2010 *Time Magazine* named the university head one of the *10 Best College Presidents* in the United States. Please refer to *Table 6.1, Appendix F* for University A's current Institutional Profile (including pre/post-Katrina data comparisons).

Evidence cited by participants that University A has recovered, includes: 1) the completion of nearly all campus reconstruction projects (aside from some modest air-conditioning units upgrades); 2) an endowment that has grown to \$888 million (as of August 2010, from \$693 Billion in August of 2004 (NACUBO-Commonfund, 2011); 3) the achievement of the University's \$700 million capital campaign fundraising goal (exceeded by \$30 Million); 4) annual *undergraduate application totals* which now more than double pre-Katrina levels; 5) its 2011-2012 total enrollment of 13,359 students, including 8,338 undergraduates, and 1,625 first-time freshmen – all numbers that now modestly exceed University A's 2004 (pre-Katrina) enrollment figures; 6) its 2009-10 freshman-to-sophomore year *student retention rate* of 91.1%, which represents the university's highest level of student persistence in its 170-year history (2010-11 student retention rate fell slightly to 90%); 7) in July of 2010, University A's athletic department returned to full time status offering 16 NCAA eligible sports programs for the first time since 2005; and 8) the quality and scope of clinical practice at the medical school had rebounded (despite a smaller population in the City) and medical school applications now exceed pre-Katrina levels. Additionally, contributors note that the university is now far more prepared for future disasters, with plans revised to take into account worst case scenarios, the need for cash reserves, and the pre-designation of two evacuation sites (with leaders split between the sites). The decision to pre-designate two evacuation sites is meant to ensure that if one site becomes uninhabitable (as was temporarily the case when Hurricane Rita struck Houston just weeks after University A's recovery team had relocated to that destination), the entire disaster response/recovery team will not need to identify and move to a new site as events are unfolding. They will instead join their colleagues at the second evacuation site.

Other Noteworthy Data:

- The university's bond rating, according to *Moody's*, remains at A2, but its rating outlook returned to "stable" (from "negative") roughly 20 months post-Katrina.
- *Standard & Poor's* currently gives University A an A+ bond-rating, with a stable outlook going forward (highest rating is AAA).
- 86% of University A's student population returned for the Spring 2006 semester, including 98.5% of the institution's medical students.
- In 2009, the *American Association of University Professors (AAUP)* removed University A from its list of censored institutions.

A faculty member/mid-level administrator who maintains an office both on main campus and at the university's medical school summarizes the recovery as follows:

The university's recovered beautifully by really any parameter you might use to measure. Our research – research has increased since Katrina. That's remarkable actually considering the faculty attrition and the faculty setbacks. The student enrollment has increased. The quality of students has increased at both undergraduate and professional levels. The number of applicants has increased. Philanthropy is good. So I think the university really has recovered. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Contrary Evidence

While in most higher education circles and nearly all interviews, the leadership team at University A (particularly the President) has received praise for taking "bold" and "necessary" steps to help facilitate the university (and to some extent the City's recovery), and has been lauded for the success of the university's fundraising endeavors post-Katrina – the efforts of university leaders to facilitate recovery have not gone without criticism (whether correctly or incorrectly placed). Some critics have noted perceived inconsistencies in public statements, perceived secretive/non-inclusive decision-making processes, and question the severity of the actions taken through the Recovery Plan. In the short-term, such issues have angered and negatively impacted University A's reputation in the eyes of a noteworthy professional association, the *American Association of University Professors (AAUP)*, some current and

former faculty members (voicing concerns separate from the AAUP), as well as a select group of vocal alumni.

In June 2007, after University A had implemented several aspects of its recovery plan, the AAUP voted to *censure* the institution for (according to the organization): 1) the administration's "refusal to provide any but the most generic evidence with respect to the declared state of financial exigency" (AAUP, as cited in Fogg, 2007, para. 14); 2) knowingly violating its own Faculty Handbook by laying off faculty members without an appeals process – arguing (according to the AAUP) that the Handbook is "not legally enforceable;" and 3) splitting the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences into separate schools without faculty consultation, thus, violating faculty bylaws and AAUP policies. While not legally binding, *censure* by the AAUP "informs the academic community that the administration of an institution has not adhered to the generally recognized principles of academic freedom and tenure jointly formulated by the AAUP and the *Association of American Colleges and Universities* and endorsed by more than 200 professional and educational organizations" (Burns, AAUP, 2007).¹¹ Roughly two and a half years after being placed on censure (November 2009), in accordance with steps taken by University A to reassure the AAUP that faculty will have an enhanced role in decision making as it relates to *financial exigency*, and that tenure will be respected going forward, the institution's *censure label* was removed.

Comments from a handful of faculty members (separate from the AAUP) in print, web-based publications, and internet-blogs, further reflect such frustrations with the university's recovery plan and some of the decisions of its President. As stated by a Professor of Electrical

¹¹ University A released a statement referring to the AAUP's report of its response to Katrina, on which censure was based as a "deeply flawed, factually inaccurate document riddled with erroneous information and contradictions that do not support its own conclusions... is a disservice to the values for which AAUP stands and to the thousands of individuals... who have suffered through the worst natural disaster in the history of the U.S." (in Jaschik, 2007).

Engineering (employed by University A for more than 23 years) shortly after the plans announcement: “Nobody has any idea about the figures...there were several forums [since the announcement], and [the President] wouldn’t give any numbers” (Epstein, 2006, p.5). A second (undisclosed) engineering professor from an eliminated department called the university’s decisions “an ugly surprise” and a “man-made catastrophe after Katrina” (Epstein, 2005, p.2). Finally, according to a Medical School faculty member, “Maybe the [broader university] is doing well, however the Medical School has suffered and continues to suffer. My own department is down to 3 faculty from 15 pre-Katrina thanks to [University A’s President]...” (as cited in Pope, 2005, p. 5).

Two vocal groups of university alumni have expressed similar frustrations, with by far the most public criticism (during both the recovery plans announcement and implementation) stemming from alums of the university’s historic *Women’s College*, several of whom remain incensed by the decision to merge it with another unit – as part of the university’s stated effort to create a unified *Undergraduate College*, and to reduce duplicative administrative staff. Some graduates of the *Women’s College* were so angered by the merger, that they filed a lawsuit in a U.S. District Court in an effort to keep the college a distinct unit. Having lost that decision, and a subsequent appeal (due in part to “lack of standing”) the relatives of the long deceased woman whose philanthropy originated the *Women’s College* entered the picture and took their case to the Louisiana Supreme Court. In 2011, the Louisiana Supreme Court upheld the lower court’s decision, ruling in University A’s favor (Goldman, 2011).

Several Engineering alumni have also voiced concerns about University A’s post-Katrina restructuring efforts – openly questioning the logic of reducing the number of engineering programs available when the City of New Orleans requires skilled engineers to help facilitate

recovery. While to date, University A's Engineering alum have not sought legal action, one such group, the "*Society of University A Engineers*" authored and published a formal complaint stating that "the decision to decimate engineering is [inconsistent] with the needs of the city... is unfathomable and we believe illogical" (Kanger, 2005, p. 1). The Society (2005) further questioned the logic of eliminating departments with alumni that "have contributed tens of millions of dollars to the President's [post-Katrina capital campaign] and millions earlier" (Kanger, 2005, p. 1). Other engineering alumni have questioned (occasionally in vulgar language) whether University A will have the ability to continue attracting high quality students stating that "a university without a [separate] School of Engineering is no university..." and suggesting that potential engineering students "...tend not to gravitate to engineering schools that have only a couple of departments" (Anonymous, as cited in Pope, 2005, p. 5). Today however, according to the leadership of University A, the newly created, *School of Sciences and Engineering* (with a more limited selection of engineering majors) is the largest and most successful school on the university's main campus (Contributor 4 – Leader, University A).

It is also important to note that while many, if not most, of University A's enrollment and academic measures have now improved beyond pre-Katrina level, *6-year graduation rates* have yet to do so. *6-year graduation rates* for its 2004 cohort stand at 70%, down 3% from 2003, and 6% from 2001.¹² The University indicates that some who did not return (hence counting against university graduation rates) may very well have graduated from other colleges or universities, thus skewing the data in a less favorable direction. Moreover, university leaders note record *first year student retention rates* as evidence of potential future graduation rate improvements.

Whether this bears out will be evident as future cohorts near graduation. In any event, *6-year*

¹² Note: University A did not report graduation rates for its Fall 2005 cohort, as the University was closed for the semester due to Katrina. Many students who had initially enrolled at the university did not return post-Katrina, yet would counted as "non-graduates," for impacting the quality of graduation rata data for that cohort.

graduation rates at University A remain one of the few institutional measures that have yet to reach or exceed pre-Katrina levels.

Please refer to *Table 6.2* below for an overall assessment of University’s A’s recovery efforts to date:

Table 6.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University A.

Name	Total Undergraduate Applicants 2004 to 2011	Total Enrollment Comparison 2004 to 2011*	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005 v. 2011	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04 v. 10/11 Cohort**	6-year Graduation Rate 1999 v. 2004 Cohort***	Financial Viability	Facilities & Campus Repairs	General Assessment of Contributors
<i>University A</i>	Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Recovered	Recovered/Beyond Recovered

Leader Behavior at University A

Key in facilitating and helping determine whether an organization’s disaster response and recovery efforts are ultimately successful, involves the skill and quality of its leadership and/or leadership team (Cameron & Lavine, 2006). This was particularly the case in the midst of Hurricane Katrina, where the City of New Orleans and its infrastructure were devastated, local officials were overwhelmed, and any thoughts of waiting on the state or federal government to rescue the regions universities (as fiscal and logistical challenges continued to mount) would have proven futile and perhaps even resulted in some institutions never reopening. Thus, university leaders and their teams were left to deal with the crisis and develop/implement strategies to facilitate institutional survival (with a longer term goal of full recovery). As news reports highlighted devastation to the region, they worried for the safety of university personnel, family members, friends, and personal property, and all the while, events were continuing to

unfold. As stated by the President of University A in a press release, one day after the storm's departure from New Orleans:

We have started the process of assessing the condition of our campus facilities and determining how long it will take us to reopen. This assessment process will take days because many of the answers will be determined by how quickly the city and its services become operational. The situation is further complicated by the fact that there is no power in the city, water levels continue to rise, all city roads are blocked, and the vast majority of our workforce had to leave the parish as part of the mandatory evacuation order... Given the uncertainties, we cannot determine at this time when employees and students should return to campus. We will do the best we can to keep you apprised of our situation and progress.

In analyzing the experiences of University A with Katrina, and the *impact of leader behavior on institutional response and recovery efforts*, interviews were conducted with 16 current/former University A employees, along with an external expert (a former University President) who was asked by the President of University A to serve in an advisory capacity at the outset of the institution's recovery efforts. Of the 16 participants directly affiliated with University A, 7 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (1 of which also held a faculty appointment), 5 filled mid-level leadership roles (4 of which also served in faculty capacities); and 4 served in staff-level positions with the university. Please refer to *Table 6.3* below for more detail on the positions held by contributors at (or associated with) University A in the aftermath of Katrina.

Table 6.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University A.

Contributors: University A
President
Faculty, Law School
Faculty, Microbiology & Immunology
Leader, Communications & Marketing
Leader, Financial Affairs
Leader, President's Office
Leader, University Relations
Leader/Faculty, Department of Medicine
Mid-level Leader, Athletics
Mid-level Leader, Legal Affairs
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Medical Education
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Research Administration
Staff, Admissions
Staff, Communications & Marketing
Staff, Human Resources
Staff, Public Relations
External Expert/Advisor - Former University President

Through the extensive document analysis and interview process (depicted in Chapter IV) several key themes and subthemes of leader behavior emerged and/or were noted by participants as having played key roles in the response and recovery efforts of University A. Those receiving particular emphasis include (but are not limited to): financial and relational reserves, competence, resourcefulness/adaptability, viewing circumstances through multiple mental frames, facilitating awareness, symbolic action, creating a context for meaning and action, and understanding (and navigating) common reactions to trauma.

Collectively contributors also shed light on three potential new subthemes of leader behavior that played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts at University A, including: 1) *navigating the external environment*, 2) *emphasizing the university's mission*, and 3) *sense of humor*. These possible new subthemes of leader behavior will be discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter. The degree to which each theme/subtheme of leader behavior (whether previously or newly identified) was exhibited by leaders and/or perceived by

contributors at University A as an important influencer of disaster response and recovery efforts, is noted in *Table 6.4* and discussed in detail below – beginning with *leader driven organizational dynamics*.

Table 6.4: Leader Behavior at University A: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.

	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important
<u>Leader Behavior</u>	
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>	
<i>balancing structure with flexibility</i>	High
<i>reliability</i>	n/a
<i>mindfulness</i>	n/a
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	High
<i>managing the external environment</i>	High
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>	
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	High
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>	High
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	High
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	Medium
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	High
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>	High
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>	
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	High
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	High (emphasis on Janusian)
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	n/a
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	High
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	High (balance of both)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	Medium
<i>timing</i>	High
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>	
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	High
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	High
<i>symbolic actions</i>	High
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	High
<i>emphasizing institutional mission</i>	High
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>	
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	High
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	High
<i>spirituality</i>	Low
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	High

Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

I walk into the room that is now University A and what is it... it was [the President's] hotel room. That was University A operationally, and in [the President's] hotel room, there must have been 40 people. Sitting everywhere, everywhere, everywhere. On the floor, on the sofas, it was a suite, so thankfully there were a couple of rooms. Everywhere, working, just working madly. *Contributor #13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

The theme of *leader-driven organizational dynamics* was noted frequently by interviewees as having played an important role in facilitating an effective response to the disaster and in moving the institution along a path towards full-recovery. Contrarily, some interviewees note that the presence or (in certain cases) absence of organizational dynamics may have inhibited efforts of the university to recover post-Katrina. The complexity of post disaster operations and context wherein organizational dynamics were to play a significant role has perhaps best been summarized by a member of University A's leadership team:

It was a very extensive operation. We had numerous committees and sub-committees of people I would be responsible for. Looking for housing in the city for faculty, staff, and students. There was another committee that was going to prioritize building restoration... You can't do it all at once. You've got a little over 100 buildings on this campus. Hiring contractors. Where are we going to get – who can come back to the city? Who can provide housing and food for their employees while they're here... There were military personnel living in [the main administration] building with tents out in the quad out behind it. They were part of the rescue and recovery team and security for the city. They had vehicles out here in the parking circle. They had port-a-johns out on the sidewalks. They pretty much commandeered this whole building and all of the green space behind it. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Each organizational characteristic highlighted by participants was either influenced by the leadership team, or in hindsight (based on lessons learned) may have been altered by leadership– in a manner that would have benefitted the university in the aforementioned context. Those subthemes commonly addressed by participants include: 1) the balance between *structure* and *flexibility*; and 2) *relational* and *financial reserves*.

Structure vs. Flexibility

Nearly all interviewees at University A emphasized the role and importance of organizational structure in facilitating/inhibiting university response and recovery efforts, with several highlighting the President's decision to "flatten the organization," and temporarily move away from the university's standard "shared governance model," as being a central (and some say a necessary) aspect of the institutions early response, given rapidly changing circumstances and the need to make a large number of decisions almost instantaneously. Coinciding with the flattened structure was a clear *chain-of-command*, with the President serving as the ultimate decision maker when/where issues rose to that level.

A key member of the President's Cabinet explains the revised organization structure as follows:

Well, I would say number one is that we had completely collapsed the organization such that the normal structures were no longer in place. We went to a... command and control kind of model ... changing that structure, I think, made a huge amount of difference. There was no ambiguity about what was going to be the focus of the day and who was going to be doing what... It enabled us to make decisions really quickly.
Contributor 1 – Leader, University A

The structure is further illustrated and justified by another key university leader who notes that:

In a time of crisis, though, you don't have the opportunity to have a shared governance model. And therefore, you have to go into more of an authoritative mode where you have to take control of the situation... A command and control environment in my view is absolutely necessary in times of crisis. You can't otherwise succeed. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

By far however, the organizational dynamic most commonly noted as positively influencing University A's response and recovery efforts, was the need to for the organization to operate in a very *flexible* and *adaptable* fashion, with a team of university leaders, faculty, and staff, that are willing to do "whatever was asked for the university" (Contributor 15 – Leader,

University A) to help foster its survival and recovery, regardless of whether the tasks they are assigned are consistent with their standard (day-to-day) responsibilities, work schedules and/or locations. As noted by a staff member involved with university communications post-disaster, “everything we did was having to adapt” (Contributor 9 – Staff, University A), whereas a staff member involved with helping rebuild a portion of the university’s technology apparatus added:

You’ve gotta be flexible, you know, we may be doing things “abc” and now all the sudden we have to do them “cba.” I think you have to be creative as well not every possible idea is gonna fall out in front of you... An element of a risk taker in there as well. Being able to roll with a changing environment is as necessity. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

A senior member of the university’s leadership team highlights the frequent role shifts at *University A* post-disaster:

Many people were doing things they never did or they wouldn’t do in their regular “University A life.” I mean, just as an example, one of the best assistance so to speak that we had in Human Resources was one of our librarians. And we just taught her what we needed her to do and she did it beautifully for three months and it was a huge asset to us. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

Financial & Relational Reserves

An additional set of leader influenced organizational dynamics noted by participants as having influenced disaster response and recovery efforts involves *financial* and *relational reserves*. It became clear, however, given the extent of the damage (\$600 million), that the mere possibility of institutional survival and recovery depended largely on the possession of cash reserves and/or the ability to secure funding from other sources, whether via loans, grants, business interruption insurance or government assistance. In this case, the university “did not have cash reserves adequate to address the situation” and had to make “immediate decisions to curtail the outflow of cash” (Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A). Moreover, as illustrated by a leader familiar with university financial circumstances:

We ended doing a short term \$150 million bond issue with interest only for the first four years and then three principal payments, \$50 million a year in years 5, 6 and 7. And we never expected it to stay outstanding that long but it gave us four years of where we only had to pay the interest. Then, we did everything and anything we could think of to delay cash outflow and enhance cash inflow. Of course, the tuition was just an unknown. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

The need to ensure that the university maintains significant *financial reserves* in the future – to leave itself less vulnerable to the long term impact of the disaster – was not lost on one university leader who joined her colleagues in Houston after recovery efforts had begun, and notes the following lesson:

What is the one thing that you take away from it... you either have to have cash reserves or the ability to take out a loan. If you don't have one of those two things then you've got a problem because if you think FEMA is gonna come in and start writing checks for you or your insurance companies and all of the insurance programs that you have are just gonna start sending money – you are living in a fantasy land. You'd better have your cash reserves or the ability take out a loan... it could be 5 to 10 years before you see your FEMA money or your insurance money. *Contributor 16 – Mid-Level Leader, University A*

While the lack of sufficient cash reserves served as hindrance to recovery efforts, and necessitated the securing of a massive \$150 million loan to meet payroll and other financial demands in the aftermath of the disaster, nearly all participants noted the existence of substantial *relational reserves* – both at the leadership level and in various other segments of the university – which helped enable swift decision making, solid communication and collaboration in the aftermath of the crisis. A faculty member, who also filled mid-level administrative role at University A's Medical School notes the importance of *relational reserves* in the midst of crisis, stating that:

I think that probably one of the biggest keys to successful operation in a crisis is to have good communications before the crisis begins. So you already know these people. They already know you. You already have confidence in them and what they're capabilities are. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

This is further illustrated by a member of the university's leadership team, who indicates that *relational reserves* may have contributed to the decision to pay employees even while the institution was closed for the Fall 2005 semester.

This is an environment that people feel very connected to... it's a very familial type of place. I think that one of the things that we did very well was take care of people. We made the decision to pay our employees during the time that we were closed. And many of our employees worked, but we had other people that were paid that didn't work. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

Several participants note that *relational reserves* were fostered pre-disaster via *collaborative efforts and experiences both inside and outside the work environment*, which yielded benefits for the organization post-disaster. Moreover, two university leaders illustrate the importance of having a team that is accustomed to working together, when dealing with Katrina and its aftermath:

I always think that the fact that I had been at the institution 7 years before it happened was helpful because the team that was in place was my team. We had worked together for 7 years. We knew how we operated. I think that was a big help. I don't know what it would have been like if I had been the new person on the block and I had not known them and they had not known me. So, the fact is the team had been together a long time and, therefore, we were able to communicate both directly and indirectly about what needed to be done. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

I'm very, very fortunate in that the senior team that I work with were all friends as well as colleagues. So there's a lot of camaraderie there. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

This view was supported by a staff member, who pre-disaster, maintained an office in the same building as members of the leadership team and assisted with recovery efforts in Houston. He notes the importance of pre-disaster collaboration in fostering an *esprit du corps*, which enabled people to work together effectively post-disaster:

I also think everything here is done in a very collaborative way. Any situation is dealt with sort of collaboratively. It's not unusual to work with people from all over the university on a project. There's never one thing that's just your project. Collaboration is I think looked on, is encouraged... There was an expectation of collaboration... I

think that's how you get people to feel invested. And we have a couple of big events like our commencement that everyone likes to attend. Things like that I think help to build sort of an esprit du corps. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

A faculty member/mid-level administrator with the university's medical school contends that having regularly engaged one another outside of work was also a key factor in building *relational reserves*:

...our program spends a lot of time, and we did this pre-Katrina, which I think helped, but particularly post-Katrina, making them do stuff outside of work together. So... it's the teams that play together, stay together. And teams that do stuff outside of work together like book club or wine tasting club or flag football or soccer team, whatever, that they just get used to seeing each other as people... You reap what you sow.
Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A

[Note: Organizational *reliability* (which appears in the comprehensive conceptual framework presented in Chapter III) is a subtheme noted for its ability to foster pre-disaster features (*e.g.*, preparedness for and/or avoidance of disaster) versus post disaster phases (*e.g.*, response and recovery), thus is beyond the scope of the current study and not discussed in this section]

Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes

By far the theme of leader behavior on which interviewees at University A provided the most insight is that of *exhibited personal attributes*, with participants providing their perceptions of the characteristics displayed by several university leaders in the midst of Katrina, with a particular emphasis on the qualities and skills exhibited by the university President in guiding response and recovery efforts.

A few participants provided overall assessments of what they believe it takes to effectively serve a university leader in the midst of crisis, and described what they witnessed on the part of key leaders at University A. For example, when asked what characteristics he believed his fellow leaders at University A exhibited in the midst of Katrina, a departmental director compared his colleagues to championship athletes:

Trusting in themselves and all of the things that maybe we champion and trumpet as the necessary attributes for athletes to become champions are the very ones that help them

face the even the greatest adversities that they ever can... having great resolve, having great commitment, having a plan, having training and teamwork, and time-management and all of things that are necessary to be champions in an athletic arena. *Contributor 15 – Leader, University A*

Others provided broad, positive assessments of the University President. A faculty member, who participated heavily in the university's recover efforts, shares his praise:

I think that if one can get a clear portrait of a leader like [the President of University A], one will get pretty much the full set of characteristics that makes a great leader in a disaster setting. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A faculty member/key administrator at the University's Medical School supports the prior assessment, stating that:

My personal view of all of that is that a lot of this goes back to the President. [The President] was actually born for the job of dealing with University A when a hurricane devastated it. I mean, I really believe that. He is a unique person generally. But his leadership skills, his determination, his work ethic, all of those things were what made all of the recovery possible. I mean, a lot of people helped him and worked hard, but he was the key. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level leader/Faculty, University A*

Elaborating further, a member of the President's cabinet, who has served the university under prior administrations, says of the leader:

He's quite impressive. He's definitely a leader. When we got to Houston and people began to share a lot, it was pretty clear that he took charge. He was in control. And he saw it as a turn-around situation and having been the dean of a business school previously, he knew a lot of the financial aspects of what needed to be done. So he got us focused on things like cash management. Let's stop the outflow as quickly as we can and as much as we can. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Most participants in this study, however, referenced specific leader attributes that they perceive played a key role in fostering response and recovery efforts at University A. Several leaders noted personal characteristics that believe they possess – and/or they believe others perceive of them – that made them effective in a time of crisis. The majority however, cited characteristics of others that they contend either helped foster or (in certain limited cases) inhibit recovery. Each *leader exhibited attribute* identified via the previously crafted conceptual

framework is noted by multiple participants as influential in response and recovery efforts at University A, and is discussed below.

Competence (Technical & Social)

One of the *attributes* most commonly perceived by interviewees as evident in members of the leadership team at University A in the aftermath of Katrina (with the President often being singled out), is *leader competence*. This includes *technical competence*, stemming from perceived experience and/or the belief that a leader understands and has the skillset to navigate the task at hand, and *social competence*, stemming from perceptions regarding how familiar leaders were with the people/skillsets around them, and how effectively they made use of those skillsets.

After depicting his role working with and securing hazardous materials post-disaster, and utilizing nitrogen cylinders to create a “freezer farm” to save an estimated \$150 million in university research assets, a faculty member/administrator explains how *technical competence* through *prior experience* made him effective in the midst of Katrina:

Everything was being done on an ad hoc basis. You know, I spent 25 years in the Marines and I just spent two tours in Iraq as a biologic weapons inspector for the Department of Defense. And I was the perfect person to come in here in both a leadership role and a biohazard role working in unlit, unsecure buildings. I was, I mean it was almost predestination. I was the right man, if I can use the term, for the circumstance. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A member of the President’s Cabinet involved with a variety of financial decisions post disaster, similar notes how *prior experience* enhanced his *technical competence* and ultimately his effectiveness:

I was probably good in the sense that once again, I had the experience of having been through several hurricanes previously. Nothing quite this bad. And I had the experience of knowing University A. As you know, in addition to being responsible for finances... I had a lot of knowledge about the facilities and could provide a lot of insight in terms of helping make decisions. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

In lauding the competence of the leadership team, one member of that team (who served as second in command during the universities response to Katrina) noted the importance of, and competence that comes with, understanding the ins and outs of the institution that they were seeking to resuscitate:

I think that as a team and with [the President] as our leader, we know our institution so we knew, we have to make decisions about what to maybe cut, where you can cut back, you know, things you don't need to open immediately. If you know your institution really well, those decisions are pretty quickly made. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

Other participants singled out the President for praise, with one university leader noting simply that "...there's a reassurance that comes from him... he knows what he's doing" (*Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*), while another university leader elaborates:

He's very knowledgeable about business affairs, having been the dean of a major business school for many, many years. And his reputation precedes him. This didn't happen in year one of his presidency, so we all knew him, we all knew, he's very decisive. He can assess a situation and make a decision quickly. He's not afraid to make a decision. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Charisma/Ability to Inspire

One of the attributes repeatedly associated with the President of University A was his *ability to inspire* other university actors to perform at a high level throughout response and recovery. A staff member involved with recovery efforts notes the following:

We're lucky that [the President] is very engaging and very charismatic and he inspires that feeling of sort of loyalty in people. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Such sentiments are further supported by two long-standing members of the university's leadership team:

I really can't be more sincere about it – we wouldn't be where we are today if it were not for the president. He clearly demonstrated the type of leadership, bringing that blue ribbon committee together, developing the renewal plan. He was with us all throughout the entire recovery process. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

It does start with the leader. When you have confidence in the leader of the organization you just wanna be part of that team that brings the university back. *Contributor 16 – Mid-Level Leader, University A*

Collectively, contributors note that the President's *charismatic leadership style* not only inspired performance, but provided those involved with day-to-day recovery efforts, as well as faculty and staff members within the broader university community, with the confidence that if they follow his lead, the institution would indeed recover. A faculty member with research-related administrative responsibilities states:

I know that he inspired in the way that a real leader does. He inspired all of us to get in line behind him. He was not afraid, he was optimistic, he was pressing forward and we were able to just get in line behind him and feel that same way. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

The President's *charisma*, is further illustrated by a member of the university's recovery team, who recounts the *renewed sense of optimism* that emanated from members within the broader university community after hearing the President's voice via audio tape (starting roughly a week after Katrina):

The president is such a strong charismatic leader and later people told me that hearing his voice made them feel like there was a possibility that things would be okay. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

The interviewee further recalls how the President sought to *inspire and rally* members of the university community at a Town hall meeting, several weeks prior to the university re-opening, stating that:

Unless you have the desire to be a part of the biggest recovery in the history of the world... if it's not in your DNA do not come back here. He laid down the gauntlet and I think it inspired people I mean here was a guy saying yeah it's as bad as you think it is it really is but accept it embrace it and either go that way or come forward. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

The president however, was not alone in receiving credit for inspiring others and/or engaging in activities intended to inspire others. Multiple senior and mid-level leaders at University A illustrate how they personally sought to inspire others to perform, while instilling confidence that the university would indeed re-open and ultimately be stronger than ever. One such leader notes how he sought to balance *hope* with *reality*.

A lot of it was dispensing hope about how things will be better for them and institutionally. We're all going through these hardships but in the end, it will be better. And the question is just getting from where we are now to that particular place. So I remember talking about it all the time, about balancing this hope and this inspiration for them versus the reality. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

The senior leader above adds that he sought to set a positive example via both his *words* and *actions*:

The other thing I always thought during this is, I have to lead by example. And if they see me, if they see me enacting the very principles I'm talking about, it will help them. I think that all sounds trite to be very honest with you, but it's true. So they saw me working 20 hours a day, nonstop. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Finally, a faculty member/mid-level administrator with the University's medical school, sought to inspire others via *thoughtful essays*, and *one-on-one conversations*.

I think the really good leaders, the people that are walking around are the people that had the equanimities when you looked in their eyes, they weren't being Pollyanna about it that this is no big deal. But they look back and say, you know, it's going to be alright. Come on, let's get through it. And just keep going. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Trust/Authenticity

Much like *charisma* and the *ability to inspire*, the perception that a leader is *trustworthy* or *authentic* appears to have played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts at University A by fostering confidence in the behavior (decisions, actions, and communications) of the leadership team post-disaster, believability in the recovery process (and claims from the

leadership team regarding the status of recovery efforts), and maintaining loyalty to the institution. As stated by a senior leader:

We were convinced that we were going to reopen. We had utter confidence that the President was gonna lead us through this... we felt like he said it was gonna happen and it's gonna happen. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

A staff member involved with recovery efforts similarly depicts his trust and confidence in the leadership team:

I mean these are just people that, we'd all worked together for a while at that point and we knew each other and they've always treated us fairly and they've never given us any reason not to trust them. So I think if you want people to trust you in a crisis, you have to treat them well all the time. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

The contributor above, along with a mid-level leader/faculty member adds that *trust* between university leadership and its employees is a *two-way street* that can *reciprocate*:

He puts a lot of trust in us. And he puts a lot of trust in his employees, so I think that's another thing. If you put trust in us, we put our trust in you. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

You need the cooperation of lots of people. And so people have to trust you, have to like you, have to feel that you're being honest with them. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A senior leader also notes the importance of facilitating trust and credibility in the midst of disaster, by providing an *honest account of events*, which he argues should not (and did not) preclude purveying a level of positivity or sense of hope:

You don't want to lose credibility, so you've got to tell them what's going on, otherwise they won't see you as credible, plus you don't want to just talk about hope without the reality... That was one of the biggest challenges, it always is. Telling them the truth, but not as depressing, so that you lost them in the process. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Members of the leadership team and others involved with response and recovery efforts repeatedly praise the President for being *trustworthy*. A staff member who assisted with admissions and student recruitment post-disaster reflects on the President:

He's a man of great stature, a man of honesty, he's realistic... he wasn't going to BS anyone, and was gonna make some tough decisions. *Contributor 6 – Staff, University A*

Similarly, in describing what facilitates university actors to line up behind the President, a faculty member/mid-level administrator states:

He's a very direct person. He had demonstrated himself previously to be trustworthy... He was true to his word, he did what he said he was going to do. He described situations accurately and that would be proven out when the situation, whatever the situation was, resolved. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness

The *exhibited leader attribute* noted least frequently (or specifically) for its role in facilitating recovery from Katrina at University A involves perceived *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* on the part of leadership. This finding however, does not indicate that such factors were missing from response and recovery efforts at University A, but may instead stem from some interviewees viewing the previously highlighted subtheme of *trust/authenticity*, as a character trait that overlaps with a sense of *ethics* or *virtuousness*. Moreover, a key senior leader at University A, specifically notes the importance of possessing “a very strong moral compass” to guide decision-making and other forms of leader behavior in a constantly changing post-Katrina environment (Contributor 4 – Leader, University A). Such sentiments were echoed by a faculty member and key administrator at the Medical School, who contends that:

Well, I think you do have to, you have to have some sort of compass internally about what's important and what's not. And in some ways I think you sort of learn that in many physician things. It's sort of, take care of the patient first. But then in terms of a university, take care of the students. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Other employees suggest that a sense of *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* may have guided some key decisions made by university leaders in the aftermath of Katrina. Noted most frequently is the decision to continue paying retained employees, even while the university

remained closed for the Fall semester. Of the decision, a staff member who assisted with technology-focused recovery efforts, states:

In a number of ways that was significant... University A said you know what we are gonna stand behind our employees...Sent a loud and clear message. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

Also regularly highlighted was the manner in which other human needs (to be discussed in more detail in the section on Human Reactions) were cared for by University A's leadership team. This includes ensuring that those who temporarily relocated to Houston had access to housing, food, and local schools for their children, and that faculty and staff who returned to New Orleans for the Spring semester (while their homes were still being repaired) were provided with access to university owned or rented housing. This was elaborated on by a university staff member who assisted the leadership team in Houston:

They took care of us and made sure that we had everything we need. Made sure that we had a place to live... giving us their personal credit card if necessary to buy the necessities we needed to buy, like t-shirts or whatever. Or food. They just wanted to make sure that we were taken care in those very, very early moments... *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Self-awareness & Self-control

A *leader attribute* commonly perceived and cited by interviewees as important in facilitating response and recovery from Katrina, was the ability for university leaders to remain calm and composed in the disaster's aftermath, and the perception that key members of the leadership team never publicly "lost their cool," even under significant pressure. The importance of maintaining *self-awareness* and *self-control* is highlighted by a senior leader:

You've got to be a voice and model for calm in a chaotic situation. So I think the other thing that helped people was that they never saw me get flustered. As bad as it was, I don't think they ever saw me raise my voice, be overwhelmed. I was just sort of calm, we'll get through this. We've just got to think about it a little longer, we'll get through this. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

A faculty member/mid-level administrator, who waited out the storm and subsequent flooding at the university's medical school, indicates that in the aftermath of a disaster "You obviously have to be calm. You can't be over dramatic. You can't be alarmist" (Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A). While a senior leader, who waited out the storm on the university's main campus, adds that he was effective in the disasters aftermath in part because he is "an even-tempered type person" who does not get "rattled too easily" (Contributor 3 – Leader, University A).

A particularly illustrative example of *self-control* playing a helpful role post-Katrina, stems from a faculty member (with administrative responsibilities) who took on the crucial task of securing the university's biological materials:

We had several faculty members who showed up and they were very demanding and very insistent that things happen a certain way... And when people would get belligerent with me, I would just, I don't rise to the bait. When they realize that you're not going to rise to the bait, they tend to calm down and try and understand what they can do to accomplish their objectives. So I think that for me, the key there is, is when you're dealing with someone who is either overreacting or under-reacting, that the key is not to get, is not to play on their level but maintain a consistent approach to this.
Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A

The *self-control* exhibited by members of the leadership team was not lost on others, and inspired an added sense of confidence in the recovery effort. As explained by two individuals where were heavily involved with recovery efforts:

Well, [the President] was never afraid. I mean, he may have been afraid inside, I don't know. But he never demonstrated any fear. And as a result, neither did we. He was always optimistic. He was, had the situation in hand from the beginning, from the first few days. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

It's grace under pressure and they never lost their composure. They, I mean at the time I was probably the bottom person on the totem pole thrust in with all these people but they never made me feel unduly worried. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Resourcefulness/Adaptability

A subtheme of leader behavior that was cited by all contributors at University A, as both necessary and evident in the actions of university leadership in the aftermath of Katrina, is that of *resourcefulness* and the *ability to adapt* in the face of rapidly changing circumstances. As noted by a senior leader "...so much of the early response required just picking up the phone and calling anybody you could in a position of power to get some help and relief" (Contributor 1 – Leader, University A). While senior administrator/faculty members with the university's medical school you also had to have "an attitude of self-reliance because it wasn't clear that anybody else was going to come to help" (Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A).

A faculty member, who was assigned to several interim leadership positions in the aftermath of Katrina contends that such *resourcefulness/adaptability*, as evident in the President's ability to arrange for the temporary (one-semester) relocation of students other colleges and universities around the country, may have been what ultimately ensured University A's survival.

I think the biggest decision.... The thing that saved the university was not really a decision. It was the ability of the President to get universities around the country to agree to take our students and to require our students to pay us rather than them. And that gave us the cash flow that allowed us to survive. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Interviewees provide multiple examples of how job descriptions completely, repeatedly and necessarily changed in the aftermath of the disaster. As illustrated by a senior leader who evacuated to Mississippi with the student population, and soon thereafter joined the disaster recovery team in Houston:

I mean, you may have been the dean of the law school when you showed up in Houston, but by the end of the day, he was basically putting together the academic semester for the following, for the spring. I mean he became, in a very different role. You know,

one of the faculty members in law became chief technology officer. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

A mid-level leader/faculty member provides additional examples of the need to be resourceful and adaptable in the aftermath of Katrina, by being willing to take on a variety of new responsibilities.

We did whatever needed to be done. So for example, a person, an individual parallel to me – I'm the vice president for research, he was the vice president for health affairs or health sciences. His job was to identify housing for the undergraduates so they could come back to University A in the spring semester when we planned to reopen. So he was doing things like getting cruise ships and arranging space, renting space in local apartment buildings. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Others, who bore the same job titles and overall responsibilities post-Katrina, often had to resort to unusual means to exercise such responsibilities. The post-Katrina actions of senior leader/faculty member (who was amongst a large group initially stranded at the University's Medical Center) provides an effective illustration of *resourcefulness*:

It wasn't clear that anybody else was going to come to help... And so five or six in the morning, I was able – most of the time you couldn't use a cell phone – but I was able to call and I talked to my mother. And I told her, call the media. Call CNN. Call whoever. Call the politicians. So she called a bunch of other family members. And actually my brother ended up knowing an owner of a small newspaper chain who knew how to get in touch with AP... And about 11:00 that morning, AP called in. By Thursday afternoon, the media had arrived here. And they had done interviews. And things started happening Thursday afternoon. And the politicians, because the media came, the politicians started thinking that, this is not going so well... It was sort of unbelievable. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

Moreover, a mid-level leader with faculty responsibilities explains how her team negotiated with the *National Institutes of Health (NIH)* to facilitate exceptions to long standing policy regarding when and how to spend federal research grants.

We needed our [university researchers and faculty] to continue to be able to spend money from their grants even though they were not at University A, from wherever they were, they needed to spend money. We needed for them to be able to pay, continue to pay salaries from their grants on people who might not even be working on the project. If they were trying to rescue their homes or deal with the personal tragedies, we still

needed to continue to pay them from the grants because we wanted to retain them on the projects. We got permission to do that. So the NIH made... a whole variety of special arrangements of that kind. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making

I will never forget watching the governor on TV talking about that the people of New Orleans are strong. Okay great but what's your plan... The president has a way of saying were gonna get through this but here's the vision here's our plan, here's the roadmap and were on our way. I didn't see him miss any issues. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

As depicted in Chapter II, an organization's ability to survive/recover post-disaster largely hinges on the ability of its leaders to effectively and accurately process a tremendous amount of rapidly changing information, and make solid decisions based on that information and after having thoroughly considered the potential consequences of various courses of action. Major crises-oriented decisions tend to be effective when leaders explore them from a variety of angles, take into account different perspectives (to the extent time permits and the survival of the institution is not put at risk), are not be limited to narrow "inside the box" type thinking (which fails to recognize that the "status quo" no longer exists), and are guided by an overall positive vision and/or clearly defined set of goals.

To assist with making decisions, University A's leaders established specific criteria. For example, the decision(s) to eliminate programs were based on a balance between their perceived financial viability and whether the program(s) have attained – or were thought (by the President, other university leaders, and/or external advisors) to have the potential to attain – "world-class excellence ... national visibility and recognition." With respect to medical programs, *world-class excellence* was defined as: Top 50 status on the National Institutes of Health research awards rankings and a Top 25 ranking in medical education.

According to interviewees, leader *thinking and decision making* played a key role in ensuring survival and fostering recovery at University A. As explained by a mid-level leader/faculty member who worked with the recovery team in Houston:

Today, we're a fully functional university with all the key elements and attributes. It's extraordinary where we've come back. And that's a direct consequence of [the President] and the senior leadership and the kinds of decisions that they made.
Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A

In explaining what they perceive made the leadership team at University A particularly effective, two staff members praise university senior leaders for their willingness to take into account the views of others before making decisions. One staff member contends that university leadership was "...willing to take other peoples input into mind, but also knew that the decision ultimately rest[ed] with [them] as [did] the consequences," (Contributor 6 – Staff, University A), while a colleague similarly notes that the University President "... listen[ed] to people's opinions who are down the totem pole. So he would hear everyone's ideas and everyone's thoughts. And you felt like he was giving you consideration" (Contributor 12 – Staff, University A).

A member of the team responsible for helping recover the University's technological apparatus further praises the leadership team for successfully processing information, in what he perceived as a *systematic and realistic manner*. He specifically mentions their ability to:

... assess what the situation is with a very real perspective and not to overinflate or underinflate the situation but to honestly assess the situation and say 'what do we need to do?'" and to "... say 'how do we fix this?' What are our options, presented the options and then picked as to what options fit best with the overall plan for the institution. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

Other participants specifically highlight the willingness of senior leaders to *make difficult decisions in a swift time frame*, rather than analyzing options indefinitely, whereby recovery efforts would have been hampered. A senior leader explains the decision making process post-Katrina:

When they were all together, there would be a certain amount of discourse and discussion and then [the President would] just say... “that’s it, that’s what we’re doing.” Which is, I think, again, what you have to do... at a certain point, you just kind of have to suck it up and say, “this is the way we’re doing it.” *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

In addition to noting the importance of *thinking and decision making* to the overall process of recovery at University, the responses of most interviewees were consistent with the subthemes outlined in the previously proposed conceptual framework. Participants however (particularly those on the leadership team), stressed the importance of leaders seeking to make the best out of challenging circumstances by seeing the *opportunity in the midst of crisis*. This section begins, however, with the importance of examining challenges and potential solutions to disaster scenarios through *multiple frames*.

Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames

Contributors at University A repeatedly shed light on the ability of university leaders to explore issues from *multiple angles*, and identify such behavior as key in helping facilitate effective decisions. As a group, interviewees noted the importance of *experience, knowledge of the higher education community* and of *University A as a multifaceted organization* as key in being able to explore crisis related issues from *multiple frames*. According to a key member of the leadership team:

Having really good knowledge of the higher education community, of our constituents. I mean, it’s important. You cannot have somebody in a situation like that, in a crisis, who only knows their arena. It doesn’t, you can’t be a one note expert. You’ve got to be thinking on multiple levels. Now that doesn’t mean you have expertise in six different areas. But you have to have some real knowledge and understanding of how things work. And I mean really work. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

A fellow university leader sheds light on how university leadership employed the *task force* or *committee structure* (with concrete deadlines for decisions or recommendations to be made) to help ensure that issues were examined from multiple angles:

So first of all we had this big group and we would all meet and we might then form some special sub-groups or subcommittees... one on housing... another one on identifying where all the students were, tracking down the students... another task force on ... see[ing] what we can do to get this particular school chartered. Then you would break out and the next day maybe your little sub-committee of six to eight people would work exclusively on [another] task and then the next day, the group would get back together and we would all report to the large group and the president would be taking notes of everything that was conveyed and through that process is when and how we made decisions. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

In praising the university president, a member of the President's cabinet highlights his ability to quickly accept circumstances and begin exploring issues from multiple angles:

I think that first when something happens, he accepts what happens and then is 20 steps ahead. I mean he's thinking about all aspects... how this will affect our students, our endowment, I mean he doesn't miss a beat. Something happened and he has a broad plan already in his head about what could happen and what should be done.

Contributor 16 – Mid-Level Leader, University A

Additionally, two interviewees provide detailed examples of how they engaged in recovery efforts – being mindful of the need to examine the responsibilities and decisions delegated to them from multiple frames. A senior leader illustrates the thought processes the leadership team went through in locating cruise ship to temporarily house faculty staff and students returning for the Winter 2006 semester.

We did things like we chartered a cruise ship because we weren't sure we could get enough housing in the city for faculty, staff and students, we chartered a cruise ship. And that alone was a significant effort. We had to send somebody out to look at the cruise ship, wherever it happened to be located at that time to see if it accommodated our needs, or what we thought our needs would be. And then come back, provide feedback, say yeah, that's the one or rule it out. No, we need a bigger one, we need a smaller one, we need two of them. Where are we going to dock it. We had to have input from the city, dock board. So there were a lot of these separate tasks going on all simultaneously. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

A mid-level leader/faculty member illustrates how he explored the issue of how best to secure and preserve biological resources – considering research, faculty, financial and security matters in the process.

I was making decisions about, on the one hand, about what to do with biological materials – well, I am a research scientist so that gave me a real advantage over an administrator sitting here trying to make decisions like that. On the other hand, I am also an administrator as a department chair and as a... so I had perspective to make administrative decisions as well. I also had a good working relationship with both the security people here and with our facilities people here. So... I was able to contribute to that conversation, not just from the perspective of a scientist, but from the perspective of someone who understands the research environment here at the institution that we're working in. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking

While mentioned less frequently than other subthemes of *leader thinking and decision making* in the midst of disaster, *Contrarian* and *Janusian* thinking played an important role in decision making and fostering recovery at University A. A mid-level staff member, who took on greater responsibility with the university post-Katrina, specifically complements leadership for *Contrarian* style thinking and/or “thinkin’ outta the box.”

In a crisis situation, the ability to think beyond the way we currently do what we do becomes imperative um you know in our situation specifically... thinkin’ outta the box, but that’s really what it is okay I understand how we did what we did but how do we do it now, what are some options or possibilities that we have to get to the same end game, but choose a different path to get there. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

However, it is *Janusian* thinking in particular, whereby two-seemingly contradictory thoughts were taken into account in an effort to craft more effective decisions, that interviewees cited as having played a central role in leader thinking as it related to the university’s recovery efforts. One mid-level leader notes that as soon as she joined the leadership team in Houston, the University President greeted her and began facilitating a dualistic mindset, encourage her and others to embrace reality while also moving forward from it towards a new vision:

Got to Houston and he said good to see you, New Orleans will never be exactly like you know it so let’s get to work... and he has a right balance between helping people accept what’s happened, giving hope for the future but not misleading. Enough hope and a vision so that you are on board with the recovery. *Contributor 16 – Mid-Level Leader, University A*

Another university leader (Contributor 4) stressed the importance of thinking about issues from both short and long term perspectives, which can be particularly difficult given the time-constraints and sense of urgency disasters create. Hence, to ensure that university leaders did not get lost in the immediacy of circumstances (short-term thinking), they recruited a team of external experts from leading businesses and universities to provide objective guidance, and help foster a long term vision for the institution (Multiple Contributors; University A's Recovery Plan Website). As noted by a senior-level leader:

You have to focus on all of the immediate crises that are coming up on a daily basis and you also have to deal with the sort of longer-term issues. And it's hard, and you need to surround yourself with people who can help you think through those issues.

Contributor 4 – Leader, University A

The same senior leader also explains how two potentially and at times contradictory criteria – “academic quality” and “financial viability” – were both considered when determining whether or not a given program should be eliminated in an effort foster institutional recovery.

So the two criteria that we would base all decisions on, were: Does it help us financially and does it help us with academic quality? If it helped us financially and helped us with academic quality, it was a no-brainer, right? If it helped us financially and kept us about neutral with academic quality, we would still think about doing something. If it hurt us academically, we just didn't do it. Even if it helped us financially. We just didn't do it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Viewing Disasters as Opportunities

Without question, the most frequently noted subtheme of leader-thinking and decision-making to emerge from the interview process involved the importance of leaders seeing, grasping and purveying the potential *opportunity to improve University A beyond its pre-disaster status* and/or make the best out of difficult circumstances. One expert familiar with University A notes that the institution, led by its President, “has given new meaning to the phrase ‘silver-lining’,” noted that the university “developed a renewal plan that focused on undergraduate

education and created a set of institutes that capitalize on the special opportunities post-Katrina,” including those focused on public service, enhancing urban communities, and the study of race and poverty (Issacson, 2007 as cited in Mayhew, 2007, xiii). University leadership also utilized Katrina as an opportunity to facilitate greater *administrative efficiency* – reducing administrative redundancy, eliminating underperforming departments, and merging others (*e.g.*, academic advising services are newly centralized) – while flattening its organizational structure.

Tapping into “public empathy” and recovery-focused “momentum,” University A’s leaders dramatically *increased fundraising*. In doing so, the university raised hundreds of millions of dollars towards its \$700 million capital campaign (which had begun just months prior to the disaster), ultimately exceeding its goal by \$30 million (University A Capital Campaign, 2008).

University leadership clearly recognized the opportunity to make the best of a difficult situation, utilizing the word “opportunity” or “opportunities” in numerous public statements and communications post-Katrina; hoping other members of the community would adopt a similar mindset, would return to New Orleans and be a part of the University’s and the City’s recovery. As the President stated in announcing the university’s recovery plan:

We are determined to find opportunity in the face of adversity. University A will do more than just survive; we will thrive and continue our role as a beacon of learning and research for the region and nation, as well as a dynamic engine of growth and change for New Orleans and its citizens. *President, University A, 2005*

Additionally, multiple interviewees indicate that even if university leadership had wanted to, its administrators could not seek to take the university back to “normal” (or the way it was before Katrina), because, as stated by one key leader, “there is no normal” after a major disaster (Contributor 4 – Leader, University A). This same leader elaborates on the prior point, and notes the importance of *looking beyond the status-quo* that existed prior to the disaster:

Early on, we said that there were three objectives we had to achieve. One was to survive, one was to recover, and the third one was to renew. Because our feeling was, just to survive and just to recover was not sufficient. Now that was a very important break-through in our thinking. So this renewal piece was really important... what we said is, the university can never come back and be just the way it was before... we who are there have a responsibility to make it better so it doesn't happen again and that the next generation falls into the same problems we ran into. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

The sentiments of the contributor above are echoed by a senior leader/faculty member with the University's Medical School.

There, it's become sort of something of a, sort of a cliché that crisis presents an opportunity... But it actually does because it gets everybody to thinking that you've got to think in new ways. And everybody is quite open to it in the midst of a crisis... and I really pressed this point, that anyone that wanted to go back to what we were before Katrina – because everybody knew we had lots of issues – that that's not the goal. And if that was your goal, you needed to get out of the way. Because that could not be the goal. We needed to be something better and hopefully bigger. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making

The subtheme of *blending instinctive* with *vigilant decision-making* (and/or relying on one versus the other) emerged from the accounts of interviewees on multiple occasions, primarily when depicting the processes by which individual leaders made decisions during the first few weeks following Katrina. Many participants, however, stressed that the mere “willingness to make a decision” was the most important aspect of decision making post-disaster, as there were so many challenges to deal with, and as a faculty member/mid-level leader with the university's medical school notes “it's just easier to steer a moving ship” (Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A). As stated by an administrator/faculty member with significant prior military training:

One of the things the military teaches you is that you have to make a decision, even if it turns out that that decision was wrong. And so part of the whole military leadership principle is that you seek responsibility and you take responsibility for your actions. So I was making decisions and I was willing to accept the consequences if I made a wrong

decision. But you know, that's the thing about making decisions is that people who are decision makers accept that some of their decisions might not be right... Because you can't sit around in a situation like that and ponder. You have to make a decision and move on. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Several interviewees expressed appreciation for the willingness of University A's leaders – in particular, the president – to make decisions, often in a rather quick, *instinctive* manner. As the two contributors note below:

[The President] is very decisive. He can assess a situation and make a decision quickly. He's not afraid to make a decision. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

One thing I would say that is a great quality is the willingness to act. [The leadership team] realized they had to make a decision and they had to make it now... [The President] makes decisions. He doesn't hem and haw. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Several participants suggest that a more *deliberative approach*, balancing *instinctive* with *vigilant decision making* is key in a time of crisis – knowing when to listen, when to continue gathering information, and when it is time to make a decision. Two key decision makers illustrate this line of thinking:

When you're in a crisis situation like that, obviously you need to make quick decisions. But within the crisis mode, there are times when a decision may need a little more thought than just a quick decision. And you need to have people who can recognize when that's necessary. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

You need to be able to make decisions knowing that you don't know all of the information. I am a big believer in the fact that you never know more than 80% of all the information you need to make decision. And if you wait to get that other 20%, then the other 20% that you knew will have changed and you won't know it. So you really need to be willing to risk making the wrong decision because actually, making the decision is in many ways more important than making the right decision. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

Of the President efforts to balance deliberation with time constraints, a senior member of the leadership team states:

[The President] has this great saying that ‘hope is not a plan’... you know, you’ve got to take action and you’ve got to be measured about it and you’ve got to stay focused.
Contributor 1 – Leader, University A

Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps

A key subtheme of leader behavior noted directly and in some cases indirectly by interviewees, was the need to be cognizant of and avoid a variety of common crisis-based *decision making traps*. As one staff member notes:

I can think of a couple people that happened to that they became so overwhelmed, they just shut down.... people that are so paralyzed by being indecisive that they can’t do anything. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Some key decision-makers, however, sought to consciously avoid falling into such traps, by recognizing that in a midst of a major disaster like Katrina, *one person cannot think comprehensively about all issues* and that so much had to be responded to and addressed immediately to ensure survival in the short-term, leaders risk *neglecting the long-term impact* of decisions. A university leader illustrates this dilemma:

How on the one hand do you deal with the immediate but don’t lose perspective? And one of the reasons I brought out all those university presidents to help me develop a longer term plan for the university recovery was, I was afraid that I was so inundated in the details that I couldn’t do it. And I wouldn’t think broadly enough and I wouldn’t think creatively enough. So I said, I need a separate group of people who I really, really respect who will come in and really push my thinking on it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Several mid and upper level leaders sought to *prevent their teams from being distracted* away from what needs to be done in the immediate term (adopting the saying “no decision before its time”) and/or from *becoming overwhelmed* by focusing too much on issues unrelated to the current task, and on issues over which they have no control (*e.g.*, the local, state or federal government response). A mid-level leader/faculty member prepared essays for his employees hoping to motivate them and keep them focused on the task at hand.

One of the essays I sent out to [our medical residents] was simply to say, what the governor does, what the president does, what FEMA does, all that's outside your box. It's as silly as worrying about what the weather is. You ain't going to change it, stop thinking about it, focus on what's inside your box. You've got five patients to see today. You get that done. And then let's talk about what we can do this evening. And then tomorrow we'll be able to do more stuff. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A member of the President's cabinet indicates that the leadership team in Houston adopted the saying "no decision before its time," as a way of reminding people where they should be directing their attention, while a fellow leader urged his team to *focus on those things they can control*.

You just stay focused on what you can get done now and get it done and then you move to the next item. And we, we had a saying that was, 'no decision before its time.' You know, there are a lot of people who want to worry about something that may not come about for six months or something you really can't, you couldn't do anything about today. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

What I always tell our people is, we're only going to focus on those things that we can control and not worry about the things we can't control. And that helped a lot. So they would bring up things and I'd say, we can't control that. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Finally, a staff member stresses the importance of consulting with the individual(s) responsible for implementing major decisions, to insure that the organizational and/or technological capabilities to execute the decision are in (or nearly in) place prior to public announcing them and/or establishing a narrow timeline for their accomplishment. A staff member indicates that in certain circumstances (*e.g.*, the commitment to meet payroll shortly after Katrina) this did not take place:

The one thing that they executive group could have done differently... is pulled the group of their wider confidence together quicker. There were some decisions made early on that were difficult to manage through in the short term that could have been alleviated with the appropriate people in the room. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

[Note: The subtheme of *devil's advocacy/scenario-based planning* was identified in Chapter II as crucial in fostering disaster preparedness, versus a behavior to be engaged in during disaster

response and recovery, hence, the subtheme falls outside the scope of the current study. It is, however, important to note at University A multiple interviewees stressed the importance of *devils advocacy/scenario-based planning*, noted that planning for the ultimate worst-case scenario had not taken place at University A (nor other universities in the region) prior to Katrina, and contend that such planning would have benefitted response and recovery efforts. Thus, given the potential that *devils advocacy/worst-case scenario* planning has to save institutions and lives, and the frequency with which the topic was voluntarily discussed by participants, the subtheme will be addressed briefly in Chapter X.]

Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style

I think one of things that we learned very well through this is the importance of communicating. The importance of communicating directly. I would say that we had a lot of bad news to give... But I think giving it directly, giving it honestly, giving it with as much information as possible, was really important and a great lesson learned.

Contributor 5 – Leader, University A

Highlighted frequently by faculty, staff, and leaders at University A was the important role that *leader communication* played in the institution's response and recovery efforts. Early on, the inability to communicate with one another consistently, due to technological failures and geographic separation, presented a significant hindrance. However, once key members of the leadership team were able to reconnect and set up formal operations in Houston, communication became a major aspect and impetus for the university's recovery. As stated by a leader/faculty member:

Communication and establishing communication was really critical both from any number of perspectives. Making decisions, having input. But probably in terms of moral, cohesion, any number of things. So setting up sort of regular, frequent communications was really important. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

Those administrators who had temporarily evacuated to a university in Mississippi alongside hundreds of freshman and much of the student-athlete population, soon discovered that all cell phones with New Orleans-based area codes were inoperable (aside from limited text messaging), and after their Mississippi-based evacuation site lost power, utilized out-of-state student cell phone to create a command center and facilitate communication.

Some student-athletes had out of state cell phones, so we created a little command center set-up. Those kids all checked them in and we tried to keep everything charged, so we could have constant monitoring and communication going on both for parents and for university officials and in this case conference officials. *Contributor 15 – Leader, University A*

As communications were re-established, university leaders utilized a variety of methods to reconnect with each other and the broader university community – from text messaging, to recorded videos, to weekly live web-chats on the web, to audio-taped message, to emails to the university community, to town hall meetings near campuses where large numbers of University A’s student population were temporarily relocated. One leader notes the university’s post-Katrina *communication philosophy*:

We did a series of live chats with the university president and posted transcripts so everyone could access them. Extremely aggressive and willing to try almost everything. Monitored blogs of some of our students every hour of every day and if there was misinformation we answered those as well and we also used them to shape our own messages... a great early warning system about what issues are out there and need to be addressed in a timely fashion. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

Interviewees were also quick to note that in the midst of disaster, the person selected to serve as the *primary communicator* both in addressing the university community and external audiences was the University President, who roundly received praise for his skill as a communicator, his message and tone. As stated by two fellow leaders:

I mean, the president’s voice was out there... we did it really with his voice. It’s such a natural thing for him. He’s an incredible communicator. But I think that you’ve got to show some comfort level with it or it might not work. I mean, he looked like a field general out in the field calling the shots and that resonated with people who were seeing a disaster. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

He’s very articulate. He’s the kind of person that when he speaks, people listen.
Contributor 3 – Leader, University A

Facilitating Awareness

As highlighted above, university leadership pursued a number of methods by which to reconnect with the university community, and keep it informed as to the status of University A's recovery efforts. By *facilitating awareness* in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, university leaders hoped to send a message that the university still exists and will be reopening for Winter semester. As noted by a staff member whose unit established the university's first post-Katrina 1(800) number:

Key was "opening lines of communication" both with each other and the broader university community. *Contributor 6 – Staff, University A*

Several interviewees explain how, rather than withholding information in an effort to avoid causing fear within the university community, leadership *leaned towards transparency*.

We just stuck to our usual system of we'll just be as calm and as rational as we can and say as much as we can. I don't remember ever there being anything that wasn't said because we were just trying to get information out there and let them know that, "hey, we're here and we're dealing with it the best we can." But as far as thinking, we better not say this, it'll freak people out, that ship had sailed. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

I think the guiding philosophy – and again, this was not an area that I was at all much involved with – was to be as open as possible. To be as honest as possible. To be as transparent as possible. But to be as positive as possible. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A senior leader involved with much of the university's communication efforts indicates that it was crucial for the leadership team to be transparent because "You don't want to lose credibility, so you've got to tell them what's going on, otherwise they won't see you as credible" (Contributor 4 – Leader, University A). However, in addition to maintaining credibility and trust in leadership, a key leader notes that *promoting awareness* can help lower anxiety and help foster a sense of certainty:

How can you lower the anxiety of people? One way is to give them information, create as much certainty in their life as you can, and try to respond to the problems that they have. So we really got into a routine of regular communications, at fixed times, so that people knew about it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

In a rather unique effort to facilitate awareness, the leadership team (then stationed in Houston) welcomed embedded reporters from both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, who primarily shadowed the President:

We had reporters come and observe us while we were working to sort of get the message out there that we were working. And we started getting tons of press calls and just tried to hook them up with the people that we thought could be our best spokespeople. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Additionally, once University A re-opened, to stave off a projected post-Katrina decline in enrollment figures, the institution engaged in creative methods to spread the word that the university is once again a viable option for undergraduate studies. For example, the university dramatically expanded its “high school guidance counselor fly-in program” in which guidance counselors from various regions of the country are flown to New Orleans to view and learn about University A firsthand, with the goal of spreading the message that University A is back, and that opportunities exist for a unique high-quality undergraduate experience at the institution (Contributor 6 – Staff, University A). Prior to Katrina, just one such trip for one region was arranged, annually. During the year following Katrina, 14 such trips were sponsored by the university, followed by 13 the next year, then 9, then 7 and so forth, as enrollment numbers continue to recover.

Clarity of Terminology and Message

Another key aspect of *leader-based communication* noted by multiple interviewees involves the overall *clarity and consistency of terminology and message* stemming from the university. University administrators stressed the importance of fostering clear and consistent

communication, which a leader/faculty member indicates should be “frequent, regular, predictable, and stay on topic” (Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A). As a key administrator explains regarding his own communication style:

I think the other thing that helped is most people would say I’m a pretty good communicator, both in writing and verbally and I speak very directly. I don’t obfuscate the facts. I think that really helped people because they believed me doing it. They knew I wasn’t B.S.ing them about what I would say and how I would say it.
Contributor 4 – Leader, University A

A recovery team member notes that the leadership team had to try and control or *shape the message* of what was taking place in New Orleans and at University A, explaining, “We were credible witnesses. Really what’s the choice – we tell the story or other people tell the story.” She elaborates below:

You have gotta get out there with your words and your thoughts and your philosophy and what you’re gonna do. That was another thing we are very action oriented. It wasn’t messages intended to mollify – don’t worry, you’re okay, you can trust us...” it was access to concrete information. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

Moreover, in order to prevent the spread of inaccurate information and ensure that relevant concerns were being addressed, the leadership team *hired staff to monitor blogs and news sources* describing events related to University A, and crafted messages specific to the concerns expressed by various university constituencies.

We hired some people to be blog analysts because blogs were popping up all the time. And we had them analyze them 24 hours a day and write reports to us every day about what was on people’s minds. And we had people summarize them by stakeholder groups and what were the three or four most important issues that seemed to be on people’s minds. And then we’d craft messages about it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

A staff member, who assisted with the university’s post-Katrina communication efforts, explains how *messages were targeted* to address the concerns of various subgroups:

I think our target audience was, well, it was always our audience is students and their parents, faculty and staff, alumni somewhat. Anyone interested in University A. So we

had to sort of separate our, once we could have knew what we were doing, separating our messages out into different sort of messages for staff, messages for faculty, messages for students. At the beginning I think it was for everyone because there wasn't anything specific to one group. The city was closed, the university was closed. That affected everybody. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Symbolic Actions

In addition to standard forms of verbal or written form of communication, another key theme of leader behavior evident the response and recovery efforts at University A involved *symbolic action*. Such *symbolic action* appeared in many forms, from *written words* and lines delivered in *speeches*, to the *priorities* implied by key decisions, to simply *being visible or present* for faculty, staff and students. Many employees came to view the leaders themselves as symbols of recovery.

I remember thinking of those people [4 members of the leadership team cited] as symbols. People you could look to find answers. There was just this unwillingness to accept any alternative but that we were gonna be reopening in the Spring and work toward that goal. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Perceiving that some university constituents may find it easier to identify with a person versus an institution, the leadership team made the President the “face and voice of the university.”

I learned that in a time of crisis like that the people need to identify with a person as opposed to an institution. So we purposely set it up so [the President] was the face and voice of the university. And it was very personal. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Others came to see the *University's athletic teams* (which continued to compete during the Fall semester) as the public face of the university, contending that “by merely being visible [they] were keeping the hope of an entire university alive” (Mayhew, 2007 p. 82). The university's athletic teams adopted the motto “*carry the torch, be the face, and represent the name*” and wore a specially designed patch on their uniforms consisting of a torch, a recognizable campus building and the New Orleans-based Superdome. In recommending to the

President that the university's athletic teams continue competing while the institution is closed, a leader explained:

We can do this and we think doing it serves a higher purpose you know it's something symbolic and gives the campus the community everyone something to rally behind at a time where even our 180 year old university can't open and function at least one aspect of your program can and be a great rallying point for your campus and community to do so. *Contributor 15 – Leader, University A*

Other university employees cited the mere *presence* or *visibility* of university leaders as a source of pride and a sign that the university was on its way to recovery. As a mid-level leader/faculty member with the University's medical school illustrates:

I still have this indelible image of [a leader at the medical school] at the big house. And he's the chairman of medicine, right? And he was up there, he was moving around too but he stayed a night at the big house. And there was like two bathrooms for 20 people... Anyway, I have this image of him early in the morning, waiting outside the bathroom, towel over his shoulder, waiting for somebody, one of the residents to finish taking a shower and leave. But it just, it captured that moment of, guys, kind of Saving Private Ryan, right? I mean, Tom Hanks' character is clearly the leader, and everybody in his platoon treats him as such, be he walks amongst the troops. And everybody follows him with great, great loyalty... and I think [panic] goes away when they see their leaders walking side-by-side. Because then you don't feel, well, if I'm getting led astray, why is this cat still here. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Moreover, contributors note that some decisions had important symbolic meaning – signifying that the university remains operational, and that its employees are valued by university leadership – as in the case of committing to continue pay full-time employees while the university was closed for the fall semester.

The President was very intent on doing a payroll on the 15th of September for lots of reasons, the two most important being to make it clear that we were still around and secondly, he had lots of employees, while final decisions had not been made, basically everyone who was full-time was kept on all during that semester. And paid all during that semester. But he wanted to get money into people's accounts so they could, wherever they were dispersed, they would have some access to it. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Creating A Context for Meaning and Action

Interviewees at University A noted several methods by which University leaders (whether intentionally or unintentionally) created a *context for meaning and action* in the aftermath of Katrina. First and foremost were circumstances where large groups of employees (at various levels of the university hierarchy) were brought together in the aftermath of the disaster to assist with recovery efforts and celebrate successes. As noted by several staff members, through such interactions, Katrina came to be viewed as a “great equalizer.”

This was happening to all of us across the board. It’s like a great equalizer. People that I had never, ever spoken to in the university now were scrounging over the same breakfast buffet here... We were all living together in the same apartment complex and some of us were rooming together. I roomed with my boss. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Living and working in the same location also had the added benefit of ensuring that the decision makers, executors and communicators of those decisions were all in close proximity when if issues required immediate attention and helped foster a team approach. As expressed by a university leader, along with a staff member:

One great benefit, we started off with everybody working in a suite...everybody was there. You could go and get instant feedback, consultation, decision and you needed that things were moving at warp speed and we felt like we had to move with them. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

The best thing that they ever did was have us all live together. And have us all be together. There was no way you aren’t going to feel like part of the team after that. I mean, when I’m sharing a hotel room with three people that I work with, you just instantly bond together. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Organized events – from town hall meetings to parties – became opportunities to share stories, and *foster common understandings and build strong bonds*.

After a disaster, as much as you feel like everybody went through it together, everybody feels really alone. Like there are times where you feel like this, all this just happened to me. And so we did, we had lots of parties. Lots of parties. And we celebrated every major holiday we could. Other country’s holidays, I don’t care... the key piece that it

put everybody together in the same room. ... And when everybody was together in the same room, there was, you could look side to side and see that you're going through this too... And then it becomes, once the loneliness goes away, then things get a lot easier. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions

It's been my experience that you actually don't know how you're going to behave until you're confronted with [a disaster]. People you might think would be the real John Wayne types, just can't do it. Yet... Audie Murphy weighed like 160 pounds soaking wet and he was like 5'5". He was turned down once from joining the Army... And yet he is the most highly decorated war hero in the history of our country. You just don't know. And so, it's hard to ever predict how people are going to behave in a crisis situation until you've seen them behave in a crisis situation. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

As illustrated in Chapter II, the ability to anticipate and respond effectively to an array of potential human actions and emotions in the midst a crisis is a skill-set that depends on leadership team's (or individual leader's) understanding of the population they serve, their knowledge of how people tend to react in times of trauma, and their ability to overcome people-related obstacles as they emerge. The degree to which university leaders can effectively manage and navigate such factors, and channel human reactions and emotions in a desirable direction, can go a long way towards determining whether or not the organization and its members are able to heal and recover from a crisis.

As noted previously, in many respects, Hurricane Katrina came to be viewed by staff as a "great equalizer," as even though the impact was not equally distributed, all employees were impacted in some fashion, and the damage to the university was so severe (with circumstances changing so rapidly), there was little time to worry about whether an assigned task was above or beneath particular an individual's particular pay-grade:

This was happening to all of us across the board. It's like a great equalizer. People that I had never, ever spoken to in the university now were scrounging over the same breakfast buffet here... We were all living together in the same apartment complex and

some of us were rooming together. I roomed with my boss. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

However, while all employees were impacted by the disaster in some fashion, the ability of individual employees (including members of the university's leadership team) to function in the midst of challenging personal and professional circumstances, as well as effectively contribute towards the university's disaster response and recovery efforts, varied considerably. Hence, multiple interviewees stressed the importance of *understanding how people tend to react in times of trauma*, and noted how such knowledge influenced leader behavior post-Katrina.

According to a senior leader:

It's unbelievably important because they're going through such a terrible time in their own lives. What we all need during this time is information. They're anxious about what it is they don't know and whatever you can tell them. And they need to know that they'll be okay. To do anything we could to give them assurance that they'll be okay, and therefore University A will be okay, was important. So we saw that as critical.
Contributor 4 – Leader, University A

Each previously identified subtheme of *managing human reactions* in the midst of disaster (presented in Chapter II) was cited by multiple participants as having influenced leader decision making and communications at University A, as well as the institution's overall response and recovery efforts. However, *spirituality* (at least in terms of the degree to which university leadership tapped into this subject) was perceived as having played a visible role in leader behavior, in comparison to leaders' knowledge of *common responses to trauma*, the degree to which they possess *emotional competence/intelligence*, and their ability to *navigate and overcome resistance*.

Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing Emotional Competence/Intelligence

As discussed above, the subthemes of *understanding common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence* were noted by multiple interviewees as critical in response and recovery efforts of leaders at University A post-Katrina (*e.g.*, two senior leaders, Contributor 2 and Contributor 4 referred to the subthemes as “huge” and “unbelievable important,” respectively). Nearly all participants linked the two subthemes in their responses, addressing them as if they are “two sides of the same coin”; thus, the subthemes are jointly addressed in this section. Collectively, the interviewees also revealed, that in addition to understanding how people commonly react in times of crises (*e.g.*, physiologically and emotionally, constructively and non-constructively), what ultimately is most important, is how university leaders utilize that knowledge, and the degree to which they adopt behaviors and/or strategies that successfully facilitate healing post-disaster.

Interviewees at all levels of University A cited specific behaviors and strategies implemented by University leadership, as evidence that key administrators recognized the importance of understanding and addressing the needs and emotions of its human population post-Katrina, including: 1) *visibly putting people first* – which involved leaders recognizing that university members were suffering in their personal lives (outside of work), helping ensure that their immediate needs were met, and demonstrating the centrality of “people” within the organization via concrete decisions and actions; 2) *fostering a family environment* – via living and working arrangements post-disaster – particularly for temporarily displaced employees; and 3) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – by looking for opportunities to reestablish

routines, celebrating victories (*e.g.*, the completion of assignments), and helping employees regain a sense of control over life events by keeping them busy and productive.

Putting People first. Recognizing that university’s “people” (faculty, staff and students) would be a key determinant in whether the institution would ever recover, University A’s leaders sought to provide employees with sense of security by *ensuring that their immediate needs were met*. One university leader, whose comments are supported by a faculty member/mid-level administrator, demonstrates the intentionality of putting people first:

My first centering thought is, okay, we have to keep people sane and healthy. We have to give them a place to land. We have to support them through whatever this is going to be. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

My feeling is you had to speak to Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs first. Otherwise, people weren’t going to listen to you... So you got to say, listen... I’ll make sure you get paid and we’ll find you a place to live and food and you’ll graduate and everything’s going to be great eventually... And then you set milestones... September 1st, this is going to happen. Then October 1st, you wait, this is going to happen. Then November 15th, then this will happen... and even if you don’t know that for sure, you just, it creates a mentality of things will return to normal. And that’s what you need. Because nobody’s willing to just float in space. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A particularly impactful example of university leadership seeking to ease the trauma of Katrina by *putting its people first* was the decision (complemented by efforts to create the technology necessary to implement the decision) to *continue paying full-time employees* even while the university was closed for the Fall semester, and employees were dispersed throughout the country. This situation is elaborated on by a university leader involved with the decision to pay employees, and a staff member who benefitted from the decision:

One of the things that we did was we guaranteed the faculty that their compensation would be at least, in clinical faculty, at least equal to what it was on an annual basis on August 29, 05. We guaranteed that salary for two years. So that they knew they wouldn’t have to jump ship to stay alive, to take care of their basic needs, that they would have that guarantee of income. And I think that kept a lot of people on board.

Let them go deal with personal issues and come back. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Making sure the entire university was paid was paramount of importance even though the whole thing happened exactly during the payday. That was a huge deal and they made it happen. Which is amazing, because I know lots of people in New Orleans didn't get paid. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

University leaders also ensured that those employees who joined the team in Houston to assist with response and recovery efforts (along the spouses, children and pets of those employees) were provided with housing, food and other basic necessities, which created an environment whereby employees could more comfortably and fully dedicate themselves to the university's efforts. As explained by a staff member:

They took care of us and made sure that we had everything we need. Made sure that we had a place to live... giving us their personal credit card if necessary to buy the necessities we needed to buy, like t-shirts or whatever. Or food. They just wanted to make sure that we were taken care in those very, very early moments... *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Fostering a family environment. Administrators, faculty and staff members at University A regularly cite the bonds that developed from jointly dealing with Katrina, and living and working side-by-side out of hotels and shared apartment complexes in Houston, as key in helping facilitate an effective organizational response. A staff member indicates that these bonds resulted in a "sense of family" and "camaraderie" (Contributor 9 – Staff, University A), which was beneficial to employee morale and ultimately to the university's recovery effort. Two key members of the university's leadership team explain the rationale behind their efforts to *foster a family environment*:

You try to be attentive to what their needs are. And then, when we were in Houston, Texas, we all lived together. And that also was very, very helpful because our families could be together and that created a sort of social system and a family that filled a lot of gaps for people. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Because we needed to make sure that people, first that people had a place to be. That they were healthy, so they could help us recover. And too is trying very hard to manage it as a community. So I was trying to put people in locations where they could be somewhat together... we would find three or four apartments together. Five apartments together so people could have some sense of community. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

A staff member, who lost nearly all personal belongings in the storm, but continued working for the university in its immediate aftermath, notes the benefits of *fostering a family environment* to him personally:

Eating breakfast, lunch and dinner together... watching movies together... and I immediately have this family... I wouldn't wish Katrina on anyone, but I wouldn't change a thing... and incredible family building experience. *Contributor 6 – Staff, University A*

Moreover, a university leader along with staff member add that efforts to *foster a family environment* enabled “social sanity” while also facilitating a 100% commitment to the task at hand.

So we got an apartment building in Houston and we gave everybody apartments and they were big enough for the entire family and their pets and we lived together 7 days a week and we'd have BBQs so we kept some social sanity. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

And they were willing to put up our spouses and our pets and that kind of thing. And we in turn responded by being able to commit 100% to the job. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Facilitating a sense of normalcy/certainty. Recognizing how people commonly react in times of trauma (*e.g.*, potentially freezing up), and the emotions such circumstances can evoke (*e.g.*, fear and sadness) – a key strategy employed by leaders at University A to help facilitate recovery (both at the organizational and individual levels) – involved seeking to *facilitate a sense of normalcy or certainty* during challenging post-Katrina circumstances.

For the leadership team in Houston, a sense of *normalcy/certainty* was established by starting each morning with a meeting in the President's hotel room. The meeting began by

reviewing a list of tasks assigned the prior day as outlined on a large flipchart purchased in Houston. After celebrating the “wins” (or assignments that were successfully completed) over the prior 24 hours, attendees updated the President on any tasks “in progress,” and a new list of assignments were added to the flipchart and delegated to individuals or committees by the President (or other key members of the leadership team). The desire to foster a sense of *normalcy/certainty* is illustrated by a university leader,

We would always start out by talking about what we did the day before that really felt like we were moving forward. So they would all say, we got this problem solved, we got that problem solved, okay, those are the wins. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

A mid-level administrator/faculty member illustrates the importance of reestablishing a sense of normalcy, noting that prior to Katrina, medical residents did not enjoying “being on call,” but in the aftermath of Katrina craved it.

Pre-disaster. I mean, it sucks to be on call. But post-disaster, people crave it. They crave the, “wow, I’m getting back into a routine.” *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Both senior and mid-level university leaders pursued a variety of methods to establish a *sense of normalcy* in the midst of trying to help University A respond to and recover from disaster. A senior level leader indicates that she retained “connectivity in her life” by dropping off and picking up her daughter from school each day (in Houston), then went back to work.

At the time that Katrina hit, my youngest daughter was in the 8th grade... And one of the things that I religiously did as I drove her to school every morning and I left work every single day to go pick her up. And then maybe I wouldn’t see her again until 8:30 or 9:00 at night, but I did those two things and that kept a sense of normalcy and I don’t know, connectivity in my life that I really needed. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

A mid-level leader/faculty member sought to re-establish a sense of normalcy for employees by ensuring that their basic needs were met (*e.g.*, housing and food) and setting clear milestones.

My feeling is you had to speak to Maslow's hierarchy of human needs first. Otherwise, people weren't going to listen to you... So you got to say, listen... I'll make sure you get paid and we'll find you a place to live and food and you'll graduate and everything's going to be great eventually... And then you set milestones... September 1st, this is going to happen. Then October 1st, you wait, this is going to happen. Then November 15th, then this will happen... and even if you don't know that for sure, you just, it creates a mentality of things will return to normal. And that's what you need. Because nobody's willing to just float in space. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Most leaders (both upper and mid-level), however, sought to facilitate a *sense of normalcy/certainty* by strategically *keeping employees busy* and/or on a set schedule, which they found to be helpful in snapping people out of the denial, excessive deliberation, freezing up, and other challenging reactions, while giving them a sense of control over and the opportunity to see progress in an aspect of their post-Katrina lives. A university leader, faculty member/mid-level administrator, and a staff member each illustrate the benefits of keeping busy in the midst of disaster:

It was a frightening time there's no doubt about it. Everyone who works on our team, we were so glad to have something to do, we couldn't sit there and be mesmerized by the images on TV, I mean we had something to do to make it better and that was great. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

Again, as they say, it's easier to steer a moving ship. And the longer you make people tread water, the more people that drown. So you set the plan to get everybody on board and just keep going knowing that you're going to pick up some momentum. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

I also know that for people were lucky enough to be on the emergency team and keep working for the university during that time, that having something to throw yourself in and distract you from, and feel like they're doing something very valuable was in itself a coping mechanism. So maybe it was easy in a way to work round the clock, 24 hours a day. Because you're doing something important when you can't be doing anything else. Because that helpless feeling was just awful. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

At the university medical school's temporary (post-Katrina) site in Texas, leaders sought to foster a sense of *normalcy/certainty* for interns/residents by *recreating the routines and*

systems that existed at University A prior to the disaster. As a faculty member/mid-level administrator with the university's medical school explains:

We recapitulated exactly what we had before. Right down to the call schedules and the colors that showed who was the resident, the intern. Right down to the way that we delivered charts in the clinic. Everything, the times that we did conference, everything was exactly the same as it was pre. Mostly because, if you got people back into the routine, then it just seemed a little more like the wheel was hitting the same cycle and that we were moving forward... the first step if you're starting to imagine, wow, things could return to the way that they used to be. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

While most interviewees jointly addressed the subthemes of *navigating common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence*, a few university leaders specifically highlighted the importance of *managing emotional reactions* – from “lifting peoples spirits” to ensuring their psychological health and well-being. As explained by a leader/faculty member:

A lot of it was trying to keep people's spirits up. And it wasn't, and again, it was just communicating. Where we stand, what's going on. Trying to be, not sure cheerful is the right word. Because that would not be very sincere. But at least not be depressed or pessimistic. That wouldn't have helped at all. And so trying to maintain people's spirits seemed important. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty Member, University A*

A leader involved with university athletics, required that each team (many of which continued to compete while the university was closed) undergo a psychological evaluation.

I made every [athletic] team go through a psychological evaluation... to be seen and to be evaluated. I wanted to be sure before I asked them to do this that they were in a stable place and felt like they were safe and secure and capable of doing this. *Contributor 15 – Leader, University A*

Additionally, a staff member notes the importance of paying attention to and maintaining a sense of the emotional well-being and needs of employees.

There are a number of folks who deal with those stresses of an event in very different ways... Being able to ascertain and read somebody, they may be saying 'yes' but everything else is saying 'no.' The ability to stop that inward look and start looking out at the same time is a skill that I think becomes very important. To be able to ascertain

you know someone's general condition, how are they doing where they're at, sometimes non-verbally... becomes important. *Contributor 14 – Staff, University A*

A fellow staff member adds that when necessary, university leaders *allowed employees to temporarily step away* from recovery efforts or other university related activities, to deal with personal matters.

So they would let people go and do. If you needed to go attend to something personal or find out where your missing relative or friend was, then you could step out and make a phone call if you needed to. So, understanding. They were very understanding. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University A*

Spirituality

One subtheme of leader behavior that seemed to play a less visible role in the efforts of leaders at University A to connect with and/or help facilitate healing amongst the university community (in comparison to other subthemes) is that of *spirituality*. This may stem from the fact that University A is a not a religiously-affiliated university; thus, regular references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders (at least while engaging as representatives of the institution) are not a part of the organization's culture to the extent that they might be at religiously affiliate institutions.

Those interviewees who referenced tapping into *spirituality*, generally did so on a private basis to assist with healing on a personal level and/or to help address the question running through the minds of many, "Why is this happening to me?" One executive level leader, however, indicates that he tapped into spirituality in an *effort to motivate his employees*, while a mid-level administrator/faculty member with the medical school challenged residents to recognize Katrina as a "defining moment" and encouraged them to rise to the occasion:

[The goal] was to focus on the importance of what we were doing... We were put here, and it goes back to spirituality, we were put here at this moment in time. And we're expected to do certain things. And this is the time where we really find out what we're made of. And it would be that kind of challenge that I would put before them. And

we're up to the task. We can do it. It's going to be hard work. We're not going to kid each other. But on the other end, you're going to feel good about what you did. And I think, they all are extremely proud of what they've done. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

And so I made the point... That there are defining moments in life. Defining moments you don't control... What you do control is how you respond to the defining moments. And that's what defines you. And that's what makes it a defining moment, right? *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Overcoming Resistance

The strong majority of contributors at University A indicate that they were impressed by the willingness of so many members of the university community (leaders, faculty and staff) to meet the challenges involved with responding to such a severe disaster, and their ability to function effectively. However, a few contributors also note that amongst those involved with recovery efforts, some were unable (for varying amounts of time) to execute their responsibilities effectively. Moreover, there were instances in which university leadership encountered significant resistance to their efforts and/or proposed post-Katrina institutional changes.

Along with (the previously highlighted) pressure from the AAUP, alumni and faculty associated with the university's eliminated engineering programs, and alumni opposed to the merger of its historic women's college with the general university, institutional leaders on occasion needed to navigate challenges or resistance at the individual level.

A key leader provides a broad overview of the types of resistance encountered by the recovery team in the aftermath of the disaster, from individuals who were *unwilling or unable to assist* and/or who were too concerned about whether the tasks they were being assigned were consistent with their specific job titles.

Some people failed us there is no doubt... and I don't think they wanted to fail they just could do it. I think the things that some people did that were not helpful – refusing to be engaged in the process, refusing to make a decision, refusing to offer comment or advice, retreating, not doing anything, so by default it fell to people who were their

subordinates, which didn't work very well. Some people appear to be more wedded to titles and job descriptions and responsibilities that are on a piece of paper... and what you're asking me to do doesn't fit, I don't know how to do it I'm not gonna learn how to do it... and I read it as I'm scared to try. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

A mid-level administrator/faculty member adds that some university actors simply felt that they (or their departments) should be exempt from any post-Katrina organizational or procedural changes.

You're going to find that there are people who think that they're really, really special and shouldn't have to follow the rules and should get special treatment. But in a crisis situation, nobody's special. Everybody's special. I mean, you can't, all of those privileged things that you thought you had don't exist anymore... It makes some of them very anxious and uncomfortable... So managing the different personality types and different reaction types can be quite a challenge. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A key leader adds an example of an employee who became an obstacle given his *inability to perform effectively under stressful circumstances*:

And you know we would think they were moving an agenda along only to find out they would be stuck on some minutia or detail that wasn't moving it along... And our IT guy just got focused on the wrong things. And I did think he was somewhat paralyzed by fear. And therefore, he didn't tell us what he was unable to do. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

Such obstacles, however, did not solely stem from university employees. A staff member who assisted with post-Katrina recruitment efforts indicates that those involved with recovery efforts occasionally had to divert attention away from their responsibilities to *placate the parents of students* who may not have understood the full scope of the devastation suffered by the university.

You had to remain calm, very diplomatic and open to hearing people's complaints. You have a Mom yelling about her daughters clothing being ruined, and you wanna say 'listen lady, there are people in the streets that have died and you are concerned about shoes,' and you have to be able to step back from that and recognize that you are working for University A and representing University A... and try to solve those problems. *Contributor 6 – Staff, University A*

Resistance also stemmed from lawsuits related to the merger and elimination of departments, along with faculty positions. The last remaining lawsuit against the university related to Katrina was not decided until 2011 (more than 5 years after the storm). Such resistance surprised some members of the leadership team:

It shocked us at how many friends of institutions, a lot of faculty, have ended up suing us in the years afterwards. I mean, it's almost as if they, for decisions that we had to make, they didn't, they would have preferred we not do anything to hurt something that was important to them, rather than save the institution. And that is just something you've got to be prepared for. *Contributor 1 – Leader, University A*

Several contributors noted strategies that they found to be effective in alleviating the obstacles or resistance resulting from the post-disaster mental or emotional state of employees. Two senior leaders note the importance of *paying attention to staff* and *watching for warning signs* that circumstances are beginning to overwhelm them:

As a leader, one of things on your list has gotta be pay attention to your staff and make sure they are doing okay, and do something hard if it's called for – make somebody go away and go to the movies and make sure that their teammates and colleagues understand that this is for the benefit of the group and when it's their turn they will be able to step away ... and there are no recriminations and no hard feelings. Let them know that they are a hero in this too. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

I've been through, crisis situations. And I certainly saw it very much in this Katrina situation, people handle things differently. Some people are just not wired up to go through it. So it's really, you've got to be really in tune with the people that are around you and understand when somebody can't do it. Need to be relieved of their duty. Need to have another option. And you're got to be really in tune when people are tired, particularly during a recovery phase. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

Another university leader indicates that a direct *one-on-one conversation* can sometimes be sufficient to pull an employee who is having difficulty performing post-disaster out of their immobilized state. Such was the case with a senior officer (and member of the recovery team) whose performance improved dramatically after the following conversation:

What happened to those that fell by the wayside... they got overwhelmed by the situation and therefore, immobilized in decision-making. They just got overwhelmed.

And nobody can blame them. Then they became immobilized. And to tell you what makes a difference, I'm not going to mention names, because I don't think it's fair, but I sat down with one of the senior officers when I realized this was happening and said, listen, you really have to get over this. I know you're suffering. We're all suffering. But the only way to get out of this is to get focused and really do something.
Contributor 4 – Leader, University A

Other leaders chose to let those who seemed visibly overwhelmed *take time away* from recovery efforts to deal with personal issues. As explained by a senior leader who assisted with budgetary matters post-disaster:

There are people who can't focus because of the impact to them personally. You've got somebody on the team whose house was underwater, doesn't know where his spouse is located and can't focus because of that. Well, you've got to let that person go. That person's got to get out and go find his spouse. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Finally, while a rare occurrence at University A, in circumstances where an employee was having or posing difficulties to the point of becoming an obstacle to recovery, they were relieved of some or all their recovery related responsibilities.

You either figure out something that they can do that takes them out of your path and allows the team to do what they need to do, or you just [remove] them completely.
Contributor 5 – Leader, University A

Potential New Subthemes

Through the document analysis and interview processes, a number of themes and subthemes of leader behavior were identified and/or discussed, many of which mirrored those identified in the previously highlighted conceptual framework. However, three potential new subthemes of leader behavior were cited with such frequency that they bear mentioning in the current chapter, and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter IX: Comparative Analysis. These potential new subthemes include: 1) *navigating the external environment*; 2) *emphasizing the university's mission*; and 3) *sense of humor*.

Navigating the External Environment

The first potential new subtheme of leader behavior – *navigating the external environment* – is closely related to the leader attribute of *resourcefulness/adaptability*. Yet given the extent to which the university was “as an organization” impacted by and dependent on the external environment post-disaster, and the degree to which survival was both constrained (e.g., via the dysfunctional government response, the rumors/overgeneralizations and consistent negative portrayals of New Orleans chances of recovery in the media – making recruitment and recovery more difficult),–and in certain circumstances enabled by that environment (e.g., via new collaborations with local universities, enhanced fundraising, new research opportunities and centers, and a revamped community service-oriented curriculum), *navigating the external environment* is a potential new *leader-driven organizational dynamic*.

One staff member illustrates the *mix of challenges and opportunities* presented by the external environment. On the one hand:

The lack of leadership at the city level was kind of like a killjoy... we all had to pitch in and help make things happen because the city was so slow moving. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

On the other hand, the university was able to *tap into the momentum* of the City’s recovery:

New Orleans is such a small city and it’s a walkable city and it’s a city that loves its traditions and its holidays and its restaurants. So every single time a new restaurant came online, it felt like a victory. And every single time a new holiday, or Mardi Gras happening, it felt like a victory... it felt like we were recovering... Everyone celebrated in everyone else’s coming back... And when the other universities came back online, it was a victory for all of us. We were all very excited when [University C] opened back up. *Contributor 12 – Staff, University A*

Sense of Humor

A second potential new subtheme of leader behavior cited repeatedly by participants as important during the process of responding to and seeking recovery from Katrina involves a perceived leader attribute, namely – a *sense of humor*. As noted by a staff member:

I'll tell you something I also think is actually a huge attribute of all these people [university leaders] I named – they have senses of humor... moments of humanity... even as great leaders. I distinctly remember them laughing over silly things like how many cookies they are eating... People at that level, it's incredibly comforting.
Contributor 12 – Staff, University A

Similarly, a faculty member, who has filled multiple interim leadership roles over the 6+ years since Katrina, notes that exhibiting a *sense of humor* can be strategic as it *helps put others at ease*:

I tend to use a lot of self-deprecating humor. And there's a cost to that, I know. Some people tend then to agree with the deprecation. But I do think that that makes people more comfortable. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Additionally, two key members of the University's leadership team noted the role of *sense of humor* in maintain a *sense of optimism* and *calmness* amongst colleagues in the midst of challenging post-Katrina circumstances:

I guess the last thing I would say is that as a senior group, we actually genuinely like one another. So we have a lot of fun with one another and that helps. And I mean genuinely playful moments when we'd find ways to kid and do stuff. In the darkest moments we could find a way to smile. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Having the opportunity to find things funny, or to find the humor in a very bad situation, is I think very important to keep people even keel... I mean, the humanity in a situation is really critical. *Contributor 5 – Leader, University A*

Emphasizing the University's Mission

A third potential subtheme of leader behavior – *emphasizing the university's mission* – was depicted by multiple contributors as beneficial in facilitating recovery from disaster at University A, and falls within the theme of *leader communication*. More specifically, this

subtheme involves uniting and focusing the university community around a common connection and/or *mission* and consistently *linking communications* (including those explaining the basis of recovery-related decisions) to that mission. As noted by a staff member:

One thing that helped [with recovery] was our passion for New Orleans... and University A. *Contributor 6 – Staff, University A*

A faculty member/mid-level administrator explains the importance of uniting the university community around a common mission:

You had to have some glue that held a team together. There had to be some mission, some reason that people were together other than just accidentally there... If you built a team around some glue mission statement, then you have a higher probability that team is going to stay together after they have taken a hit, right? And then after taking the hit, the leadership lesson too, one, is to build your team that way to begin with, but two, is you immediately remind people why we're together to begin with. And then you focus on activities that fit with that mission statement. *Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

An additional faculty member/administrator adds that those who remained with the University's Medical School since Katrina seem to be driven by the unit's mission:

I think one of the things is people are much more sort of mission oriented. They realize exactly why we're here. And hopefully exactly what we need to do. Not that that necessarily persists every day, but the missions of a school to educate, to do research, and in our case, to perform clinical service and to keep the finance, to keep the wheels going that all of those... if you're not working on those, then.... It's not good enough. *Contributor 8 – Leader/Faculty, University A*

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the experiences of University A (a major research university with a 170-year history) in dealing with the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee failures, and seeking to recover from the aforementioned devastation. In total, the University suffered an estimated \$600 million in damages (a total that includes both physical and operational costs). Yet, despite projections from educational leaders that the university had a 1/3 chance of ever reemerging as a successful university in New Orleans, criticisms stemming

from the AAUP, as well as alumni associated with its historic *Women's College* and its *School of Engineering* – according to available institutional data and the accounts of nearly all university-based interviewees – just 6-years after the disaster, the institution has emerged as strong, if not stronger, than it was prior to the disaster.

Based on the perceptions of all University A leaders, faculty, staff members interviewed for this study (including those affiliated with the university's main campus and its medical school), the primary reason(s) for the institution's recovery stems from the behavior of university leadership in the aftermath of the disaster. Particularly noteworthy was the role of the President, who repeatedly received praise from faculty, staff and fellow leaders for his role in facilitating University A's recovery via his uplifting/candid communication style, his willingness to make difficult decisions, and determination to rebuild the institution beyond prior status. Amongst the themes/subthemes of leader behavior most frequently cited by contributors as key in response and recovery efforts at University A were: *technical competence* (e.g., the perception that leaders knew what they were doing); skillfully blending *instinctive* with *vigilant decision making* (e.g., handling matters with near term consequences swiftly, while adopting the mantra “no decision before its time” for those that could benefit from further deliberation); exhibiting *charisma* or the *ability to inspire* (e.g., delivering motivational speeches, and “celebrating wins”); *facilitating awareness* within the campus community (e.g., by leaning towards transparency and disseminating regular updates to constituents); and successfully navigating *common responses to trauma* (e.g., by helping create a “sense of normalcy/certainty” by re-establishing routines and delegating recovery related responsibilities).

On the other hand, according to contributors, university leaders did not commonly tap into *spirituality* in an effort to foster response and recovery efforts. Instead it appears that most

university leaders viewed spirituality as a more private matter, while other sought to unite members behind the cause of rebuilding the institution, and/or the opportunity “to find out what [they’re] made of” and/or to “rise to the occasion.” Additionally, at times (albeit infrequently), university leaders fell into a specific *decision making trap*, namely – making and announcing decisions (and the timelines for executing such decisions) without having ensured that the appropriate infrastructure was in place or could be restored/created in time to meet such commitments. On occasion, such commitments placed added strain on university personnel to accomplish leaders’ stated objectives (*e.g.*, ensuring that all employees were paid on time via direct deposit, despite post-disaster technological challenges) – requiring both the creation of new infrastructure, and the execution of decisions, when those involved were already in the midst of navigating challenging personal and professional circumstances stemming from Katrina.

Moreover, building upon the previously identified themes and subthemes of leader behavior, each of which were cited by multiple participants, three new potential subthemes emerged from the experiences and perceptions of contributors at University A in the aftermath of Katrina, including: 1) the ability of a university to *navigate the external environment* (*e.g.*, to be self-sufficient, avoid obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary); 2) leader exhibited *sense of humor* (finding reasons for laughter in the midst of stressful circumstances); and 3) *connecting post-disaster communications to the mission* of the university (*e.g.*, unifying personnel behind the need to foster the institution’s survival and recovery).

In December 2005, just 3+ months after Katrina, University A’s leaders accompanied the distribution of the institution’s post Katrina Recovery plan with the following statement:

It took University A 172 years to become one of the most respected and highly regarded universities in the nation, and the university’s leadership pledged, rather than allow disaster to destroy University A’s legacy and dream of world-class academic excellence, instead the university would redefine and renew itself for the future.

According to the collective accounts of university leaders, faculty, and staff, just 6 years after Hurricane Katrina, the leadership team at University A has successfully accomplished its stated mission.

The chapter to follow discusses the experiences of University B, and identifies leader behavior evident in the institution's response to the unprecedented disaster.

CHAPTER VII
UNIVERSITY B & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF
HURRICANE KATRINA

Who knew that when I took this position, that I'd basically be getting my Ph.D. in disaster and emergency preparedness... But, that's effectively what I've got now, after having gone through Katrina. *President of University B (as cited in Jump, 2008, p. 5)*

Background – A Catholic University with a 100-year History

In 1911, the *Jesuits of New Orleans* (some of the region's earliest American settlers) made the decision to merge two *Jesuit colleges* (founded in 1849 and 1904, respectively) into a single postsecondary institution located in New Orleans. The following year, the newly merged private, religiously affiliated institution, *University B*, was granted a charter by the Louisiana State Legislature. Consistent with the with a Jesuit tradition emphasizing liberal arts education, the first of the University B's five current colleges, the *College of Arts and Science*, began admitting students in 1912, shortly after the university's founding.

Today, University B's main campus in New Orleans spans 24 acres. The university also maintains a nearby 4.2 acre campus, which houses the university's *College of Law*, its *Law Library* and related facilities. University B emphasizes its identity as an American, Jesuit and Catholic institution of higher education, which welcomes students of diverse backgrounds and all faiths. The university is shaped by the following mission: *Preparing students to lead meaningful lives, and to pursue truth, virtue and wisdom, while working towards a more just society. Inspired by the principle of recognizing God in all things, the university seeks to educate*

the whole person, while also benefitting the broader community (paraphrased from University B's Mission Statement, 2011).

University B currently represents the largest Catholic university south of St. Louis in an area extending from Arizona to Florida, and is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities nationwide (AJCU, 2012). The University offers 61 undergraduate majors and 10 graduate degree programs in its five colleges: *Humanities and Natural Sciences*, *Social Sciences*, *Business*, *Music and Fine Arts*, and *Law*, and hosts 40 study abroad programs. It is home to 5,008 students, including 3,165 undergraduates and 1,843 graduate/professional students. The University boasts a student/faculty ratio of 11 to 1 (University B, Common Data Set, 2011-12).

Nearly half (48%) of University B's current undergraduate population stems from out-of-state (this includes international students from some 54 different countries), along with 61% of its graduate student and 30% of its law student populations. The university's enrollment data further depicts a student body that is predominately female and Caucasian – with 58% of undergraduate students, 78% of graduate students, and 50% of its law students identifying as *female*, and 34% of undergraduates, along with 27% of its graduate students, and 28% of its law students identifying as *racial or ethnic minorities* (with roughly 14.1% of overall student population identifying as Black, 9.7% as Hispanic, 3.6% as Asian, and 1.5% as Other) (University B, Enrollment Stats: Demographics, 2011).

*Other Facts and Figures*¹³:

- *U.S. News & World Report (America's Best Colleges) Rankings*: University B has been listed amongst the top 10 universities in the Southern region by *U.S. News* for each the last 21 years. In 2010, the institution was ranked in the top 10 amongst "Master's University in the South," and in the top 30 (nationally) for its service learning

¹³ The university rankings listed below are based primarily on information presented online via "About University B." Where possible, the rankings were verified by accessing the original source of the data.

opportunities. Additionally, in 2012, University B was added to the publication's "Great Schools, Great Prices" category, with an additional top 10 ranking.

- *Princeton Review Rankings*: In 2010, University B was ranked in the top 5 of the publication's "Best College Libraries" list. In 2011, the institution was listed amongst the 20 "Easiest Campus to Get Around," and amongst the 20 with the best "Town-Gown Relations." Additionally, in 2012, University B ranks amongst the top 10 institutions for "Lots of Race/Class Interaction," and is profiled as one of the "Best in the Southeast" in the *Princeton Review's* "2012 Best Colleges: Region by Region" website feature.
- *Forbes.com – America's Best Colleges*: University B is ranked amongst the top 300 schools in the nation by *Forbes*. The list, taken from more than 6,000 colleges and universities in the United States, was compiled using student surveys, graduation rates, accumulated student debt, and alumni listings in *Who's Who in America*.
- *A Good Value*: University B was named a 2011-2012 *Best Value Private College* by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* and a *Best Buy* in the *Fiske Guide to Colleges 2012*. *Barron's Best Buys in College Education* similarly notes University B as one of "America's 300 Best Buys."
- *Community Involvement*: University B was named to the *President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll* for community service activities conducted throughout the 2006–2007 academic year (Corporation for National & Community Service, 2008). In 2010, the University was similarly recognized by the *Carnegie Foundation*, for its community engagement efforts and long tradition of partnering with and reaching out to the wider community. Additionally, in 2011 University B was ranked amongst the 30 "Top Colleges that Gives Back to the Community" by *Washington Monthly*, while its moot court program (conducted through the institution's College of Law) was ranked one of the "top 10 advocacy programs" in the country by *The National Jurist*.
- *Safety*: In 2008, *Reader's Digest* gave University B an *A Rating* for its safety record, listing it as one of the safest universities in the country.
- *A Top Collegiate Library*: The *Princeton Review* and other ranking entities (*e.g.*, *CampusGrotto.com*) have consistently recognized University B for hosting one of the top college libraries in the country. The more than 145,000 square foot facility currently

holds more 350,000 books and periodical volumes, over 20,000 music scores and recordings, and provides web-based access to thousands of additional full-text references.

Katrina's Impact on University B

On Friday, August 26, 2005, the students of *University B of New Orleans* were busy moving into their dormitories and apartments, not fully aware of the path and strength of the gathering storm (then a *Category 1* hurricane) just off the coast of Southern Florida. In addition to moving-related activities, a busy orientation weekend had been planned for the freshmen and their parents. At that point, there was limited concern at University B (and in New Orleans more broadly) about the gathering storm, as most projections indicated that the hurricane (soon to become infamous as *Katrina*) would likely travel along Florida's western coast as it moved north towards Florida's panhandle (Wessinger, 2006; Contributor 9 – Staff, University B). Perhaps indicative of the minimal concern in the region at the time, when asked by a student's parent "What are you going to do about the storm in the Gulf?" a key staff member at University B recalls saying "What storm?" (Contributor 9 – Staff, University B).

By Saturday morning (August 27th), however, earlier predictions as to the storm's path began to shift considerably. University B's officials, along with other New Orleans residents and visitors learned that Katrina had not only grown in size and quickly strengthened into a *Category 4 hurricane* (with winds up to 145 mph), but was now heading in the general direction of the New Orleans/Mississippi region of the Gulf Coast.

Similar to University A, most members of the University B community (who had transportation options), became aware of and heeded recommendations (stemming from meteorologists, local officials, or university leaders) to depart from the city prior to Katrina's arrival. Ironically, many students, had just days earlier expected to be emotionally parting ways

with their families (after moving into their dormitories) at around the time same time they instead found themselves leaving New Orleans together (Wessinger, 2006). Those who did not have immediate access to transportation or shelter outside New Orleans (roughly 200 students and a small group of parents) and/or with evacuation related responsibilities (student affairs personnel, residence life staff, a few faculty members) were evacuated by University B to a shelter approved by the Red Cross in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (Contributor 9 – Staff, University B; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

In contrast with University A, however, University B’s initial evacuation plans had to be adjusted when it was discovered that their previously negotiated evacuation site at a post-secondary institution in Baton Rouge had instead been turned into an emergency shelter for those with disabilities (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B). Moreover, based largely on the unpredictability and rapidly changing projections of Katrina path, and the City’s delayed “mandatory evacuation” orders, University B did not begin a formal “full-evacuation” until Sunday – on the eve of the storm (Wessinger, 2006; Multiple Contributors, University B).¹⁴ As such, the university was not able to secure private buses to assist with the evacuation, and instead utilized university vans, along with the vehicles of faculty and staff to assist with transporting students (along with a small group of parents) to its newly designated emergency shelter in the Baton Rouge area – a *Baptist-affiliated Church*. Given that the evacuation (while “successful” in terms of transporting everyone to safety) took place during the morning/afternoon just prior to the Katrina’s arrival, many University evacuees had to cope with various traffic-related

¹⁴ A segment of students (along with their parents), faculty and staff evacuated the area prior to the formal evacuation order.

challenges, including those associated with *contraflow*¹⁵ (a traffic management technique designed to facilitate a safe mass evacuation), causing it to take 8 to 10 hours to arrive in Baton Rouge – a drive that normally takes about an hour (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

Once in Baton Rouge, the Baptist Church initially provided effective refuge from the late August heat and humidity and the massive storm to come. Unfortunately however, while evacuees did have access to bathrooms, the Church lacked accommodations for showering/bathing. This was not a major concern at the outset, when evacuees assumed that they would be making a swift return to New Orleans post-Katrina; however, upon learning that the levees had been breached and that members of the University B community would not be heading back to New Orleans anytime soon, the lack of bathing facilities did pose challenges. As did the eventual loss of electricity, which eliminated access to air-conditioning in the midst of high-temperatures and humidity, and made it difficult to access information on just what was taking place in New Orleans. Thus, instead of returning to University B, over the next several days, student affairs and residence life staff would spend much of their time contacting the parents of students, to assist in making arrangements for their sons and daughters to return to their hometowns (via plane, train, and bus) or be picked up by family or friends who chose to drive down to the Church-based shelter (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B). Later that week, university staff would themselves depart from Baton Rouge, dispersing to locations throughout the country.

While those in Baton Rouge had escaped the full-force of Katrina, the story was much different for the University President, the Director of Public Safety, designated facilities

¹⁵ The U.S. Department of Transportation (2011) defines *contraflow* as “a process where ... lane reversal is utilized during mass evacuations on major limited or controlled access highways to reduce the duration of an evacuation by opening up all lanes in one direction” and typically only one direction for specific periods of time.

managers and staff who remained on campus throughout the storm – hoping (much like the leaders of University A) that their immediate presence would allow for a quick response and the ability to more effectively manage any fallout from Katrina. It soon became clear however, as flood waters began to rise throughout New Orleans and concerns of looting emerged, that the situation was no longer safe, prompting the Director of Public Safety to insist on the President’s evacuation from University B and New Orleans more broadly.

Soon thereafter, the President of University B relocated to Alexandria, Louisiana, where he was joined by several members of the institution’s leadership team including: the Chief Financial Officer, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, and the Director of Government Relations – along with key Human Resources personnel. Moreover, high ranking members of the University’s academic sphere,—including: the Provost, Associate Provosts, and Deans, along with select members of the institution’s enrollment management/admissions team, and staff involved with managing student financial aid – evacuated to Houston, Texas, setting up operations at a local university that had generously offered to provide University B’s personnel with temporary office space.

Over the next several weeks, these two geographically separated leadership teams would communicate with each other primarily via text message (which many employees began utilizing for the first time) and a temporary web-based message board, followed by email and phone, once capabilities were restored. They lived in hotel rooms and apartment buildings, joined in some cases by family members and pets, seeking clarity as to what was taking place in New Orleans, and responding to circumstances from afar – hoping to lead the institution towards full-recovery from the unprecedented disaster (University B, Multiple Interviewees).

The majority of University B's faculty and staff members (*e.g.*, those who did not have designated responsibilities to assist with recovery) initially dispersed to locations within the state of Louisiana and the surrounding region, expecting that campus would re-open in just a couple of days. Few anticipated a long term absence, let alone the closing of campus for an entire semester, accompanied by a devastated city, and shattered local infrastructure (*e.g.*, the lack of electricity in many areas for at least a month). Nor did most (if anyone) fathom being unable to meet and/or communicate with other members of the University B community, being restricted from checking on the status of their own homes (due to health and safety concerns), and (in most cases) not permitted to visit campus, until several days to weeks after the initial storm. Those wishing to check on their residences, typically had to wait until local authorities had approved a given zip code for visitation rights, while those faculty and staff members who wished to view campus, were only able to do so for a limited period of time, often just long enough to retrieve their belongings.

Most students on the other hand, after initially reuniting with family members or relatives outside of New Orleans, scattered to campuses throughout the country. Many attended one of 27 Jesuit colleges and universities (all part of the *Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU)*), who openly welcomed University B's displaced students (roughly 6000) to their campuses for the Fall semester, with the understanding these "guest students" would to return to their home campus in New Orleans once the campus reopened come Winter (Contributor 2 – Leader, University B; Contributor 14 – Leader University B; Contributor 15 – External Expert, University B). Other, non-Jesuit affiliated institutions (from community colleges, to Ivy League institutions) similarly opened their doors to University B's students for the Fall semester. All Jesuit-affiliated institutions (with one exception) agreed to collect tuition dollars on behalf of

University B while allowing the funds collected to pass through to the New Orleans based institution (Contributor 9 – Staff, University B; Contributor 15 – External Expert, University B). Many non-Jesuit institutions made similar revenue sharing arrangements with University B, provided the “visiting students” with significant discounts (*e.g.*, room and board related cost reductions), and/or kept tuition for Fall at the level students would have paid at University B (even if publicized tuition rates were higher at the hosting institution).

When the university re-opened on January 9, 2006, 92 % of students returned for the Spring semester (Wessinger, 2006). To help ensure that those students who were unable to take required courses towards their degrees during the Fall were not set back in terms of their time to degree completion (*e.g.*, due to a course not being offered at the institution temporarily hosting them), the University changed its academic calendar – offering an additional Spring semester between May and July 2006 (Contributors 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B).

Damage Summary

Fortunately, much like with University A, most members of the University B community were able to evacuate by their own means prior to Katrina’s arrival, and those without such means (including about 200 students as noted above) were transported safely to Baton Rouge (about 80 miles from New Orleans), preventing any loss of life on campus. University B was also fortunate that the structural damage to its campus was far less severe than that sustained by University A (despite the campuses being directly adjacent to and nearly contiguous with one another), with much of the damage resulting from the 135 mph winds that accompanied the Hurricane, versus the levee breach induced flooding that had inundated University A. The more

limited physical damage to University B stemmed largely from the fact that most of the campus sits at a slightly higher elevation than much of neighboring University A.

Thus, while the university did suffer short term physical damage, estimated at roughly \$5 million, by far the most significant costs were operational in nature, stemming from the temporary (and in some cases long-term) loss of students, faculty members, and services they relied on (Mangan & O’Leary, 2010). Operational costs associated with Katrina are estimated at nearly \$39 million – with \$23.8 million in short term losses (*e.g.*, revenue shortfalls from the cancelled semester and the need to temporarily operate from satellite locations), and a projected \$15 million longer-term revenue shortfall (Contributor 8 – Mid-level leader, University B).¹⁶ As an institution that is heavily dependent on tuition as a source of revenue, the inability to recruit students for the next admission’s cycle (while the university was closed in Fall 2005), the deep drop in the number of residents of New Orleans (traditionally the source of more than 20% of total student enrollment at University B) (Kurland, 2006), the inability to recover applications that had been submitted prior to the storm (which were not stored digitally), and the unwillingness of many parents to send their children to New Orleans post-Katrina (largely out of safety related concerns) had a substantial negative impact on university enrollment totals going forward – posing fiscal challenges for the university. This was further magnified by losses suffered at the individual level by faculty and staff – with over 60% reporting a total or significant loss of their homes (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 11 – Mid-Level Leader, University B; Wessinger, 2006)

¹⁶ The specific breakdown of damages varies by reporting source. According to Mangan and O’Leary (2010): Total physical damage to University B reached \$4.6 million, but notes that \$16.5 million in costs/losses were recovered from federal sources. An estimate of operating costs due to Katrina were not provided by this source.

The 2 to 3 years immediately following Katrina were University B's most challenging. In total, the university's operating deficit for 2005–06 was \$12.9 million and (prior to budget cuts and the creation/implementation of its recovery plan) had projected a budget deficit of between \$9 (Macklin, 2006) and \$12 million for fiscal year 2006-2007 (O'Neil et al., 2007). While University B maintained its A1 debt rating from *Moody's*, and A+ from *Standard & Poor's*, its "ratings outlook" from both agencies was downgraded from "stable" to "negative." First-time freshman enrollment fell rather dramatically from roughly 900 students in 2005 to 527 in Fall 2006 (a 41% decline), while total enrollment dropped from approximately 5,600 students to roughly 4,600 students, over the same time-frame (a nearly 18% percent decline from the prior year) (O'Neil et. al, 2007; University B's Enrollment Data, 2005-2006; University B's Common Data Sets, 2006-2007)¹⁷

While University B did not declare *financial exigency* (instead citing *educational considerations* in a forever altered post-Katrina environment as the primary basis for many of its restructuring decisions), the university laid-off 17 faculty members (11 of whom were tenured) and eliminated several dozen full and part-time staff positions in conjunction with its post-Katrina reorganization and recovery plan. Amongst other changes, the plan, to be discussed in greater detail below, eliminated 15 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, and suspended 12 others (University B's Recovery Plan, 2006). While university leadership maintained much of its support from the Board of Trustees, and received praise from multiple constituents in the aftermath of the storm (more so as time has passed and many then controversial decisions have proven beneficial to the university), the Provost, two Associate Provosts and University President ultimately received votes of "no confidence" (a non-enforceable but important

¹⁷ Precise enrollment figures for Fall 2005 were not tabulated by University B (and most other colleges and universities in the region) as campus closed for the Fall semester, prior to the first day of classes.

symbolic measure) from the faculty associated with its largest college – the *College of Natural Sciences and Humanities*. Moreover, a level of distrust (referred to by one contributor as an “undertone of negativity”) pervaded relations between faculty and the administration for the next several years (Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B).

University B’s Plan for Recovery

While the physical damage and overall monetary costs suffered by University B as a result of Hurricane Katrina were not as extensive as those endured by University A, given University B’s smaller size and greater dependence on tuition as a source of revenue, the multi-year decline in enrollment totals posed serious challenges for the university and its leadership team.

In response to \$28.8 million in short term losses (physical damages + immediate operational costs) and projected future revenue shortfalls (projected to approach \$15 million), in early December 2005, the President announced that he would be working with other university leaders to craft a plan to reduce the institution’s operating budget by roughly 20% and its salary related budget by approximately 15%. Shortly thereafter, the university laid-off 28 staff members, and announced that an additional 27 “currently vacant” staff positions would be eliminated (University B Press Release; Lederman, 2005). However, major institutional changes would not begin taking place until the Spring of 2006, when the President, in partnership with the Provost’s office, announced a series of restructuring decisions intended to facilitate recovery from Katrina and re-position the university for competitiveness as it approaches the start of its second century as an institution (University B Recovery Plan, 2006; Contributor 2 – Leader, University B).

More specifically, on May 19, 2006, the President of University B, with approval from the university's Board of Directors, announced the institution's post-Katrina *Recovery Plan* – designed to be implemented over a 5-year period. An earlier version, which included a set of core principles and provided a basis for upcoming restructuring decisions – but was comprised of fewer specifics than the version presented to the Board for approval – was introduced on April 11th. The university community was presented with the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft version of the plan, and modest changes, additions and clarifications were made in accordance the feedback received prior to it being presented to the Board for approval.

The soon to be controversial *recovery plan* had three primary stated objectives: 1) to create synergies within academic areas, 2) to resize colleges for better communication and management, and 3) to assist in making the university's vision of "... [preparing] men and women so that they might lead lives of service with and for others,... be scholarly and ethical practitioners, entrepreneurs, artists and civic leaders..." a reality (University B Recovery Plan, 2006). Key elements of the 5-year plan include (but are not limited to) the following:

- *New Colleges* – University B reorganized its existing academic units into five distinct colleges (in certain instances creating/restructuring the schools within those colleges): *College of Business, College of Natural Sciences and Humanities, College of Law, College of Music and Fine Arts, and the College of Social Sciences*. Under the plan, the *School of Mass Communication* and the *School of Nursing* were also created and housed under the *College of Social Sciences*.
- *Eliminate Part-time/Adult Learning College* – Rather than managing a separated college specific to part-time/adult learners, the intent of the five newly established colleges is to “offer sections of appropriate courses at night and in accelerated formats to serve this population.”
- *Program Suspensions* – Multiple academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels were suspended, including undergraduate majors/minors in: German, Human and

Organizational Development, Japanese, Music Composition, Music Theory, Physics, Piano Pedagogy, and Russian. The following Master's programs were also suspended: Music Education, Music in Performance, Music Therapy and Religious Studies.

- *Program Eliminations* – Several academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels were eliminated as part of restructuring efforts, including: undergraduate and graduate level Communications programs (e.g., Communications Studies and Film Studies), undergraduate programs in Computer Information Science and Computer Information Systems Applications, undergraduate and graduate level programs in Elementary Education, and the graduate level Reading and Secondary Education program.
- *Name Changes* – Some pre-existing schools were renamed as Colleges (e.g., the School of Law) and Departments renamed as Schools (e.g., the Department of Communications).
- *Student Learning Objectives* – With the stated goal of “fostering student learning” the university has (or over time is seeking to): revise the common curriculum, implement a quality enhancement plan, improve the quality of residential life (including living-learning opportunities), strengthen the Jesuit identity of the university; and modernize educational facilities.
- *Faculty and Staff Development Efforts* – The University is looking to increase participation in professional development activities, develop a merit review process, establish Centers of Excellence, and craft shared decision making processes in accordance with the restructured schools and colleges.
- *Outreach Endeavors* – The University is hoping to develop stronger ties with the city of New Orleans and the surrounding region as it rebuilds, and hopes to increase the effectiveness of its fundraising activities.

Has University B Recovered?

What happened, not only with the storm but the immediate aftermath of the storm – It's almost like a prize fighter who's been almost knocked out. He's standing up and they're kind of groggy walking around for a while. I think that's the way the city was. I think that's the way the institution was for a couple years. *Contributor 5-
Leader/Faculty, University B*

Since University B's campus reopened in winter of 2006 and its recovery plan was approved by its Board of Trustees in May of that same year, the university's leadership team has largely focused its attention on reorganizing and restructuring the university in a fashion consistent with the aforementioned plan. As of today, according to institutional data and most interviewees (leaders, faculty and staff) the University is very close to full recovery if not fully recovered. Several participants in this study indicated that the university may actually be better positioned post-disaster; while a smaller group suggested that the university still has a bit further to go before achieving a full-recovery. The President and the remaining members of his leadership team received praise from multiple participants, who noted the challenging circumstances faced by university and credited the leadership team for having been willing to make difficult and at times unpopular decisions in an effort to reestablish the university's financial security, recover enrollment totals and move the institution beyond Katrina, while also playing a key role with helping facilitate the City's recovery.

Evidence cited by participants that University B has recovered include: 1) the completion of all post-Katrina campus repairs; 2) the opening of multiple new and/or newly renovated buildings; 3) the 2011 fall enrollment of 959 first-year undergraduate students – a figure that exceeds the university's pre-Katrina freshman enrollment total; 4) A total enrollment approaching pre-Katrina levels (7.7% below 2004 totals); 5) the recent return to a balanced budget; 6) a \$266 million endowment as of the close fiscal year 2011¹⁸ (NACUBO-Commonfund, 2011); 7) improvements in the university's credit rating; 8) the establishment of new post-Katrina partnerships and consortiums; 9) faculty totals have now reached pre-Katrina levels; and 10) the institution's 5-year graduation rate for its 2006 cohort (the first to arrive post-

¹⁸ While University B's \$266 million endowment was noted by participants as a sign of fiscal health, this overall figure remains below the university's pre-Katrina (2005 fiscal year end) endowment total of \$318 million (NACUBO, 2006).

Katrina), currently exceeds the 6-year graduation rate for its 2004 cohort which arrived in the year prior to Katrina (57.3% to 56.8%, respectively) (Office of Academic Affairs). Additionally, several contributors indicate that by incorporating lessons learned from the Katrina experience, the university has become far more prepared for future disasters – with a more comprehensive plan in place, a requirement that all students, faculty and staff have *individualized evacuation plans*, a clearly designated evacuation site for university leaders (and other members of the recovery team), more structured communication plans, and more resilient communications equipment. Please refer to *Table 7.1, Appendix G* for University B’s current Institutional Profile (including pre/post-Katrina data comparisons).

Other Noteworthy Data:

- Nearly 92% of University B’s students returned for the Spring 2006 semester (Wessinger, 2006)
- University B was removed from the AAUP’s list of censured institutions in June 2011
- University B maintains an A1 debt rating with *Moody’s Investor Services* and an A+ debt rating with *Standard & Poor’s Rating Services* for both its 2006 and 2010 series revenue bonds. Both agencies now consider University B to have a “stable outlook” (which had been “negative” for four years after Katrina) and cite expectations for a strong balance sheet going forward (University B Press Release, 2010).
- University B has completed several campus renovations post-Katrina including: the addition of a four-story, 16,000-square-foot unit to its College of Law; the addition of two floors to a major campus parking garage; and the renovation and expansion of a building that centralizes a variety of student administrative services, including: Admission’s, the Bursar’s Office, Student Records, Student Finance and Financial Aid.

Contrary Evidence

As noted above, according to institutional data, firsthand observation, public commentary, and the perspectives of faculty and staff interviewed for this analysis, University B

has nearly, and in many respects fully recovered from Katrina. Members of the university's leadership team (*e.g.*, the President, Provost, and Vice President for Finance and Administration) have received praise from internal and external constituencies for making tough decisions in the face of difficult circumstances, for guiding the university towards recovery, and for playing a very active role in helping facilitate the City's restoration (Multiple Contributors – University B; Carnegie Foundation, 2010; Corporation for National & Community Service, 2008). That being said, the efforts of university leaders to manage Katrina and its aftermath have also been the focus of strong and often quite public criticism (whether correctly or incorrectly placed). Several such critics have highlighted what they believe were flawed decisions and decision-making processes, poor communication between decision makers and those affected by them, and a lack of transparency regarding the data utilized as the basis for leader behavior.

Much like with University A, the perceptions cited above negatively impacted University B's reputation in the eyes of the *American Association of University Professors (AAUP)*. The association, which echoed the sentiments of, and largely served as a voice for current and former faculty members that were angered by the post-Katrina decisions and actions of University B's leadership team, and subsequently added the university to its list of censured institutions.¹⁹ More specifically, the first set of concerns involves the equitability of the process involved in terminating the employment of 17 faculty members, 11 of whom were tenured (the other 6 held tenure-track positions), and "the treatment afforded the notified faculty in the immediate aftermath of those decisions" (O'Neil et al., 2007, p. 94; Macklin, 2006).

¹⁹ In responding to the AAUP, the President of University B notes that "no university administration relishes the possibility of being censured," but that the survival of the institution "...was dependent on immediate and decisive action by the administration..." and contends that the "AAUP would have had [University B's leaders] make decisions in a time frame which was not designed for the crisis [they faced] and continue to face" (as cited in Jaschik, 2007).

The AAUP (2007) contends that while the University did suffer “significantly from wind and water intrusion as a result of the hurricane... [the] damage was modest compared to other New Orleans universities,” and that the revenue shortfall (initially estimated at \$25 million post-Katrina) was largely offset by \$15 million in business interruption insurance, \$8.2 million in federal supplemental aid, \$.4 million from the Bush-Clinton fund, and other sources (O’Neil et al., 2007, p. 88).²⁰ Thus, the AAUP (representing a contingent of University B faculty) questioned institutional leadership’s claim that financial challenges (*e.g.*, current and projected future budget deficits) were at a level serious enough to justify central elements of the university’s post-Katrina recovery plan, including the suspension and elimination of multiple programmatic offerings, and the previously noted faculty layoffs – adding that the University did not go so far as to state *financial exigency* as grounds for terminating tenured faculty, while instead citing “educational considerations” (O’Neil et al., 2007, p. 65).

Complaints emanating both from university faculty and the AAUP focused in particular on the process by which the institution’s *Recovery Plan* was developed and the manner in which decisions to eliminate departments and faculty positions were made. Under normal circumstances, shared governance played a key role at the institution, with the *Faculty Senate* (consisting primarily of faculty) serving as “an advisory body whose function is to assist the University in matters that the Senate deems appropriate concerning the whole University” (University B, About the Senate, 2012) While an additional entity, referred to as the *Standing Council for Academic Planning (SCAP)*, which is chaired by the provost/vice president for academic affairs, and includes 14 elected faculty members and 2 students – has historically been

²⁰ Note: University B’s leadership and those responsible for risk management indicate that it took several months to years of conversation, assessment, and negotiation with federal authorities and insurance company representatives to receive the funding. Thus, University B’s access to funding from some of the sources listed in the AAUP’s report was limited at that time various university decisions were made.

responsible for reviewing proposals for program initiation and discontinuance, and evaluating such proposals “on the basis of criteria proposed by SCAP and agreed to by the University Senate and the President” (O’Neil et al., 2007, p. 88). Accounts differ greatly on the extent to which the University Senate and SCAP were consulted in the development of the university’s post-Katrina restructuring plan, and degree to which the committees’ input was considered in departmental suspension and elimination decisions (Contributor 2 – Leader, University B; Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B)

The AAUP and several University B professors (on individual bases) also contend that in terminating faculty the university violated its own written policies. Specifically, they argue that when a faculty member is terminated for reasons of “program discontinuance” the university should (in accordance with its pre-Katrina *Faculty Handbook*): 1) make every effort to place the faculty member concerned in another suitable position, 2) provide a reasonable period of training, for circumstances where the position differs from the faculty members prior expertise, and 3) if no suitable position exists, faculty should be offered severance at a level consistent with a faculty member’s length of past and potential service to the institution (University B Faculty Handbook, 2005; O’Neil et al., 2007). The AAUP, and some university faculty (particularly those associated with its largest college, formerly known as the *College of Sciences and the Arts*) maintain that “the administration made no discernible effort to comply with these rules before issuing the termination notices” (p. 97).

On April 20, 2006, 9 days after a draft of the recovery plan was released, the criticisms noted above prompted University B’s Faculty Senate to vote “no confidence” in the process that produced the recovery plan. On May 11, 2006, the Faculty Senate followed its prior action by voting “no confidence” in the Provost’s office, which had been heavily involved in developing

the plan. The following day, the faculty of the university's largest college, the *College of Sciences and the Arts* (soon to be renamed and incorporated into a new *College of Natural Sciences and Humanities*) similarly voted "no confidence," naming the Provost and two Assistant Provosts as targets of the motion (p. 21).

On September 26, a few months after implementation of the recovery plan had begun, faculty of the newly named *College of Natural Sciences and Humanities* voted 61 to 19 in favor of a motion expressing "no confidence" in the President, and 70 to 10 in a motion of "no confidence" in the University Provost.²¹ However, in response to the motions and direct contrast to the votes of "no confidence," the Chair of University B's Board of Trustees (which had unanimously approved the institutions *recovery plan*) noted that the Board "...is confident in the leadership of the University" and affirmed the "direction and vision" instituted by the President and Provost (as cited in Netherly, 2006).

Several interviewees, along with other individuals (both university employees and members of professional associations) cited by various news entities (*e.g.*, Inside Higher Ed, Chronicle of Higher Education, and The Times Picayune) have questioned the decisions of university leadership to suspend or eliminate what they believed to be key programs or departments, and the data utilized as the basis for such actions (*e.g.*, Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B). By far, the most frequently criticized programmatically focused decision, involved closing University B's *School of Education*, particularly given New Orleans recent major transformation from a public K-12 into a largely charter-based school system. Those voicing disapproval (including those who were not directly associated with the eliminated School) argue that maintaining a *School of*

²¹ While the motions serve as important indications of the faculty perceptions at the time the votes took place, neither bind the Board to take action affecting the employment of either the President or Provost, nor do they directly impact university policy.

Education, would have left University B well-positioned to provide teachers and administrators for the City's new charter system, and likely would have attracted students seeking to fill an important role in uplifting the City of New Orleans.

Eight tenured faculty members whose positions were eliminated in association with the organizational restructuring, filed lawsuits, several of which resulted in monetary settlements reaching six-figures. While interviewees indicated that some of the tension between faculty and the administration has been alleviated over time (*e.g.*, Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B), the last remaining lawsuit was not resolved in December 2010, and the AAUP did not remove University B from censure until June of 2011. As one member of University B's leadership team put it, "I think lawsuits are kind of like a wound... an open wound. And once it's resolved, you get into a healing process... As long as the litigation was pending, it was difficult to move forward" (Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

Finally, the university has had to deal with heavy staff and faculty turnover since Katrina. While some of this turnover was the direct result of layoffs, retirements, the pursuit of other opportunities, and/or to philosophical differences with institutional leadership regarding response/recovery related decisions and/or the direction of the University going forward, many, however, simply chose not to return to City of New Orleans due to a lack of confidence in the City's recovery, and/or unwillingness to put themselves or their families back into a setting they view as vulnerable to a repeat event(s). Even though many of those who left were replaced by what long-term employees referred to as "high-quality" faculty or staff members, some current employees have expressed concern about the "institutional memory and knowledge" that has left the University with their former co-workers (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B;

Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B), and believe that, much like a fraction of the student population admitted since Katrina, some new faculty and staff members may not be as connected with the mission of the institution as those who have departed (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

A small group of contributors also contend that admissions standards may have been relaxed slightly to recover enrollment totals and that while very talented students were admitted, many are not as connected to the Jesuit mission and philosophy of the university (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B). As a result, University B’s residence life staff has had to manage more disciplinary issues than in the past, including more frequent alcohol and drug related incidents. Moreover, institutional data reflects broader swings in freshman-to-sophomore year retention rates post-Katrina than occurred prior to the disaster. Since 2006, retention figures have fluctuated between 73% from 2007-08 to 82% from 2009-10 (two years at or above 80%). The 2010-11 retention rate stands at 77%. During the five year period for which freshman-to-sophomore year retention figures were kept prior to Katrina, retention figures varied from 79% to 84% (over 80% four of those years).

Please refer to *Table 7.2* below for an overall assessment of University’s B’s recovery efforts to date:

Table 7.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University B.

Name	Total Undergraduate Applicants 2004 to 2011	Total Enrollment Comparison 2004 to 2011*	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005 v. 2011	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04 v. 10/11 Cohort**	6-year Graduation Rate 1999 v. 2004 Cohort***	Financial Viability	Facilities & Campus Repairs	General Assessment of Contributors
University B	Beyond Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Recovered	Nearly to Fully Recovered (enrollment remains 7.7% below pre-Katrina levels)

Leader Behavior at University B

In analyzing the experiences of University B with Katrina, and the impact of leader behavior on institutional response and recovery efforts, a total of 14 current/former University B employees were interviewed, along with a representative of a professional association (with a higher education focus) who worked closely with the university in during its initial response and recovery efforts. Of the 14 participants directly affiliated with University B, 6 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (three of which also held faculty appointments), 6 filled mid-level leadership roles (one of which also served as faculty), and 2 filled staff-level positions with the university. Please refer to *Table 7.3* below for more detail on the positions held by contributors at (or associated with) University B in the aftermath of Katrina.

Table 7.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University B.

Contributors: University B
President
Leader, Academic Affairs + Faculty, Music & Fine Arts
Leader, Academic Planning/Restructuring + Faculty, Music & Fine Arts
Leader, Government Affairs
Leader, Research Administration + Faculty, Social Sciences
Leader, Financial & Administrative Affairs
Mid-level Leader, Academic Affairs + Faculty, Business
Mid-level Leader, Community Engagement
Mid-level Leader, Enrollment Management
Mid-level Leader, Legal Affairs
Mid-level Leader, Risk Management
Mid-level Leader, Student Affairs
Staff, Information Technology
Staff, Student Records
External Expert - Professional Association (Higher Education)

Through both the document analysis and interview processes several key themes and subthemes of leader behavior emerged and were noted by participants as having played crucial roles in the response and recovery efforts of University B. Those most frequently cited include technical competence, financial and relational reserves, symbolic action, ethics/morality/virtuousness, and nearly all subthemes of managing human reactions.

Collectively, the interviewees also provide context and add further support for two of the three potential new subthemes of leader behavior identified in Chapter VI as important in the midst of disaster at University A, including: *navigating the external environment* and *emphasizing the university's mission*. An additional potential subtheme of leader behavior, *timing* (which underlies the broader theme of *leader thinking and decision making*) also emerges via this exploration of the experiences and disaster management efforts of University B's leadership team. The degree to which each theme/subtheme of leader behavior (whether previously or newly identified) was exhibited by leaders and/or perceived by contributors at University B as an important influencer of disaster response and recovery efforts, is noted in *Table 7.4* and discussed in detail below – beginning with *leader driven organizational dynamics*.

Table 7.4: Leader Behavior at University B: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.

	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important
<u>Leader Behavior</u>	
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>	
<i>balancing structure with flexibility</i>	High (emphasis on flexibility)
<i>reliability</i>	n/a
<i>mindfulness</i>	n/a
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	High
<i>managing the external environment</i>	High
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>	
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	High (emphasis on technical)
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>	Low
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	High
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	Medium
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	High
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>	High
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>	
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	High
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	High
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	n/a
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	High
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	High (balance of both)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	High
<i>timing</i>	High
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>	
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	High
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	High
<i>symbolic actions</i>	High
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	Medium
<i>emphasizing institutional mission</i>	High
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>	
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	High
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	High
<i>spirituality</i>	High
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	High

Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

I'm really proud of how we handled everything as an institution. I mean, there are little things I can think of, decisions that we should have made sooner or maybe a little differently. But as an institution, I think we did some really stellar work for our community. And again, talking faculty, staff, students and the city as a whole – nothing glares out to me that would be a wholesale thing I think we should have done differently. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Similar to interviewees at University A, multiple contributors at University B noted that *leader-driven organizational dynamics* played an important role in facilitating (and in other circumstances inhibiting) an effective organizational response to the disaster and in moving the institution along a path towards full-recovery. An example of the complexity of post-disaster operations and context wherein organizational dynamics were to play a significant role is illustrated by a mid-level leader who evacuated with University B's student population.

We realized that we couldn't go back, we couldn't take the students back to the university, and people that had evacuated like myself couldn't go back to the university and we couldn't go back to the city. So immediately started contacting parents and contacting bus terminals, airports, how were we to get students out. And once we got all the students out of there, about two days later, then we actually moved to another location, because what happened with that shelter, it started as a shelter for us, it was a shelter for University B students, faculty and staff who evacuated with, and parents, actually some parents evacuated with us as well because they got stuck at the airport and couldn't get out. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Two subthemes of *leader driven organizational dynamics* were commonly perceived and highlighted by participants at University B including: 1) the balance between *structure* and *flexibility*; and 2) *relational* and *financial reserves*.

Structure vs. Flexibility

Several interviewees at University B underscored the role and importance of balancing *structure* with *flexibility/adaptability* in facilitating university response and recovery efforts, with most emphasizing the importance of having a structure in place pre-disaster, in order to facilitate effect post-disaster actions and decisions, even when such actions and decisions may need to

deviate from previously established plans. A key member of the President's Cabinet explains the balance as follows:

You have to have a foundation from which to work. And obviously things are going to change and you're going to have to adapt. But to have the structure at least in mind that you know that you may be able to go this route. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

The need for a *structured foundation* in combination with *organizational flexibility/adaptability* post-disaster is further illustrated by a mid-level university leader/faculty member who was assigned additional responsibilities in the aftermath of Katrina.

I brought in a professor from the business school... and he helped us set up a very complicated Gantt chart, to show us what every day you have to have done by this target date... [but] the everyday schedule went out the window because every day there was some kind of new crisis or some kind of new issue to deal with, there was never what you would call a regular day where you went to work and then you came home there was something new every day. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

The majority of the interviewees at University B, however, (particularly those directly involved with response and recovery efforts), commonly noted the need for and benefits of the university being able to operate in a very *flexible* and *adaptable* fashion, with a team of university leaders, faculty, and staff, who were “doggedly determined to do everything that we put on the table” to help foster its survival and recovery, regardless of whether the tasks they were assigned were consistent with their standard (day-to-day) responsibilities (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B). As noted by a staff member who plays an important role in the university's risk management efforts, “I think the one thing that you have to look for is people who are truly flexible” (Contributor 8 – Staff, University B).

Similarly, a key university leader who maintains responsibility for a segment of the university's financial matters notes the need for and benefits of *organizational flexibility/adaptability* in the aftermath of disaster. He explains that such challenging

circumstances can require that decisions be made without the time or logistical capability to consult with key university personnel who they have historically (*e.g.*, during non-emergency circumstances) relied on for guidance, requiring:

...the flexibility of being able to make decisions without a, let's call it "a structured environment," you did not have with you those role players that would report to you and basically give you advice. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader who received praise from multiple contributors for playing a key role in maintaining and helping reestablish the university's technological infrastructure post-disaster, sheds light on the benefits to University B of leaders having *empowered those responsible* for campus infrastructure (*e.g.*, technology and facilities) to do what they believe is in the best interest of the university during emergency situations – allowing them to *make decisions at the local level*, rather than requiring that they wait for higher level leaders (who may or may not be experts on a given subject and/or may be temporarily unreachable during communication outages) to approve and/or make the decision for them.

Well, we really had to think on our feet. One of the things that I've always enjoyed about University B, and I've been really fortunate in my tenure here is really being empowered to make decisions when it comes to IT. And that was a real asset during Katrina. There were some decisions I had to make that basically I felt empowered to make on my own. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader: University B*

The views above are supported by a mid-level administrator who assisted with primarily with recovery efforts (versus the university's immediate response to the disaster), and praises the president for having *enabled decentralized decision making*, which she contends has been helpful in facilitating recovery, as those with the appropriate knowledge have been allowed to make decisions relevant to their areas of expertise, rather than waiting on the President to make decisions for them.

One thing that I will definitely say about the President... we run our areas. He doesn't tell [legal counsel] now he thinks litigation should go. He doesn't tell student affairs

how [they] should draft a student code of conduct. He allows the areas to run according to the leader of that area...And so as the president, he makes decisions as a president. But he clearly trusts his team to make their decisions. Because he always says, "I hire people who can do the work and make good decisions." *Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader, who helped guide the evacuation of students from University B, illustrates the importance of *organizational flexibility/adaptability* in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances related to evacuation efforts.

We had no transportation so what we did for Katrina is we used the university vans that were available, a number of university departments had vans, and personal vehicles to get about 200 students on our way out of New Orleans to Baton Rouge. The only problem with the site for us in Baton Rouge was that, for some reason, LSU was contacted and they were not necessarily forced, but they were asked to accommodate some disabled citizens in that auxiliary gym so we lost our site. So at one point in time we had no site so we had to wait for the Red Cross to find a site for us and they found one early Sunday morning. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Hoping to enable organizational recovery, the institution also became *flexible* with respect to some long standing procedures. A mid-level leader/faculty member who served on the university's recovery team that was located in Houston (versus Alexandria), notes that to keep students on track toward graduation and facilitate their return to University B, the institution had to demonstrate flexibility in terms of the types of courses they would allow to transfer in for degree credit.

Students were taking courses at everywhere from the highest ranked colleges in the country to the lowest ranked... we decided eventually to have a pass/fail program because there was no way to evaluate all of the differences we accepted everything c and above. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Financial & Relational Reserves

An additional set of leader influenced organizational dynamics noted by participants as having impacted disaster response and recovery efforts at University B involves *financial* and *relational reserves*. *Financial reserves* (in this case generated through *business continuation*

insurance proceeds) were unanimously perceived by interviewees as key in facilitating institutional survival and recovery – serving as a buffer, as the organization took steps to rebound from the physical and operational costs associated with Katrina. *Relational reserves* on the other hand, were cited by interviewees as helpful in *fostering a team environment* – enabling those with a long history at the university to work together in a constructive fashion post-disaster. Where *relational reserves* did not exist, witnesses indicate that recovery may have to some extent been inhibited or slowed.

The importance of possessing *financial reserves* and/or access to other forms of funding in the immediate aftermath of a disaster is illustrated by a mid-level leader/faculty member, who notes that a variety of university initiatives she was involved with had to be put on hold until sufficient funding was secured, and the university's budget was on sounder footing.

Everything went away, the funding for building graduate programs was no longer there, faculty development wasn't there I mean money was a major issue during the crisis and we had no idea what the future was gonna bring. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

While some specific university endeavors were suspended post-Katrina, interviewees assert that University B's ability to eventually resume the majority of its operations was the result of some good fortune (along with the proactivity and good-timing of a staff member), in that just one month prior to Katrina, University B's "risk management coordinator" persuaded university officials to triple the amount of its *business interruption insurance coverage* from \$5 million to \$15 million – covering a large percentage of the overall operational costs suffered by the university (Contributor 8 – Staff, University B)

One member of the University's leadership team speaks to the efforts of the risk manager and the benefits of business interruption insurance to recovery efforts:

In many ways he was [our] fiscal savior. Because he had the foresight to get... a business interruption insurance policy which we, we were then able to collect. And that provided [us] over the past couple of years with the financial stability that [we] didn't have to go out and just get students. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Another key university leader/faculty member adds that having access to some form of *financial reserves* provided a “cushion,” allowed payroll to be met, and enabled recovery efforts:

I know not everyone was in our position as an institution, but we were well-insured. And so, that made a difference in the ability of the institution to respond. You could absorb some costs, whether it was damaged buildings, or the ability to continue to pay people, which they did even though we were shut down for that fall semester. Every two weeks, our checks were deposited... we were able to draw on that during those years of reduced enrollment and higher graduation rates so that as revenue decreased... that business interruption insurance provided a cushion, so that we could make up for parts of our revenue. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

In describing major lessons learned from the university's experience with Katrina, one staff member notes that in preparing for disaster, to facilitate financial survival, colleges and universities should, quite simply: “Buy more insurance” (Contributor 8 – Staff, University B).

In addition to impact of business continuity insurance on facilitating recovery efforts, several participants highlighted the role that *relational reserves* can, and in this case did, play in response and recovery efforts at University B. One senior leader/faculty member explains the benefits of *relational reserves* as it relates to leading in the midst of crisis:

A person in a leadership role has some good will that he or she can call upon. So that if you are faced with a situation that you can get a little leeway because are willing to, cut you some slack in saying, you know, we did the best we could, three years down the road, you know, maybe we wouldn't have done it the same way, but it's where we were at the time. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Participants add that *relational reserves* positively impacted recovery at both the individual and organizational levels. A mid-level leader refers to the feeling of “community” within the university, while a staff member depicts the “camaraderie” in her unit as similar to that of a “happy family.”

We refer to it as “the community, the University B community.” It very much is a community. So people drew a lot of strength from each other once they returned, and even before we returned. We were, people were on the phone with each other, tracking each other down and reporting in. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

The camaraderie on this campus was unbelievable. We really are one “happy family.” In most cases, we’re a “happy family.” My office staff is amazing. We’ve been together, there’s only six of us in this office and we’ve been together for like 130 years. We’ve all been here for a long time. Everybody took care of everybody else. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Additionally, a faculty member/mid-level administrator on the university’s disaster recovery team contends that *administrative stability*, in combination with the *lengthy tenures* of many key employees, were key in fostering *relational reserves*, and enabling productive work relationships post-disaster:

At the time, our deans had been here a while – a new president but the basic administrative structure of the institution was very stable. Everybody worked together well. We all knew each other. And there was a real – it still is that way today. You can pick up the phone and get a lot of things done on campus. I think that worked to our advantage. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader: University B*

In contrast, a leader/faculty member further illustrates the importance of *relational reserves* (in this case established through feelings of *trust* and *collaboration* pre-disaster), by describing how the lack thereof can pose challenges post-disaster – as in the case of a former member of University B’s leadership team, who did not have positive relations with other members prior to Katrina, posing challenges in the disaster’s aftermath (Contributor 2 – Leader, University B).

I think that if prior to crisis you don’t have a trust relationship. If you don’t have a, what is clearly understood and appreciated by individuals as a shared decision making process... if that overall system and that level of trust and cooperation is not very strong in the beginning, it’s only going to worse I guess would be what I would say. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

[Note: As mentioned in Chapter VI, *organizational reliability* (which appears in the comprehensive conceptual framework presented in Chapter III and revised framework appearing in Chapter X) is a subtheme noted for its ability to foster pre-disaster features (*e.g.*, preparedness

for and/or avoidance of disaster) versus post disaster phases (e.g. response and recovery), thus is beyond the scope of the current study and not discussed in this section]

Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes

A theme of leader behavior that nearly all interviewees at University B noted as crucial in university efforts to foster response and recovery from Katrina were the *exhibited personal attributes* of members of the leadership team. While the majority of contributors provide their perspectives on skills and attributes exhibited by the university President, Provost, Vice Presidents or other senior and mid-level leaders that they observed in the aftermath of Katrina, several interviewees instead offer broad assessments of the leadership team and/or discuss attributes that they now believe it takes to serve as an effective university leader in the midst of crisis. For example, a mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that the *collective depth of experience* of the leadership team and administration at University B was crucial in managing response and recovery efforts, and notes the type of experience that she believes individual actors on such a team should possess:

The other thing I would want is “experience”... we all had different experience, but we all had depth of experience in one area or another... so I would want someone who had had either experience in relations around the university or expertise in a particular area.
Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B

Both a senior leader/faculty member and a mid-level leader indicate who they perceived to be leaders or other key actors at the time of Katrina – noting the role of the President, Vice Presidents, and Deans, among others.

Certainly the president’s cabinet and the top executive level folks. The deans were crucial during that time... now their role is even more central. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Basically, it’s the president and the cabinet which are, the cabinet consists of the vice presidents for finance, administration, student affairs, enrollment management, which at the time was not on the cabinet. Institutional advancement, and the provost. I also

serve on the leadership team, the recovery team, as does the public affairs officer.
Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B

One leader, however, disagrees with the assessment of Contributor 1 above regarding the value that the university's (now former) Dean's provided in the aftermath of Katrina.

...we did not have a strong set of deans when we went into the storm. And it's funny, having been a dean; I never realized how important administratively those positions are, particularly when you're doing the faculty and program review. They're absolutely crucial. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Irrespective of which leaders were singled out for praise or criticism, each participant in this study referenced specific leader attributes that they perceive played a key role in fostering response and recovery efforts at University B. Multiple leaders also noted personal characteristics that they believe made them effective in the aftermath of Katrina, and helped foster recovery. Each *exhibited leader attributes* identified in the previously advanced conceptual framework, was emphasized by multiple participants as influential in university response and recovery efforts, and is discussed below.

Competence (Technical & Social)

An *attribute* perceived by multiple interviewees to have been important in managing the aftermath of Katrina, and evident in the behavior of select members of University B's leadership team, was *leader competence*. Responses at University B focused primarily on the *technical competence* of key leaders – stemming from their perceived experience and/or the sense that a leader has the skills appropriate to effectively manage their area(s) of responsibility. *Social competence*, or perceptions of leadership's familiarity with the people/skillsets surrounding them, and how effectively they made use of those skillsets, received little attention from participants.

In discussing the attributes of members of the university's leadership team, a staff member who assisted with immediate response efforts, notes that "the depth of that knowledge and understanding of the institution... was really, really important" (Contributor 8 – Staff, University B). This is supported by a key member of that team (who held significant financial and facilities related responsibilities) who notes the value of possessing competence that stems from having a deep familiarity with the institution, its history and how it operates:

The people in their respective roles that did evacuate had an extreme familiarity with the university and its structure. These individuals, and I'm speaking from my standpoint as well as those individuals in the student records area. People who had a long history at University B. So they brought with them that historical information, that historical knowledge in order to be able to use when they alone were the individuals making decisions. Institutional knowledge... it was extremely important to just have people that were able to get things up and running rather quickly and then have really strong familiarity with the systems in place at the university. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

In addition, to a staff member who assisted with tracking down University B's student population (which had dispersed post-disaster), and notes that they the institution has an "amazing group of administrators" (Contributor 9 – Staff, University B), a leader/faculty member who played a key role in recovery efforts, addresses the "collective competence" of the leadership team – which he believes stems largely from the *length of their experience* with the university and the *wisdom attained* through such experiences:

One of the real strengths of institution is the collective wisdom we have in intelligence. And there were a lot of people who had been at University B a long time and I think of trying to involve as many from a manageable situation to try to do that. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

An executive level leader contends that the *technical competence* he attained from working in areas outside of higher education prepared him to help manage response and recovery efforts, while a mid-level leader/faculty member, notes that her training and experiences both

inside and outside higher education, enabled her to assist with the university's post-disaster restructuring efforts.

I think the best single training I ever got for Katrina was actually my work in intensive care medicine for years. Because that's one personal attribute, I think, that was, an intellectual attribute. And the other was, I was an amateur boxer... I think that probably in another mindset, because you just get in and you deal with it. You don't worry about the fact somebody's going to hit. You try not to get hit. I think in a mindset it sort of lends itself to it. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

I was a business professor... I came to academic from a banking finance background... but I am actually a prof of business strategy, and so my knowledge of strategy and management and finance I think really came into play in our setting up the organizational structure *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

An additional mid-level leader, who played an important role in the university's disaster recovery efforts illustrates how the *competencies attained through managing small scale crises* and projects with defined endpoints, on a day-to-day basis, helped ensure that many mid and upper level leaders (along with general staff) responsible for restoring Information Technology (IT) were uniquely prepared to deal with disaster:

IT folks are kind of milestone oriented. We're used to taking on projects that may go on for an extended period of time that you have to methodically plan through. You have to set milestones. You have to set dates. You have to understand what things are on the critical path. Just kind of basic project management. It's what IT people live from a managerial standpoint – that was just a natural approach for us. And that helps to make calm out of chaos. That's how we operate on a daily basis. ... So you become rather adept at doing on the spot recovery on a small scale every day. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

He contrasts this with the academic side of the university, where he contends that people are more accustomed to regular routines, thus, when a disaster occurs and regular patterns are suddenly altered, reactions can be unpredictable, and often inconsistent with what is needed to effectively manage a major crisis:

The academic side is very cyclical, it's very repetitive and it's very static. So you pull that rug out from under them and you see all kinds of reactions. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Some contributors singled out specific co-workers for praise, noting their competence and *ability to take on multifaceted tasks*. Of the former Director of Admissions, a mid-level leader/faculty member states:

Our Director of Admissions was absolutely fantastic, she helped with everything, is a really bright woman, and brought tremendous talent, she not only managed the class that was scattered all over the world, to bring them back, and to contact parents etc., but she also at that same time was trying to build a class for the next year which we knew was gonna be smaller in size, so it was amazing to see her handling both those tasks at one time. I give her tremendous credit *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Moreover, a mid-level leader who was largely responsible for the safe evacuation of students on the eve of Katrina's arrival, praises the Assistant VP of Student Affairs for her efforts in responding to the disaster, noting that her many years of *prior experience* had led to *technical competence*, which prompted others on her team to look to her leadership:

She had been there for sixteen or seventeen years and we had already gone through these scenarios, at least with hurricanes. We would evacuate in place but we had gone through these storms over and over and over again... [She] knows what needs to get done and has a way of telling us that these are the kinds of things that we need to get done. We respected her so we looked to her for her leadership. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Charisma/Ability to Inspire

One of attributes least cited by interviewees at University B as important to the response and recovery efforts of the institution involves leader-based *charisma* and/or the *ability to inspire* other university actors to perform at a high level during response and recovery efforts. Instead, participants suggested that motivation and performance in the aftermath of Katrina stemmed mostly from intrinsic values, and/or a connection to university/city, versus having been encouraged by members of the leadership team. This reliance primarily on intrinsic values, and personal connections for inspiration, rather than external actors (*e.g.*, university leadership), may

in part stem from the fact that visible damage to the institution was far less severe than that suffered by University A (or University C, which will be discussed in Chapter VIII) or the City of New Orleans, while personal losses suffered by faculty and staff in terms of homes and other property remained significant. Hence, faculty and staff may have had a reasonable level of confidence in the institution's eventual reopening, thus, needed less encouragement from university actors in that arena.

Limits on the perceived influence of leader-based *charisma* or the *ability to inspire* on recovering from crisis, may also have resulted from members of the religiously affiliated university instead seeking inspiration/guidance through their Jesuit faith, which is embraced by the majority of university's employees, rather than seeking such inspiration from university administrators. As will be seen later in this chapter, the subtheme of *spirituality* was perceived by contributors to have played a role in facilitating recovery at University B far more frequently than it was suggested as having done so at University A. Moreover, the *Jesuit mission* of the university was also cited by multiple contributors as a key factor in faculty, staff and students returning to University B for the winter semester, rather than seeking employment elsewhere.

Trust/Authenticity

In contrast with *charisma* and the *ability to inspire*, the perception that university leaders were *trustworthy* or *authentic* appears to have played an important role in fostering (and in certain circumstances inhibiting) disaster response and recovery efforts at University B. A staff member contends that the *level of trust* in university leadership shifted over time in accordance with the announcement of key decisions and institutional changes, and varied by constituency (*e.g.*, faculty or staff).

I think there is a lot of trust. Because these men and women know what they're doing. Now of course, when you speak with some faculty or maybe some other administrators,

they're going to say, there was no trust there. Because when we came back after Katrina, there were a lot of tough decisions that had to be made with some of our programs. And I know our faculty lost faith and trust in the President, probably in our board of trustees and our deans, because they had to do some really tough things... I think beforehand there was a lot of trust. After, not so much. But that doesn't speak for... I'm not referring to everyone. I'm just talking, faculty mainly. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Moreover, a mid-level leader, who is largely responsible for leading initiatives intended to enhance student recruitment efforts and improve overall enrollment figures, cites the importance of *managing expectations* and how doing so may have increased perceptions of trustworthiness and authenticity.

[They did a] very good job in managing everyone's expectations. I think that's something you also have to do in a crisis. You can't sort of make rosy promises and then it's far worse if those don't come true... You can't – back to the crying wolf point I guess. You can't overpromise and under-deliver. And similarly you can't, the sky is falling and then if it doesn't fall, oh well, I was just kidding... I think we've done a good job managing our board with respect to that. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Similarly, a university leader who assisted in developing the institution's recovery plan notes the importance of facilitating trust and building credibility in the midst of disaster, through *transparency* and the *sharing of data* on which key decisions are based.

I think in times of crisis especially when decisions are made predicated upon data and information, if you basically say well, believe me, the numbers are bad, that doesn't work. We need to share those numbers and say this is, here is the situation I'm faced with. And here are a few possible solutions to it. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

Multiple leaders on the other hand, contend that trust in their colleagues post-disaster stemmed from their *willingness to stand up for what they believe*, even if it means disagreeing with their colleagues – as such respectful dissent can result in more informed and effective decisions during rapidly changing circumstances (*e.g.*, Contributor 2 – Leader, University B; Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B). One such leader/faculty members presents an

example of a situation where trust did not exist and how a lack of trust distracted from recovery efforts:

I think that strong leadership just in that you're not afraid to hear someone that says "You know, I respect your idea but I think it's a pile of who-ha." And we need to do this, and that. That's really how effective decision works... I'm not sure that was the situation prior to the storm and that had been something that had been historical at the institution, just the role between someone at student affairs or someone in business and finance and someone in the academic affairs. It's like they were each fighting a battle against each other. And it had lack of trust that way.... you've gotten weaknesses in certain things, they're exacerbated in terms of crisis. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness

A subtheme of *exhibited leader attributes* that was infrequently cited for its role in facilitating recovery from Katrina at University B, involves perceived *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* on the part of leadership. It is however, important to add that some contributors at University B may view the previously discussed subtheme of *trust/authenticity* as a character trait that overlaps with a sense of *ethics, morality* and *virtuousness*. Others at University B, given the institution's religious foundation, may link *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* to subtheme of *spirituality*, which is addressed later in this chapter, and was regularly noted by interviewees as having played a key role in disaster response and recovery efforts of University B.

The importance of *integrity* in leading during a crisis, is explained by a key leader/faculty member who played a significant role in helping craft the university's post-Katrina reorganization plan.

I would say you have to have somebody with integrity if they're going to be confronted with a situation like [Katrina]. Because there are all kinds of issues that one would be confronted with. And unless you can count on the person... you've got a problem. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

A mid-level leader/faculty member contends that some key decisions made by university leaders were guided by a sense of *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* stemming from its Jesuit

foundation. Noted most frequently was the decision by the University President to *retain and continue paying nearly all full-time employees*, while the university remained closed for the Fall semester, and was generating only a fraction of its projected revenue for that time period:

First our president made this decision, but it was part of a Jesuit values that we was looking at, you know we have call beyond just education being supported by the Jesuits and so part of the decision to do that to continue to pay faculty and staff was that he felt simply that it was the right thing to do given the value of the institution. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Others also praise the university president (who serves as a Father in the Jesuit tradition) for his expertise in ethics/morality as well as his emphasis on social justice and desire to *put the concerns of people first* all the while seeking to facilitate institutional survival. Two mid-level administrators provide their perceptions:

He's a bona fide expert in ethics. That's his professional academic field. So since a lot of our focus was on ethics and city government, he had a natural, well, he had an expertise that he brought to that process. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

As a Jesuit, he was concerned about social justice and people's concerns and he addressed those right up front... I think his social justice, knowing that he needed to do something but it had to be the right thing. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Along the same lines, a key member of the university's response and recovery team indicates that his personal background in "clinical ethics" served him and the university well in the aftermath of Katrina, particularly in circumstances where he had incomplete knowledge regarding a situation, but still had to make a decision.

I think in many years, my work in clinical ethics and working in intensive care medicine was probably the best training I ever got for this. Because you have, you have incomplete knowledge, but you have to make decisions and if you don't make decisions or if you do make decisions, people are going to die. And that was, I think, in terms of a habit of mind and thinking was probably the best prep that I ever had for going through this. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Self-awareness & Self-control

One of the most commonly perceived attributes of leaders at University B involves the ability to maintain a sense of *self-awareness* and *self-control* even under immense pressure, uncertainty and rapidly changing circumstances. A key university leader surmises, that in the midst of disaster, institutions benefit from leaders who possess “the ability to stay calm... kind of like a good general... and make tough decisions under fire” (Contributor 14 – Leader, University B). He notes that the lack of access to normal, day-to-day office surroundings can test the patience of leaders.

As best as possible patience is something that you need during a crisis... when things aren't normal... when you not in your office, when you don't have access to your files, all these things patience can certainly wear thin... sharing an office. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader adds that the combination of personal and professional challenges stemming from the disaster can make it particularly challenging for leaders to maintain self-control. He argues that remaining focused on the *big picture* can be helpful in that process.

I think you have to look at the big picture. Remaining calm has a lot to do with it. That's hard to do.... we were asking people to do extraordinary things for the university at the same time they had experienced extraordinary events in their own personal life. And in many cases, those things were in opposition to each other. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

The same mid-level administrator notes that while privately leaders may lose some control of their emotions, in public (around faculty, staff, students or other university constituencies), they must remain *self-aware* and *under control* – exhibiting patience or calmness:

I think you also have to look for folks that can really remain calm. I mean, they may lose it in the back room but I think on the forefront, you have to have somebody who can remain calm in a crisis and be very methodical about what needs to be done. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Several contributors indicate that where *self-control/self-awareness* was exhibited by members of the leadership team, it helped facilitate sense of confidence in the recovery effort. A university leader commends his colleagues, in particular the university President and Provost, for having “thick skin” – or being able to make decisions, stand by them, and not panic or lose composure even in the face of significant criticism. He describes a scenario where self-control or “thick skin” was both necessary and exhibited by these key administrators.

College campuses are really interesting places, and they certainly have their own politics that take place, whether it's between faculty and administration, or administration and staff, and a lot of that went on here.... So you have to have thick skin because a lot of mean personal things were said about administrators here on campus, and have the ability to withstand that and still go into a room full of the faculty senate and discuss things that are painful. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

Finally, a mid-level leader illustrates how the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs inspired confidence in her team by *keeping her composure* during the evacuation and temporary relocation of hundreds of students in the midst of Katrina.

She was pretty level-headed about how we going to approach things. With her and myself working together and some other staff, it was pretty easy in terms of dealing with the situation. I think she has a level-head about herself, and knows what needs to get done *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Resourcefulness/Adaptability

The perceived leader attribute most regularly highlighted by interviewees for its important role in facilitating disaster response and recovery efforts at University B is *resourcefulness* and the *ability to adapt* in the face of rapidly changing circumstances. The mere fact that an evacuation reduces the number of personnel available to perform university related tasks, requires that those directly involved with recovery efforts take on new roles, in addition to their day-to-day responsibilities. As explained by a senior administrator:

[I was] not only doing my role at the time, but performing the role of others because we were not able set up shop for every single employee in our recovery areas” *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

This need for *adaptability* and *resourcefulness* in the midst of shifting circumstances is further illustrated by a staff member, who speaks of leadership in the midst of crisis generally and of the University President more specifically:

You have to be able to adjust to any type of situation. Whether or not it be a pleasant situation or a not so pleasant situation and you just have to learn to roll with the punches. No matter what comes down, and I think the President certainly handles all of that well. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

A mid-level leader/faculty member and a staff member who were both involved with the university’s immediate response to the crisis, credits the *resourcefulness* of the institution’s technology experts and facilities managers for helping foster recovery.

One of the good things we did... is that our records were kept in Chicago... far north of us, so that we were able to get our systems back very quickly much more quickly than the other universities in the city. It was our IT guy... he was really a tremendous asset to our university during that time – a real life saver for us. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Our facilities management group, the physical plant staff, in terms of recovery operations... their relationships with contractors was called into question and play very quickly. Where they had people on standby basically come in and do roof repairs and do some of the immediate emergency response to the property and had really no problem doing that because of the relationships that they had established with these various contractors in the past. *Contributor 8 – Staff, University B*

Several senior and mid-level leaders, whose primary responsibilities did not change post-Katrina, had to adapt to changing circumstances and/or employ different methods to execute their duties. The experiences of a senior leader who played a key role in managing the universities finances, and mid-level leader with significant enrollment related responsibilities, provide personal accounts of resourcefulness and adaptability.

I found that in my role much of what we should have been able to do electronically now had to be basically done by, done verbally... And just on my voice alone conduct

business. And so the good thing is that I had established relationships with a number of these entities, specifically the bank, as well as where the university held its short term investments. Because we needed cash in order to be able to purchase things. So the relationship between those individuals and our institution was really important because we, for all practical purposes, threw out the typical requirements for conducting – let’s call it financial transactions – to the external components. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

What I didn’t think I would have to do was basically craft another recovery on the fly... Most recovery plans have a daily fee associated with them and when we realized that this is going to be an extended outage, that cost sort of scared me. So [we] basically purchased another mainframe system over the phone... and had it shipped to another location in Houston. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

In select circumstances, senior leaders *delegated responsibility* for key tasks to trusted staff members, who were encouraged to utilize their own resourcefulness in accomplishing assignments. The post-Katrina actions of a key staff member who was entrusted with additional post-Katrina authority, given her experience and long-tenure at University B, provides a case in point – as she sought to locate and keep track of a rather dispersed student population.

[We] had to find our students. We have a very good relationship with all the Jesuit registrars that I immediately reached out to and said “which one of our students showed up on your doorstep?” And then I belong to a listserv through AACRAO, which is our professional association and I emailed that group... then I took it a step further and I went to clearinghouse... anybody that has a student loan, all of those loans go through clearinghouse and they notify lending agencies... So then what I started doing, after I [found] out where our students were, I started enrolling them in courses, in a dummy course and just calling this, “Students visiting LSU,” “Students visiting St. Louis U.” So we could at least keep track of where our students were. And that was really beneficial. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Moreover, in scenarios where government agencies bore ultimately decision making authority, and no precedent had been established – as in the case of determining how financial aid allocated to a student for the purpose of attending University B would be impacted if a student were to temporarily attend another institution (and which institutions would ultimately receive those funds) – *delegations of university officials* were sent to Washington DC to negotiate with federal officials and influence federal policy. A mid-level leader/faculty member

who played a major role in tracking the temporary relocation of students around the country (and in some cases, world) illustrates such *resourcefulness*.

We had no pattern for dealing with financial aid... the students moved in that weekend and then moved right out again but they never had a first class at University B, and then they went to other universities... we really had to the work with the federal government on financial aid and coming to decisions about how that would be allocated... we had to send people to Washington DC to work on that... these are things that you never think about. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Additionally a mid-level administrator who was asked by the President to assist with University outreach efforts in the aftermath of the storm, notes the role of *resourcefulness* in fostering a *new collaborative entity* to help uplift the surrounding community.

I had quite an extensive network of relationships before the storm. And I was able to reach out to those people as a known entity. Somebody with whom they had worked in the past. So when it came time to draw together a group of leaders for this effort called Common Good, I wasn't starting from scratch. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making

I'd probably give us a "B" if I was grading us. I think that there are things that we delayed that we probably could have done a little quicker and there are some things that we did a little bit too quickly. But overall, I would probably give us a "B." I think we did fairly well with those decisions. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

According to nearly all interviewees, leader *thinking and decision making* played a major role in determining the speed and degree to which University B recovered from Katrina. While many contributors, with benefit of hindsight, argue that the decisions made by University B's leaders in the midst of the disaster were generally quite positive (even if they questioned those decisions at the time), several participants indicate that they or others were frustrated with the process from which many post-Katrina decisions emerged and/or questioned the basis behind some of leadership's more controversial restructuring choices. As noted by one key decision maker:

We did a lot, and we did have to eliminate some programs and things like that. We did a lot in a very short period of time to evaluate the programs and things like that. And it was clearly imperfect. There's no doubt in my mind about that. Because you were doing it so rushed. One of the things we've done now though is we've got everything is on a regular cycle of review. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Another key leader, who had significant involvement with the university's restructuring efforts indicates that despite the unpopularity of some restructuring decisions, most would now argue that the university is in a "good position" going forward, which he largely credits to those early, difficult decisions.

Few people would say to you that University B is not in a good position at this time. I think and it turns out we had to make some truly difficult decisions about the university going forward. And some of those painful decisions required us to release staff and faculty. And that in itself created a great deal of turmoil within the university. But the decisions that were made then actually placed the institution in a position so that it could in fact recover and recover fairly rapidly. And I think that has been born out in our situation here in the city. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Several contributors implied that the ability to think through issues and make decisions in a rapid fashion was at times impeded (albeit not with severely damaging results) by *not having all key decision makers in one location* – as the leadership team was largely split between Houston, Texas and Alexandria, Louisiana, while many key staff and faculty members were spread through the region (*e.g.*, temporarily located in Baton Rouge with the students who were evacuated from University B). A leader/faculty member adds how with the benefit of hindsight, if in charge, he would have handled the evacuation and temporary relocation differently.

I think the first thing I would have done is gather the senior team together all at a location, and got them all together on a somewhat permanent basis. We were all kind of scattered throughout the United States. The deans were anyways. And you had the provost and a few of the team in Houston. You had the law school in Houston. You had the other deans kind of, we were all scattered other places. You had the president and the financial person and others in Louisiana... that would have been something I would have done, just gotten everybody together very quickly and started to try to lay out what the scenarios were and get the best minds together towards that solution. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

On the other hand, members of one key administrative unit did relocate to a common location in Houston and remained together throughout the first few months of the crisis (working from a local university in a space historically reserved for student organizations, and living in a common apartment building). A member of the team in Houston contends that *having key personnel in the same location helped facilitate communication and decision making* in their department.

We only had a wall separating us and a lot of these decisions were made across the wall and together. Whatever problems came up, there was sharing... each of us had specific jobs to do but there was a lot of joint decision making there. The provost was the final word. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

While accounts and experiences also differ over the degree to which *collaborative decision making* did or did not take place at University B in the aftermath of Katrina (and over whether *shared governance processes* would have been helpful or disruptive post-disaster), many who returned to the institution upon its reopening seem to be generally pleased with the results of the restructuring efforts. A mid-level leader (with faculty responsibilities) who was involved with helping craft the recovery plan, shares her perspective on the effectiveness of post-disaster decision making efforts:

I've heard from many people who were very angry when this was done, but I have heard from many people over the years who say that really was a blessing in disguise... life really is much easier now. *Contributor 13, Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Contributors observed that some *general principles* were guiding (and they contend should have been guiding) university leaders in the decision making process, including: 1) wanting to make the institution stronger by focusing on the long-term health of the university; and 2) being deliberative versus seeking to meet every challenge at once – focusing in the fall on helping facilitate the return of students and faculty to the university for the Winter semester, and upon reopening focusing on the university's reorganization (Contributor 13, Mid-level

Leader/Faculty, University B). A senior leader/faculty member, and a mid-level leader, each highlight the *decision-making principles* they perceived to be guiding university response and recovery efforts:

I think having a clear sense of wanting to make the institution stronger as a result of the experience. I think of having in their mind a clear, out game, end game, that these were going to be difficult decisions but they were the right decisions for the long term health of the institution. I think there was clarity on the part of the decision makers about that. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

You have to set realistic goals. You can't just try to fix everything overnight. There really was a sense, okay, we're going to plod along and be very deliberate about how we achieve, what we want to set up to achieve. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

To *guide restructuring decisions* (including those involving reductions in the number of faculty and staff), members of the university leadership team indicate that they considered enrollment patterns, the financial viability of academic departments, current and projected future demand for degree programs, expenses associated with making a struggling programs more successful and other factors (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B). Two members of the leadership team involved with crafting the reorganization plan contend that decisions were not made on the basis of personalities or other non-objective criteria.

I can really say this, none of the decisions that we made were made on the basis of personalities or how well somebody got along with somebody else. Strictly these were decisions strictly based on the data that we came up with. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

It wasn't a matter of picking and choosing faculty who were to lose jobs it was a matter of departments, and that was the only way to be fair about that. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

In addition to citing the importance of *thinking and decision making* to the overall process of recovery at University, the responses of most interviewees were consistent with the

subthemes outlined in the previously proposed conceptual framework. Participants, however (particularly members of the leadership team), stress the importance of *collaboration* as a means to view issues from multiple perspectives before decisions are made, and repeatedly note that university leaders sought to make the best out of challenging circumstances by seeing the *opportunity in the midst of crisis*. This section begins, however, with an analysis of the degree to which university leaders examined challenges and potential solutions to disaster scenarios that resulted from Katrina, through *multiple frames*.

Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames

While the majority of interviewees at University B cited the importance of exploring issues from multiple angles – or utilizing *multiple mental frames* to help facilitate effective decisions in the midst of managing a disaster – accounts differ over the degree to which university leaders did so prior to making key recovery focused decisions, with some faculty contributors openly questioning whether Katrina-related challenges were fully or adequately explored before leaders chose specific courses of action. It is, however, also important to note that many of those who questioned the degree to which issues were explored from multiple angles were not specifically involved with post-disaster decision making processes; thus, they did not directly witness leaders thinking through issues and alternative course of action. Generally speaking, these individuals were frustrated by what they perceived was leadership's circumvention of standard non-emergency “shared-governance processes” whereby multiple constituencies are given the opportunity to provide input, ideally ensuring that (at least to some extent) issues are viewed from multiple angles before decisions are made.

Along those lines, several interviewees noted the importance of *collaboration* and *hearing different views* before making decisions in the midst of crisis. According to a key decision maker:

I think the person has to have the strength to hear differing opinions and to actually relish that. To gather the decision makers around the table and say, here's what I'm faced with. What do you all think we should do. In a very easy sense that way. But as you know, some personalities, people are very to themselves. They will profess in a way to be strong in character but are very reticent to hear differing opinions and views. And I mean, this is just my personal opinion. I view that as a weakness in someone. I think the strongest people are the ones, the ones most likely to hear differing views than the ones that say, I don't want to hear that. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

A fellow leader/faculty member indicates the importance of *hearing different sides of the argument* and *considering the pros and cons* before making major decisions. He contends that the leadership team gave the university community an opportunity to review a draft of the organizational restructuring plan and provide input before releasing a final version for Board approval and implementation.

Once we made a tentative decision from those programs and the programs that would likely be affected by the process, we put that out to the entire university community and asked for feedback, people providing feedback and believe you me, people provided feedback. But nonetheless we were, it was certainly our intention by doing that to give everybody an opportunity to participate and to have their say. That did not mean that in the end a lot of the people would control the decision making process, but it certainly permitted everybody who wanted to have input in the process. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

A particularly noteworthy example of university leadership looking at an issue from multiple mental frames, involved the challenge of “re-recruiting” its dispersed student population for the university’s Spring semester reopening. The multi-level outreach and marketing efforts described below (starting with the invitation to visit campus while closed and collect personal belongings) contributed to the return of roughly 92% of the students who were enrolled at the university prior to Katrina’s arrival.

One decision that we made as a group ... [was] the decision to open the residence halls for people to come back to campus to pick up some things... It was a key way to communicate with students and have individual contact with students... One of the things that I think everybody was really concerned about was okay, the city flooded, so my room flooded, my computer's destroyed, my TV's destroyed, my clothes are ruined, and so forth, and to find out that: 1) that was not the case, and 2) that they'd be able to come back and pick up some things and to talk to people about their experiences and where they were and how we were going to come back next semester was key. We also worked with the admissions office. We did a number of marketing videos... telling them that we are here, the campus is dry, with pictures of buildings as pristine, which basically they were and that we're ready for you to come back and waiting for you to come back. So we pushed that video out to everybody. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

An additional mid-level leader, who indicates that “Katrina plays a role in everything [they] do to a certain extent,” from drafting institutional policy to updating the faculty handbook (whereby University B’s leaders now ask themselves “What would happen if a disaster occurred?”), praises the university president for soliciting feedback from individuals with varied perspectives before making important post-Katrina decisions:

When we come together, we talk about issues... an expert in student affairs... may come to me to say... “these are my thoughts from a student affairs perspective, but what are your thoughts from a legal perspective.” And legal counsel is not looking at it from student affairs perspective... solely from a liability, legal perspective. And so we’ll get together, we’ll talk and then at some point, we’ll have a discussion with the President and make a recommendation.” *Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking

While mentioned less frequently by interviewees than the other subthemes of *leader thinking and decision-making* in the midst of disaster, *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* played an important role in decision making and in fostering recovery at University B. For example, a mid-level leader exhibited and encouraged *Contrarian* thinking via his (successful) efforts to persuade senior leaders that in a post-Katrina world, the University has temporarily lost stature with the national audience, and needed to shift its approach and methods to facilitate enrollment,

by marketing more aggressively to prospective students (and the parents of prospective students) outside the institution's standard target market.

I had to convince everyone here of, at least at first is look, everything has changed. We are not who we think we are in the national scheme. So we've got to compete in a very different way. And we've got to think about our market in a very different way... we had to start to tell a very different story nationally and... do our best to reach as many [students] that could see themselves here as possible. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Contrarian thinking processes were also evident in the leadership team's decision to have the university offer two-full spring semesters between January and July, in an effort to keep students on track towards graduation (as many were not able to take required degree related courses at the universities they had temporarily joined for the Fall semester), which also helped incentivize the large scale return of students to University B in January. However, the leadership team appears not to have employed *Janusian thinking patterns*, and as a consequence, failed to anticipate a future challenge – namely, that many freshman, sophomore, and junior level students would also take courses during both semesters, lessening their time to graduation, just as the university's incoming student population was beginning to wane (due to post-Katrina recruitment challenges), magnifying the impact of the university's budget shortfall. The scenario is further depicted by the university leader/faculty member below:

One unintended consequence of that [teaching two-semesters in spring] was our graduation rate, while our enrollment, our first year enrollment suffered, our graduation rate skyrocketed, because not only seniors were kept on track, but now we had a lot of juniors – ooh – I can get extra credits. And so... then we had this sort of dual effect where first year enrollment stayed low for a while, but our graduation rate was increasing so then that of course has an impact on revenue, because students are leaving a little earlier than we might have anticipated. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Other interviewees note the role of *Janusian thinking* in the recovery and response efforts of the university's leadership team. A mid-level administrator notes that the university leaders

simultaneously “had to make decisions to keep the university afloat as well as look at where the university wanted to be so many years down the road,” and praises them for having done so successfully (Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B). Similarly, a key senior leader stresses the importance of thinking about crisis from both short and long term perspectives (a Janusian trait), which he notes is “a skill that not everyone possesses” (Contributor 14 – Leader, University B). More specifically, in complementing the efforts of university leaders (in particular the President and Provost) and commenting on leadership in the midst of crisis more broadly, he states that it is important to possess:

The ability to take a step back... the ability to take what's' on your plate realize that they're major issues... but have a bigger world view than just the current crisis, try to see past the current crisis... that's a skill that everyone does not possess. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

Both *Contrarian* and *Janusian* thinking patterns were evident in the development of post-Katrina admissions related initiatives. For example, although the university is heavily dependent on tuition revenue to conduct operations, to facilitate prospective student visits and ideally attendance at University B, the University was willing to offer monetary incentives that would in essence reduce the tuition dollars received (albeit modestly) from each incoming student. As noted by a mid-level leader involved with enrollment related efforts post-Katrina:

We also, offered a visit credit so if a student came to visit and then eventually enrolled, they'd get \$1,000.00, a \$1,000.00 grant. So that really did incentivize people to come and visit and to check us out. So again a lot of our work was about making sure we had the story sound and then sharing that with the marketplace. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Viewing Disasters as Opportunities

Perhaps the most readily visible subtheme of leader-thinking and decision-making that emerged from interviews with leaders, faculty and staff members at University B, involves the perception that key leaders recognized and utilized Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath as an

opportunity to strengthen and improve aspects of University B; in essence, seeking to position the university more favorably or competitively for the future than it had been prior to the disaster. As surmised by a university leader responsible for helping secure several rounds of disaster relief funding post-Katrina:

The hurricane obviously did terrible damage, but it also provided an opportunity not only for the city but for institutions in the city to reexamine what they were doing and how they were doing things. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

The same leader praises the President and his leadership team for having taken the opportunity to *examine the university and address broad questions* in an effort to strengthen the institution going forward.

Essentially we took the opportunity to figure out what is the right size for University B, where are we going, what were we doing wrong prior to the storm... look at programs that weren't successful... that I think is something that the president and his team, the cabinet and the folks here on campus did a really good job of. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

The account above is further supported by a mid-level leader/faculty member, who contends that from both financial and mission-centered perspectives, many of the changes made post-Katrina should have been made a long time ago, but it took a crisis and budget cuts to both force and enable such changes.

I really think, looking back now, there were things that should have been done long before that the crisis forced us into doing. There were departments that had not been evaluated in years to decades... that were not profitable and not necessarily in line with the university's mission... we had added a lot over the years, but we had not subtracted anything, and we were forced to go in there and re-evaluate every program after the crisis because we had to cut our operating budget by 10 million a year... and this number came from the board so we had no option in that. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

An additional key leader/faculty member indicates that Hurricane Katrina was utilized by University B's leadership team as an opportunity to become *better prepared for future disasters*,

and potentially prevent operations from being halted to the extent that they were during Fall 2005.

I think Katrina was the impetus for... making and getting an appreciation for the full range of things that you might need in that kind of situation should you face it again... I.T., for example, better access to remote kinds of technologies so the classes could keep going, whether it's Blackboard or something else. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Additionally, much like at University A, the leadership team at University B utilized Katrina as an opportunity to facilitate greater *administrative efficiency* – streamlining operations, eliminating underperforming departments, and merging others schools/departments. As noted by a university leader/faculty member whose department was impacted by such efficiency measures:

I think some of the program discontinuances were correct. Painful, but correct... I think like any institution, I think we probably not hugely, but there was some administrative bloat, if you will. And so I think some reductions on that side of the budget were appropriate as well. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

Finally, a mid-level leader who represented the university in efforts to help foster the city's recovery, and creating a collaborative entity to help foster the City's recovery, notes that Katrina presented an *opportunity for enhanced community involvement*.

The Jesuit order that runs the university has a strong commitment to social involvement and social justice in the communities where our universities live. And so... this university, being very engaged with what's going on in the city, wasn't new. It was more of a new opportunity to pursue that. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making

Based on the collective accounts of contributors, the subtheme of *blending instinctive with vigilant decision-making* (and in certain circumstances relying on one versus the other) was a key element of leader behavior post-Katrina, particularly over the weeks immediate following the storm. Much like participants at University A, however, a number of interviewees at

University B indicate that the mere “willingness to make a decision” was perhaps the most important aspect of decision making post-disaster – as there were so many decisions that needed to be made, in an abbreviated time frame, under a rapidly shifting state of affairs.

According to a senior leader, the circumstances above, in combination with communication’s challenges lent themselves to instinctive decision making, whereby “you had to make the decision yourself based upon your own instincts and information that you alone were able to assimilate” (Contributor 7 – Leader, University B). This is supported by a fellow leaders who explains that Katrina prompted members of the leadership team to (out of necessity) alter more methodical patterns of shared governance – in favor of quick, largely *instinctive decision* making processes.

If we’d followed some of the standard procedures, nothing would have happened by how six years later and we’d still be in a, I’d still be waiting for some committee report.
Contributor 2 – Leader, University B

In slight contrast, a senior administrator, who played a central role in the university’s post-Katrina academic restructuring efforts, argues that with major decisions, Katrina presented an environment that necessitated *vigilant decision making* versus *instinctive*, or more elongated *shared-governance processes* (typical of non-emergency circumstances). He presents an example of the 4 month timeframe in which a major plan for reorganizing the institution had to be drafted and approved for implementation.

Doing and extended program review... I would have to guess that the average institution that would undertake a process like that would take anywhere from 2 to 3 years to conduct the review process. We had to do that process in about 4 months, starting in January and have completed the recommendations ready to go to the board of trustees by the board meeting in May. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Others suggest that a deliberative approach, with a balance between *instinctive* and *vigilant decision making* is key in a time of crisis – knowing when to listen, when to continue

gathering information, and when it is time to make a decision, while also recognizing whether adjustments need to be made when/if the leader becomes aware of new information.

According to a contributor with both administrative and faculty responsibilities, during crises leaders should embody:

... decisiveness and willingness to stay the course. At the same time, I would say that a willingness to shift, if need be. If you make a decision that's the best you could have made at the time, and then additional information comes to light or you say, we didn't think to look at that before, let's look at it now and see what it tells us... then, you know, a willingness to say, oh, that leads us to a slightly different place. ... So it's a combination of decisiveness and flexibility once a decision is made. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

The approach above is further supported and elaborated upon by a mid-level leader, who adds that once a decision is made it is important to stick with it, so ensuring that the necessary thought has been put into it before hand is critical.

You have to make decisions and stick with them. Because that builds credibility in what you do. Which might mean that you have to delay decisions a little longer than people are comfortable with. But I think it leads to better decisions. Sometimes you have to decide things very quickly and on the fly. But I think the ability to be able to identify those things that you need to think about a little bit longer. Because the critical decision time is not necessarily right now is very important. Because then it looks like you're methodical in moving through the process. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps

The need for leaders to be cognizant of and avoid fall into a variety of common crisis-based *decision making traps* was cited by participants on multiple occasions as crucial in disaster and response efforts, generally, and at University B more specifically. A decision making trap – regularly noted by interviewees as important to be wary of in the aftermath of a disaster – involves “waffling” or “hemming and hawing” on decisions. As cited by a mid-level leader (who later compliments the leadership team for their decision making efforts):

I think you also need to have leaders who are decisive. Because waffling on decisions, and this is not only in a disaster, but I think it's more acute in any kind of recovery – waffling on decisions wastes time and money and can also really put people through the ringer. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

On the other hand, a leader/faculty member notes that “jumping too quickly” into making decisions during a crisis can present additional challenges:

Someone who's rigid probably is not going to do well. Someone who needs to be decisive but jumps too quickly, to not allow some things to play out. To not get so caught up in the moment that you feel everything has to be done right now. Let it mature enough so that the right data can be gathered... You know, not everything has to be decided right away. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

One key decision maker at University B notes the importance of *not waiting to make the “perfect decision,”* contending that in the midst of disaster no decision maker will ever have all of the information they wish to have access to prior to making the call. The leader recalls the advice he received from a colleague at Harvard (with prior experience managing crises), advice that he embraced in helping guide response and recovery efforts at University B.

He said, “nobody's got the book on this one.” But it was probably the best advice I got. He said, “there's no right answer.” He said, “make your best judgment and go with it” ... Because you have incomplete knowledge, you don't know what... but you still have to make decisions and choices. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Assessing the decision making ability of senior administrators at University B, a mid-level leader/faculty member cautions that in the aftermath of Katrina some university leaders were more skilled and willing than others to make difficult decisions, as it can require *putting personal relationships aside* in an effort to make a decision that will be of most benefit to the institution.

There are many [leaders] who are very people oriented and they had trouble making decisions because of their relationships with people... you need somebody who can look beyond his or her wishes to do what needs to be done. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/faculty, University B*

Moreover, in complimenting institutional leadership's willingness to make difficult and often controversial decisions in the aftermath of Katrina, two mid-level leaders indicate that University B's President, Provost and other senior leaders managed to largely avoid a common trap, namely – putting *too much weight on public opinion*. By not utilizing public outcry as a *barometer or basis for decision making* during crisis, leaders seemingly recognizing that “the public” lacked much of the information that administrators were relying on as the basis for decisions, can have interests other than what is best for the overall university in mind, and constituents' perceptions can shift with the benefit of hindsight.

I don't think angst should not be the barometer of the success of something. Short or long term. I think that's where it's really tricky because you can say from one standpoint a leader's got to be decisive. You've got to go into crisis mode, make these decisions, then take the heat later. I think that's actually what we did. And so when you look back on it, what did you need to do? You couldn't hang it up, you couldn't have debates for three or four years about this stuff. You didn't have a normal situation.
Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B

You must have thick skin and do what you think is best at the time because as noted by a mid-level admin: hindsight's 20/20, but your decisions are judged after the fact and the timeliness of your decisions are judged after the fact using information you didn't have at the time you were making the decision. And sometimes people in the community don't realize that. It's like, looking now, we could have made that decision two days earlier. But at the time, we didn't have all this information. And at times people sort of lose sight of that. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

[Note: The subtheme of *devil's advocacy/scenario-based planning* was identified in Chapter II as crucial in fostering disaster preparedness, versus a behavior to be engaged in during disaster response and recovery, hence, the subtheme falls outside the scope of the current study. It is, however, important to note that much like with University A multiple interviewees at University B stressed the importance of *devils advocacy/scenario-based planning*, noted that planning for the ultimate worst-case scenario had not taken place at University B (nor other universities in the region) prior to Katrina, and contend that such planning would have benefitted response and recovery efforts. Thus, given the potential that *devils advocacy/worst-case scenario* planning has to save institutions and lives, and the frequency with which the topic was voluntarily discussed by participants, the subtheme will be addressed briefly in Chapter X.]

Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style

One of the lessons we learned from Katrina was that if you have to evacuate, and you have to be out of the city for a length of time, you need to have a way to convene and communicate on a staff level. I had staff scattered all over the country and I had no way to track all of them down and let them know what was going on. *President of University B (as cited in Jump, 2008, p. 5)*

Cited frequently by faculty, staff, and leaders at University B was the importance and role *leader communication* in the institution's response and recovery efforts. As with all universities in the region, the inability to communicate with one another effectively due to technological failures posed significant challenges as did the geographic separation between key players at the institution. As described by a staff member:

Our executives were scattered all over the place. We didn't know where they were. We didn't know where our core staff were. Trying to communicate with everyone because communication systems went down was a nightmare. The IT system obviously was offline for a week while they relocated to the recovery center. So initially the communication was just, was horrible. And we didn't know where people were, we couldn't make decisions. *Contributor 8 – Staff, University B*

While the initial geographic separation stemmed from the expectation that personnel would only need to evacuate for a few days before reconvening in New Orleans, as it became clear that the University would not be able to reopen for several months (largely due to the devastation suffered by the City of New Orleans, versus damage to University B's facilities), many key university leaders gradually settled in one of two locations – Houston, Texas or Alexandria, Louisiana (based largely on the region to which some had initially evacuated and the availability of facilities). Once communications had in-part been restored (expanding beyond text-messaging and a web-based message board), not having all key players in a single location at times still resulted in a communication lag. As noted by a mid-level leader:

Half of our administration wound up in a small town in central Louisiana and the other half of the administration wound up in Houston. That didn't work so well. I mean,

there was a communication lag. Sometimes we found ourselves both working on the same things. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Despite the periodic delays noted above, as communications were re-established, university leaders and faculty utilized a variety of methods to reconnect with each other, with students, and the broader university community including: email updates, web-based postings, conference calls, and town hall meetings and advising sessions held near campuses where large numbers of University B's student population had temporarily relocated. The institution established a toll-free 24-hour hotline (1-800 number) to field inquiries from students and parents (Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B), and (within a couple of weeks of the disaster) also began posting and distributing *weekly updates* for various constituencies – faculty, staff, students, and alums (Contributor 2 – Leader, University B). However, notwithstanding the variety of efforts noted above, the leadership team primarily utilized the institution's website to keep the university community informed, as a staff member recalls:

The President would periodically release updates to the campus and what was going on, where we were in our recovery. There are different stages of recovery that they post and that was our main source of communication with everyone. He would just post it on the website. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Several interviewees commended the role that faculty, staff and senior administrators played in connecting with students and helping ensure that those who had been registered to attend University B over the fall semester, were being well accommodated at the institutions in which they were temporarily enrolled (Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B). A staff member, who was involved with recovery efforts post-Katrina, specifically praised the efforts of faculty, some of whom who joined the President and other administrators at town hall meetings around the country.

Our faculty was amazing. They would go off to other schools in the area, speak to our students just like our president was. We even had an early registration where they went off to the other schools and advised. Same thing with staff. We were constantly on the phone with our students. Our students had our cell phone numbers that if they had questions, they could call us. Everybody went beyond what they would normally have been required to do. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Additionally, a senior leader who played an important role in post-disaster communication efforts indicates that those seeking to facilitate institutional recovery found themselves battling against perceptions stemming from the national media's rather consistent negative coverage of the impact of Katrina and devastation to New Orleans, often without clearly differentiating between those areas of the city that were indeed devastated and those that suffered far less physical damage.

I'm not blaming the national news, but the coverage on the news out of the city, crime and violence and all this other stuff was nothing positive. If you're a mother in Boston that you're going to let your kid go down to New Orleans. So I thought, it just, what I wanted to make sure that they knew that we were (a) were still alive and (b) we had made a decision about returning in January. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

University leaders also had to fight negative perceptions stemming from an anonymous blog that presented information that, according to participants, included a mix of accurate and inaccurate information, flawed assumptions. As noted by one mid-level university leader/faculty member who was at times the subject of personal attacks on the blog:

If you looked at the blog... it's so full of misinformation and people reading things that weren't there... that can be really surprising to read... you can't keep moving with those types of insults coming out every day. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

In seeking to steer local and national opinion in a more favorable direction and limit the circulation of misinformation, the university relied heavily on its public relations team, which saw an increase in its marketing budget post-Katrina. A mid-level leader praises their aggressive efforts in the months/years following Katrina.

So our PR team did a really nice job with our contacts and they're very aggressive about getting to national press. So we were able to... and even local press, we were able to really get a lot of messaging out. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Ultimately, all subthemes of leader-based communication identified as pertinent to disaster response and recovery efforts in the previously advanced conceptual framework, were reflected in the comments of interviewees at University B, and will be further addressed in the pages that follow. However, two subthemes of leader behavior were most commonly noted by participants: 1) *facilitating awareness* – for which reviews varied as to the degree to which university leadership was successful in doing so; and 2) *viewing disaster as an opportunity* – a philosophy that several participants suggested the leadership team embraced in making significant institutional changes. This section begins with the subtheme of *facilitating awareness*.

Facilitating Awareness

As highlighted above, university leadership pursued a number of methods by which to connect with one another, students, faculty, and staff, as well as keep the university community informed regarding the extent of the damage suffered by University B, and the progress of recovery efforts. The importance of *facilitating awareness* in the aftermath of a disaster is explained by a mid-level leader who played a crucial role in re-establishing the university's web-based communications post-disaster. He contends that "probably the biggest thing we can do during any type of campus emergency is communicate... people need information" (Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B). This is elaborated on by a member of the university's leadership team who played a key role in *facilitating awareness* post-Katrina.

I think we have to, especially in times of crisis, people are looking for someone to tell them what's going on. And for them to feel assured that we are on top of it, even if we might not be at that point in time. And so I think that role of communication, however

that takes place, whether it's written or oral or whatever, I think is critical. *Contributor 5- Leader/Faculty, University B*

Multiple interviewees noted the importance of facilitating awareness both internally (e.g., leadership, faculty, staff and student communications) and externally (e.g., the media, prospective students and their parents). This is illustrated by a mid-level leader via his efforts to enhance university enrollment figures after Katrina (persuading university leaders to nearly double the amount of marketing the institution engages in to attract prospective students):

Internally, we had to say look, we have particular profile of student that we're used to getting. We're not going to get that student unless something changes the way that we approach our marketing. We have not differentiated uptown New Orleans, which I'm sure you're familiar with, from the rest of New Orleans... But we have to sell the benefits of uptown New Orleans. We cannot act like a victim in this sequence... We were acting in many ways like poor old us. And we had to tell a very different story because the marketplace wants a winner. The marketplace isn't interested in a victim. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Praising the university's public relations team, a mid-level leader above highlights the university's efforts to "steer the national conversation" (*Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*). More specifically, he states:

And we did a good job with our PR team I think. And so we jumped on any opportunity we had to tell that story. Got quite a bit of national press in 2008, 2009... The other thing that we made a point of doing was [reaching out to] opinion leaders, teachers, college counselors, being very clear about what we were doing here and what we were about and what uptown New Orleans is about. So I think those were some steps that helped move us here in the right direction. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

However, most interviewees argued or acknowledged that in terms of facilitating information awareness internally (e.g., amongst faculty and staff), the leadership team could have been more much more effective. The need for better communication and awareness was particularly apparent when it came to announcing the university's post-Katrina restructuring plan. As noted by a mid-level leader/faculty member who assisted with the plan's development:

If I were to do anything differently I think one of the bigger problems that we had was not enough communication from the provost's office and the president's office. I look back on it and I realize some were very upset and felt like they weren't getting enough guidance, and probably they certainly weren't getting enough I think. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

The same mid-level leader adds that in hindsight, the university community would have benefitted from receiving information on the development of the post-Katrina restructuring plan directly from the president, provost or other key leaders in an unfiltered manner, rather than relying on and hoping that standing university committees would swiftly and accurately relay information to their constituents. She perceives that with more *direct and regular communication from the decision makers* themselves the changes and cuts resulting from the recovery plan “would have been less painful.”

A lot of communication was going on between the administration and the committees the standing committees of the university... but that meant that even though there were representatives of the faculty that everything that was coming from the administration was being filtered through them as it was being brought back to the colleges. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

According to multiple interviewees, university leadership placed a particular emphasis on and did an effective job of *facilitating awareness amongst the dispersed student population*, as to the condition of University B, and plans for the institution's re-opening. Illustrating the efforts of the leadership team to reconnect with students, faculty and staff, a mid-level leader notes:

What they tried to do was identify, first of all, where our students were, what university did they go to. Then they tried to identify faculty and staff in those areas, because... we were spread all over the country. So they would try to find faculty and staff that were in those areas to go meet with our students at those universities to make sure they made contact with them, so if there was anything they needed or wanted, then they would communicate back to the main administration... There were a number of blogs, student, faculty and staff blogs where people were blogging back and forth and made sure that everybody was okay and where they were and identify where they were. Each vice president was the leader in terms of making sure they knew where all their staff were and how they communicated with them and what was going on. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

The contributor cited above, also highlights efforts by university leaders to facilitate awareness via the creation of *unique marketing videos*, intended to re-attract the dispersed student population.

There were videos that we put on the website showing what the conditions were in the buildings so they all knew this is what it looked like, and we were ready for people to come back. There were key people like myself and other faculty that had been there for a while that said ‘we’re here, we’re waiting for you, we’ve come back, we want you to come back. So we wanted to make sure people knew that 1) the facilities weren’t damaged, plus 2) the staff and faculty were coming back and we wanted the students to come. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Clarity of Terminology and Message

An additional subtheme of leader-based communication revealed by multiple interviewees at University B as pertinent to institutional response and recovery efforts, involves the overall *clarity and consistency of terminology and message* stemming from institutional leadership. A mid-level administrator notes that in future disaster scenarios the university will be “more regimented in [its] communication process” as during Katrina university leaders posted updates frequently, but irregularly (*e.g.*, only when there was new information), rather than at a set time each day – leading to occasional confusion and the feeling amongst some employees that institutional leaders “have fallen off the face of the earth” (*Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*). The mid-level leader elaborates:

I think one of the things we picked up on was, particularly at the beginning of the storm, when again we didn’t have lots of new information, you have to make sure that the message you place on your website or you push out to folks is regular and updated, even if you don’t have anything new to share... So as a matter of practice now, we tell folks when the next update will be and we make sure we provide that update.
Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B

The contributor above sought to facilitate *clarity and consistency in messaging* – efforts that were well-received by staff associated with his unit:

I've got about 35 people in [my unit]... I had alternate e-mail addresses and phone numbers for all of my staff. That was part of our recovery plan. Well every night, usually about 2:00 in the morning, I would send out an update to my staff by e-mail, not only on what was going with the university and IT, but who I had heard from on our staff and where they were, that they were safe or that they had particular needs and I shared that with my whole staff on a daily basis. And I got more comments from my guys about just how much that meant to them to know that this co-worker was okay and this is where they were or this is what they needed. And it facilitated I think people helping each other out. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

A senior leader/faculty member conveys the importance of ensuring *direct communication* between key leaders and the university community, as a means to foster message clarity, rather than relying on representatives of each constituency to relay information.

When you're dealing with a major crisis whether it's intentional or not, depending upon how the communications are relayed, the info can change a little bit and then once the change when it gets to the next level, then it can cause all sorts of problems. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

The leader above provides a firsthand account of the challenges that can emerge when key decision-makers do not directly disseminate potentially controversial decisions (and the rationale behind those decisions) to the university community.

What I discovered, and again with hindsight was that when I would call the deans to Houston for a meeting and we would talk through various issues, number one is that not all of the deans were reporting back the decisions that were coming from those leading and number two, there were decisions that were being inaccurately recounted to their various colleges. Now, I don't think all of that was intentional. It's just that people went away with different, sometimes with different understandings of the decisions that were being made. And in hindsight, it would have probably good on my part after each of those meetings to send out an e-mail blast just to the whole community letting everybody know what the discussions had been, what the decisions were that emanated from those meetings. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

A mid-level leader also notes the importance of message clarity, by describing his unfortunate experience with attempting to visit University B prior to the campus's official reopening, when it remained unclear as to whether faculty and staff could return to collect their belongings.

I drove back here and some of the people on the physical campus said you shouldn't be back, you're not allowed back here. And I wondered why I wouldn't be allowed back on campus, I'm not a stranger, I have a reason to be here. So there was a lot of miscommunication like that. ... We had faculty members who had experiments. There's all kinds of things people would have come back for but there wasn't any clear communication about whether you could or could not come back. I laughed it off and said I've been here almost thirty years, I'm not a stranger, not hanging out. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Symbolic Actions

In addition to standard forms of verbal or written form of communication, another key theme of leader behavior apparent in the response and recovery efforts at University B involved *symbolic actions*. In the aftermath of Katrina, several forms of *symbolic action* were evident – from specific decisions and leader-based communications, to special events and monuments placed around campus. According to a mid-level leader “symbolic leadership is the most important kind of leadership” in the midst of a disaster, and important for leaders to be cognizant of “...because everyone – and people do this on a campus anyway – will be inferring from everything you say and do” (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

Several key leader decisions at University B (generally intended for purposes beyond symbolism) were perceived as having important symbolic meaning. First and foremost, multiple contributors noted the decision to *continue paying full-time employees* while the university was closed for the fall semester, as *symbolic*, both in signifying that the university is still operational, and that its employees are valued by university leadership. A staff member shares her perspectives on the decision.

One of the greatest things that faculty and staff heard right off the bat was that they were going to pay their faculty and staff through the entire semester. Even though no one was here on campus.... everyone was paid which really spoke highly of our administration to make sure that their faculty and staff were taken care of. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

The sentiments above are supported by a mid-level leader who notes that in addition to reaching out and *contacting every single employee and student post-Katrina* to make sure that “they were okay,” university leadership showed its concern for the well-being of others by committing to pay employees even without a clear revenue stream.

One quite stunningly dramatic thing that the university did, is it kept all its employees on the payroll until the university reopened, even though most of them could not work because campus was closed. So nobody missed a paycheck. And you can imagine what a difference that made to people’s sense of well-being during that time. A lot of other people were, in fact, not just dealing with flooded homes and flooded neighborhoods and an uncertain future, but also had lost their income. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

A key leader adds that the decision by the President and his team to quickly deploy the personnel necessary to protect and repair campus facilities, while also encouraging the National Guard to create a base of operations on campus – allowed university leadership to *present the image* of a university that was secure and had essentially survived the storm.

Made the decision to keep a good number of police force as well as the engineers and other people who were critical to protecting the property. That was huge. Being able to show the property pretty quickly as not being in horrible condition was a massive morale booster to pretty much everybody. The President [was] able to get the National Guard installed on our campus. Then we supported them as well as them supporting us. That was tremendous. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

Additionally, at various locations throughout campus, university leadership placed and/or approved the placement of *statues, monuments and other symbols* of the institution’s survival in the face of Katrina. Multiple interviewees noted the post-Katrina presence and symbolic intent behind these structures, with one leader indicating that such tributes (*e.g.*, a replica of a street car donated by the graduating class of 2008 to celebrate the return of students to New Orleans after Katrina) were intended to show that “whether it’s recovery or stages of it – that we’re back” (*Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*). A staff member describes one such structure:

To thank those other schools that took in our students, we had a, it's a bench, it's a huge metal bench in the shape of the hurricane swirl that you see on the Weather Channel. And engraved on there are all the schools that took our students in... It's constant reminder on campus of what went on and when it happened and who helped us.
Contributor 9 – Staff, University B

Others came to see university efforts to keep in contact with its student population (e.g., visits by the university president, deans and other senior/mid-level leaders to institutions temporarily hosting students) as a means of purveying that University B is on its way to recovery, and that its leaders, faculty and staff care about the dispersed student population, as well as wish for their return to University B for the spring semester (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B). A staff member share her perceptions of such actions and the symbolic meaning derived from them.

Our president and deans and other staff members, they'd go to these cities or to the schools where the majority of our students were and meet with them. And as a PR if nothing else to try to let the students know, everything is going to be fine. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

A mid-level indicates that the President hands-on efforts to assist with the City of New Orleans recovery sent a positive message to the community and had “symbolic value,” raising the stature of University B within the city of New Orleans.

University presidents rarely, if ever, put the kind of time that he put into an activity that isn't primarily within their scope of responsibility, immediate responsibility as university presidents. He put a lot of time and a lot of university resources into getting our ethics review board up and running ... and he's not just anybody here, he's the president of the university, so that has a lot of symbolic value as well. University B's history of involvement with the city was raised up to quantum level because of the challenge that came with the storm. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Creating A Context for Meaning and Action

While the subtheme of *creating a context for meaning and action* was not mentioned frequently by interviewees as prevalent in the actions of University B's leaders, there were clear

instances in which the leadership team sought to foster such a context and other instances where contributors suggest that university leaders could have more effectively done so.

One key effort on the part of university leaders to craft a *context for meaning and action* involved *faculty and staff reconnecting events* hosted by the institution during the first week of the Spring semester. The events included a seminar on “helping students in the post-Katrina world,” a session to “allow faculty and staff members to talk about their recent experiences, listen to each other’s stories, and articulate where we find hope,” a *reflection* offered by the President, followed by a *prayer service* “rooted in [university personnel’s] shared experiences and hopes” (University B, Press Release, December 2005). These events have been followed annually (generally on or around the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina) with *seminars*, *memorials*, *community projects*, the *recognition of heroic acts* by first responders, and other activities intended to bring the university community together and help establish a shared context for meaning after Katrina.

University departments whose leaders arranged for their employees to temporarily live and work at a common evacuation site, benefitted from having decision makers and the executors of those decisions in close proximity – helping ensure that unit members had access to the similar information and could share their views regarding appropriate next steps directly with one another. In contrast, the lack of a common destination for all key senior and mid-leaders occasionally resulted in different interpretations of events, and misunderstandings as to the processes and facts utilized to make decisions. As noted by a university leader/faculty member regarding interpersonal communication in the aftermath of Katrina:

I think it was mediocre at best. It was not as strong as it probably should have been...
I’m talking more of the interpersonal communications. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

For those reasons a mid-level leader who was heavily involved with data recovery efforts contends that in future disasters university leaders should and now plan to ensure that “the senior administrative team is together in one location, kind of calling the shots” (*Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*).

An additional mid-level leader (with faculty responsibilities) emphasizes the need for leaders to create a *context for meaning and action* post-disaster through *proactive communication efforts*, or faculty and staff members may instead derive meaning from a context that is not specifically relevant to their institution. For example, upon returning to University B in December to prepare for the Spring semester, and hearing about changes and cutbacks taking place at other institutions in the region, faculty and staff began to question whether they and/or University B would soon face a similar fate. As illustrated below, in the absence of direct leader-based communications indicating otherwise, concern or apprehension can build within the university community.

I think when we got back to the university that there was great apprehension... not because of what we were doing yet but because of what was happening at the other universities in town, people were being cut, salaries cut... there were all kinds of things going on at the other universities, and so our people were listening to what was being said there as well as what was going on with us... better communication with people.
Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B

The contributor above further indicates that after witnessing multiple rounds of layoffs at other institutions in the region, for many at University B “it was difficult... to believe that after the first round of [faculty] cuts – it was over, but it really was over” (*Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*). More proactive efforts on the part of university leadership to facilitate a shared context for meaning and action may have helped ensure that university employees were basing their views on more accurate and relevant information.

Acknowledging that university leaders could have done more to establish a *context for meaning and action* in the aftermath of Katrina, contributors indicate that in midst of future disasters, the university will be taking different steps to foster a *sense of community* – particularly amongst the response and recovery teams. More specifically, university leadership has arranged to evacuate response and recovery team members and their families to a single location in Texas, where they will live and conduct university operations until it is safe to return to New Orleans. A staff member contends that such changes will help foster *community*:

Community is incredibly important. That's part of the reason that the people who are involved in the Katrina recovery, there was a lot of stress, there was, people were separated from one another... So we're hoping that by keeping the group together, they'll support one another as much as we can do help support them too. *Contributor 8 – Staff, University B*

Moreover, a university leader, who played a significant role in the institution's financial survival and restoration, further indicates that the expenses associated with temporary post-disaster living arrangements will be covered by University B:

The university is picking up the tab, not only for them, but their spouse or individuals that perhaps they have to take care of at the evacuation site. ... So it would even be if an employee and spouse and two children had to evacuate, University B is picking up the housing for that employee and the spouse and children. That was not the case during Katrina. All of our employees that went to the evacuation site, they were all on their own having to pick up housing. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions

In many cases I think [Hurricane Katrina] brought out the best in people in terms of their willingness to help, to be patient, to accepting... and in some cases, because of their situation, or their temperament, it might not have brought out their best side. And you have to expect that range of reaction.... Some people had their entire belongings destroyed, they had loved ones die, and they're not, they've got other things to attend to. And we won't react the same way as others who didn't suffer the same level of misfortune. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

The theme of *managing human reactions* was the most frequently cited and emphasized aspect of leadership in the midst of disaster highlighted by interviewees at University B. All

members of the university community were in some way (and often in a significant way) impacted by Hurricane Katrina. As surmised by a university leader involved with financial affairs:

When you live in an area that is prone to some kind of disaster and of course, everywhere is, the impact of having something like this occur is tremendously traumatic... But for our employees... their lives were completely disrupted. Their homes were destroyed. They're living in another area... We had people in Houston, we had people in Alexandria, people scattered everywhere. And they didn't know what they were going to do... their personal lives were massively impacted. We lost a lot of people after we came back because they just couldn't handle the idea of having to live through that again. Including a vice president, including some people we thought were rather robust. It just was too much. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

Interviewees involved with response and recovery efforts from all levels of the organizational hierarchy noted that the combined impact of challenging *personal* and *professional circumstances* (stemming from the disaster) had a significant physical and emotional toll, which was more fully felt once work-related activity has momentarily ceased.

Anytime you keep your body in that mode your adrenal glands can just handle it for [so] long a period of time. So there are days where you have step back and say, you know, I'm just going to chill out... find a streetcar and go watch the Saints play because I think if you constantly, if you're constantly in that mindset, it's kind of a mess. I think you also have to temper that, balance that. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

There was so much work to do. And not only was it professionally demanding and draining, but it was personally draining... it was an alternative reality is what it was... the most draining experience of my life... I know on the weekends, I just kind of collapsed. I can remember watching TV for a long time and not even knowing what was on. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

A mid-level leader adds that it can be difficult to know how individuals will react in a disaster, and/or who has the attributes necessary to effectively lead a university (or unit therein) to recovery, until a crisis emerges and personality traits become more visible and relevant skills are put to the test.

The tough thing... a lot of those attributes you won't know people possess them until you put them to the test. I saw people that were rock solid all year long just kind of fly off the handle. And then you saw some people who you wouldn't expect to really rise to the occasion. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

While all employees at University B were impacted by the disaster in some fashion, roughly 60% reported a total or significant loss of their homes, resulting in the expression of a range of emotional and physiological reactions (Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B; PlanItNow, 2012). A mid-level leader, who played a key role in university recovery efforts, provides an overview of what he categorizes as “three-types of university employees,” based on his perceptions of their reactions to the crisis, and willingness/ability to take initiative during the immediate aftermath.

I thought people you would probably categorize in [three] different ways. I think there were a fair number of folks here, and just in the city as a whole, that were paralyzed. They were overwhelmed... And they were looking to both the leaders of the city and then on a more personal note, the leaders of this institution to kind of give them that direction. You had the other group of folks who were not paralyzed but either were not in a position or not comfortable with taking a leadership role and they were more like, tell me what you need me to do. I'll do anything you need me to do, just tell me what you need me to do. And then I guess the next level up you had those who were willing to roll up their sleeves and do the work, but were also in a position to kind of direct and orchestrate the recovery. And I think people kind of fell into one of those three categories. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

One key university leader (whose prior employment had been outside the field of higher education) observed that there is a tendency for university personnel (leaders, faculty and staff) to come together after a disaster, only to pull apart later.

From an institutional standpoint... I honestly think everyone... at a time like that everyone pulls together, whatever your differences are... As you get further and further away from the day of the disaster or day of the event that good feeling of wanting to work together, etc. does not permeate as predominately as it does right after the storm. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

The ability of individual employees (including members of the university's leadership team) to function effectively in the aftermath of Katrina, willingness to assist with the

University's recovery and/or return to University B upon its reopening, varied considerably, often in accordance with *personal and family circumstances*.

Everybody's circumstance – that's why I say Katrina's different because everybody's circumstances were just a little bit different, and depending on whether you had insurance money, you had flood insurance, how much damage was done to your home, if you had kids, all these things were factored into whether you could or would come back and if you could or would stay. I mean I don't live in New Orleans any more. I live almost in Baton Rouge. I'm commuting probably an hour or an hour and fifteen minutes one way every day. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Hence, given the importance of the university's people to the process of responding to and recovering from disaster, and the range of possible reactions such circumstances can and did evoke in facing Katrina, several interviewees emphasized the need for leaders to possess the knowledge and ability to *manage human reactions* in the aftermath of disaster, and noted how such knowledge influenced leader behavior at University B post-Katrina. Similarly to University A, each subtheme of *managing human reactions* in the midst of disaster, presented in Chapter II, was cited by multiple participants at University B for influencing leader decision making and communications, and for impacting the success of the institution's overall response and recovery efforts. Leaders' knowledge of how to *navigate common responses to trauma*, their *emotional competence/intelligence*, their willingness to tap into *spirituality*, and their ability to navigate and *overcome resistance* were each perceived as critical elements (that were on occasion observed to be lacking) in the response and recovery efforts of University B.

Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing Emotional Competence/Intelligence

Along the same lines as participants at University A, most interviewees at University B cited the subthemes of *understanding common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence* as key in effectively responding to Katrina. Moreover, rather than

separating the aforementioned subthemes, contributors generally linked them together while discussing the need to *manage human reactions* in the disaster's aftermath – thus, the subthemes are jointly addressed in this section.

One senior university leader draws parallels between the mental processes university employees went through after Katrina, and the stages he previously observed patients in intensive care units encountering after being told that their lives were nearing an end.

So a lot of my work was in intensive care medicine which really meant people were at the end of their lives... there are stages that people go through when they find out that they're dying... one is denial and then there's anger and then there's bargaining and ultimately, somebody, if they live long enough, they get to acceptance. And I saw those stages with clinic, in patients... But I saw the same sort of dynamic in this. There was denial, there was anger, there still is. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

Interviewees at all levels of University B highlight specific post-Katrina decisions, communications, and strategies as evidence that key leaders recognized the importance of understanding and addressing the needs and emotions (linking the aforementioned subthemes) of its human population. In combination, such leader behavior largely falls with two categories, including: 1) *visibly putting people first* – by showing *empathy*, which involved leaders recognizing that university members were suffering in both their personal and professional lives, and demonstrating the *centrality of people* within the organization via concrete decisions and actions; and 2) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – by looking to facilitate a *sense of security* (e.g., by meet basic human needs, and if possible, continuing to pay salaries), and helping employees regain a *sense of control* over life events via reestablishing routines, *keeping them busy* with work-related responsibilities, and making counselors and other mental resources available to the campus community.

Putting People First. Similarly to interviewees at University A, multiple contributors at University B noted that university leadership visibly sought to put the need of its “people”

(faculty, staff and students) first, both for caring/humanitarian purposes and because leaders recognized that the institution's "people" would serve as a key determinant of the institution's potential recovery from Katrina. As concluded by a university staff member:

The human element in all of this can't be overlooked. People have to be taken care of and they're the core of all of this. So if your people aren't functioning, your students can't learn, if your faculty can't teach, if your employees can't do their job, you don't have anything. So everything needs to be focused on providing those opportunities for people. So recovery operations I guess in a nutshell what I think is the recovery operations needs to be focused the human element as much as anything else.
Contributor 8 – Staff, University B

This is further supported by a leader/faculty member who played a central role in developing the university's post-Katrina recovery plan, and adds that before focusing on whether to be for or against particular decisions/initiatives the initial focus of leaders and the broader university community should be on making sure that "everyone [is] whole again:"

I think you deal with the personal issues of people first. And then you move from that to the institutional things. ... But I think it's important for people to focus on what I thought was more important in expressing outrage about some decision to making sure that we were able to, within our campus, our community of faculty and staff, make sure that everyone was whole again and then of course, ensuring that those students who were with us were getting the best possible education we could deliver. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Several contributors contend that university leaders should have, and in the aftermath of Katrina, did *put people first* by showing *empathy* and *demonstrating concern* for the safety and well-being of students and university personnel above all other institutional concerns. This mindset is explained by the mid-level and senior level leaders below.

I can't over emphasize the empathy idea. I know when... the provost at the time who I reported to who was in the position I'm going to say maybe two years when Katrina hit. The first thing he would ask me every time we would talk by phone is how are you doing? How's family? Do you need anything from me? And he was talking at a personal level. That meant a lot. *Contributor 4 –Mid-level Leader, University B*

And the most important thing, at least from our perspective was number one, to ensure that our students and then the faculty and staff were safe and then specifically for

students, that we provided them with opportunities and messages and website for them to come to see what other opportunities existed. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

An example of university leadership *putting its people first* through post-Katrina decision making involves a commitment by University B's President to *pay all full-time employees* for the Fall 2005 semester even as the university remained closed, and waiting to make decisions regarding staff/faculty layoffs until having a clearer picture of Winter 2006 (and projected future) university enrollments/budgets – even as most other universities in region had already conducted at least one round of layoffs (University B Press Release, 2005; Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B). As illustrated by a university leader involved with the decision to pay employees:

We paid everybody through that semester. We made a commitment early on to make sure that people were paid. Partly because we wanted to make sure that they had income and also that they had their health benefits and insurance and things like that. Because we figured, God knows where they are and what they're going to need. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader who supervised data storage and recovery efforts describes the positive impact of the decision to continue paying employees on faculty and staff.

The thing the president did which was a tremendous commitment on his part, was we announced early on, once we decided that we had to cancel the semester for the rest of the year, that all faculty and staff would be paid through the end of the year. Tremendous load off of people's minds. And a tremendous commitment by the university because we had no income. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Moreover, upon reopening campus for the Spring semester, university leaders were perceived by contributors as *put people first* by ensuring that those employees who needed access to temporary shelter in order to return to the region (as repairs were being made to private residences) had such needs met through housing placed on university owned property. A staff member describes the leadership team's efforts to *provide housing for faculty and staff*:

One of the things that University B did, as [the institution] owns some property out in a suburb not far from campus. And many of our faculty and staff lost their homes. University B took this property and had FEMA place trailers on their property so our faculty and staff would have a place to come back to if they hadn't had a trailer in front of their flooded home just yet. So that's just one of the things that University B did for faculty and staff. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Facilitating a sense of normalcy/certainty. Consistent with interviewees at University A, multiple contributors at University B note the importance and in many cases effectiveness of university leaders who sought to facilitate a *sense of normalcy or certainty* for employees (and at times themselves) in the aftermath of Katrina. The need to re-establish a sense of *normalcy/certainty* after a disaster is illustrated by a mid-level administrator with responsibility for helping restore the university's technological infrastructure post-disaster.

Some of my guys here – I had one guy who lived across the lake. You're familiar with the area, but he had no flooding, but four trees fell on his home and he was washed out anyway. And he came back to work here long before his home was recovered. He came back here in October, grateful to be back at work. He said, I need a sense of normalcy. But these guys were so happy to be doing something normal. That gave them a lift. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Most campus leaders (both upper and mid-level), however, sought to facilitate a *sense of normalcy/certainty*, by strategically *keeping employees busy*, and/or having them work towards a goal, which a mid-level leader contends is the only way to help people and a university move beyond a disaster.

The only way you're going to start to move something forward is to start to that return to normalcy, start putting some stakes in the sand and say okay, this is what we have to do. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

The contributor above further indicates:

You basically have to give people something to do. And it almost doesn't matter what it is. But you can go up to the most paralyzed person and you can say okay so and so, I need you to take this on. This is what we need to get done. And I just need you to do it. You're empowered to do it. And I've found that even for the paralyzed so to speak, if you gave them something that became theirs to take care of, most of the time they did a

fine job with it. And it kind of got them out of that mode of being paralyzed.
Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B

Upon returning to campus, senior administrators, faculty and staff members who continued to feel unsettled in the aftermath of Katrina had the opportunity to *meet with counselors* arranged for by the university. As noted by one staff member, who found the availability of counselors to be beneficial:

There were counselors available on campus when everyone came back. So that was a huge help for faculty and staff, and students if they needed [them]. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Additionally, while most interviewees at University B seemed to unify the subthemes of *navigating common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence*, a few contributors specifically highlighted the importance of *managing emotional reactions* – by paying attention to the emotional well-being and needs of staff, recognizing when it's time to lessen their workload or allow them to temporarily step away from recovery efforts or other university related activities.

According to both a senior and a mid-level leader, managing emotional reactions begins with *knowing your people* – having a sense for both their individual circumstances and the unit as a whole.

I think clearly you do what you can in terms of trying to know enough about individuals' circumstances so that if someone is not in a position to do something you need, you understand... have enough knowledge of people's individual circumstances so that you didn't accidentally put too much on them that they couldn't, and no one could be expected to respond to well. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

And I think a great leader has to have a sense for the whole unit. It can't just be about, I'm just going to deal with the vice presidents and the deans and everybody else can scramble for themselves. The backbone of any organization is always the folks in the middle and the bottom of the hierarchy. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

The contributor cited above adds that to prevent employees from becoming emotionally overwhelmed, conversations *cannot merely focus on the bottom-line* (e.g., improving the financial status of the university or recovering enrollments).

We can't talk about the bottom line all the time. You just can't. You've got to make sure that people have the ability to be successful and you've got to talk about the program and all that, you can talk about everything but the bottom line sometimes... At least for a little while. And then we can come back to it. We have to pick our spots. I should remind the president of that. He always talks about it. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Moreover, a mid-level administrator cautions that in the aftermath of a disaster, no one, including those filling leadership roles, will be immune to the emotional and psychological impact of the crisis. He explains that those filling leadership positions with University B in the aftermath of Katrina, found themselves constantly on the move and expending a great of energy caring for others (employees, etc.). Thus, while many university leaders appeared to “hold-up well” during the early stages of crisis, when the fast-pace began to slow – it was commonly accompanied by mental or emotional exhaustion. In other words, it is a matter of “when” not “if” the impact of a disaster will be felt on a personal level.

What you find is, once you stop running, once you stop, that's when it hits you. So for me it was kind of the next summer. I was able to catch my breath. But there are some people who are wired to – I think if you're... in a leadership role and you're wired to be empathetic and to take care of other people, they say time heals all wounds. By the time summer came for me, personally, I was exhausted. I just needed a little time to regroup. But enough time had passed that I could see things progressing. So that helped me through it. It hits everybody at different times. It really does. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Spirituality

One subtheme of leader behavior that seemed to play a more visible role in the efforts of leaders at University B in seeking to help facilitate healing amongst the university community (in comparison to the behaviors of those at University A) was that of *spirituality*. This occurrence

may stem from the fact that University B is formally affiliated with a religious denomination (the Jesuit [Catholic] faith), and is led by a President who also serves as a Father in the Catholic Church. Thus, references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders, while engaging as representatives of the institution, are more commonly a part of the organizational culture at University B (in both emergency and non-emergency circumstances), in comparison to non-religiously affiliated institutions, like nearby University A.

While some interviewees referenced tapping into *spirituality* on a private basis, to assist with personal healing and/or to help come terms with *how and why such a major disaster took place*, several also noted the role that *spirituality* played in the efforts of institutional leaders who were seeking to promote campus-wide healing at the organizational and individual levels. As one executive level university leader surmises:

We do want a resurrection. [We] want to bring to life that which was best in the city and hopefully shed what was worst in the city... I do think it helped. I do think it helped a lot. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

The same leader sheds light on how spirituality impacted his thoughts (on a personal level) and actions (on an organizational level), in *seeking answers to difficult life and/or religiously centered questions* that can emerge after a disaster, and in driving his efforts to help “resurrect” the city and the university.

I think my faith had a lot to do with my ability. But it also was a real challenge to my faith at various points. There were points I just said, “Where are you in all this?” “Where is God in all this?” And trust me, there were long stretches of time when – wondering “Where is God in all this” and “How does this happen.” But I think in many ways that faith as I mentioned the notion of resurrection really helped at key points to say, there can be life. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader surmises that *spirituality* played an increased role in the region post-Katrina, and served as the *basis for an important decision* on the part of university leadership in the disaster’s aftermath, namely – to continue paying employees.

I think spirituality erupted all across the region. In dire times, even the non-spiritual becomes spiritual. But for University B, the decision I talked about with the president, making sure people were paid. There was a spiritual basis for that. We need to make sure our people are taken care of. They take care of University B day in and day out. This is one of the biggest things we can do to make sure they know they'll be taken care of. So absolutely. *Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Moreover, a senior leader who helped secure significant financial support for the university in the aftermath of Katrina, argues that spirituality played an *important role in the decision-making of the University President* (who also serves as a Father in the Catholic/Jesuit tradition) after the disaster – particularly as it involved understanding that employees had personal obligations that extended beyond the university, and in terms of helping secure temporary housing for many faculty and staff whose homes were still being repaired or rebuilt at the time of the university's reopening.

I think certainly as an individual that has a religious background and a moral ethics background... he realized those people including myself and staff and faculty were having obligations and their lives were destroyed as well it wasn't just the institution, and he said look let's see what we can do to help these people... We own this property in Jefferson parish and [we] set up a trailer park for faculty and staff... and [the university] had considerable expenses as a result of that. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

Overcoming Resistance

While some employees at University B were perceived by interviewees as more proactive than others in terms of their willingness or ability (given personal circumstances) to assist the university and take charge of their arenas in the immediate aftermath of Katrina, a strong majority of contributors indicated that they were generally impressed by the efforts (albeit not always the decisions) of university leaders, faculty and staff, in responding to the disaster, as well as their ability to function effectively during such difficult circumstances. However, a few contributors also noted that amongst those involved with recovery efforts, some were unable or seemed unwilling to execute their responsibilities in a constructive or team-oriented fashion.

Moreover, much like with University A, there were instances in which university leadership encountered significant resistance to their decisions, actions, and/or proposed post-Katrina institutional changes.

One leader/faculty member notes that such *resistance is to be expected* – and was in some respects inevitable – because, as he argues, “you can’t cancel programs without it engendering hard feelings no matter how transparent the policy might be” (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty Member, University B). This line of thinking is further supported by a mid-level leader who contends that some members of the university community wanted to be able to return to University B and have everything be exactly the same as it was prior to the storm. This, however, was “no longer a possibility,” because as she notes below, the context, and facts on the ground had shifted after-Katrina.

I think there were people involved who wanted everything to be the same, they wanted to come back and have everything would be the same, so the resistance to change was very strong... But it was no longer a possibility, we could not do that and so we had to make certain changes simply because the facts that we had to deal with... but what was very difficult there were some people who took on these changes as a personal insult for whatever reason, and spent a lot of time... trying to second guess and put down steps that the administration was taking. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B*

Hence, along with pressure from the AAUP and faculty associated with the university’s largest college prior to Katrina, the *College of Sciences and the Arts* (as discussed earlier in this chapter), who were opposed to the process by which the university developed its post Katrina recovery plan and several of the decisions associated with it, institutional leaders also had to navigate challenges and resistance at the individual level. As summarized by one leader/faculty member:

I mean, there was some dissatisfaction that was pretty vocal. There were demonstrations against a reorganization. The local chapter of the AAUP got involved. There were efforts to communicate with board members to get them to reverse it. There

were efforts to recruit students to oppose it. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

A key leader/faculty member explains what he believes to be the origin of much of the faculty-based *resistance* at University B post Katrina. More specifically, he illustrates how fiscal realities and post-disaster *time constraints resulted in truncated governance processes* at University B (in comparison with non-emergency circumstances). These abbreviated governance processes and the proposed institutional changes that resulted, in turn sparked concerns (and in certain case outright opposition) on the part of many faculty members who were accustomed to having a greater voice in decision-making, over what they contend was a serious deviation from more traditional shared governance processes. This perceived deviation added stress to their professional lives, at the same time that they having difficulty managing personal losses stemming from Katrina.

It was very difficult... when you are so heavily dependent and you have fixed expenses at the institution and you find your revenue within one year taking potentially a one-third to one-half hit, then something needs to be done with the fixed costs... And it was something that needed to be done very quickly. As you know... the process through the various governance bodies seek to eliminate a program is quite a lengthy thing. ...And so while the institution attempted to utilize that same process, it was so abbreviated that I think there was a real sense on the part of those participants that really it was not a – I don't want to say not a valid process but it was so truncated that it really was more just to try to go through the process to get to a pre-ordained end of the game. And so that caused a lot animosity and tension... But when the people involved in the process don't have a place to live at the end of the day, that's even harder. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Such *obstacles* or *resistance* however, did not solely stem from university employees. For instance, in explaining why the university needed to (and did) significantly increase the amount of financial resources it dedicates to positively marketing the institution and its academic offerings, a mid-level leader who helped guide University B's post-Katrina recruitment efforts indicates that the *parents of prospective out-of-state students*, who were largely basing their

opinions of the university on *negatively-oriented media reports* regarding the devastation and crime in the City of New Orleans more broadly, often posed admissions challenges.

Now this was a school that was enrolling students at a clip of 70% of them or 65% of them were coming from out of state each year. And suddenly, that market was reduced to a third in terms of opportunity. It's 18 year olds, so it's parents saying, you're not going to down there, no way. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Several contributors note strategies that they found to be effective in *alleviating the obstacles* or resistance resulting from the post-disaster mental or emotional state of employees. One university leader indicates that on occasion resistance can require a direct *one-on-one conversation* with a higher level officer. Such was the case when a member of the President's Cabinet was unwilling (or at the time unable) to share pertinent financial information with a fellow leader and the President ultimately chose to intervene.

Internally, there was a member of the president's cabinet who was at that point in time... was not the most helpful... I think she was doing what she thought was right, but at that point in time it was very difficult to worth through one of our cabinet members, wasn't necessarily the most forthcoming with information that I need to provide to folks on the hill and essentially had to be told from top down "give it to him!" *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

An additional senior leader/faculty member indicates that in certain circumstances, an obstacle to response and recovery efforts may simply need to be removed (willingly or unwillingly). As in the case of the dean depicted below:

We had a Dean of the college who in my view was not the strongest leader. And a person who took great stock in being liked by his colleagues. And therefore, a person who did not communicate as fully with the constituencies of the college and I think in hindsight really contributed to a lot of the angst that developed in that college and to a lot of it getting out of control. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

According to the contributor above, the Dean "put himself on the market fairly early" and to help facilitate his departure university leaders "worked very hard with him to provide great

references... and he eventually selected another position” (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B).

In conclusion, an administrator who was heavily involved with recovery efforts, and had to navigate both internal and external obstacles, argues that university leaders should “be aware and have a plan to minimize the problem child as best [they] can” (Contributor 14 – Leader, University B). He adds that while most administrators, faculty, and staff will respond to the disaster in a favorable manner, there will always be “outliers” who respond in a disruptive fashion.

The overwhelming majority of folks respond positively. Most folks roll up their sleeve and really get down to business and try to help in any way possible. That being said you are gonna have the outliers as I would call 'em who are who are gonna be pains in the ass there always gonna be thorns in your side even not during a crisis you're going to have people who aren't team members. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

Potential New Subthemes

Just as with University A, through the document analysis and interview processes at University B, a number of themes and subthemes of leader behavior were revealed, many of which mirrored those identified in the previously highlighted conceptual framework. However, three potential new subthemes of leader behavior were cited with such frequency that they bear noting in the current chapter, and will be discussed in greater detail in the comparative analysis section. Two of these emergent subthemes mirror those identified through the experiences of leaders at University A – *Navigating the External Environment* and *Emphasizing the University's Mission*. In addition, a new potential subtheme of leader behavior, the *Timing of Post-disaster Decisions*, emerged via this separate analysis of the experiences of administrators, faculty, and staff at University B.

Navigating the External Environment

Similarly to those at University A, contributors at University B regularly note that in the aftermath of Katrina their organizational leaders needed to deal with and *navigate* challenges and possibilities stemming from *the external environment*. The university was to some extent constrained (*e.g.*, by a dysfunctional local government, a downturn in the U.S. economy, and consistent negative portrayals of New Orleans chances of recovery in the media), and in other ways enabled by its external environment (*e.g.*, via partnerships with the Jesuit network of colleges and universities, security arrangements with the National Guard, and financial assistance). Thus, as further illustrated below, the experiences of University B in seeking to recover from Hurricane Katrina provide further support for *navigating the external environment* as an important new subtheme of *leader-driven organizational dynamics*.

According to one key university leader, both the *federal and city government* presented major obstacles for University B the aftermath of Katrina. Of the *federal government* he states:

My joke always, it's not a joke, if the federal government had responded with half of the insights that the private sector did, the city would be in a very different place.
Contributor 2 – Leader, University B

Of the *city government*, the same executive level leader adds:

The city government was just, it was just wholly dysfunctional... Even the simplest things weren't happening. And the problem is it all goes to the top. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

A mid-level leader who played a major role in the recovery of university enrollment figures notes that the *national economic picture* also posed challenges to recovery efforts.

The economy has been a huge challenge for us, especially for our out-of-state students. Right after the storm, it was in-state because everyone in-state was scrambling from a housing standpoint or job loss standpoint. But a lot of that's better... But yeah external environment is weighing on us ... This economic issue can't be overstated. I'll give you an example. In 2000 or so, the average cost of a Jesuit university was about \$25,000.00 a year. Now it's about \$35,000.00. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Several university leaders, faculty and staff members also note the importance of *external partnerships* in contributing to an effective university response, and ultimately to recovery. Two senior leaders specifically highlight the role of *fellow Jesuit institutions* in assisting University B and its temporarily dispersed student population.

There are 27 other Jesuit college universities in the U.S. They opened their doors immediately to our students. And a lion's share of our students wound up there, but we wound up with students at over 500 universities. I mean, Higher Ed responded beautifully. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

One of the things that we found extremely helpful was the other Jesuit universities allowed our students to basically evacuate and continue their education at those institutions. And allow University B to retain the tuition and fees associated with their number of hours that they registered for... As well as other universities that were not part of the Jesuit network allowed our students in many, many, many, many instances to enroll and not, and choose not to charge them or ask University B to remit payment. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University B*

Contributors also illustrate the role that *colleges and universities* more broadly played in helping facilitate University B's survival – allowing faculty to meet with and otherwise maintain contact with the dispersed population. As stated by an administrator/faculty member:

I think the reception that our students received from other universities around the country also helped. My experience was with the University of Memphis. And as I recall, they had about 20 or 25 of our students enrolled during that fall semester. And they were terrific. And I heard other stories of other schools that were the same of getting them into classes, getting them into the residence halls, holding informational sessions so that faculty and folks who were around could get there, hold advising sessions, do social sessions, to teach them to get and keep them engaged in thinking about University B. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Furthermore, a staff member involved with student outreach post-disaster sheds light on the various *financial accommodations* made by colleges and universities that temporarily took in students (*e.g.*, diverted tuition dollars to University B).

We started making agreements with other schools that were not Jesuit schools. And it was amazing how generous these schools were. Some of them didn't charge our students anything as long as we didn't charge them either. Some of them did the same

thing that the Jesuit schools were doing. Some would charge tuition but charged in state tuition or may have given them free housing or meal plans just charged them minimal amounts to go to school there... for the fall semester... everyone welcomed our students with open arms. *Contributor 9 – Staff, University B*

Finally, a mid-level leader with an expertise in community engagement maintains that the university and the City are in many ways “inseparable.” Thus, as university actors seek to uplift the community, and the community becomes safer and more attractive, their efforts similarly uplift the university – attracting students, faculty, staff, and resources towards it.

The interests of the university and the interests of the city in which it has its life are inseparable. ... That the well-being of the city and the well-being of the institutions within the city, including its universities, really can't be separated... And I think University A and University B both in different ways while we were dealing with the crisis of what happened in August and early September and then getting the university stood back up and running again also showed a remarkable ability to have some time and some energy and so focus for the good of the larger city. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Emphasizing the University's Mission

A second potential subtheme of leader behavior identified in the prior chapter, *emphasizing the university's mission*, was depicted by multiple contributors at University B as helpful in facilitating recovery from Katrina. As noted previously, this new subtheme, which falls within the broader theme of *leader communication* involves uniting and focusing the university community around a common connection and/or mission and consistently *linking communications* (including those explaining the basis of recovery-related decisions) to that mission.

One mid-level leader, a New Orleans native, who lived outside the region at the time of Katrina, notes that the *mission of the university* and chance to make a positive difference prompted him to accept a position at University B in the disaster's aftermath.

I felt a calling to come back and do something. So when this job popped open, it felt for me very much like it was something I should be doing, that I should be part of

rebuilding the city ...and University B is a perfect fit. I'm Jesuit educated to the core so it all made an awful lot of sense. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

A leader/faculty member who assisted with developing University B's recovery plan adds that many faculty and staff who remained with University B in the aftermath of the disaster, even after having lost their homes, were united around and remained attached to the institution's mission.

Out of our faculty and staff during the storm, about 60% lost everything. And so there were plenty of reasons for them not to stay in New Orleans or stay at the institution. And some did not. But the vast majority did which redoubled their personal, in my mind, commitment, not only to the institution but to our mission and to the city. So as I also will tell people, I don't think there is a stronger group of individuals that if you ask them why they're at the institution, have really good reasons... *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

The contributor above adds that University B may actually be stronger after Katrina, arguing that *those who remain with the university have a special connection* to the Jesuit brand of education, and may now be more connected to the institutions mission.

I think we are stronger as I mentioned, as an institution because in times of crisis you become more introspective. And I think you basically pull yourself back to what are some of your basic values as, in our case, as an institution. And historically being the Jesuit brand is a very strong brand and a very clear mission. So I think what has happened as we've now pushed beyond at times, we have become a strong institution mission-wise. I think we are stronger from the standpoint of our faculty and staff understanding that mission and their deep commitment to the institution. *Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

To facilitate further recovery, a mid-level leader argues that in terms of undergraduate admissions the university needs to and is beginning to refocus on its Catholic, Jesuit roots and traditions, which he believes the university may have strayed from "a little bit" during the recovery process. He contends that *deviating from the mission* has led to more challenges with student conduct than in the past.

I think we have a lot more behavior problems, a lot more issues with drinking and alcohol and drugs, which we'd addressed with tighter disciplinary sanctions. We still

have a problem with alcohol. I think that will persist because we're in New Orleans and it's a party city. I think that's a given. But it was a little bit more than normal. We had a lot of students come into New Orleans not only to help recover, which is a great thing, but also to party a little bit more than normal. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Timing

A potential new subtheme of leader behavior that emerged via the experiences and perspectives of contributors University B's, underlies the theme of *leader thinking and decision making* and involves leader *timing*. More specifically, the *timing* in which some important decisions were made at University B in comparison to University A, varied considerably, as did, to some extent, the resistance to and results of those decisions. Particularly noteworthy and consequential was the variance in the timing over which each University unveiled their recovery plans and made decisions regarding employee layoffs. While University A revealed its recovery plan during the month of December 2005 (while the University was still closed), and made many of its layoffs decisions in conjunction with the plan's announcement –University B's leadership team did not unveil its post-Katrina restructuring plan until April 2006 (final version approved in May), and did not make or announce most of its layoff decisions until the University had already been open for several months and many university operations had assumed some *semblance of normalcy*. While University B's leaders indicate that they largely delayed restructuring and layoff decisions until the Spring semester so they could determine how many students ultimately returned to the university and get a sense of budget/enrollment projections going forward. Hoping to avoid making decisions pre-maturely, the delay may have also had some unintended consequences.

As stated by a leader/faculty member involved with the recovery process:

What hurt was that during that spring semester was when the initial outline of what degree reorganization is going to look like started to become known. And that then

engendered some ill-will and ill-feelings. That probably contributed in some cases to people being less than willing to step up and do what had to be done or what they were told had to be done. *Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the experiences of University B (a private Jesuit-affiliated University with a 100-year history) in dealing with the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, and seeking to facilitate full recovery. In total, the University suffered an estimated \$44 million in damages (a figure that includes both physical and operational costs²²), with most of those costs associated with the need to close campus for Fall 2005 and operate from remote locations, as well as reduced enrollment totals occurring each year since Katrina. Yet, despite concerns that the City of New Orleans would never recover, severe criticism stemming from the AAUP, and lawsuits from tenured faculty members whose positions were eliminated in association with the university's recovery plan (the last of which was resolved in November 2010) – according to most available institutional data and the accounts of nearly all university-based interviewees, just 6-years after the disaster, the institution has nearly to fully recovered from the disaster.

Based on the perceptions of each leader, faculty, and staff member interviewed, the primary reason(s) for the University B's recovery stems from the behavior of multiple university leaders (both senior and mid-level), as well as the action/cooperation of some key faculty and staff members in the aftermath of the disaster. The University President, Provost, along with few key Vice Presidents and mid-level leaders were lauded by many contributors for their role in facilitating University B's recovery to date. The types of leader behavior commonly singled out for praise at University B, include *technical competence* (e.g., successful efforts to secure and restore the university's technological infrastructure), *financial reserves* (e.g., tripling business

²² Operational costs include 23.8 million in initial costs, and an estimated \$15 million in lost revenue due to post-Katrina enrollment declines. A precise determination of financial losses attributable to post-Katrina enrollment declines has yet to be calculated by University B.

interruption insurance coverage just months prior to Katrina), *symbolic action* (e.g., enabling campus monuments and tributes), *utilizing the disaster as an opportunity* to make organizational improvements and reduce vulnerabilities, and most subthemes of *managing human reactions* (e.g., “putting people first” by committing to pay employees for the entire Fall semester while the University remained closed and *tapping into spirituality* in public statements).

However, some members of the same leadership team, including the President, Provost, and members of the President’s cabinet (several of which are no longer with the University) were also the subject of mild to more substantial criticism from both interviewees and current/former employees cited in various media sources (e.g., *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The Times Picayune*). Complaints have primarily focused on the process by which the recovery plan was crafted, communicated and implemented. More specifically, the following subthemes of leader behavior were frequently noted as important but at times lacking in the leadership teams efforts to facilitate effective response and recovery from Katrina, including: *facilitating awareness* (e.g., of the timeframe and process by which decisions would be made regarding university restructuring efforts), *clarity of communication* (e.g., leaders took several weeks to establish a set time for posting web-based updates, leaving some community members searching for information), and *creating a context for meaning and action* (e.g., the university did not have a pre-established central location for conducting response and recovery efforts).

In addition to the previously identified themes and subthemes of leader behavior, each of which were cited by multiple participants, three new potential subthemes of leader behavior (not identified in the previously proposed conceptual framework) have emerged, two of which mirror those discovered via the analysis of University A’s experiences with Katrina, including: 1) the ability of a university to *navigate the external environment* (e.g., to be self-sufficient, avoid

obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary); and 2) *emphasizing the university's mission* in post-disaster communications. A third potential new subtheme of leader behavior, which involves the *timing of post-disaster decisions*, was also revealed as key factor in determining both the impact of decisions and the level of resistance to them.

While some critics of the leadership team may continue to question the specific methods or reason(s) for University's B's near to full recovery, in September 2011 (roughly six years after Katrina), the Editorial Board of the university's school newspaper arrived at a strong conclusion:

It is incontrovertible that we, as a university and a community, are in a better situation now than at [the recovery plan's] birth. Our incoming freshman class is the largest in University B's history, and the school is thriving (University B School Newspaper Editorial, September 2011).

Moreover, reflecting on the behavior of institutional leaders post-disaster, and how they went about crafting and announcing the post-Katrina recovery plan, the Editorial Board notes the unprecedented circumstances in which the plan was developed and the positive of the leadership team at that time. Specifically the Editorial Board states that the plan was:

...conceived during an unprecedented period in our history, and the atmosphere was one of intense insecurity and anxiety... whatever the outcome, officials were acting in what they felt was the best interest of the university at a time when foresight was immeasurably blurred by disaster (University B School Newspaper Editorial, September 2011).

The chapter to follow discusses the experiences of University C, and identifies leader behavior evident in the institution's response to the unprecedented disaster.

CHAPTER VIII
UNIVERSITY C & LEADER BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF
HURRICANE KATRINA

I don't think there is any precedent in American academic history for the challenge of rebuilding a campus in the aftermath of a disaster like Katrina. If you had seen our campus, you would have wondered if it would be possible to ever rebuild. The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stands for danger, the other for opportunity. *President, University C (as cited in The Times-Picayune, 2010)*

Background: A Renowned HBCU

The origins of *University C* can be traced back to 1866, when the Methodist Episcopal Church founded a *Biblical Institute* for the training of African-American ministers. Roughly three years later, in 1869, the *Freedman's Aid Society* of the United Methodist Church founded a *Normal School* for the training of teachers, which when added to the aforementioned *Biblical Institute* – established a new African American serving university. That same year, the *American Missionary Association* of the Congregational Church (now the United Church of Christ) also established an African American serving university affiliated with its faith tradition. In 1935, the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ chose to merge the two historically Black post-secondary institutions noted above – creating *University C*.

Consistent with *University C*'s historical and continued affiliations with the *United Church of Christ* and the *United Methodist Church*, the institution is primarily focused on providing students with a strong education in the Liberal Arts. The university's mission is *to produce graduates with the capability to excel and become world leaders who possess: well-rounded educations; cultural awareness; the desire to advance the human condition; and the*

ability to meet the demands of a diverse, global and technologically advanced society (paraphrased from University C’s Mission Statement, 2011).

Today, University C is one of the most highly regarded *Historically Black Universities* (or *HBCUs*) in the country. Its campus is located in a residential suburb of New Orleans – spanning 55 acres, and is replete with walking trails, greenery, and oak trees, which University C promotes as the “picture perfect college environment.” The institution currently offers 23 academic majors in its 4 colleges: the *College of General Studies*, the *College of Arts and Sciences*, the *College of Professional Studies*, and the *College of Business*.

Its total undergraduate enrollment for Fall 2011 is 1,249 – which consists of students from 29 states and 10 foreign countries (University C, Application for Admissions). As an HBCU, the strong majority of its student population (more than 95%) is Black/African American, and 72% is female (University C, Office of Institutional Research). With 82 full-time and 45 part-time faculty members the university’s student/faculty ratio is roughly 12 to 1. The university offers opportunities athletic participation through its membership in the *National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)*.

*Other Facts and Figures*²³:

- *U.S. News & World Report*: In 2007, University C was ranked amongst the top 20 Comprehensive (4-year) postsecondary institutions in the Southern Region, and for each of the past five years has been ranked as one of the top 10 HBCU’s in the nation.
- *Washington Monthly*: In 2011, the university was ranked as one of the nation’s top 25 liberal arts colleges.

²³ The university rankings listed below are based primarily on information presented online via “About University C.” Where possible, the rankings were verified by accessing the original source of the data.

- *Highly-regarded Nursing Program:* University C’s Nursing Program is held in particularly high esteem regionally, and in 2008 was chartered as a member of the *Xi Psi* (at large chapter) of *Sigma Theta Tau International*, the Honors Society for Nursing.
- *Unique Features and Opportunities:* University C (as an institution) is a founding member of the *United Negro College Fund* (UNCF). The institution’s physics program hosts a state of the art, *pulse laser system* – providing its students with the opportunity to perform graduate-level research. The institution participates in the *Melton Fellowship Program*, which fosters international collaboration with students from countries including: Chile, Japan, Germany and China. More than 40% of University C’s students end up pursuing an advanced degree with five years of graduation.

Katrina’s Impact on University C

According to University C’s leadership team, including its President (whose tenure began just one month prior to Katrina), the damage to University C's campus as a result of the storm was “almost impossible to describe” (Hughes, in de Vice, 2010). In addition to sustaining heavy damage from Katrina, the university fell victim to one of the many, now infamous “levee breaches,” in this case the East Levee of the London Avenue Canal (located behind University C). Soon after the levee ruptured, Lake Pontchartrain began pouring into campus, and remained there for nearly three weeks – flooding every single building except the chapel with between four to eight feet of water (Hughes, in de Vice, 2010; University C’s Recovery Plan). As a result, all 20 of University C’s on campus buildings were heavily damaged or destroyed – including three that caught fire while the campus remained underwater (Schleicher, 2005).

On Saturday afternoon, several hours prior to the City of New Orleans issuing a mandatory evacuation, campus officials at University C (*e.g.*, the President, members of the executive team, and residence life staff) directed students, faculty, and staff to evacuate campus (advising that they consider evacuating New Orleans as well). Soon thereafter the gated

entrances to campus were closed and locked by security personnel. Those students without the means to do evacuate (about 270 total) were transported by bus to the University's designated evacuation site at a college in Shreveport, Louisiana. However, the organized evacuation was not without incident, as just a few hours after the caravan of evacuees had departed from University C, officials were notified that a bus carrying more than 30 of its students had caught fire just outside Baton Rouge, causing them to lose all the belongings they had brought with them (Leigh, 2010; Multiple Contributors, University C). Fortunately, however, no one was injured and after a 10 hour bus ride, the roughly 270 students successfully arrived at the college in Shreveport – a temporary reprieve from the gathering storm (Leigh, 2010; Multiple Contributors, University C). Unbeknownst to student and non-student evacuees, was the devastation that would soon encompass their home university (and the City of New Orleans more broadly). Within just a few days, however, they would not only learn of the devastation, but also that their home campus would be closed for the entire Fall semester – prompting them, along with select faculty and senior administrators, to temporarily disperse to more than 200 colleges across the country.

Given the extent of the damage to campus facilities and broader New Orleans, many individuals associated with University C questioned whether the institution would reopen anywhere, let alone reopen in the devastated City of New Orleans. University administrators spent much of the Fall 2005 semester living in, and conducting (limited) operations and recovery efforts out of temporary offices in Atlanta, Georgia, while the institution's President, Vice President for Development, and other designated staff members, flew to from Washington DC to lobby federal officials for emergency financial assistance. Though most campus officials remained eager to repair and re-open the university in New Orleans, several members of the

university's Board of Trustees (and a small group of senior administrators) went so far as to propose that the institution be permanently relocated to Atlanta, an idea that was ultimately rejected, in favor of restoring campus at its existing site.

As it became clear that campus would at a minimum remain uninhabitable until the summer of 2006, university leaders sought out a temporary site in New Orleans that would: 1) allow for the continuation of operations, including the resumption of courses, and 2) provide housing for those students, faculty and staff who returned to the city for the Spring 2006 semester (Multiple Contributors – University C). Consistent with those objectives, University C crafted an arrangement with a *Hilton affiliated hotel* – a site that would serve as a temporary residence and base of operations for more than 1,100 students, along with several dozen faculty and staff members – for the entire Spring semester and a significant portion of summer. Guest rooms were converted into dorm rooms, ballrooms into classrooms, and the cafeteria located in the hotel lobby became a dining hall (Konigsmark, 2006; Contributor 7 – Leader, University C). Spring semester courses were offered at both the Hilton hotel and the nearby New Orleans-based World Trade Center (across the street from the Hilton) (NACUBO, 2007). To ensure that returning seniors would be able to graduate on schedule (as some were unable or chose not to take courses at other institutions that Fall, while other students simply did not have access to courses required for degree purposes), University C offered two intensive/abbreviated semesters between January and July at the Hilton – with some faculty members teaching 4 to 5 courses during that period (Multiple Contributors –University C).

Damage Summary

The impact of Katrina on University C was both severe and costly. While the institution was fortunate, in that no students, faculty, or staff members lost their lives as a result of the

disaster – storm and flood related capital losses (including infrastructure and clean-up costs) ultimately exceeded \$280 million (University C’s Institutional Data).²⁴ Factoring in lost tuition, and other sources of revenue (*e.g.*, from special events and merchandise), total damage to University C’s campus reached approximately \$400 million (Schleicher, 2005; Hughes, in de Vice, 2010). Although in pure dollars, the damage to University C does not appear to match that sustained by University A (\$400 million versus \$600 million, respectively), as a much smaller institution, flooded and/or otherwise damaged in its entirety, while lacking the advantages of large alumni base and endowment, Katrina proved catastrophic to University C – at least in the near term.

In an effort to manage the severe short term losses and anticipated longer term revenue shortfalls, in November 2005 (just three months after Katrina), University C laid-off 201 of the 344 faculty and staff members employed by institution prior to the disaster, a reduction in personnel of more than 58 percent (University C’s Recovery Plan, 2007).²⁵ Student enrollment fell swiftly and dramatically, with just over 1,100 of the more than 1,993 enrolled at University C for the start of the Fall 2005 academic term returning for the Winter semester (a loss of approximately 45% of its student population in just 4 months). Roughly half of the students who returned were juniors or seniors, leaving the student population “top-heavy” and susceptible to significant further enrollment reductions when the number of entering freshman did not and/or could not keep pace with the population of students graduating and subsequently departing from the institution (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). Hence, over the next three years total enrollment at University C continued to

²⁴ This figure contrasts with Mangan and O’Leary (2010) who report estimated physical damages of \$228 million.

²⁵ According to University C (via its Recovery Plan), the 201 layoffs included a total of 89 non-tenured faculty and 112 staff members.

drop, bottoming out at 851 students in the Fall of 2008 (Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C; University C’s Institutional Data).

In combination, the significantly reduced enrollment totals, along with the personal demands of faculty, staff and students seeking to recover from the impact of Katrina on their livelihoods outside of work (*e.g.*, property related damage), prompted several academic units on campus to adopt 4-day work weeks, with classes offered between Monday and Thursday, from 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C). This schedule (which remained in place for roughly two years) was viewed by many university actors as a way of enabling the university to function, while also affording personnel much needed time to take care of personal matters related to the disaster (*e.g.*, home repairs and insurance company dealings).

Along the same lines as University B, University C is heavily dependent on tuition as a source of revenue. Hence, the severe decline in the university’s overall student population (after having been closed for the Fall 2005 semester and operating out of the Hilton Hotel in Winter 2006), the deep post-Katrina drop in the number of residents of New Orleans (particularly within the African American population and community surrounding University C) (Kurland, 2006), the inability to recover admission’s applications that had been submitted prior to the storm (which were not stored digitally), and the unwillingness of many parents to send their children to New Orleans post-Katrina (out of safety related concerns and uncertainty over whether the university would ever reemerge) had, and continues to have, a substantial negative impact on university enrollment totals – posing significant fiscal challenges for the university (tuition related revenue is not high enough to meet faculty and staff salary commitments) and presenting mismatches between the number of tenured faculty and total student population within various academic units.

A Plan for Recovery

Upon surveying the severe damage suffered by University C, the President and other key leaders (who at the time were still largely based in Atlanta, Georgia) determined that the institution's recovery process should be split into two overlapping phases. *Phase 1* (stemming from shortly after the storm until roughly 2008) involved a series of actions and decisions designed to stabilize and ensure the mere survival of the highly-regarded HBCU. *Phase 2* on the other hand (from roughly 2007-08 to the present day) involved a shift from focusing primarily on survival, towards a focus on recovery and beyond. The foundation for the latter "phase" had in part been laid out prior to Katrina, as the then new President had been working with other university leaders to craft a strategic plan intended to transform aspects of the university and enhance its competitiveness going forward (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C; Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C). While the disaster significantly delayed such efforts, elements of the strategic plan under development pre-Katrina, informed post-Katrina efforts to move the university towards full-recovery and subsequently "transform itself into a stronger and better institution" (University C's Strategic Plan, 2008, p. 3).

Primary elements of the two-phase recovery process implemented at University C include (but are not limited to) the following:

- *Returning to New Orleans:* University C's first priority in seeking to ensure institutional survival was to facilitate the resumption of operations and the return of students, faculty and staff to a designated location in New Orleans (ultimately the Hilton hotel) for Spring 2006 (a semester that begins in January), as the University's main campus continued to undergo repairs – with the goal of reopening its home site by Fall 2006. To help ensure that returning juniors and seniors remained on track for graduation, two-semesters of courses were offered between January and June.

- *Enhanced Government Outreach & Fundraising Efforts:* Shortly after Katrina, University leadership began lobbying federal sources for financial support to assist with rebuilding campus (even stationing two of its key leaders in Washington DC), securing a major \$160 million federal loan (via the *HBCU Capital Financing Program*), with a 1% interest rate for 30 years, and no principal or interest due during the first three years of the loan. The university also secured a \$25 million research grant (spread out over 5 years) via the *National Institutes of Health (NIH)*, along with funding from multiple private foundations (e.g., the *Teagle Foundation* – to support faculty positions and student scholarships). In 2008, University C launched a \$70 million capital campaign.
- *Campus Appearance/Landscaping:* Given the University’s complete inundation post-Katrina, every campus building required rebuilding or renovation. The University similarly emphasized the restoration of its landscape for which it is renowned (open walking trails, white buildings exteriors, green lawns and large oak trees).
- *Academic Reconfiguration & Program Reductions:* University C’s leadership team chose not to eliminate programs until 2010 (more modest changes were made in 2008). At that time, the university reduced the number of majors it offers from 32 to 26 and transitioned from a division to college-based organizational structure (Pope, 2010). Thus, rather than 6 Academic Divisions (*Business, Educational & Psychological Studies, Humanities, Natural Sciences & Public Health, Nursing, and Social Sciences*), the University now consists of 4 Colleges: the *College of General Studies*, the *College of Arts and Sciences*, the *College of Professional Studies*, and the *College of Business*.
- *Faculty & Staff Reductions:* The University laid-off 89 non-tenured faculty and 112 staff members in November of 2005 (several of which were rehired in January 2006). All tenured faculty positions were protected throughout the university’s disaster response and recovery processes. Faculty totals have fluctuated since that time.
- *New “Green” Facilities:* University C has sought to facilitate the “greening of its campus and the promotion of environmental sustainability” as it rebuilt. The institution has constructed two new LEED certified facilities, one of which now hosts its Professional Schools and Science Programs and the other now serves as its Student Union, and hosts the campus’s Health and Wellness offerings.

- *Enhanced Focus on Research:* Based on the viewpoint that “research enhances a university’s reputation, and attracts top students and faculty, as well as public and private funding” (University C’s Strategic Plan, 2008, p. 13), University C’s leadership team is seeking to double the number of research activities that faculty and students are engaged in, from exploration/investigation to the dissemination of results via publications and presentations.
- *Rebuild Enrollments, Increase Student Retention & Persistence:* University C is seeking to increase its student population to at least pre-Katrina levels (2,000 students), by raising funds for incentive scholarships (to retain current students and recruit new students), utilizing targeted recruitment strategies (*e.g.*, potential transfer students), improving year-to-year student retention figures, and significantly improving 6-year cohort graduation rates. In particular, the university (through its *Office of Student Success* – created in 2006) is focusing its efforts on improving *freshman-to-sophomore student retention rates* setting a short term goal of 80%.²⁶ To achieve that goal, the institution is employing a number of strategies, including: 1) transitioning first-year advising from administrative staff to faculty; 2) crafting an early-warning system to help identify and address potential student academic difficulties; and 3) expanding its counseling center to meet the behavioral and mental health needs of its student population (University C Strategic Plan, 2008).
- *Offering Graduate Programs:* University C plans to selectively introduce graduate programs, based in part on projections of future workforce needs. The University is exploring the possibility of graduate programs in a variety of fields including (but not limited to) Nursing, Law, Business (*e.g.*, Executive MBA) and Public Policy.
- *Helping lead the Recovery of New Orleans:* As noted in its 2008 Strategic Plan, University C intends to help facilitate the “revitalization” of its surrounding community and the City of New Orleans more broadly via its *Community Development Corporation*. University leaders hope to position the institution as a “resource” for residents who lack the means to rebuild, and in doing so have redesigned its “community service

²⁶ More recently, University C’s retention efforts have expanded to include *sophomore-to-junior year*, and *junior-to-senior year* retention rates (University C’s Student Integration Model, 2011).

requirement” seeking to better align curriculum with the University’s commitment to rebuilding New Orleans.

Has University C Recovered?

As noted previously, after it became clear as to the sheer devastation faced by University C as a result of Katrina and the nearby levee breach, the immediate focus of the HBCU’s leadership team was less about ensuring full institutional recovery than it was about ensuring the mere survival of the historic institution. Surrounded by a low income community that was severely and disproportionately impacted by Katrina, and possessing more limited resources than either University A or University C (*e.g.*, fewer alumni, more limited non-tuition based revenue streams, and a smaller endowment) – to survive and recover – University C not only had further to climb than the previously mentioned institutions, but had fewer means by which to do so.

Perspectives amongst contributors regarding the extent to which University C has recovered since Katrina vary widely, and to a greater extent than did the perspectives of interviewees at either University A or University C. While some university leaders, faculty and staff contend that the institution has nearly achieved full-recovery and is beyond pre-Katrina status in certain key areas (highlighted below), most argue that the University still has some distance to go – with estimates varying from 60% to 75% to 90% recovered. Multiple participants, chose to provide separate assessments of the degree to which the university has recovered in terms of facilities/appearance, and operational issues (*e.g.*, enrollment numbers, campus finances, and faculty/staff levels pre versus post-Katrina), rather than providing an overall assessment. The strong majority of participants indicate that *facilities-wise* the University has recovered considerably with estimates ranging from 80% to 90% repaired/renovated. In terms of *overall student enrollment* (a major determinant of financial

health and faculty/staff levels at University C), collectively, participants contend that the university is has far to rise to achieve full-recovery, and amongst those who offered percentage values, assessments ranged from 50% to 75% recovered.

Several members of the University's leadership team received praise from contributors, in particular the University President, Vice President for Development, and the University Chaplain. These leaders were lauded primarily for their efforts during the 12 months immediately following Katrina, wherein the President and Vice President for Development are credited with helping prevent the university from falling into bankruptcy, closing down, and/or relocating to another state, while the University Chaplain is recognized for having helped the university community (including senior leaders) deal with, and to some extent heal from the trauma induced by the disaster. The leadership team also managed to secure a temporary site in New Orleans to conduct operations for the winter semester, while its heavily damaged campus continued to undergo repairs. Had the university remained closed for a full 12 months, with its students continuing to study at other institutions, and faculty and staff needing to find temporary employment, the likelihood of University C's survival would have been severely reduced.

The evidence of recovery (or progress towards recovery) at University C, most frequently cited by interviewees, include: 1) the campus's return to its traditional pristine appearance and landscaping; 2) all buildings having been repaired or replaced (with the exception of two dormitories and some minimal ongoing piping issues); 3) the post-Katrina construction of two state-of-the-art facilities: a 400,000 square foot building which now houses the institution's professional schools and science programs, and a new student union which houses the university's recreational and health and wellness centers; 4) the university endowment now totals \$65 million (near pre-Katrina totals, after having fallen in conjunction with the local/national

economy); 5) admissions numbers are on an upward trajectory (albeit not yet approaching pre-Katrina levels); 6) the substantial increase in federal awards and grants attained for research and sponsored programs, from \$7.5 million to \$16 million per year (Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C), 7) a gradually improving debt structure, 8) new partnerships and consortiums with campuses in the region including University A and University C; and 9) campus ratings by national publications remain favorable in comparison to peer institutions. Finally, nearly all contributors indicate that today the university is far more prepared to manage future disasters, with improved evacuation and communication plans for students, faculty, staff and members of the leadership team. Please refer to *Table 8.1, Appendix H* for University C's current Institutional Profile (including pre/post-Katrina data comparisons).

Other Noteworthy Data:

- Out of an estimated \$400 million in damages, roughly \$110 million was covered by insurance (NACUBO, 2007), and \$66.5 million was received in federal financial support (not including low interest loans).
- In the year following Katrina, University C raised more than \$34 million in public and private gifts and grants for construction, operating expenses and scholarships (Hughes, in de Vice, 2010)
- The university has raised more than \$60 Million towards \$70 Million capital campaign goal (University C's Capital Campaign, 2011)
- As of April 2011, the university's endowment totaled roughly \$40 million (Bloomberg/Businessweek, 2011). University leaders note the receipt of a recent \$25 million contribution, boosting its endowment to \$65 million.
- Neither Moody's nor Standard & Poor's has issued a current bond rating for University C. Moody's had given University C's 2002 issued bond its highest rating, Aaa, until as June 2008. However, by November of 2008, the bond rating had dropped to Baa1 (lower medium grade).

- In September 2011, University C enrolled 1,249 students for the fall semester, the largest number of students to attend the institution since prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Contrary Evidence

As noted above, according to institutional data, firsthand observation, and the perspectives of faculty and staff interviewed for this analysis, University C has made significant strides towards recovering from a disaster that had a disproportionately devastating impact on its campus and the surrounding community. Members of the university's leadership team (*e.g.*, the President, Vice President for Development, and Chaplain) have received praise from internal and external constituencies for their efforts during the year following the disaster, which included: 1) arranging for a New Orleans-based Hilton hotel to host university operations, along with students, faculty and staff for two abbreviated semesters running between January and June, 2) successfully lobbying the federal government and various foundations for funding to support campus rebuilding and fund faculty positions, and 3) ensuring that the university indeed returned to New Orleans.

That being said, the efforts of university leaders to manage Katrina and its aftermath have also been the focus of strong criticism (whether correctly or incorrectly placed), as nearly all contributors to this study contend that while the university is in a far better position than it was immediately after the storm, the institution has yet to fully recover. By far the most frequently cited evidence that the university still has a distance to climb to achieve full recovery, involves the institution's continued struggle to increase enrollment figures, which have remained well below pre-Katrina totals. To illustrate, at the start of the Fall 2005 academic term, university enrollment totals stood at 1,993 students, but quickly fell to just over 1,100 by the start of the Winter semester (a loss of approximately 45% of its student population in just 4 months). Over

the next three years total enrollment at University C continued to drop, bottoming out at 851 students in the Fall of 2008. While university enrollments have steadily increased since that time, its current student population of 1,249 (as of the start of Fall 2011) remains almost 40% below its pre-Katrina level.

Also posing problems for University's C, both its *freshman-to-sophomore year retention rates* and *six-year graduation rates* remain below pre-Katrina levels. According to institutional data, between 2000 and 2004 (prior to Katrina), *freshman-to-sophomore year retention rates* never fell below 69%. For those cohorts that have arrived at University C since Hurricane Katrina however (2006 through 2010), only two have managed to reach the institution's pre-disaster minimum of 69%.²⁷

Data on graduation rates at University C present a far more challenging picture for institutional leadership, as for those cohorts whose members had not already reached or neared graduation at the time of Katrina (freshman and sophomores), *six-year graduation rates* fell dramatically below those cohorts who had spent more time at (and potentially grew more attached to) the institution and community prior the disaster (juniors and seniors). More specifically, while the 2000 and 2001 cohorts managed six-year graduation rates of 46% and 50%, respectively, for only one cohort since that point has the rate exceeded 30%.²⁸

Unlike Universities A and B, University C was not censured by the AAUP, as the institution did not layoff any tenured employees in the aftermath of the storm (despite severe damage), nor did it declare *financial exigency*. However, the decision not to lay off tenured employees in an effort to help manage the institution's severe budget short fall – instead choosing to lay off the vast majority of its non-tenured faculty, along with more than 100 staff

²⁷ The freshman-to-sophomore year retention rate for the 2005 cohort (which arrived just before Katrina) was 45% according to institutional data.

²⁸ The six-year graduation rate for the 2002 cohort stands at 37%.

members – has had some unforeseen negative consequences, as: 1) tenured faculty members have the highest salaries amongst faculty at University C, yet on individual bases were not necessarily the top professors in their respective departments or the most marketable to prospective students; 2) several academic units now have a mismatch between the number of faculty and number of students pursuing degrees within those units, and 3) several talented, relatively new, non-tenured faculty members – with low to moderate salaries, and the potential to remain at the university for extended periods of time – were overrepresented in the layoff decisions, prompting some contributors to question whether the overall quality of the faculty at the university has been lessened given, the loss of some promising non-tenured faculty (*e.g.*, Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). Hence, according to multiple contributors, the university now finds itself in a situation where some institutional leaders wish the institution had declared financial exigency and made more deliberative (case by case or department by department) layoff decisions at the outset, to alleviate challenges the institution now faces (*e.g.*, Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C)

Several current and former administrators, staff and faculty members, indicate that *turnover* and/or a *lack of continuity* within the university's leadership team has also become a major challenge in the aftermath of Katrina – reporting that the institution has hired multiple CFO's and multiple Provosts, and replaced multiple Dean's since the disaster (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). Moreover, the number of faculty members at University C has fallen and risen and fallen again in the aftermath of Katrina – shifting from 145 full-time faculty members prior to Katrina, down

to a low of 34 during Fall 2005 (while the campus remained closed), and quickly back up to 77 at the start of the Winter 2006 semester (where operations were conducted primarily out of a local Hilton hotel). Over the past 6 years, the number of full-time faculty at University C has fluctuated from a high of 104 (in Fall 2008), to a low of 80 (as of Fall 2011) (University C's Office of Institutional Research).

Critics argue that such rampant changes in key personnel have resulted in shifting visions for the university and prompted questions over who and how decisions are being made and whether key academic figures are being appropriately consulted when making changes to the academic structure of the university (*e.g.*, shifting from a divisional to a college structure). Only two senior level leaders who were at University C prior to Katrina, remain in leadership roles with the institution today – the Vice President for Legal Affairs and Vice President for Development – the latter of which was hired one month prior to the storm (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C).

Other information challenging the extent to which University C has recovered since Katrina, focuses on the fiscal health of the institution, in particular the university's debt structure (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C).²⁹ While the university was successful in securing a \$160 million loan with an incredibly favorable 1% interest rate for 30 years (with no principal or interest payments due over the first three years), to stabilize the university in the immediate aftermath of Katrina – now that the three year grace period has passed – the institution is finding it difficult to make annual payments given that enrollment figures continue to exist far below pre-Katrina levels (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). As a mid-level leader involved with

²⁹ In contrast, two university leaders indicate that the university's debt situation has been gradually improving (*e.g.*, Contributor 1 – Leader, University C & Contributor 4 – Leader, University C).

university strategic planning initiatives notes, “if you’re at half your enrollment, you’re at half your tuition net revenue, which means that you’re also at half of what you normally would have to promote the institution through marketing and public relations, through staffing, through faculty (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C).

Please refer to *Table 8.2* below for an overall assessment of University’s C’s recovery efforts to date:

Table 8.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University C.

Name	Total Undergraduate Applicants 2004 to 2011	Total Enrollment Comparison 2004 to 2011*	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005 v. 2011	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04 v. 10/11 Cohort**	6-year Graduation Rate 1999 v. 2004 Cohort***	Financial Viability	Facilities & Campus Repairs	General Assessment of Contributors
<i>University C</i>	Beyond Recovered	Far from Recovered	Far from Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Far From Recovered	Mixed (Tuition Revenue ↓ Debt ↑ Fundraising/Grants ↑)	Nearly Recovered (Dorms still under repair, but two new "state of the art" facilities have been built)	60% to 90% Recovered (facilities nearly recovered, enrollment and faculty totals remain 40% below pre-Katrina levels)

Leader Behavior at University C

In analyzing the experiences of University C with Katrina, and the impact of leader behavior on institutional response and recovery efforts, a total of 14 current/former University C employees were interviewed, along with two emergency response experts who interacted with university leadership during its response and recovery efforts. Of the 14 participants directly affiliated with University C, 4 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (two of which also held a faculty appointments), 8 filled mid-level leadership roles (five of whom also served in faculty capacities); and 2 who held pure faculty positions. Please refer to *Table 8.3* below for more detail on the positions held by contributors at (or associated with) University C in the aftermath of Katrina.

Table 8.3: Profile of Contributors at (or associated with) University C.

Contributors: University C
President
Faculty, English
Faculty, Professional Studies
Leader, Academic Affairs + Faculty
Leader, Institutional Advancement
Leader, Student Affairs + Faculty, Sociology
Mid-level Leader, Chaplain's Office
Mid-level Leader, Enrollment Management
Mid-level Leader, Institutional Research + Faculty, Political Science
Mid-level Leader, Research & Sponsored Programs
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Arts & Sciences
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Humanities
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Natural Sciences
Mid-level Leader/Faculty, Social Sciences
External Expert - Local First Responder (Incident Commander)
External Expert - Local First Responder (Deputy Incident Commander)

Through both the document analysis and interview processes, several key themes and subthemes of leader behavior emerged and were observed by participants as having played central roles in (or were noticeably absent from) the response and recovery efforts of University C. The subthemes most commonly highlighted include the following: *financial reserves*, *charisma/the ability to inspire*, *resourcefulness/adaptability*, *symbolic action*, *creating a context for meaning and action*, and *spirituality*.

Collectively, the interviewees at University C also present further support for three of the four potential new subthemes of leader behavior identified via the experiences of University A and B as important in the aftermath of disaster, including: *navigating the external environment*, *emphasizing the university's mission*, and the *timing of post-disaster decisions*. The degree to which each theme/subtheme of leader behavior (whether previously or newly identified) was

exhibited by leaders and/or perceived by contributors at University C as an important influencer of disaster response and recovery efforts, is noted in *Table 8.4* and discussed in detail below – beginning with *leader driven organizational dynamics*.

Table 8.4: Leader Behavior at University C: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts.

<u>Leader Behavior</u>	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>	
<i>balancing structure with flexibility</i>	High (emphasis on flexibility)
<i>reliability</i>	n/a
<i>mindfulness</i>	n/a
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	High (emphasis on financial)
<i>managing the external environment</i>	High
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>	
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	High (heavy emphasis on technical)
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>	Low
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	High
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	Low
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	High
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>	High
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>	
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	High
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	High
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	n/a
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	High
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	Low (emphasis on instinctive)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	High
<i>timing</i>	High
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>	
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	High
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	High
<i>symbolic actions</i>	High
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	High
<i>emphasizing institutional mission</i>	High (connected with history of university)
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>	
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	High
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	High
<i>spirituality</i>	High
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	Medium

Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

Here I am sitting at this dining room table ... And I'm saying this school has been in existence since 1869... And I said, wow, the balance is in our hands. And so I got inspired by the fact that this school had this rich history and culture of over 140 years at that point and we are being entrusted to carry on that important heritage and legacy... it became very important to the president and myself and several others to notice the fact that this school's future was in its history. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Nearly all contributors at University C noted that *leader-driven organizational dynamics* played an important role in facilitating – and in other circumstances, inhibiting – response and recovery efforts of the institution in the aftermath of Katrina. A mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that the organization's efforts took place in the context of three overarching stages: 1) the *exile from New Orleans*, spanning from September 2005 until January 2006, 2) the *return to the city*, with a local Hilton Hotel serving as University C's base of operations and the primary residence for returning leaders, faculty, and staff, from January to July 2006, and 3) the *return to campus*, starting in the Fall of 2006, roughly one year after Katrina (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C).

However, according to the accounts of most contributors, the linear stages above, while valid, only begin to capture the breadth and depth of the challenges faced by university leaders in the aftermath of Katrina. An example of the complexity of post-disaster operations and context wherein organizational dynamics were to play a significant role is illustrated by a senior leader who played an important part in managing university response and recovery efforts.

I had seen an aerial view picture of University C and it just looked like a whole river of water. I couldn't believe that that was real. But that was real. And I couldn't even get in here. But I still had my thousand plus residential students because I wasn't responsible for the non-residential. But I had those people up at Shreveport. And I had to find out what do for those people, knowing that getting back on campus for the first semester was impossible. And I didn't know that it would also be impossible for the second semester. So see we were off campus for an entire year. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader/faculty member further illustrates the context in which university leadership was seeking to foster effective organizational response and recovery efforts. He describes the scenario leaders faced upon returning to a dilapidated New Orleans and relocating the institution to a local Hilton Hotel. He notes that the university had to become “a self-contained entity.”

While we were at the Hilton, you have to understand that the city was torn up. I mean, there was no place to go. There was no medical facilities. There were no hospitals. There were no grocery stores. So at the Hilton, it was almost like a self-contained entity. While the downtown area was pretty okay, the rest of the city was as if a bomb had dropped on it as well as it was not safe. There was not police in certain sections. We had the National Guard. It was a state of emergency... the university was sort of self-contained. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

As with Universities A and B, two subthemes of *leader driven organizational dynamics* were commonly perceived and highlighted by participants at University C as central to effectiveness of response and recovery efforts including: 1) the balance between *structure* and *flexibility*; and 2) *relational* and *financial reserves*.

Structure vs. Flexibility

At University C, where nearly all contributors highlighted the role and importance of *structure* in managing a disaster, most indicated that *flexibility/adaptability* was the primary means by which university leaders sought to facilitate response and recovery efforts. The limited role of structure (at least early in the institutions response) stemmed largely from the fact that aside from well-established evacuation procedures, limited comprehensive disaster planning had taken place at University C, and the new President had little time to update procedures prior to the disaster (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C; Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). However, while noting that the massiveness of the destruction may have made it difficult to follow any one script, a mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that *structure through*

prioritizing would have been helpful to response and recovery efforts (e.g., Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C).

I think that because of the massiveness of the destruction, there was no any one script. This was not, there was no real, which one, which is the right way, which is the one. I'm just saying for me, I would have listed these are the 10 things that I'm going to have done. And I asked the university to be a part of this. But that's not how it was done.
Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

However, the *lack of a structured foundation* from which to operate may have resulted in an added *level of confusion* post disaster as suggested by the faculty member below, who adds that post-disaster circumstances can require a bit of *experimentation* and *creativity* – which he contends that the leadership team at University C typified.

We were in a state of confusion like this and you're not, you know... you have to be a little bit experimental and creative and... I can certainly say that the administration was that. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Similarly, a mid-level leader, who played a major role in securing funding for research projects and other sponsored programs in the aftermath of Katrina, illustrates the importance of *organizational flexibility/adaptability* and being willing to do what needs to be done in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances.

Shortly after the hurricane hit, kind of all bets were off. Everybody's responsible for everything. ... my office got more involved in not necessary for financial functions but financial oversight as well as we got much more aggressive in seeking out more federal opportunities for funding. So while technically the position didn't change, responsibilities increased – everybody was kind of in recovery mode. Our office went from doing basic grant applications to even seeking out federal financing options and things of that nature. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

A prime example of *organizational flexibility* and *adaptability* involved efforts on the part of university leadership to temporarily *reconstitute the institution at a New Orleans based Hilton Hotel*. As a mid-level leader/faculty member who filled multiple administrative positions on the academic side of University C in the aftermath of Katrina illustrates:

The Hilton Hotel was converted – the first nine floors were converted into University C basically. The whole nine yards. And the ballrooms were partitioned off into classrooms, so forth and so on. We made it work. And all things considered, you'd have to give everyone an A+ in really coming back because there was that moment when it was like, University C is washed away. It's gone, never to return. But of course, that didn't happen. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Organizational flexibility at the Hilton Hotel is further illustrated by a mid-level leader/faculty member who joined the leadership team in Atlanta, before returning to New Orleans for a 7-month stay at the hotel. He describes how leaders, along with hotel staff, partitioned exhibit halls into classrooms, creating “a university without walls.”

So what happened, the exhibit hall at the hotel became, they divvied up into I think it was about 15 classrooms. It was sort of a like a university without walls. While they had partitions, that's all it was and if your next door class person is really emphatic, which didn't require very much to be 10 decibels higher, then everyone heard it. So you may have gotten a lecture in physics while you were sitting in your biology class because you heard those. But those were unusual, that was pretty unusual. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The contributor above further explains that rather than offering courses typical of a Spring semester at University C, the institution demonstrated flexibility by *offering a full year's worth of courses (two-semesters) over a seven month period*. Courses offered were largely based on audits of seniors (to determine what courses needed to be taken to facilitate graduation) and polls of juniors. Courses appropriate for freshman and sophomore students were offered as well, but are not referenced below.

So it became unusual in terms of where we had to have class, but also what classes we needed to offer. We offered specifically what the particular students that we had enrolled needed. And we were very deliberate in that. We polled, we did audits for the seniors and we polled the juniors and said, what is it that you need in the major areas. We were not following our normal schedule like, this is what we offer in the spring. This is what we offer in the fall. We were doing sort of like a one year into seven months. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Other contributors note that while their overall job responsibilities did not change in the aftermath of the disaster, at certain points their *workload increased dramatically*. Some faculty members, including the interviewee below, were asked to teach five courses between January and July 2006 (at the Hilton Hotel) to help ensure that returning seniors (many of whom did not have access to required courses at other institutions while University C was closed for the Fall 2005 semester) remained on track to graduate that summer.

We did a very intense extended semester because we wanted to be sure that the students who were to graduate in 2006 graduated. So we had an unusual schedule. And I think I wound up teaching... five courses or something like that at the hotel because we used their various convention spaces and turned them into classes. It was really an amazing experience. So my role did not change as a faculty member in terms of what faculty members do. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Financial & Relational Reserves

Similarly to the accounts of contributors at University A and University B, interviewees at University C noted the importance of *financial* and *relational reserves* in enabling (and the lack thereof in hindering) the response and recovery efforts of their institutional leaders. The *financial reserves* possessed by the university were primarily in the form of insurance proceeds which, while significant (\$110 million), were dispersed over time, and not at level sufficient to cover University C's Katrina related physical and operational costs (\$400 Million); thus, university leaders were forced by circumstances, to engage in a variety of efforts to generate the liquidity required for near-term institutional survival.

That being said, multiple participants emphasized the substantial role insurance proceeds played in enabling the University C's survival. One key leader credits the prior administration for purchasing *property and business interruption insurance* policies.

I think clearly one has to tip their hat to the fact that the previous administration had the good sense to take out a significant amount of insurance. And that was a Godsend because it enabled the university to get through some very perilous times. So that one

decision looms large in my mind as something significantly important. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

A fellow university leader/faculty member, who played a key role in University C's response and recovery efforts (and whose unit endured severe budget cuts) illustrates the vital role of financial reserves (via insurance proceeds) and university leadership subsequent fundraising efforts.

We would not have recovered if we didn't have insurance money. We would not have recovered if the institution didn't have good insurance, we would not have recovered if many people across this nation were not generous. Especially the Mellon Foundation and other foundations. We got scholarship money from a couple of foundations to attract our students to come back. So we would not have survived. We would not be here today in New Orleans if it were not for the generosity of Americans, foundations and that insurance. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

The leadership team at University C, in particular the President and Vice President for Development (who both spent much of the first three months after Katrina in Washington D.C., living and lobbying the federal government for disaster aid), received a great deal of praise from contributors for their *ability to identify and access external sources of funding*, to secure the level of resources necessary to fill the gap between the institution's financial reserves (\$110 million in insurance proceeds) and the total physical and operational costs (\$400 million) stemming from the disaster (*e.g.*, Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). As explained by a mid-level leader/faculty member who joined the provost and other key members of the leadership team in Atlanta a few weeks after Katrina.

...they were pretty quick at identifying external funding sources, whether it was from the government or whether it was from private industry to keep the university afloat. Our vice president for development actually right during the storm, a week after the storm, actually went up to Washington, got a hotel room in one of the Washington hotels and I believe stayed there for the next three or four months... he basically spent all of his time lobbying on Capitol Hill for federal funds. He took a very correct approach there. I think they did a good job as far as identifying external funding sources. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Through such efforts, the university secured a major \$160 million federal loan (via the *HBCU Capital Financing Program*), with a 1% interest rate for 30 years, and zero principal or interest due during the first three years of the loan. The University also received a \$25 million research grant (spread out over 5 years) via the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Additional details on the financial resources secured by university leadership in the aftermath of Katrina are presented under the subtheme of *leader resourcefulness*.

Relational reserves on the other hand, received limited mention by participants at University C, and when discussed, was perceived by interviewees as to some extent missing in the organization's upper leadership ranks – posing challenges during response and recovery efforts. A primary reason for the perceived *lack of relational reserves* stems from the fact that university president had been hired less than two months prior to the storm, and had inherited a team that did not have experience working with the new leader, and vice versa. At the time of the disaster, only one member of the executive team had been selected by the president, the remainder had been inherited from her predecessor. Thus, according to a mid-level leader, the time to establish rapport, familiarity and trust was not sufficient to foster *relational reserves* at the upper echelons of the organization prior to the disaster.

The President had just gotten here... She didn't even have time to really develop her own relationships with the administrators that were here, get additional administrators in place, know who her students were, know who her faculty and staff were before she even got here. And new to the city. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

[Note: As mentioned in Chapters VI & VII, *organizational reliability* (which appears in the comprehensive conceptual framework presented in Chapter III and revised framework appearing in Chapter X) is a subtheme noted for its ability to foster pre-disaster features (*e.g.*, preparedness for and/or avoidance of disaster) versus post disaster phases (*e.g.*, response and recovery), thus is beyond the scope of the current study and not discussed in this section]

Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes

In the case of University C – they had a very strong leader who hadn't been their very long and she managed to step up in a very big way and get her institution back up and running... I think out of all the university leaders that we met she was probably one that impressed us the most—who stepped up and just found a way to get things done.

External Contributor, Leader, City of New Orleans

Collectively, interviewees at University C cite multiple *leader attributes* that they perceive to be pertinent to university response and recovery efforts and indicate were *exhibited* (to varying degrees) by members of the institution's leadership team. While the majority of the contributors to this study provide their perspectives on skills and attributes exhibited by individual university leaders (*e.g.*, the President, Provost, Vice Presidents, Chaplain or other senior and mid-level leaders) observed in the aftermath of Katrina, several also (or instead) provide more broad-based assessments of the leadership team and/or discuss attributes that (through their experiences with Katrina) they now believe it takes to serve as an effective university leader in the midst of crisis. For example, a mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that the *collective knowledge* of the leadership team stationed in Atlanta was crucial in managing response and recovery efforts, and helped elevate the institution.

I don't think it was necessarily one individual stepping up. But I think collectively people were able to contribute things from their knowledge of their particular area, skills that they had, to be able to contribute towards the whole and so sort of like a "cornucopia of input" that really collectively elevated the institution... and it also allowed people to bond and then recognize the individual skills that I think carried over afterwards... *Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Many contributors specifically evaluate the efforts and attributes of the University President. In praising her performance, a mid-level leader who worked on a variety of recovery focused strategic initiatives notes the *uniquely challenging circumstances* faced by the university in the aftermath of the disaster.

I think she did a phenomenal job based on all of those other variables that other college presidents did not have to really deal with and because of where this institution is located, we had the most damage. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

A senior leader who took on significant fundraising responsibilities in the aftermath of Katrina credits the University President for having *set the tone necessary* to guide the institution to some early disaster response related success.

I think leadership was such an important factor in advancing the institution in this time of crisis. It started with the president in setting the tone and we were able because of some of these early successes to convince the rest of the staff that this could be, this was doable, that this could work. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

However, a mid-level leader/faculty member who filled multiple administrative roles on the academic side of the institution after Katrina, disagrees with the positive assessment of the President's performance in guiding response and recovery efforts.

Four [of six] Deans felt that you had to stabilize the institution and try to get it back to where it was before the hurricane before you went off on these grand and glorious ideas. And the President, there are some things that she did good for the institution... But in terms of management and supervision, she told me directly she didn't like to be a micromanager, but she was flying here and there and everywhere and not really understanding what was going on. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Irrespective of sentiments regarding the President's performance, each participant in this study highlighted specific leader attributes that they believed played important roles in fostering response and recovery efforts at University C. While some contributors cite characteristics that they perceive (and/or they believe others perceive) made them personally effective in a time of crisis, most highlight the attributes of other university actors, who they assert helped foster or (in certain limited cases) inhibit recovery. Each *perceived leader attribute* identified in the previously advanced conceptual framework was emphasized by multiple participants as influential in university response and recovery efforts, and is discussed below. Particularly prominent in the responses of contributors is the subtheme of *resourcefulness*, as exhibited by

the President, the Vice President for Development, and other key leaders in the months following the disaster.

Competence (Technical & Social)

A perceived leader attribute that was noted frequently by interviewees at University C with respect to leader behavior during institutional response and recovery efforts, involves *leader competence*. However, responses at University C focused primarily on *technical competence* (versus *social competence*³⁰) and typically involved a self-assessment rather than a trait perceived by one contributor regarding another.

One faculty member, however, praised what she perceived as the competence and knowledge of the *overall leadership team*, starting with the President.

I think those in leadership roles had brought with them a knowledge of what it took to make a university work. I think the President brought her vast connections with individuals, not only in the United States but abroad... So I do feel that we had a well-trained and well-knowledgeable administrative staff. We could not have made such a move without them acting promptly and acting with a lot of intelligence. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

However, as noted previously, most responses noting the role of *competence* at University C typically involved self-assessments, and focused on the knowledge attained through prior personal experiences, rather than a trait perceived by one contributor regarding another university actor. An executive level leader explains that the *technical competence* she attained by participating in *FEMA sponsored emergency workshops* in California, prepared her to help manage response and recovery efforts:

I would say the emergency training was absolutely essential. I didn't panic because I knew the kind of crisis that one could expect and the steps that need to be taken in order

³⁰ The lack of emphasis on *social competence* may stem from the fact that the President had not been at the institution long enough to develop familiarity with and confidence in the specific skill sets of other university actors, and vice versa (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C).

to pull a campus together and get out of a crisis. I think maybe many campuses now realize – and I just can't say enough about adequate emergency training. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

The senior leader above further add that the skills she developed through her *academic training* in organizational management and organizational psychology further prepared her for the rigors of rebuilding a campus community in the aftermath of a disaster:

My background is in organizational management and in organizational psychology. So I wasn't pulling for straws. I wasn't like an engineer or a chemist out there wondering what do I do next. In terms of organizing a university community, that for me was a specialty. And it was a natural specialty. So I knew how to do that. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Similarly, a leader/faculty member indicates that *experience with guiding evacuations* in the face of other significant storms, contributed to her ability to help direct the evacuation of students in the midst of Katrina.

My experiences with hurricanes and evacuating began in July of 2004. For example, we had Tropical Storm Cindy. The campus was shut down for about a week. The students were in Shreveport and we had to continue with the campus being closed until electricity was restored, which was about five days. We had Dennis [in July 2005] which we had to evacuate and we went to an evacuation site the Regency Hotel and all the senior administrators went to that site. Students as was part of our protocol went to Shreveport. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Finally, a leader with experience working in both educational and medical settings, illustrates how having *managed other forms of crises*, provided him with the skillset necessary to help direct aspects of University C's response and recovery in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

I had had these kinds of exposures in other settings... I had been involved in crisis management – students taking over buildings, student disorder, student disruption. Major labor union crisis where I'm a member of the team, the management team dealing with the labor union strife... crisis are crisis. And you learn how to adjust and to deal with them. And so I guess I was pretty well seated by that point in my career and understanding the nature of crisis. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Charisma/Ability to Inspire

An additional attribute of leader behavior cited frequently by interviewees at University C both for its presence, and at times absence, in the response and recovery efforts of the institution, involves leader-based *charisma* and/or the *ability to inspire* other university actors during response and recovery efforts. An external expert on the actions and experiences of University C's leadership in the aftermath of Katrina illustrates the importance of *taking the time to inspire* employees in the post-disaster:

You never can lose sight when ... there's gonna be a large number of people who just feel overwhelmed they can't imagine how this happened and they can't imagine themselves getting out of it and a lot of it is sometimes you have to encourage and motivate people to inspire them that they "can do." *External Contributor, Leader, City of New Orleans*

In contrast, a leader/faculty member who filled a variety of student affairs focused positions in the aftermath of Katrina illustrates the need for charisma and inspirational leadership in the midst of disaster, but questions the degree to which it was exhibited at University C.

But this institution and any institution, after a major event like that, the leader has to become in some ways charismatic in order to mobilize people, to inspire people. Not only people here at the university, but people outside the university. Potential students. I just don't think we had that. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Most others however, presented strong examples of institutional leaders inspiring other university actors. One leader explains how she *inspired confidence in the dispersed student population* about the possibility of the institution reopening New Orleans come January 2006 – promising that if they came back in January, they would indeed have the opportunity to graduate from University C, and carry on the institution's long standing tradition of "walking through the oaks."

One of the things I said to students – I said, "I only want you to finish the first semester wherever you are, I will bring you back to New Orleans... I'm going to bring you back to New Orleans because that's where you belong in January. So for the second

semester, you plan to pack up and come back.” And I went all over the country telling them that. And they would just applaud. And to the seniors I would say, “you come back. You’re going to march through the oaks.” And they would scream. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Several participants noted the role of *faith* and *leader guided prayer* in inspiring the university community, and helping members realize that they were more fortunate than many New Orleans residents. As stated by a faculty member:

At University C the Chaplain was a tremendous inspiration. And she prays with us often. And we took that practice to the hotel where we would get together specifically to pray. And specifically to find strength. Because students and faculty alike were all hit very hard by this. But we all knew that we were more fortunate than many others. Some faculty couldn’t return, some students couldn’t return and then we were faced with wondering, could we succeed. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

A senior leader, who was responsible for gaining access to millions of dollars in disaster relief for University C, indicates that while employees were situated at the Hilton Hotel, university leadership regularly announced the receipt of major grants and donations allowing the entire university community to *share in the celebration of successes*.

I don’t want to put it crudely, but it was important to keep feeding the raw meat of, “we can do this.” We can make this happen to incentivize people, to motivate people... So during that span of time, we may have generated about 9 or 10, seven figure gifts from major foundations. And so every time we were able to do that, we were able to announce it. Sometimes those were gifts that support faculty salaries and support scholarships or whatever the case may be. But it was like everybody was sharing in the celebration. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

The leader above adds that he sought to motivate and inspire his team of eight staff members who remained in his unit after layoffs, by tapping into the *uniqueness of circumstances*, and *highlighting the opportunity* to have a positive career defining impact.

I said, “it’s very rare that you get an opportunity to do something special in your career that may have a long lasting impact in terms of your profession or your field or in this instance, the securing of the future of a university in a great American city like New Orleans.” And I said, “if you do this well, if we do this well in trying to generate a support necessary to bring University C back and to enable it to flourish, that you’ll be able to write your own ticket anywhere.” *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Trust/Authenticity

Similarly to *charisma/the ability to inspire*, the perception that university leaders were *trustworthy* or *authentic* appears to have played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts at University C. However, in this case, there was largely a lack of pre-established trust for and between some members of the leadership team, as Katrina occurred less than two months after a new President and Vice President for Development were hired. As a result, the two new executives had little time to get to fellow senior leaders, mid-level administrators, faculty and staff (and vice versa); nor had they yet had the shared experiences necessary to build trusting relationships (on either personal or professional levels). Hence, some contributors note that they were not confident that the leadership team would be up to the task of responding to and successfully fostering recovery, when led by a President with which they had little familiarity, and who contrarily had limited familiarity with the institution (*e.g.*, Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C).

Additionally, illustrating that *trust* in the midst of a disaster *is a two-way street*, some participants perceive that the President and Vice President for Development had not been at the institution long enough to develop familiarity with and confidence in the specific skill sets of other university actors, but did have trust in one another from having worked together in prior settings (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). Thus, according to some contributors, the two new leaders seemed to rely primarily on each other to make and execute decisions, at the exclusion of other university actors (including some on the leadership team). A mid-level leader whose initial request to drive to campuses around the country to visit dispersed students was denied by the President, notes:

Being new, they didn't know us and I can see why [they are thinking] "I don't know who that is – should they be on the road?" *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Some contributors, however, came to question the *intentions* and *authenticity* of the President's actions, as they did not know her well given her recent hiring, and she was generally not in the same location as much of the leadership team (primarily in Washington DC seeking federal assistance). She was however, regularly profiled by the media, causing a few interviewees to question whether actions were being taken to benefit the institution or her personal profile. A faculty member, who has been appointed to a mid-level leadership role over the years since the disaster, perceives that the President was a little *too worried about public opinion* – impacting her willingness to make tough decisions.

I'm afraid our President, she might, I think she might have been a little bit too worried about public opinion... She can't be worried about public opinion if you're a leader. Especially not in a crisis... You do what's right, and then you stand before your constituents and you... get their consent. That's what leaders do. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Similarly, a mid-level leader/faculty member questions the trustworthiness of the president, who she perceives was involved in "too much credit seeking:"

She began to spin ultimately a narrative that only deals with her and no one else. Like she rebuilt the place without anybody else's help. And it was all about her. It's not about you. It's about the institution and the students and the faculty. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

In contrast, however, another mid-level leader/faculty member suggests that the President (along with the Vice President for Development) spent much of her time in Washington, D.C. to garner the resources necessary to help foster recovery, while other leaders were in Atlanta.

The President initially was in Washington, D.C. and so was the Vice President for Development. They were in Washington, D.C. of course trying to get federal assistance, you see. But the provost and the deans were basically in Atlanta dealing with our insurance. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness

A subtheme of *exhibited leader attributes* that was not specifically cited for its role in facilitating recovery from Katrina at University C, involves perceived *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* on the part of leadership. It is however, important to add that some contributors at University C may view the previously discussed subtheme of *trust/authenticity* as a character trait that overlaps with a sense of *ethics, morality* and *virtuousness*. Others at University C likely perceive *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* as a component of *spirituality*, which is addressed later in this chapter, and was regularly cited by interviewees as having played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts.

Self-awareness & Self-control

One of the more commonly perceived attributes of leaders at University C, according to interviewees, involved the ability to maintain a sense of *self-awareness* and *self-control* under immense pressure, uncertainty and rapidly changing circumstances. One key university leader surmises that in the midst of disaster, institutions benefit from leaders who are “going to keep everybody else on an even keel” and are not “too excitable” (Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C). He notes the leadership team at University C exhibited *self-control* and a *sense of levelheadedness*.

For the most part, everyone was kind of level. Even though it was a serious situation everybody was kind of in emergency mode. There was never really ever any panic mode. That kind of levelheaded, that straightforwardness was refreshing. It kind of kept all the troops together if you will. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

In an address to the United Methodist Church, the President of University C similarly asserts the importance of remaining *calm* and *under control* in the midst of crisis (in Chandler, 2010).

My first message to you is you need to be psychologically prepared and the message is: No matter what happens, you can't afford to not be calm, you can't afford to not be purposeful, you can't afford to not be in control. *President, University C, 2010*

Self-awareness on the part of leaders also involves *knowing what you don't know* and *seeking expert guidance* under such circumstances. A key leader at University C notes her efforts to connect with experts at Brown University and Princeton University.

There were times that we needed things and expertise that we didn't have and couldn't access... for example, we used Brown's budget officer and strategic planner a lot. I mean she would just put him on a plane to come down here and spend a week or so with us. That's the way that was. The same thing was true of Princeton... rebuilding the entire campus, we needed architectural advice; we needed library advice. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader/faculty member notes the importance of *humility* in the midst of disaster, which she contends would be a leader who can say “look, these are my skills” while also being aware of and *able to manage their own fears*, utilizing professional help as a precaution.

I think what else is interesting and people probably don't think about is, one has to kind of look at one's own fears. And separate your own emotions from, and fears that you would make for your personal self to an institutional. It might not be bad for Boards to call in a professional to help counsel a President and maybe some of the Board... So they could have a neutral someone to separate all those issues. Someone from the outside that wouldn't report back to the board. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The same mid-level leader notes that she personally lost her temper on a couple of occasions. She eventually *sought counseling* to assist with breaking some of the “bad habits” she became aware she had adopted given the trauma of Katrina.

I probably maybe shouldn't have lost my temper a couple of times. So there were some, there were some instances of control, I just probably was more vocal than I needed to be and those have been bad habits to break. That's been bad. Being so mad and talking too much. But I'm a very verbal person ... But you have to be careful whose face you're in front of... I would be more what do you call it – filtering. Self-filtering. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

A fellow mid-level leader/faculty member who took an active role in checking on the well-being of faculty within his division indicates that he *had to hold back his emotion*, act as if he and his family were fine, and not react to the fact that so few of those under his purview actually took the time to reciprocate his gesture and ask, “well, how are you doing?”

When I called all my faculty, tried to find out how their lives were and all of that, I think it was only two of those forty calls that asked me, “well, how are you doing?” Because in some way, I guess [leaders] don’t have disasters. Things don’t happen to them. And so I did not load them up with my, I really could have pulled up a chair... but I didn’t want to go that route. Because I’m trying to attract you back. So I’m fine.... How are you? That what I went with. You’d have no idea that my house was destroyed and I had a nightmare or two on the bridge and no one got that information, but my psychologist, okay? *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Resourcefulness/Adaptability

The *perceived leader attribute* most frequently highlighted by interviewees for its role in facilitating disaster response and recovery efforts at University C is *resourcefulness* and/or the *ability to adapt* in the face of rapidly changing circumstances. In many respects the President of University C is viewed by contributors as having exemplified *resourcefulness*, particularly during the year immediately following Katrina.

A mid-level university leader who assisted with retention and recruitment efforts in the aftermath of Katrina, indicates the President was somewhat constrained in her ability to tap into local relationships (as she had moved to the city only shortly before Katrina), but was very *resourceful externally* – able to tap into relationships at the federal level and other regions of the country.

Where other presidents probably could facilitate and manage local relationships and local partnership that they already had, our President focused probably more externally than internally. And what I mean by that is within the city and within the state of Louisiana. Of course, we have a great partnership with University A... but she had to pull on her own contacts from California, her own contacts with the federal government. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Along the same lines, a mid-level leader/faculty member, who is in many other respects critical of the President, echoes the positive sentiments of the prior contributor, and further depicts senior leader's *resourcefulness at the state and national levels*, over the 12 months immediately following Katrina.

Within the first year, I have to commend the President. She went to D.C., she got the money, she made the connections, she did everything as far as I know to get people to look at University C and say, this is an institution with a historic – that's important to the City of New Orleans. It has a history and it cannot die. And so she got certain resources from, whether it was the federal government, the state government, various foundations who gave us money. Gave us money for faculty support, for salaries.... there were collaborations established... People got on board to help us. And I attribute that to her leadership. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, two external experts add that the President exhibited *resourcefulness on a local level* as well – explaining that she quickly established a “symbiotic relationship” with the local Hilton Hotel, ultimately relocating the entire university (its students, faculty and staff) to that destination to live and conduct operations over two condensed semesters (from January to July 2006).

I think one of the things that impressed [us] – not just speaking with her – the fact that she very quickly formed a relationship with the Hilton Hotel relocated a university in that hotel was a process that served students to get an education and also gave the hotel a need for workers so that together they helped each other... a great symbiotic relationship. *External Contributor, Leader, City of New Orleans*

The resourcefulness of the President was also evident in her ability and willingness to *connect with other university leaders* in an effort to ensure that University C's dispersed students were able to temporarily enroll at institutions throughout the country. As a faculty member explains:

Because [our new President] had been a university president. She then had associations with other university presidents and because of that, our students were welcomed at many universities. Our students were able to go to other universities and actually finish that semester... So I think she was assertive and aggressive in the most humane way be

able to reach out for help and able to know where to go to get help and receive the help in a timely fashion. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

In an effort to *secure major disaster assistance*, the University President and Vice President for Development (along with other key mid-level leaders) set up temporary operations in Washington D.C., where they successfully lobbied federal officials and agencies for badly needed financial assistance including a \$160 million federal loan (at 1% interest over 30 years, with no payment on principal and interest due for the first 3 years), and roughly \$72 million in federal grants. They also raised an additional \$38 million in private gifts over the year following Katrina (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). As noted by the President of University C, “During this time I learned I could do so much more than I thought I could do” (in NACUBO, 2007).

Resourcefulness and adaptability was also exemplified by a senior leader who after assisting with the university’s evacuation, found her *roles and responsibilities quickly and necessarily shifting* in accordance with various disaster scenarios and unforeseen challenges, including a university chartered bus, filled with University C’s student evacuees, catching fire.

I was preparing to go to Atlanta because I thought we would be away for a few days and I have relatives and friends there. ... Well, I got a call saying, you really need to come to Shreveport, bus tire blew out, the bus burned and the students are hysterical. So I got that call about 12:00, I slept for about 3 or 4 hours, got up and left New Orleans at 4:00 to drive to Shreveport, which is normally a six hour drive. It took me 14. So when I arrived in Shreveport, I was responsible for working with the dean of student affairs there in terms of setting up an evacuation site. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Upon returning to New Orleans, the leader above continued to *adapt to circumstances* as required, adding that she became the person responsible for (among other activities):

... making sure that students abided by the code of conduct. I was sort of the person who monitored conduct and access and make sure that they had the services they need. I set up the agreement with University A to provide medical care.... I really was doing everything. Working with facilities, keep the buildings straight. Dealing with such

things as holes where rodents would come in. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

A mid-level leader/faculty member lauds the efforts and illustrates the *resourcefulness/adaptability* of the institution's Vice President for Student Life, who in addition to assigning hotel rooms and securing classroom space at the Hilton, managed issues related to student conduct, and helped locate housing for students when campus reopened in Fall 2006, as multiple dormitories had yet to be repaired.

She was in charge of the logistics as far as getting students there, into the hotel rooms and getting them housing, getting them a place to live... She's still at the university... I think she did a good job. Because that's really the issue. The logistics are getting your students together and then finding housing for them and then finding classroom space for them [on] short notice. That was a tough gig. I would not have wanted to work in student life during that particular point in time. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

A final noteworthy example of *resourcefulness* and *adaptability* in the aftermath of Katrina, was exhibited by a mid-level leader/faculty member who would start off the day at the Hilton Hotel dealing with academic responsibilities, followed shortly thereafter by meetings with engineers and contractors at University C's heavily damaged campus, while wearing hazmat clothing and boots – hoping to ensure that the science building and associate research laboratories are reconstructed in accordance with the institution's needs.

But the science building in particular was significantly damaged and non-occupiable after Katrina. So I spent a lot of time with hazmat clothes and boots and all of that coming over to meet with contractors, engineers and all of this in rebuilding the building. So my day to day changed from dealing with perhaps academic issues in the morning, at about 11:00 I'm over here on this campus. So for the first month of this, first year or so, I was dealing with the building restoration. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making

When [we] looked around at other areas where leadership failed it was those leaders who were sitting around waiting for somebody, whether it was government or an external source to come in and help, versus those leaders who said I'm not waiting for

anybody... [the President of University C] was one of those remarkable people that wasn't gonna sit around waiting to see who was gonna do what for her. She was gonna make it happen herself. *External Contributor, Leader, City of New Orleans*

According to all interviewees at University C, leader *thinking and decision making* played a major role in determining the speed and degree to which the institution has recovered from Katrina. Contributors praise leadership for many important decisions made during the first 8-10 months following the disaster (*e.g.*, the decision to return University C to New Orleans and to temporarily shift all university operations to a local Hilton Hotel), however, some also question the logic and process behind many less popular decisions (*e.g.*, the decision to layoff all non-tenured faculty only to hire many back just weeks later, and the decision to construct two new state of the art facilities prior to completing repairs on two existing dormitories) (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C).

The decision on part of the University Provost to set up a satellite office in Atlanta was viewed very positively by interviewees, as it provided a place for senior and mid-level leaders to begin planning for the university's eventual reopening. As a mid-level leader/faculty member who played a major role in connecting with reconnecting with faculty after Katrina expresses:

I think the greatest decision was when we, when the provost... opened a satellite office in Atlanta. And that satellite office became the focus where the deans as well as some of the other administrators, because the president was out doing whatever it is that she was doing. But we were there planning, like what are we going to do. We're talking about September, October and November. Because we did not know where we were going to do, where we were going to open up. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, the decision cited most frequently and reviewed most favorably by contributors, involves the President's decision (with approval from the Board of Trustees) to rebuild the university at its pre-Katrina home in New Orleans, rather than closing down the

institution, or moving it to Atlanta as some Board members (and other university constituents) had initially advocated.

Well, I would say the decision for the President to decide to bring University C back to New Orleans... was a great decision. It was something that needed to be done. We also had to make a hard decision of where we, right after the storm, we had more faculty and staff living on campus. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Similarly, interviewees consistently laud the decision by university leadership to resume full-scale operations at a New Orleans-based Hilton Hotel in January 2006, while the institution's home campus remained closed. The Hilton served as both a temporary university and the primary residence for over 1,100 students, faculty and staff members from January to July 2006. As noted by a mid-level leader:

The decision to come back into the Hilton, that was like a lightning strike... we had heard several ideas floated... the idea of bringing everybody back into town at the Hilton was perfect. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

On the other hand, not all post-Katrina decisions are viewed favorably by participants. One leader-based decision over which multiple interviewees have expressed concern involves the decision to build two large-scale LEED certified buildings – when enrollment totals remain far below pre-Katrina levels – and two dormitories that would enable a larger “traditional student population,” have yet to be fully repaired (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C). As maintained by a mid-level leader with responsibility for various recovery focused enrollment initiatives:

We made the decision to build a new professional school's building and also to build a student union at the same time... I would probably not have done that because when you have two residence halls down and you have two new buildings coming up and you're not at your enrollment capacity, then you get these extra questions along with, do we really need a new professional school building which is mostly classroom space when we're at... a little over 50% of our enrollment of where we were before the storm. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The same mid-level leader indicates that the limitation in on-campus housing has to some extent impacted the university's ability to recruit traditional first-time, full-time students, ultimately affecting the university's overall budget.

If you're at half your enrollment, you're at half your tuition net revenue which means that you're also half of what you normally would have to promote the institution through marketing and public relations, through staffing, through faculty. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Similarly, a faculty member argues that at time decisions were contradictory and appear to have been made "off the cuff," including the decision to give faculty members unexpected bonuses when the institution was facing a number of fiscal challenges.

I just think [decisions] were made off the cuff, no real thinking and then there's the contradiction of okay, we're having all these problems, but why is it that... sometime in 2006 that you gave a kind of thank you bonus to faculty members that they did not ask for? It was not a raise in salary. It was just outright money that was given... So there were some strange things going on with money around here, man. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Several participants at University C indicate that they were unaware and/or unable to determine the rationales behind various restructuring decisions (Contributor 3 – Mid-level leader, University C; Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C). However, a senior leader who was largely responsible for developing the university's response and recovery plans, indicates that the institution had four initial goals guiding the decision making process.

There were four goals in particular. One was to get back to New Orleans as quickly as we could because New Orleans is the home of University C University, to reopen the campus for classes as quickly as possible which we slated to be fall of 2006, three, before that point, get back to New Orleans in January to begin classes somewhere in New Orleans which ended up being the Hilton Hotel. And four, to actively engage in the rebuilding of New Orleans in ways that we could and that largely meant focusing on the Gentile community. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

In addition to citing the importance of *thinking and decision making* to the overall process of recovery at University C, the responses of most participants were consistent with the subthemes outlined in the previously developed conceptual framework. Faculty however, tend to emphasize (and note the absence of) *collaboration* as a means to view issues from *multiple frames* before decisions are made, while several mid and senior level leaders provide examples of *Janusian thinking* at work during response and recovery efforts. As with University A and University B, leaders at University C sought to make the best out of challenging circumstances by seeing the *opportunity in the midst of crisis*. This section begins, however, with an analysis of the degree to which university leaders examined challenges and potential solutions to post-Katrina scenarios, through *multiple frames*.

Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames

At University C, interviewees commonly noted the importance of exploring issues from multiple angles or utilizing *multiple mental frames* to assist in facilitating effective decision making in the aftermath of a disaster. However, accounts differ greatly on the degree to which university leaders utilized multiple frames prior to making key decisions, with many faculty and some mid-level leaders questioning whether Katrina-related challenges and potential courses of action were indeed viewed from multiple frames or considered from multiple perspectives before decisions were made.

Collectively, interviewees (particularly faculty and mid-level leaders) cited the importance of *listening, hearing differing viewpoints* and *collaboration* and before making decisions in the midst of crisis. A mid-level leader/faculty member with the university's largest college states:

People need to know how to listen as much as they talk. They need to really be able to listen. And so that if you are listening then as you have a clear vision of direction.

Then people can buy into it because you should be incorporating what they've said into it or addressing it. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The contributor above, who held shared responsibility for planning Spring 2006 course offerings, illustrates how she viewed her responsibilities through multiple frames, ultimately driving back to New Orleans to get a sense of the layout of the Hilton Hotel and secure the appropriate facilities both at hotel and elsewhere, to address “the nuances that go into instruction for all of the disciplines.”

Ultimately the thing with the Hilton Hotel came up. And... I had to think about the kinds of spaces that those things are taught in. So if the choir is singing or somebody's doing their piano, they can't be in this open classroom. And literally asked, I did ask my provost, could I go to New Orleans and scout out what the layout for the Hilton was... And I just got in my car and went... I had music majors. I had theater majors. I had art majors... But you've got to be able to put into the equation all the nuances that go into instruction for all of the disciplines. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, according to a mid-level leader, there was at times a lack of willingness to fully engage the perspectives of others during the recovery process, prompting some units to operate in “silos,” which posed challenges for the institution going forward.

One of the things I have to tell you. I use this phrase with my staff all the time is that we cannot let ego get in the way of intent. And what I mean by that is sometimes we would – and I'm saying we in a general sense – that we would be more concerned about our perspective on things, that we didn't always keep open minds about what others were saying for constructive feedback and involving others in the process as we moved along. So I did think that sometimes we kind of fell back into our own little silos which could also cause challenges for moving the entire university forward. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

This is supported by a senior leader/faculty member who filled a variety of roles in the aftermath of Katrina, who indicates that many of the university's “key administrators” were *unwilling to view issues from multiple perspectives* and/or to listen those with viewpoints that differed from their own – which she contends is a hindrance to recovery.

One attribute that I find a hindrance is the inability to listen and weigh all perspectives. There was a tendency only to listen to certain people for whatever reasons. Sometimes just for reasons that are unexplainable... So I just feel that in terms of leadership, many of the key administrations on the senior cabinet didn't listen, not even to each other. And people made ultimate decisions, had their own agenda. And they executed what they wanted to execute, and didn't do anything else. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Similarly, other interviewees (primarily faculty with shared administrative roles) expressed frustration over what they perceived was leadership's *circumvention of standard non-emergency shared-governance processes*, and note an unwillingness to listen to those with different perspectives on pending academic restructuring decisions.

People did not listen particularly to the four of us from an academic standpoint. They saw us as just people like I said who were just, that we were combative, that we didn't want to embark on anything new.... It wasn't that at all. It was that you can't do this because, it's like you want me to change a flat tire and the car is still rolling down the hill. You can't do that. But nobody wanted that, "we don't want to hear that. We're going to do these grand and glorious things and it doesn't matter what you say."
Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

Consistent with the viewpoint above (to some extent), a senior leader indicates that first few months following the disaster, university leadership was focused on doing what they felt needed to be done to facilitate the survival of the institution, versus concerning themselves with reestablishing shared governance processes (which eventually resumed, in part, at the Hilton Hotel).

That was the least important. I mean seriously it was not important at all. I think probably maybe a couple months or so after we were back in January, the faculty decided to continue the senate. And student government began to organize. That was not on the front burner at all. But we did get back to the senate and shared governance and all of those principles. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

To facilitate leadership's exploration of post-disaster challenges and decisions through multiple frames, a mid-level leader, who received praise from multiple contributors for her efforts to help the organization heal over the many months since Katrina, notes that leaders often

underestimate the degree to which they have been personally impacted by a disaster, thus, should rely heavily on the *perspectives of unbiased external experts* to help broaden their thinking.

My single biggest piece of advice to future leaders would be to find [an external expert] who is objective, use them, and trust them. Because I think what happens is the leadership underestimates their own shock and in trying to manage everything themselves it's easy to sell your community short at least initially because you are just not together enough to be what you would be in normal circumstances so you need to augment that. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The mid-level leader above adds that while the University President did consult with other Presidents, to her knowledge she did not sufficiently consult with those who have had significant experience managing disasters.

She used other presidents, but we could have done and didn't do enough of was talk to people who have been in disaster situations... campuses in CA who had earthquakes, campuses that have gone this route, not just other people, but people that have had the background to bring to it. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking

Both *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* were cited by several contributors at University C as having played important roles in decision making and in moving the university towards recovery in the aftermath of Katrina. A particularly noteworthy example of *Contrarian thinking* involved the University President's proactive decision to evacuate campus on Saturday afternoon, rather waiting for the mayor's decision to declare a mandatory evacuation, which did not take place until Sunday morning. Many other campuses and businesses in the region waited until Sunday to evacuate, which would have posed added challenges for University C. As noted by one key university leader:

We evacuated early... on Saturday... before the mandated exit from the city occurred. So [our] students were at their relocation sites on Saturday actually. They were at the relocation site because we evacuated the campus at about five or six on Saturday, and they were going about six hours north of here to Shreveport on buses. I'm glad that we did that. I just can't imagine having those students on campus with the buildings that

were 10 feet high in water. They would not have survived. They would not have survived. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

The decision to return to New Orleans and temporarily relocate the university to a local Hilton Hotel presents evidence of both *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking*. The decision was *Contrarian*, in that at the time many constituents were openly questioning whether the New Orleans would ever be a sustainable city again and some key university officials (*e.g.*, members of the Board of Trustees) were lobbying fellow officials to move the institution to Atlanta. The President and other key officials, however, were ultimately successful in persuading the Board to support a return to New Orleans. These unique circumstances are illustrated by a senior leader involved who participated in these conversations.

We had fissures along that issue in that some people didn't want to move back to New Orleans because they didn't think it was safe. They saw this as an opportunity to move University C, lock, stock and barrel to Atlanta... And we said no, that University C is a New Orleans institution. That if it's going to move anywhere, it needs to move back to New Orleans as quickly as possible... So we not only had to fight about bringing University C back and reopening in New Orleans, we had to fight off an effort, a concerted effort on the part of some to move the university permanently to Atlanta. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

The decision made above also characterizes *Janusian thinking*, as in making the decision to remain in New Orleans, the leadership team examined the situation from both historical and present day lenses, recognizing: 1) the University's unique status as an institution that grew directly out of a post-Civil War desire (on the part of faith based organizations) to educate newly freed African Americans (in the Deep South) and, 2) the University's subsequent evolution into one of the most highly regarded *Historically Black Universities* (or *HBCUs*) in the country, as well as a symbol of success for generations of African Americans and Americans more broadly. Hence, the leadership team recognized that its alumni, faculty, staff and students (as a group) would be far more likely to unite around and support a rebuilt University C at the site of its birth,

than at a “new” location in Atlanta where a prior institution lost its accreditation due to financial mismanagement (as some Board Members were proposing) (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). As noted by a university leader who is largely responsible for ensuring the survival of the institution in New Orleans:

And so when you think about it in that the school’s future is in its history, you can’t help but become caught up in the fact that you can’t let the school close or flounder on your watch. There are too many people whose shoulders it was built on. And now it’s your opportunity to carry that on and to figure out a way to sustain it. So there’s a lot of inspiration to be gained by it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

There are other clear instances of *Janusian thinking* serving as a precursor to the post-disaster decisions of University C’s administrators. A mid-level leader who was not involved with the university’s initial response, but took on great responsibility for recovery efforts, notes that she attempts to think about potentially sensitive matters from at times opposing viewpoints (a *Janusian trait*) to facilitate better decisions.

And so even today... when I’m dealing with very confrontational type sensitive matters with staff that I really try to put myself in their shoes to think about what is it that they’re going through and how is what I’m saying impacting their ability to continue to do the work that they need to do at Dillard. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

On the other hand, a faculty member presents an example of a decision that would have potentially benefitted from *Janusian thinking*, had alternatives been examined from both *short and long term perspectives*, rather than what appears to have been a focus on immediate circumstances. Specifically, she notes that laying-off all non-tenured employees may have had some short term budgetary benefits, but in the long term has posed significant challenges for the institution – leading to an imbalance in faculty/student ratios in various departments.

The problem in my unit was, a serious problem is that I had some very old faculty but I had some very young faculty. And some departments were completely wiped out when you fired all the non-tenured people. So my theater department disappears. Left in Spanish with one person, foreign languages, one person. And I had Japanese, English,

Spanish and French. It was just so uneven. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Similarly, a faculty member indicates that at times key decision makers may have failed to *balance internal fiscal challenges with projections of local needs* going forward; resulting in the elimination of the university's teacher education program, at a time with the local community had a growing need for new teachers.

Now I didn't think this was too wise, because... why would you abandon an award winning – and I mean the program had been highly touted by the state for its excellence. And suddenly you just get rid of it... you do not use it as an opportunity to try to recruit more people by looking at the school system and saying yes, we're going to need more teachers, not fewer... People were a little bit outraged because University C had a long history of producing fairly good teachers. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Hence, a mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that what he looks for in a leader during a time of crisis is someone who can *view circumstances through at times contradictory criteria* – in this case restructuring the academic side of a university by considering both a short and long term picture and balancing that vision with legitimate monetary constraints.

Specifically, he recommends leaders who have:

...the experience again from an academic standpoint to look at the institution where it was, look at the faculty, look at all of the things that make up the academic component, look at it where it was and look at it in terms of where it could go with really, on the one hand, money being, you knew you needed more money but if it wasn't forthcoming, what would you do. And someone who could paint a picture of okay, here's what I would do with limited resources. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Viewing Disasters as Opportunities

As with University A and University B, contributors at University C commonly noted the importance of seeing and *taking advantage of any potential opportunities inherent in the disaster*. University C's leadership recognized the opportunity to make the best of a difficult situation, utilizing the word "opportunity" or "opportunities" in numerous *public statements* and

communications post-Katrina, and making similar positive declarations (*e.g.*, “We’re coming back better and stronger.” in NACUBO, 2007), hoping fellow members of the university community would adopt a similar mindset, and would return to New Orleans to be a part of the University’s and the City’s recovery. As the President stated in announcing the university’s strategic plan:

Out of the disaster of Hurricane Katrina, University C has the opportunity to transform itself into a stronger and better institution... Instead of merely rebuilding our physical campus, we are building a future that takes us beyond our history into an era of expanded opportunities for our students, faculty and communities. *President, University C, 2007*

University leaders also *tapped into public empathy* in the aftermath of the disaster to dramatically increase fundraising efforts – raising \$38 million in private gifts, \$72 million in federal grants, and subsequently launching a successful \$70 million capital campaign (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C).

A faculty member provides a detailed account of the ways in which University C has strengthened since Katrina – illustrating how university leadership took advantage of post-disaster circumstances to *enhance institutional features* that existed (or were lacking) prior to the disaster.

So now we have, because of Katrina, we do have state of the art green buildings on campus. We have much better infrastructure. We’re beginning online courses... We have a quality enhancement program... our assessment of student learning outcomes is enhanced... we’re establishing articulation agreements with many of the universities that we didn’t have these agreements with before, including foreign articulation agreements with universities in France, in China, in African countries. So all of that now, our study abroad program has been enhanced... Our recordkeeping is better now than ever before. We lost records before. So we’ve learned now how to keep them, where to keep them and to keep them in triplicate. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Other contributors indicate that Katrina presented an *opportunity to build relationships* with two-year colleges, attract transfer students, enhance the university’s involvement within the

community, and forge new partnerships (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C). As mid-level leader involved with university recovery efforts explains:

Because we don't have our [dormitories] up and running... [we] now focus more on our agreements with two year colleges and universities along more stronger articulation agreements. And also doing more work in our local community to prepare the students in our metropolitan New Orleans area to be able to attend University C. So it has allowed us some additional opportunities. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

On the academic side of the institution, a mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that he found in the crisis an *opportunity to design and teach a new course* specific to Hurricane Katrina and its impact on New Orleans – as events were continuing to unfold.

I taught a senior seminar. I said this is one of the most significant teachable moments in American history right here. And we're right here in the middle of it. We experienced it... And I had them choose a topic and do research relative to the impact that Katrina had. What impact did it have on the political structure of New Orleans, that was one project. What impact did it have on the educational structure. What about looting, the whole issue of looting... So I from my teaching standpoint seized upon it as just really a major teachable moment. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

In contrast, however, one mid-level leader/faculty member contends that university leadership did not fully take advantage of the *window of opportunity* stemming from the immediate aftermath of the disaster and “lost the momentum” to grow enrollments.

We had the window. We had the window we would have been alright and then we lost the momentum. So that let's say in the fall of '06, nobody was sending children to New Orleans. That was going to be an off year. But the President had money coming in from all kinds of places. But they kept wasting money and they didn't hire the personnel they needed. Because we didn't get an enrollment management person until February '07... who had to build the whole recruitment office and everything from scratch again. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making

The subtheme of *blending instinctive with vigilant decision-making* (and in certain circumstances relying on one versus the other) was rarely addressed by interviewees at

University C, as most contributors (aside from a couple of senior leaders) assert that they had a difficult time determining the processes by which many key decisions at their institution were made, in part due to post-Katrina geographic separation between fellow members of leadership team (Atlanta and Washington DC), and between leaders and the broader university community. However, multiple contributors note the benefit of what they perceived to be *instinctive decision making* on the part of the President in insisting on reopening the university in New Orleans, despite uncertainty over whether the City would be reconstituted and/or the institution would be viable; and in quickly partnering with the New Orleans based Hilton hotel – enabling the university to resume operations at that location in January 2006, and begin the recovery process.

Favorable, definitely to partner with the Hilton Hotel as quickly as we were able to. Because the longer you would have waited, the more likely it would have been, this isn't going to happen. So I applaud the leadership that was able, and again, probably the President, Vice President for University Relations, that group there that were able to cut that deal. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, an external expert who complements the President of University C for being “one of those remarkable people that wasn't gonna sit around waiting to see who was gonna do what...” illustrates the importance of *vigilant decision making* in the midst of crisis.

Once you realize that a decision has to be made, you may or may not have everyone agreeing with you – you need to be decisive, you need to be confident and you need to stay on top, follow up and follow through... you don't waiver off of that and stay the course. I think those folks who are subordinate to you see that you feel very strongly and confidently about the decision you have to make, even if it's a difficult decision they are gonna lean towards following that decision. *External Contributor – Leader, City of New Orleans*

Avoiding Common Traps

Multiple participants at University C shed light on the importance of *avoiding common decision making traps* in the aftermath of a major disaster. While some contributors praised leadership's ability to skillfully make large-scale unwavering decisions (*e.g.*, the decision to

rebuild the university at its historic home of New Orleans), others expressed concerns over what they perceived to be mistakes in the way decisions were made – alluding to decision making traps that are organizational leaders are susceptible in seeking to manage major crises.

For example, a faculty member warns against making quick recovery-focused decisions that seem *contradict other decisions or institutional priorities*. He specifically references leadership’s decision to build two new state of the art buildings, when the institution is not bringing in the tuition revenue sufficient to occupy the buildings and cover the increased utility related costs.

I would suggest that the wisest course is not to make hasty decisions which wind up being contradictory. We have two new buildings on campus... so you’ve got these grandiose buildings... you don’t have the student population, the student level to really bring in the kind of income that you need when you start doing this, and you certainly did not factor in every large new building raises utility costs. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

A mid-level leader illustrates the danger of having *too few people involved with decision making* and *not setting up a process to vet ideas* or engage many of those who wished to assist with response and recovery efforts. Ultimately, she contends that at University C leaders were so focused on larger-scale issues that many lesser but still important decisions were delayed and as a result senior executives did not take full advantage of the institution’s “people power.”

We had so many people involved with so many different ideas that rather than setting up a process to vet ideas – to decide what are we gonna do and what aren’t we gonna do – they just said “it’s more than I can handle”... I mean they are dealing with all of these humongous issues on Capitol Hill... I think they were kinda like “why do we have talk about whether or not four people in Atlanta who want go visit students just tell them to sit there and wait a minute” not realizing that we could have had many things going on at the same time if there had been some way to do that and probably needed to do that we didn’t take full advantage of our people power. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Hence, according to the contributor above, some senior and mid-level leaders came away from the experience with “the impression that they are not needed” which she contends is “the

biggest mistake a leader can make” and resulted in the loss of “some good people... they just moved on” (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C).

A mid-level leader/faculty member also warns against *letting unyielding personal views or standards get in the way of deliberative decision making*, as the lack of deliberation in the short-term can have negative consequences in the long term. He presents an example of the decision not to declare *financial exigency*.

Our president just had a personal thing. She wanted to protect tenure at all costs... And that's admirable wanting to protect tenure. However, tenure, I don't want to say tenure's a luxury, but tenure is something that you can afford when you're not in the middle of a natural disaster... in hindsight, I think that the quantitative evidence we have now is that was not the correct decision... there might come a time in the future when we have to declare financial exigency. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

[Note: The subtheme of *devil's advocacy/scenario-based planning* was identified in Chapter II as crucial in fostering disaster preparedness, versus being identified as leader behavior engaged in during disaster response and recovery, hence, the subtheme falls outside the scope of the current study. It is however, important to note that much like with University A and B multiple interviewees at University C stressed the importance of *devils advocacy/scenario-based planning*, noting that planning for the ultimate worst-case scenario had not taken place at University C (nor other universities in the region) prior to Katrina, and contend that such planning would have benefitted response and recovery efforts. Thus, given the potential that *devils advocacy/worst-case scenario* planning has to save institutions and lives, and the frequency with which the topic was voluntarily discussed by participants, the subtheme will be addressed briefly in Chapter X.]

Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style

The big issue I know for us was to continue to work to keep lines of communication open to our stakeholders. Because sometimes when you're so busy running to try to get things done, you forget to turn around and say okay now guys, we're going to turn left now. And so your people are there and it's like, “where are they going?” And just trying to make sure that we were moving ahead, but continuing to look back to make sure that we were bringing everybody forward along with us. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The importance and role *leader communication* in facilitating (and the lack thereof in hindering) the institution's response and recovery efforts, was cited regularly by faculty, staff,

and leaders at University C. However, as with all universities in the region, the inability to communicate with one another effectively due to technological failures posed significant challenges in early efforts to respond to the devastation. As did the geographic distance between members of the leadership team (both senior and mid-level), who had spread throughout the region – anticipating a short-term departure from New Orleans.

Contributors collectively note that the first communication they received was via text message (as the standard voice communication options was inoperable on phones with 504 area codes for several days to weeks), a cell phone feature that many had rarely utilized previously, and turned out to be the means by which the institution was able to determine the location and well-being of employees (Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). As explained by a mid-level leader:

Ironically, the first communication I got from the university, most of us got from the university, believe it or not, was a text message... My initial text was, if you get this and you can respond please give your contact information and the information of all of your staff people. And of course, all I had at that point was cell numbers for everybody.
Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C

Once communications had in-part been restored (expanding beyond text-messaging), given the continued geographic separation (albeit many senior and mid-level university leaders eventually relocated to Atlanta), *conference calls* became a primary method for communication between member of the leadership team. As depicted by a senior leader who participated in cabinet level conference calls:

We quickly got rid of these 504 area code phones. And we ended up having set times for conference calls. So the conference call became something where we would call in to a certain number, generally on an AT&T or Sprint line and the conference call would last two hours, three hours. Sometimes those calls were just the cabinet and the president. Sometimes they were meetings with the cabinet and the board of trustees.
Contributor 4 – Leader, University C

Several interviewees commended the efforts of the President and other senior and mid-level administrators who traveled to various locations around the country to directly communicate with the *dispersed student population* (and the parents of those students), update them on the status of University C and encourage their return to New Orleans for the start of the Spring semester (January 2006). As stated by one university leader/faculty member, who joined the President on a road trip to ten major cities to “re-recruit” students:

I think going on the road trip to ten major cities, areas where we [re-recruited] students was the best thing we could do. Talking with students and their parents. Telling them what we were going to do. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Others, however, noted the *irregularity of leader based communications*, a circumstance that one faculty member indicates resulted from the scattered locations of personnel post-disaster, and the difficulty in tracking down new/temporary phone numbers.

There was a bit of irregularity to the communications. And I could understand that because it's very difficult trying to call faculty members who are scattered who knows where over the country... And keeping up with the [changing] telephone numbers and of course our landlines, we didn't have those numbers anymore so I had a cell phone which I did not have before Katrina... It became something that you had to have. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

A mid-level leader/faculty member adds that while the leadership team did disseminate information to the university community, it “probably would have been better to have a set time once a week so people would know to check their e-mail” as there was *not a regular pattern* to such communications.

I think they erred on the side of providing more information, but I think they just sort of, as information became available, they would just communicate with it. We didn't have, there was no regular e-mail blast or regular e-mail list or anything like that. It was just when the president felt she needed to say something, she would just say it... we did have normal meetings once we got back to the Hilton. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Both a university leader, and a faculty member note that University C has had particular difficulty battling public perception stemming from the national media's undesirable coverage of New Orleans, adding that as a "small school" the university lacks the resources to effectively combat negative portrayals of the city and (at times) the institution's continued challenges. Such factors have had an impact on the ability to attract students from outside the State of Louisiana.

A lot of people didn't even realize that we had reopened. And so the idea of needing to not only get greater awareness out there that University C is back, that it's reopened for classes, that it's safe, that New Orleans is safe. I mean, that was part of the uphill battle. And it did not go easily for us because as a small school, we didn't have the resources of a University A where we could go all out and put those kinds of dollars into the marketing of the institution. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

We had over 40% of our students were from out of state. So we do feel that the fact that we still have hurricane season, that some family members from out of state are not willing to expose their students to a hurricane season again. So our student body is still building slowly. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Hence, based on the communications related challenges that emerged at University C in the immediate aftermath of Katrina, a key university leader stresses the importance of *establishing a resilient communication process* and system prior to a disaster.

An emergency communication system is essential. For the first week, we could not really all connect with each other. We had everybody's phone number and we had the phone tree ready. But we didn't have the system ready for the fact that all phone lines including cell phones, were non-effective. So it took us a little time to get reconnected. I would say for all of us to reconnect was probably about a week. All of the administrative cabinet for example. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

According to contributors, each subtheme of leader-based communication identified at the outset of this study played a major role in determining the effectiveness of disaster response and recovery efforts at University C. However, two subthemes of leader behavior were most commonly cited by participants: 1) *symbolic communication* – for which university leadership received a great deal of praise from contributors; and 2) *viewing disaster as an opportunity* – a philosophy that most participants suggested the leadership team embraced in making decisions

and institutional changes, while others indicate that the leadership team may have not fully taken advantage of the “window of opportunity” that presented itself. This section begins with the subtheme of *facilitating awareness*.

Facilitating Awareness

As illustrated above, University C’s leadership pursued a number of methods by which to connect with other university actors, as well as *facilitate awareness* within the university community regarding the extent of the devastation suffered by institution, and the progress of recovery efforts. However, in the weeks immediately following Hurricane Katrina, the ability to facilitate information was hindered by a variety of challenges – both technological and geographic, as depicted by a mid-level leader who assisted with securing federal funding in Katrina’s aftermath:

Communication was just such a challenge early on. To get everybody the same message at the same time was next to impossible... the leadership team was basically together in the same place in Atlanta... There was a lack of information, not a terrible lack, there was a lack of information trickling on down. And of course nothing was perfect. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader, who is lauded by multiple contributors for her ability to communicate with and inspire the university community post-Katrina (particularly at the Hilton hotel and upon returning to campus in Fall 2006), illustrates the need for *balancing optimism with reality*, being careful not to overpromise.

You need to give a message that’s optimistic enough that people feel encouraged that people feel progress is going forth, but if you overstate it and you can’t fulfill it than that’s pretty rough... carefully balancing what you say and don’t say. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

According to multiple interviewees, university leadership placed a particular emphasis on and did an effective job of *facilitating awareness amongst the dispersed student population*, as to

the condition of University C, and plans for the institution's re-opening. Illustrating the efforts of the leadership team to reconnect with students, faculty and staff, a mid-level leader notes:

The president was sending out, I wouldn't call it a president newsletter, but like president briefings. We would update information on our website. We now have what we call e-alert. Because you know a lot of parents were concerned about, if I send my child down there and another storm occurs, what happens? How do I communicate with my child if we can't get through to them through telephone? *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The views of the contributor above are further supported by a mid-level leader/faculty member, who praises the leadership team (in particular the President) for their *outreach to students*, and notes that such visits likely helped facilitate their return to University C

I think they did a good job of communicating with the students, getting the students back... I give the president a lot of credit in that she visited, we know the cities that most of our students are from and she got on an airplane and she flew to every one of those cities and she had a town hall meeting with the students... and she allowed the students and the parents of the disbursed students to come and ask her questions and she said, "Yes, we're going to open up. Yes, we'll be back. No we don't want you to transfer to another university. You need to come back to graduate." *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

In addition to communicating from a distance, the mid-level leader above indicates that during the fall 2005 semester (when University C remained closed), the President *visited campuses/regions of the country* that were temporarily hosting large populations of University C's students, as well as those with significant parent and/or alumni populations, to garner support, facilitate awareness as to the university's circumstances and ideally boost the university's early recovery efforts.

I think one thing that the president did do is that she went on this national tour going into all of the major theater areas where we normally, where we had students. And talking to the families and talking to the students. And then also going to all of our major areas where we have our alums and talking to the alums. So she was able to garner support of parents and students and alumni which is wide based. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

However, many interviewees contend that in terms of *facilitating awareness amongst faculty and staff*, the leadership team could have been more much more effective. The need for better communication and awareness was particularly apparent when it came to announcing the university's post-Katrina academic restructuring efforts. As noted by a faculty member:

I was very disappointed. We did not have substantive discussions. I mean, if you were to tell me, as a result of not being able to raise sufficient funds and we have certain grants that have run out and it's impossible for us to keep a certain program, then explain it to me. I might accept it. I might not like it, but I might accept it. But just to say this is what is to be without adequate discussion was unnerving to me...they were just tossing things down my throat. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

The contributor above adds that in addition to being absent from actual restructuring focused discussions, some faculty expressed frustration that they were not at least made aware of the rationale behind the various decisions that resulted.

Why are these particular changes being made and not other kinds of changes? Was it simply a matter of a declining number of majors in a given program? Were there certain forecasts... based upon national studies of trends... I'm not sure if those patterns were really taken into consideration... because I don't know the content of discussions in the cabinet meetings. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Clarity of Terminology and Message

An additional subtheme of leader-based communication emphasized by multiple interviewees at University C as pertinent to institutional response and recovery efforts, involves the overall *clarity and consistency of terminology and message* stemming from institutional leadership. A mid-level leader, who regularly addressed the university community in the aftermath of Katrina contends that the clarity and consistency of communications (and at times the perceived lack thereof) was particularly impactful at University C in the aftermath of Katrina, noting that “the ability to speak well has always been important on Black campuses” and that “the highest compliment a West African can pay another West African is ‘he or she speaks very well’... so that was very important” (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C).

However, perceptions amongst university leaders, faculty and staff vary on the degree to which the leadership team exhibited clarity in their communication efforts, with one contributor noting that the university at times had *difficulty portraying optimism without overpromising*:

A skill that came into play that took us a while to find our way to was the ability to carefully balance the promises and we stumbled a few time on that and that cost us a little bit... *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

University leaders, in particular the President and Vice President for Development, were collectively praised by contributors, for their clarity and consistency in communicating that University should and would return to New Orleans, rather than Atlanta or some other location. According to the mid-level leader below, as rumors started to spread regarding various proposals, the President put an end to the speculation and “galvanized” the community around a *commitment to rebuild the university in New Orleans*.

I mean, there were proposals coming at us all from groups suggesting that we relocate the institution to Atlanta or we relocated somewhere in Louisiana. That was a level commitment from the start that no, we’re returning to New Orleans... And whatever the campus looks like, it’s going to be in the same location in the same home... once that kind of message was made clear to everyone, it kind of put everyone else at ease, and really galvanized folks to really move forward. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Multiple contributors, however, expressed that there was a serious *lack of clarity* and certain cases *lack of accuracy* in post-disaster leader communications. A mid-level leader/faculty member with one of the institution’s largest academic divisions indicates that faculty were encouraged not to get jobs at other institutions, suggesting that they would continue to have employment at University C, only to be laid-off in late November.

At first they encouraged people to not to get jobs elsewhere. And then that flipped around Thanksgiving, right around there that they laid off all non-tenure people. And that was really so unfair I thought because people in that early period could have found jobs. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

An additional mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that in announcing a major institutional restructuring, university leaders noted that the decisions had resulted and been analyzed by a university committee, however, some members of the committee claim that they never even received notification of the relevant meeting(s).

They turned the whole academic structure upside down. They put out these notices that this committee met and we decided to do this, and we did a full analysis and we should move from a division structure to a college structure. And people I talked to who were supposed to have been on this committee, they never got notification that there was a meeting of that committee... And so there was this statement of, we're transparent and this has been a democratic process and it was whatever. No. It wasn't. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

To help account for a perceived *lack of clarity* over when post-Katrina layoff decisions would be made and who would be impacted, as well as compensative for she contends was the lack of a “unified leadership message,” a mid-level leader/faculty member began sending “cryptic messages” to her team, to encourage them to prepare for the possibility that their employment would not be secure indefinitely. She further suggested that faculty who are laid off, remain in communication, as there was a possibility that the institution will seek to rehire them if a sufficient number of students re-enroll for the Spring 2006 semester.

I had to send out these cryptic messages like save your resources, because people were still getting paid up through Thanksgiving. Hold onto your resources, try to let them know that folks are going to be laid off. And then keeping in a loop of communication with them because it was decided that as students registered online that we would have to be a measured call back but that would be partly propelled by enrollments.
Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

Symbolic Actions

A subtheme of leader behavior perceived by nearly all contributors as evident in the efforts of leaders at University C in the aftermath of Katrina involves an often overlooked means of communication – *symbolic action*. Several forms of *symbolic action* were evident at University C – from specific decisions and leader-based communications, to the celebration of

successes, to smaller scale tributes. In many respects university actors came to view the institution as itself “a symbol of hope for the community, the city and nation” (University C’s Strategic Plan, 2008). As stated by a mid-level leader/faculty member:

We knew the whole world was looking at us and that we could not give up. We had to not only do it for University C and for New Orleans, but for other people who might go through the same thing, that you can recover. That you can make it and that nothing’s impossible. There was really a lot of that within the first year, the first eighteen months. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

University leadership placed an emphasis on *saving the university’s historic oak trees*, which one leader, who played a major role in facilitating the university’s first post-Katrina graduation, notes are “more sacred than anything on that campus” – as they line a pathway that students walk through as a *rite of passage* at graduation “or they just feel like they haven’t done it” (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C). The senior leader recalls her thoughts at the time the oak trees became an important element of recovery efforts:

I’ve got to save these trees. And it sounded awfully inappropriately directed when I was saying that to the people around me. I’ve got to save these trees. And they were saying, “trees! You have a bigger problem than that.” ... And so I called Princeton and told them... I needed their best caretakers of the grounds and trees particularly to come down and assist us. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Hoping to impress upon the university community and broader public that University C has survived and is on the path to recovery, the leadership team placed great emphasis on ensuring that its campus could be temporarily reopened and grounds prepared to host a *memorable graduation ceremony* in July 2006 – the first post-Katrina graduation ceremony at University C. As senior leader above further notes:

All I wanted was for the lawns to be green for commencement. And none of the buildings were open for commencement so I had to use port-a-potties all over the place. But the campus was gorgeous. It was gorgeous because people from around the country wanted to do things. ... So the buildings were pristine white, the grass was green, there were blossoms all over the campus that people brought and just did it as a service. And

so we set up that campus – it was the most beautiful commencement you could ever imagine. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

As a *tribute* to those institutions who temporarily hosted students during Fall 2005, at the institution’s first post-Katrina graduation (Summer 2006), each graduating student carried the flag of the university they attended that semester. As illustrated by a senior university leader:

So [emcee of the graduation] said to me, now, I want you to go and ask every graduate to give me the name of the university where they were. I got that for him. And he said, now I’m going to order a flag from each of these universities, enough flags for all your students to carry from these universities. Everybody is going to walk in carrying a flag. And it’s going to be from the university where they are affiliated. I mean, the emotions were just wonderful. They were absolutely spectacular. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Institutional leaders also sought to facilitate momentum and symbolize recovery by *publicly announcing and celebrating successes*. In addition, to publicly announcing the receipt of “seven figure gifts” as a way of saying “we can do this” (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C), a mid-level leader recalls that the university hosted *rededication events* as each building reopened to the campus community.

As each one of the buildings would come back online... the university would do sort of a rededication of each of those buildings... And when the new buildings went up, the student center and the professional schools complex, there were major dedications for those. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

On the other hand, the leadership team is also the subject of significant criticism by some faculty and staff, for not having placed enough emphasis on a particularly important element of symbolic communication in a time of crisis, namely – *being present*. As noted by an external contributor, in a time of crisis “good leaders are visible to the folks that they lead” (External Contributor, Leader, City of New Orleans). A mid-level leader/faculty member who relocated to Atlanta after the storm, also notes the importance of *being present* in the aftermath of a major disaster.

You need to be present. Physically, emotionally, and intellectually present. And you need to be constantly communicating with people. The thing with Katrina that was different from say if we have a tornado hits, is the devastation to the whole environment. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, multiple contributors at University C indicate that in aftermath of Katrina, they did not have a good sense of where university leaders were at a given moment or what they were doing, in part because New Orleans was uninhabitable and university members were initially spread throughout the country, but also due to the fact that two key university leaders (President and Vice President for Development) spent much of their time in Washington D.C., prompting some faculty and mid-level leaders, to feel out of the loop on what response and recovery related activities these key leaders (and some who had temporarily to Atlanta) were engaging in on a day to day basis. A mid-level leader/faculty member who remains critical of the President of University C for what she perceives was a *lack of presence* and engagement in the immediate aftermath of the storm, in comparison to the President of University A, states:

[The President of University A] was on the ground. That's what we were missing with [our President]. She wasn't on the ground. You didn't get the feeling that she was there. The President of University A, his presence was there. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Moreover, a mid-level leader who multiple contributors (including the University President and several faculty members) credit for *being present* both for students and her colleagues in during disaster response and recovery efforts (particularly at the Hilton Hotel), explains how she came to view presence as an important skill:

I've never seen the skill of presence come into play as much as it did in that situation just being around the people would note that I was there... I figured out in that situation that it was important how I looked and my demeanor the look on my face whether or not I was smiling... the willingness to read the room. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Creating A Context for Meaning and Action

Similarly to the emphasis university leaders placed on *symbolic action* in the aftermath of Katrina, the accounts of contributors reveal that the leadership team was generally effective in *creating a shared context for meaning and action* particularly during the two abbreviated Spring semesters conducted at the Hilton Hotel. Such efforts helped foster both individual and organizational recovery. As articulated by a mid-level leader/faculty member:

The Hilton, that was a unique experience. It created bonds with the people you didn't know much about... when you're working there, you're living there and you are interacting with the people you work with 24 hours a day. All of the sudden because you are all pushed in the same situation – just about 90% of the people who were there had nowhere to live. Their homes and personal property were destroyed. They were dealing with the same situation with insurance companies with FEMA and so you had these commonalities and it sort of drove you together and really you started to look out for each other... it helped to forge relationships that probably wouldn't have existed.
Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

Initially however the ability to create a *shared context for meaning and action* was hindered by the fact that the university *did not have a pre-established evacuation site* for its leadership team, in part because the current and prior administrations had not anticipated a prolonged absence from the region, accompanied by a near complete shutdown of communications. As highlighted by a senior leader, in the future “there has to be a pre-identified command post reserved. And you have to reserve it because everybody is running, looking for space” (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C).

By mid-September, the university Provost was successful in securing temporary office space in Atlanta to begin reconstituting the university's operations. She would soon be joined by dozens of additional senior and mid-level leaders, some of whom made periodic visits – to assist with various aspects of the institution's response and recovery efforts. According to a contributors, establishing a base of operations in Atlanta not benefitted recovery efforts, as

decision makers now had access to similar information and could more easily communicate with one another (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C), but by *living and working together*, they began to view the University C community as *family* (Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C). As a faculty member attests:

It's that "family." We often use that term. They were probably closer as a family than ever before because they had to live in Atlanta where the planning took place in a hotel there working day and night having planning meetings so that they could determine precisely how to orchestrate this event as soon as it was determined that University C would not be in any other place but New Orleans, then the planning was focused on how do we get it back there. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Moreover, between January and July 2006, at the Hilton hotel in New Orleans, the *sense of family* grew to comprise the broader institutional community including the 1,100 students who returned to the region. It was also during this time frame that university leaders more intentionally (versus out of necessity) sought to establish a shared context for meaning and action. As illustrated by a senior leader:

We were all there in the Hilton hotel living on the same floors, room next to room, with students for the better part of a year. And we laughed and joked together. We cried together. We did everything together as a family in the midst of that hotel. And so there were many things that had to celebrate. And during that time, a sense of something known as the "University C family" really came about. And we began to talk about it more in the terms of a family and the pride in belonging to this family than at any point that I could remember... It was clear that something special was happening at this place. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Living and working at the Hilton Hotel provided an opportunity for members of the university community to *share stories and experiences* with colleagues who truly understood what they were going through, while also *helping to facilitate a level of enjoyment and healing*.

As expressed by a senior leader, followed by a faculty member:

We would play games, dance or... one of the things we often did was share and research the experiences that we were all having. We would talk about those. Like it was okay to know that you were traumatized by it. It's okay to know that you're

recovering from it. So [we] made all of that okay. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Really we were all sharing our stories. We all had our personal problems, or personal challenges. But we honestly came together trying to help. We were all getting some measure of counseling. And telling people where we could get some additional help. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

The faculty member cited above also contends that *group prayer* played a significant role in establishing a shared context for meaning and action, promoting a sense of togetherness and faith in a brighter future ahead for the institution.

There's a religious association. I find that the University C faculty and the University C board tends to come together with a kind of a spiritual ideal in how we have to pray together to survive. And so prayer was eminent, prayer was a bond. We were not only hoping, but we were praying that it would come back and we were all willing do whatever we could to have that happen. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Efforts to facilitate a shared context for meaning and action did not end once the university community returned to its home campus in New Orleans. A mid-level leader recalls that on the *first two anniversaries of Katrina*, the university community was called together to not only *reflect on the tragedy*, but also to learn of and *celebrate the progress* of the institution since that point – hoping to build upon that momentum.

On the anniversary day, the 29th, August 29th of each year for the first couple of years, call people together and not just reflect on how horrible it was, but give people a status update of just where the university is in terms of enrollment, in terms of facility growth, in terms of grants and research, private donations and the like. It was a way of noting the progress, but also acknowledging folk who stayed with that process. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions

When my family and I came back home... we didn't know what to expect. All we knew is what we've seen on television. And it was like everything that we had worked our entire lives for, down the tubes. And so where are we going to go? What are we going to do? I know for myself I kind of put myself in a zone and became kind of mechanical... I really kind of put myself in a military mindset. That I've got to do this. I don't have any other choice. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The theme of *managing human reactions* was referenced by each interviewee at University C as an important aspect of leadership and efforts to foster recovery in the aftermath of disaster. However, accounts differ regarding the extent to which the leadership team at University C focused enough attention on human concerns and/or were successful in meeting the needs of the its people post-Katrina. As expressed by one university leader:

I think you have to understand the whole psycho-social cultural drama that plays out and you've got to understand that well, you've got to sympathize, empathize and demonstrably care. You're doomed to failure if you don't have that ability to care, to listen, to understand before you make decisions... It is important in times of crisis to be seen as sympathetic, as caring and sensitive to the needs of people. And I think we've done a masterful job of that for the most part. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

While assessments vary regarding the performance of University leaders with respect to managing human reactions, contributors recognize that all members of the university community were in some way (and often in a significant way) impacted by Hurricane Katrina. As surmised by a mid-level leader/faculty member of the leadership team in Atlanta:

Without a doubt everyone who was there on the leadership team has faced personal hardships in terms of their housing and basically everything they had. All of their possessions were gone... My entire house was 6 feet under water for 19 days, and once I was able to return – everything was destroyed. *Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The reactions of individual employees (including members of the university's leadership team) and their ability to function effectively in the aftermath of Katrina varied considerably. As stated succinctly by one contributor "different people, as in life, are going to respond differently" (Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C). By in large, however, contributors praise their colleagues for how they reacted in the face of difficult circumstances. As noted by a mid-level administrator:

Overall I was impressed... overall all I was so impressed, that year was hard, the years that followed actually harder to be honest with you when we got back to campus and had to deal with the reality of being on campus... In many ways I feel like people

became their best selves... I remember when we were back together at a Christmas party... I remember standing at the Christmas party and looking around with pride. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Consistent with the contributor above, a mid-level leader/faculty member adds that while it can be difficult to predict how people will react in a time of crisis, much of the faculty population at University C is from Southern Louisiana, so had prior experience with hurricanes and as such generally did not panic.

Some human beings, you don't really know how they're going to respond in a crisis until they're actually in the crisis... But we do have a good chunk of faculty that are from the south Louisiana region. And what that means is that if you're from the south Louisiana region, you grew up with hurricanes. So you know how to react. Nobody's going to freak out... you kind of know the drill. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

A faculty member adds that it is also important for leaders to anticipate and provide the resources necessary to account for the possibility that current and future students who were impacted by Katrina may exhibit symptoms related to *post-traumatic distress disorder*, as has been the case at University C.

A larger number of students seem to be coming to us with all kinds of post-traumatic stress. Especially the ones that are from the New Orleans area. I mean, the attention span is not there. They're not, they're going to school for whatever reason but their level aspiration is very low. Self-esteem is low. They are more adult problems but that young people are dealing with today. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

Moreover, according to a faculty member, who has been promoted to a mid-level leader since Katrina, found that even those university leaders, faculty and staff who seemed to respond well to the disaster will eventually need to some downtime to "recuperate and recover."

People needed to have that time and that space to take care of themselves. I think that's the issue that you have to keep in mind. People need some, people are going to need some down time. People are going to need some downtime to recuperate and to recover and to get back up to speed. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Hence, given the importance of the university's people to the process of responding to and recovering from disaster, just as with University A and University B, interviewees at University C indicate that the degree to which their leaders both anticipated and were able to *manage human reactions* in the aftermath of Katrina, impacted the institution's overall response and recovery efforts. The leadership team's willingness and ability to tap into *spirituality* played a particularly noteworthy role in the response and recovery efforts of University C. Institutional leaders' knowledge of and ability to *navigate common responses to trauma*, the degree to which they possess *emotional competence/intelligence*, and ability to *navigate/overcome resistance*, were also perceived as critical elements of disaster response and recovery, which were on occasion observed to be lacking.

Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing Emotional Competence/Intelligence

As with the prior institutions in this study, interviewees at University C collectively emphasize the importance of university leaders maintaining an *understanding of how people commonly respond to trauma* and *possessing emotional competence/intelligence* in effectively responding to a disaster, and commonly link the two subthemes together under the broader theme of *managing human reactions* – thus, the subthemes are jointly addressed in this section. Perceptions over the degree to which University's C leaders exhibited the aforementioned subthemes vary significantly. A mid-level leader/faculty member indicates that it can be surprising how individuals will react in a disaster, as once people enter *survival mode* and their *adrenaline kicks in* some become more resilient, adaptable and energetic than anticipated.

You'd be surprised what people can do if they have some adrenaline and they're in survival mode. I know I was surprised, people that I would not normally identify as being resilient or adaptable or energetic. They do. When the survival instinct kicks in, people do. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The contributor above warns however, that *adrenaline is fleeting* and will only last for so long before people begin to wear out.

And they're running on adrenaline. Now the problem with that is people can only run on adrenaline for so long... people start to wear out, because you can't stay locked and loaded in that crisis mode for an extended period of time. You just can't, physically you can't, mentally you can't. And then people start to tire out. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Interviewees at all levels of University C highlight specific post-Katrina decisions, communications and strategies, as evidence that key senior and mid-level leaders recognized the importance of understanding and addressing the needs and emotions (linking the aforementioned subthemes) of its human population post-Katrina. They also provide examples wherein university leaders may not have adequately anticipated or addressed the needs of the institution's people. In combination, relevant leader behavior identified by contributors at University C largely falls within two categories: 1) *visibly putting people first* – by showing *empathy, demonstrating concern*, helping meet their *basic needs*, and recognizing that university members maybe suffering in both their personal and professional lives; and 2) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – helping employees regain a *sense of control* over life events by reestablishing routines, *keeping them busy* through work-related responsibilities, *providing them with downtime* to address personal matters related to the disaster and make resources available to the campus community to *meet their mental health needs*.

Putting People First. Similarly to interviewees at University A and University B, several contributors at University C noted the importance of and instances where that university leadership visibly sought to put the needs of its “people” (faculty, staff and students) first. As one leader argues it “wasn't just about going through a checklist, we've got the clean water, we've got this – no, you need more than that” (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C).

A key example of University C's leadership *putting its people first* in the aftermath of Katrina, involves the commitment by University C's President to *pay all tenured faculty* for as long as the institution could afford to do so. A faculty member explains the positive impact of this decision below.

University C communicated, the President communicated to us that we would be paid as long as University C could afford to pay us... We were paid through the entire time that we were out. University C paid us. So we were very fortunate. It was a month to month decision. But as it turned out, they never missed a paycheck for us. So we were pleasantly surprised and relieved. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Multiple interviewees share the viewpoint that *putting people first* involves showing *empathy* and *demonstrating concern* for the safety and well-being of students and university personnel, rather than merely focusing on institutional concerns. This mindset is explained by a mid-level leader who was heavily involved with developing the university's post-Katrina strategic plan, followed by a fellow mid-level leader who assisted with institutional efforts to increase federal funding for research projects. Both note the need for senior and mid-level administrators to occasionally pause and recall that their teams may still be struggling with the aftereffects of the disaster.

The majority of the individuals that are still here working at this university also went through the storm... I know I'm a very driven administrator and I know even for me, I've had to stop and take into consideration that I have staff members that are still trying to recover from the storm. One of my assistants that just moved back into his home that was just rebuilt less than a year ago. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

We had to remind ourselves that people were, including ourselves, were going through these ordeals. So we had to keep it in the back of our mind, in the forefront, that people were going through significant challenges outside of this hotel. And be understanding of that. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

An additional leader/faculty member explains that by *exhibiting empathy* in the aftermath of disaster, university leaders foster a *sense of trust* and *develop bonds* with employees, which can simultaneously build personal and institutional loyalty, and reduce the risk that employees

will choose to depart the institution for other opportunities in the midst of response and recovery efforts, rather than participating in the rebuilding process.

It creates a sense of trust. It shows that you care about them. It makes them want to continue. You develop a bond. They don't want to go somewhere else, even though they may have opportunities to go somewhere else. It creates a sense of hope and confidence that you're going to do whatever is necessary to make sure that they're safe and secure and that the environment in which they live and learn is clean and safe and secure. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

A fellow leader notes that he showed how much he cares for his employees by *being present*, actively walking around and *listening to their concerns*, while keeping in mind the following question – “What can I help with?” He elaborates below:

Do it by... walking around and showing your empathy, showing your caring, managing essentially by indeed walking around and sublimating your ego to some extent to the needs and the interests of the organization as a whole where you're really emphasizing, what can I help with. Listening. Listening. Just hearing people out. ... What you want them to be able to say is “they did a great job with the institution and they really demonstrated their care about us.” *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader/faculty member who was a part of the leadership team in Atlanta before returning to New Orleans at the start of the Spring 2006 semester indicates that in “being sensitive to human needs” the President/leadership team facilitated events to express appreciation for faculty and reveal that “she cares. They care.”

There was a lot of appreciativeness kind of activities occurred at the Hilton for faculty. That's one thing the president did, we had events ... but the mere fact we said, “she cares. They care.” And when you feel that you are cared about, you do things. You do things in terms of a thank you for caring. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

However, both a senior and a mid-level leader add that while it is imperative to show true empathy and concern to the university community, it is also important to *balance empathy* with an atmosphere that prevents faculty and staff from simply dwelling on the disaster, and instead fosters healing while encouraging community members to move beyond the disaster.

Now what you get is that you get to a point where you can't just overly emphasize that because a lot of people will like to dwell on, oh, I'm still hurting. A lot of people still are hurting. And you sympathize with that but the institution does need to move on. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

The need to *balance empathy with the desire to move beyond the disaster* is further illustrated by a mid-level leader who voluntarily took on responsibility for helping much of the university community heal post-Katrina.

There's a lot of angst... there a lot of regrets, you know, "I wish that hadn't been done," but eventually you have to get to the point where you put it to bed. Okay, yeah it didn't happen the way you wanted it to happen, or it might have been better if this had happened or whatever... but were still on the road and still moving forward and a continuation of the conversation of what didn't work or what didn't happen doesn't serve any purpose... lets forgive and move on. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

On the other hand, a mid-level leader observed that on occasion senior leadership became so preoccupied with repairing facilities, fundraising and managing logistics (perhaps given the scale of the devastation suffered by the institution) that the *spirit of the people* was to some extent neglected. More specifically she explains:

The administration more than had their hands full trying to deal with actual physical recovery, buildings materials... but there was another piece that I hadn't counted on and that was "what do you do about the *spirit of the people* when that appears to be failing?" *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Upon returning to campus in Fall 2006, the mid-level leader above took it upon herself to help restore the *spirit of the people* by forming a group to that would work behind the scenes to reestablish the university's identity in the aftermath of disaster and spread a sense of optimism in an environment that remained challenging. She elaborates on these efforts below:

One of the things I did... was I finally put together a little group called that we called the "Spirit of University C conversation" and we talked about it for a long time and identified steps to take and people to be in touch with and get involved. The determination to be optimistic. The determination to be more straightforward in articulating our traditions. The President was new to us... we were expecting her to be

clairvoyant, but how's she gonna know, if we don't say. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

Facilitating a sense of normalcy/certainty. In addition to *putting people first* in response and recovery efforts, multiple contributors at University C reveal the importance of and in many cases appreciation for leader behavior that helped facilitate a *sense of normalcy or certainty* for employees (and in some circumstances for themselves) in the aftermath of Katrina. A mid-level leader indicates that Katrina was overwhelming mentally for much of the university community and required that personnel seek assistance to collect their thoughts.

People were so blown away by so much of it... you know your mind just goes in so many different places and so forth they just needed somebody to kind of help them collect their thoughts. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

In an effort to establish a *sense of normalcy* and “break some of the trauma” the university made use of the ballrooms at the Hilton Hotel to *sing, dance and host celebrations*. A university leader who helped facilitate arrangements with the Hilton Hotel states:

We had all the space there. All those ballrooms. They were not just rooms where we would have big speeches. We did that. But sometimes we would have dances and singing and celebrating. Just whatever we needed to do to break some of the trauma that was a part of our existence. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Others indicate that campus leaders sought to facilitate a *sense of normalcy/certainty* by strategically *keeping employees (and themselves) busy*, which helped distract them from their difficult personal circumstances. A mid-level leader explains the *therapeutic impact* of work in the aftermath of Katrina.

The work we were doing was almost therapeutic in many ways. Because everybody's homes were a mess. People's families had relocated to Houston and Dallas and my family was still up in north Louisiana. And really because we had to be so engrossed into what we were doing, it wasn't an 8 to 5 workday obviously. 8 to 2 and then a 3 to 9 p.m. in a hotel. Take a break and come back and work for the rest of the night. But in many ways it was therapeutic... I guess thinking of my own experience right after the storm, watching CNN, watching my street on the news with cars floating by... there's a helplessness thing going on. But once you're back to work... you're working for the

future of an institution. It's therapeutic in many ways. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

However, in addition to *keeping people busy* university leaders also sought to *provide downtime*. For example, once the two abbreviated semesters at the Hilton Hotel came to an end, the leadership team at University C afforded faculty and staff the time needed to address any personal matters related to the disaster and/or spend time with their families (who had not accompanied them to the Hilton Hotel) – by cancelling the institution's standard "summer session."

We had a summer semester every year. It's good – we make money off our summer semester. It's a money maker for us. But the summer after Katrina, after we had had that semester, the semester coming back, we decided that the university should just be closed and people should just go and... have the opportunity to deal with their personal issues with their houses, with their families, do whatever they do. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The contributor above further indicates that university leaders need to have a plan in place to deal with the inevitable decline in energy that comes when those involved with response and recovery efforts have been operating on adrenaline for months on end, including *offering counseling services, and providing time off*.

I think any leader needs to understand okay, yeah... for the first three to six months they'll be fine. After that, people are going to wear out and you've got to have a plan for what you're going to do when people start to wear out. That may be, they have to provide some sort of counseling for people. You may have to give people some time off. You need to have a plan in place for when people just naturally start to wear out. Something to deal with, with those particular issues. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Additionally, while most interviewees at University C jointly address the subthemes of *navigating common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence*, a small group of contributors specifically highlights the emotional impact of the disaster and the importance of anticipating and being prepared to *manage emotional reactions* – by paying

attention to the emotional well-being and needs of staff, recognizing when employees need to time away from work to handle personal circumstances, and by helping reestablish or reinforce a sense of community.

A faculty member, who filled a mid-level administrative role on an interim basis in the aftermath of the disaster, describes the severe emotional impact that Hurricane Katrina (and the events to follow) had on her and co-workers.

It was one of the most deeply emotional times that I've ever experienced in my life. If you, as you talk with people you'll find, as I did, that some of us didn't know how challenged emotionally we were until we began to come out of it. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

The contributor above adds that as a result of the physical and emotional toll, *many employees did not return* to University C or New Orleans more broadly.

People ended up having physical and emotional problems that didn't allow them to return. We did have that situation. We did have physically individuals were unable to come back because of, well some were, some who stayed had lost family members and were physically ill because of what their bodies had gone through. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

To help manage the emotional trauma, a mid-level leader/faculty member with dozens of faculty and staff under her purview, indicates that she and others leaders focused on seeking to *reestablish a sense of community*.

People had a lot of emotional trauma. I'm not a skilled psychologist at all, but, and certainly I even had some emotional trauma. So it was important that we create community, we had to create a new sense of community that was, it had different physical boundaries. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

The prior contributor adds that the key to building a “new sense of community,” even while living at a distance, was to *communicate regularly* with her employees via all available methods.

That was by communicating. So even if it was by e-mail, that was all I really had. And then sometimes I would talk on the phone for a long time with people. Because we

were all scattered. So we were no longer in the city, but we were still a community. And so how do you create that? You've got to build, you've got to reestablish those linkages of communication. So I was either on the phone a great deal, or using the internet and e-mail to communicate with people. And people afterwards told me that it was just so healing for them. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

An additional mid-level leader/faculty member cites the importance of *providing access to counseling services* which he indicates a large number faculty and staff utilized via an employee assistance program. Others sought counseling from the university chaplain as noted below.

One thing that became very front and center was the activities of the chaplain. The chaplain, we had spirituality sessions and talks and... people, we don't know names and numbers, but they sought counseling via our chaplain. *Contributor 14 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Spirituality

A subtheme of leader behavior that participants indicate played a particularly visible and vital role both in coming to terms with the devastation suffered by the University C community and in helping to facilitate healing at both the organizational and individual levels – involved leadership's ability and willingness to tap into *spirituality*. As an institution with Methodist and Protestant affiliations, references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders (while engaging as representatives of the institution) were commonly a part of the organizational culture prior to the disaster, thus, not unexpected in the Katrina's aftermath. Institutional leaders commonly and faithfully note that the only building on campus that did not sustain severe wind, mold, or flood related damage as a result of Katrina was the University Chapel. Moreover, the University Chaplain (in this case, a Reverend) was lauded repeatedly for her role in helping faculty, staff, students and top university leaders *unite and around their faith* and the mission and history of the university, while providing a safe space for which to share their (often emotional) stories and experiences with Katrina. As one senior leader explains:

We do have a chaplain and we do have a chapel. So we created a chapel in the Hilton Hotel. And on Sundays, we had regular services with music and everything else. And those kinds of gatherings were good. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader explains why members of the University C community came to rely on institutional leadership and space provided by the Hilton Hotel as a means for tapping into their faith.

We lost many churches, so a lot of people lost their congregations lost their pastors, they lost their prayer circles and so forth... It's like having a bomb go off and losing your whole community... so therefore a lot of people needed to draw on their faith. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The contributor above adds that the HBCU's members looked to religion as a way to help *interpret the disaster* and *draw meaning* from the experience – a practice she notes has historical precedence in the African American community.

The question is not “Why had god abandoned us?” it's “What does this mean? What does God ask us to make of us? What do we do with this?,” which actually is historic in the African American community because the early history African Americans asked that question regarding slavery... so we had that advantage in terms of our perception of ourselves it made us realize that there was more to it than what we could see with a physical eye. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Additionally, university addresses, post-Katrina documents and articles written by university leaders, occasionally tapped into the subtheme of spirituality. In a letter to students three weeks after the disaster (on September 19, 2005), the President of University C writes “Let us walk by faith and not by sight toward the University C that is rising out of the struggles of these difficult days” a phrase that is repeated in university documents including its recovery plan. The President adds, in an editorial penned on the Fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, “University C's journey to renewal and transformation began in prayer” (in de Vise, 2010), a statement she follows with a passage from James Weldon Johnson's (1899) famous poem turned song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing:"

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who has brought us thus far on the way. Thou who hast by thy might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray.

A mid-level leader, who helped organize many of the community prayer session, further illustrates the *power of spirituality* at University C, stating that in the aftermath of Katrina, university actors felt as if they were being “buoyed up by the prayers of strangers.”

We were very much buoyed up by the prayers of countless thousands maybe million – I’ve never had the experience of being carried on the prayers of strangers the way we were at that period in time it was absolutely tangible and it was extraordinary.
Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C

Overcoming Resistance

A subtheme of leader behavior that was highlighted infrequently by contributors at University C involves overcoming resistance, whether *intentional* (e.g., opposition to post-Katrina policies or initiatives) or *unintentional* (e.g., the inability to function effectively as a result of disaster induced trauma). One leader describes a repeated challenge faced by the university leadership, whereby the *parents of students* attempted to board University chartered buses intended for the evacuation of students, and any remaining faculty and staff members. Ultimately university leadership allowed parents to board and/or remain on the buses – erring on the side of humanitarianism.

There were many instances – students who were living with their parents and who wanted to get on the buses. Well, they could get on the buses but then they also arrived with their children. And rather than turn them around, I just said, get on the bus. Get on the bus. We have enough food, get on the bus. So we took more people than we should have taken. But that didn’t affect the budget that much. It was just the psychology of what was going on. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Multiple contributors noted strategies that they found effective in alleviating the obstacles or resistance resulting from the post-disaster mental or emotional state of employees. While at the Hilton Hotel, a mid-level leader indicates that on a couple of occasions each month, he would

call his team together, to get a sense of how his staff members were dealing with the aftermath of the disaster. Recognizing that “some people had harder times than others,” he utilized these team meetings as an opportunity to determine when/if it might make sense to let a staff member(s) *take some time away from work* to deal with personal circumstances.

A couple times a month, we just called folks together and just kind of had a discussion of where people are and what’s going on with you... And it gave me as a supervisor an idea of what folks may not say on a daily basis because there’s so much work going on, but... based upon what you find out ... maybe next Friday you [tell them to] “Leave early and go do what you gotta do. Go to Houston if that’s where your family is” or something like that. *Contributor 9 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

One method by which university leadership has *sought to prevent or curtail divisiveness* within the university community during the recovery process, is to hold regular leadership meetings wherein participants agree that despite any internal disagreements, once they leave the meeting room senior administrators must support one another.

We have leadership meetings every Monday morning so any vice president can put items on the agenda... sometimes we have to decide to agree to disagree but make sure that when we’re leaving that we’re supporting each other and moving things forward to not cause divisiveness among our community. And so we did that. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

Human-based *obstacles or resistance*, however, have also emanated from *public perception* of the devastation, fears of future hurricanes, and crime in the City of New Orleans – based largely on negatively-oriented media reports. These perceptions have posed significant challenges to student recruitment, and unlike University A and University B which have more extensive marketing budgets and are in located in a part of New Orleans that generally sustained less damage, University C has had greater difficulty battling public perception. Explaining the university’s admissions challenges, a faculty member notes:

We had over 40% of our students were from out of state. So we do feel that the fact that we still have hurricane season, that some family members from out of state are not

willing to expose their students to a hurricane season again. So our student body is still building slowly. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

A senior leader elaborates on the university's *battle to sway public opinion* in a more favorable direction.

A lot of people didn't even realize that we had reopened. And so the idea of needing to not only get greater awareness out there that University C is back, that it's reopened for classes, that it's safe, that New Orleans is safe. I mean, that was part of the uphill battle. And it did not go easily for us because as a small school, we didn't have the resources of a University A where we could go all out and put those kinds of dollars into the marketing of the institution. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Potential New Subthemes

Through this analysis of the accounts of leaders, faculty, and staff at University C in the aftermath of Katrina, a number of themes and subthemes of leader behavior were revealed as necessary and evident in the response and recovery efforts of the institution, most of which were consistent those identified in the previously developed conceptual framework. However, just as with University A and University B, three potential new subthemes of leader behavior were cited by contributors at University C with such regularity, that they bear noting in the current chapter, and will be discussed in greater detail in *Chapter IX: Comparative Analysis*. These three emergent subthemes closely mirrored those identified via the accounts of contributors at University B, including: 1) *Navigating the External Environment*, 2) *Emphasizing the University's Mission*, and 3) *the Timing of Post-disaster Decisions*. However, at University C, *Emphasizing the University's Mission* involved a more intensive focus on uniting the campus community around the rich history from which the mission of the institution emerged.

Navigating the External Environment

Consistent with participants at University A and University B, contributors at University C regularly note that in the aftermath of Katrina their organizational leaders needed to deal with

and *navigate challenges and possibilities stemming from the external environment* (a potential new subtheme of *leader-driven organizational dynamics*). As with the prior institutions, leaders at University C were to a significant extent constrained (e.g., by a dysfunctional local government, a downturn in the U.S. economy, consistent negative portrayals of New Orleans chances of recovery in the media), and in other ways enabled by the external environment (e.g., via partnerships with other colleges and universities, opportunities to secure financial assistance).

However, in contrast with University A and University B, University C is located in a far less affluent community that was disproportionately devastated by the disaster and has yet to see the return of much of its pre-Katrina population. Hence, a faculty member maintains that the university and the City are in many ways inseparable and as such the community of New Orleans needed to see University C return.

The qualities were, and again there was that spiritual connection of University C having to be saved, of the University C presence needed in the New Orleans community, why New Orleans needed University C and why the people in New Orleans needed University C to return. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Nevertheless, the reduction in city-wide residents has contributed to *persistent enrollment related challenges* for University C, as a significant percentage of its students had historically come from the local populace. As highlighted by a mid-level leader/faculty member:

The student population dropped precipitously... and a lot of the that had to do with the conditions of New Orleans at the time and the population of new Orleans itself had not yet begun to reconstitute however in 2009 as the population of new Orleans began to come back... are enrollment started to climb again. *Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Others, including a faculty member whose division has undergone multiple changes in the aftermath of the disaster, indicate that the *national economic picture* has posed challenges to recovery efforts while necessitating additional downsizing.

If I could try to reconstruct this in terms of time, the downsizing of would have been, let's say 50% less than it was. It would have been 50% less because [economic challenges were] spread out over a period of time and other things would have taken place or you would have recombined some programs so that maybe you didn't downsize faculty as much as you did. *Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C*

At the same time, a mid-level leader/faculty member illustrates the unique challenges posed by various *government agencies* (e.g. the National Center for Education Statistics) and *non-government publications* (e.g. in U.S. News & World Report) responsible for gathering and providing access to institutional data, and/or ranking institutions along various criteria. More specifically, such government and non-government sources of data did not allow students who departed from University C (or others in the region) as a direct result of Hurricane Katrina to be excluded from their calculation of *retention* or *graduation rates* – causing colleges and universities in the New Orleans area to “look pretty bad” in comparison to peer institutions (both regionally and nationally) over a period of several years (as multiple cohorts were impacted by the disaster).

There was a meeting between all of the institutional researchers of higher education institution in New Orleans and one of the issues that came about during Katrina was how we are reporting retention and graduation rates... in the IPEDs report... there is no exclusion for natural disasters... one of the things that did was make us all look pretty bad in terms of our retention and graduation rates... finally IPEDs this last year allowed us to put an explanation in the comments section. *Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

On the other hand, leaders, faculty and staff each noted the importance of *external partnerships* in contributing to an effective university response and progress towards recovery. A leader/faculty member specifically highlights the role of the community of Shreveport in not only welcoming University C's evacuees to their community, but also in raising more than \$55,000 to cover the transportation related expenses of students, many of whom wished to

reunite with their families, while others were seeking to travel to (and temporarily enroll at) postsecondary institutions throughout the country.

I will never forget the generosity of the people, the residents of Shreveport. Black, white, rich, poor, Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal, you name it. People who never come into contact with each other were there in support of our needs. I will never forget that generosity. And the spirit. If I go into a store – oh, you’re from New Orleans. Or we’re so sorry. What can we do? One man came and he sent his housekeeper, his nurse into the building. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C*

A senior leader adds that a group of *Ivy League institutions* (led by Brown and Princeton) provided much needed assistance to University C – allowing many of its students to temporarily enroll at their institutions during the Fall 2005 semester.

We need to places to send out students and [Brown University’s President] said, I’ll take as many as I can... And then she said, I’m going to my Ivy friends. My Ivy colleagues to ask all of them to do the same thing... And she also said, I’m going to ask my colleague at Princeton to join me in some kind of partnership to uplift you so I’m going to have an office on my campus for University C and Hurricane Katrina fallout. So she opened up an office and staffed it. And then she asked the Princeton, at Princeton to do the same thing. *Contributor 7 – Leader, University C*

Finally, partially out of a desire and need to present a unified front to Congress when lobbying for federal disaster assistance and relevant policy changes, relations between campuses in the region grew stronger and culminated in *new partnerships and mutually beneficial consortiums*.

There was more cooperation between institutions of higher education during that period of that time than normal, because we were all sort of in the same boat... Consortium agreements were confected during that time... so their tended to be a lot of interaction between the campus... and we borrowed from each other’s experiences... and consulted with other institution’s to look at ways of doing things. *Contributor 8 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Emphasizing the University’s Mission

A second potential subtheme of leader behavior identified in the current and prior two chapters, involves uniting and focusing the university community around a common connection

and/or *mission* and consistently *linking communications* (including those explaining the basis of recovery-related decisions) to that mission. At University C, however, institutional leaders not only looked to unite constituents around the current mission of the institution, but also sought to motivate the university community by reminding faculty, staff and fellow leaders of the rich history from which the mission of the institution emerged.

A leader notes that for many faculty and staff it was the *mission of educating students* that led to their return to University C during very unstable and unpredictable times.

They were committed to these students, they were committed to these kids graduating on time so that the semester that they had disrupted would somehow be made up for. And so that was also something that I saw as noble in terms of the fabric and the resiliency of these people. There was just something about the commitment to these kids and seeing them through... And it wasn't uncommon to see faculty come out with funds from their own pocket to help a student go to an interview for law school or for graduate school. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

A mid-level leader adds that some administrators, who left over the years following the disaster, may not have had the same connection to the institution as those who remained, and recommends that when hiring cabinet level leaders to help manage recovery efforts, it is important to *ensure their commitment to the institution* for an extended period of time.

We need to make sure that as we bring in leadership, whether it's at the cabinet level... we ensure that we're bringing in leaders that are committed to being at University C for an extended period of time. *Contributor 2 – Mid-level Leader, University C*

The need to emphasize the University's mission in the aftermath of a disaster was viewed by contributors as particularly important at University C, where faculty, staff, and university leaders noted that as an HBCU, community members tend to be particularly attached and connected to the *purpose of the institution* and *historical circumstances* from which the institution emerged. A faculty member shares her perspective on why it was vital that University

C return to New Orleans and why a large percentage of the institutions faculty and staff (who were not laid-off) remained with University C in the aftermath of Katrina.

I really felt because of University C's history and culture, and connection with the New Orleans community and the connection with black history and what the meaning of the historically black college and university has on black culture and New Orleans culture, I really didn't envision University C not returning to New Orleans... the roots are so strong here. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

In explaining what prompted her to remain with the university in the midst of challenging circumstances, the faculty member above elaborates on the *socio-cultural foundations* of the institution.

University C, like other historically black colleges and universities, came out of the need to educate black children, black people. We came from of course enslavement and a segregated society where schools like Louisiana State University did not permit blacks to enter. *Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C*

Moreover, a key university leader adds that by *focusing attention on the institutions history*, there is a greater sense of appreciation for the institution and the importance of facilitating its survival.

When you think about it in that the school's future is in its history, you can't help but become caught up in the fact that you can't let the school close or flounder on your watch. There are too many people whose shoulders it was built on. And now it's your opportunity to carry that on and to figure out a way to sustain it. So there's a lot of inspiration to be gained by it. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Timing

A final potential new subtheme of leader behavior that emerged via the experiences and perspectives of contributors University C's, involves the *timing of post disaster decisions*. More specifically, the *timing* in which some important decisions were made at University C in comparison to University A and University B varied considerably, as did, to some extent, the resistance and consequences of those decisions. Particularly noteworthy and consequential, was

the vast difference in the timing during which each University's recovery plan was unveiled, as well as the variance in the timing of employee layoff decisions.

As noted previously, University A unveiled its recovery plan in December 2005 (while the University was still closed), and made many of its layoffs decisions in conjunction with the plan's announcement, while University B did not unveil its post-Katrina restructuring plan until April 2006 (final version approved in May), and did not make or announce most of its layoff decisions until the University had already been open for several months and many university operations had assumed some semblance of normalcy.

In contrast, University C's leadership team made its initial layoffs decision in November of 2005 – laying off dozens of staff members and all non-tenured faculty members (some of whom were rehired just weeks later), introduced its formal recovery plan in 2008 (although some smaller changes had been made prior to this date), and announced additional significant organizational changes in 2010. According to institutional leaders, the rationale behind making changes over a comparatively extended time-frame, is that during the first 2-3 years post-Katrina, the top priority had to be on facilitating institutional survival versus focusing on longer term matters (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C; Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). After the leadership team grew confident that the institution would indeed survive, they chose to refocus on recovery efforts, and transforming aspects of the university to enhance its competitiveness going forward (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C; Contributor 4 – Leader, University C).

However well intended the timeline, the aforementioned changes had some *unintended consequences*, and contributed to the frustration amongst some interviewees regarding the institution's response and recovery efforts. For instance, as highlighted earlier this chapter and

noted by multiple contributors, the decision to layoff all non-tenured employees in November 2005 – rather than systematically analyzing the needs of each unit, declaring financial exigency, and laying off a mix of tenured and untenured employees – may have prolonged fiscal challenges, and merely delayed an inevitable reduction in the number of high salaried tenured faculty employed by the institution. While the decision to rehire some non-tenured faculty just a couple of weeks after they had initially been laid off caused some faculty to lose confidence in the leadership teams strategy going forward (e.g., Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 12 – Faculty, University C). A mid-level leader/faculty member explains the present day concerns of some faculty and administrators – resulting (in part) from the decision not to eliminate any tenured faculty positions in the aftermath of Katrina:

A lot of the other institutions there, they cut programs, they cut people, even tenured people... And University C did not do that. And the question is being asked now, given the kind of debt that is surrounded by faculty salaries is why didn't you do like all the other folks and cut people, cut programs. They did that after the fact to a certain degree... with the restructuring here. But certainly not to the level or the degree that they perhaps should have done. And I think...there's probably going to have to be some more programs that are going to be cut. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Moreover, by delaying various restructuring decisions, the leadership team at University C may have *missed the “window of opportunity”* to make controversial changes with limited resistance source (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C) as in the immediate aftermath of the storm the university community sympathized with severe circumstances faced by the institution, and anticipated major changes. By waiting for operations to shift back towards some semblance of normalcy, with a resumption of shared governance processes, then announcing major restructuring decisions without fully utilizing such processes (according to contributors), the leadership team unintentionally contributed to frustration, turnover and low

morale. As expressed by a faculty member who became a mid-level leader in the aftermath of the disaster:

You don't want to get into a situation where you have this drip, drip, drip where every year you have to shut down a couple programs and lay off a couple people. I mean, that's just does not help the situation. Kind of like, you need to have surgery, just go ahead and have your surgery and get on with it. If you need to have that root canal, just get in and get it done and get your new tooth or whatever... and move forward. Don't just let the tooth slowly rot away and have to suffer the long term pain of that.

Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the experiences of University C (a renowned HBCU, which grew out of the merger of two religiously affiliated institutions founded back to the 1860's) in dealing with the near complete submersion of its campus in 8-10 feet of water as a result of Hurricane Katrina and the severe breach of the East Levee of the London Avenue Canal, which neighbors campus. Each of the university's 20 buildings were damaged or destroyed as a result of Katrina – including three that caught fire while the campus remained underwater (Hughes, in de Vice, 2010). Storm and flood related capital losses (including infrastructure and clean-up costs) ultimately exceeded \$280 million. Factoring in lost tuition, and other sources of revenue (*e.g.*, from special events and merchandise) – total damage to University C's campus reached approximately \$400 million (Schleicher, 2005; Hughes, in de Vice, 2010). As a small private university (which enrolled roughly 2000 students at the time of Katrina), flooded and/or otherwise damaged in its entirety, lacking the advantages of large alumni base and endowment, and (like most small campuses) rather dependent on enrollment as a source of revenue, Katrina proved catastrophic to University C (at least in the short term).

While the university necessarily closed for the Fall 2005 semester, and its physical campus would take roughly 12 months to restore to habitable status, to begin the process of

recovery, university leadership officially “reopened the institution” in January of 2006.

However, in so doing, university operations (*e.g.*, two abbreviated semesters) were conducted out of a New Orleans based Hilton Hotel – which also provided living accommodations for faculty, staff, and the roughly 1100 students who had returned to the region.

Despite concerns amongst many current and former members of the University C community that the institution could never reopen in New Orleans (if it were to reopen at all), and a proposal promoted by some members of the University’s Board of Trustees to move the university to a location in Atlanta, the institution’s leaders “beat the odds,” and not only reopened the storied HBCU’s campus in the Fall of 2006 (albeit not with all repairs complete), but did so at its original location in New Orleans.

While the university has yet to fully recover (particularly with respect to enrollment), its long term financial security remains in question, and high turnover (some of which result of dissatisfaction with decisions made by the University President and other members of its leadership team) continues to plague its leadership and academic ranks – the university survived in the face of challenges that some viewed as insurmountable, its landscape and infrastructure have largely been restored and in some cases improved beyond pre-disaster status, its fundraising efforts have proven very successful, and enrollment figures appear to be on a gradual upward trajectory.

The primary reason for the institution’s survival and gradual shift towards recovery (albeit also a trigger for criticism amongst some of its community members) in the aftermath of the disaster, stems from the behavior of university leaders. Particularly noteworthy was the role of the President who (along with the Vice President for Development) received praise for her *resourcefulness* (*e.g.*, by establishing partnerships and gaining access to badly needed financial

assistance), and *decision* to reestablish University C at its pre-Katrina home in New Orleans. The leadership team also was widely perceived as having effectively created a *context for meaning and action* by temporarily relocating the entire university to the Hilton Hotel for the Winter semester, engaging in a variety of *symbolic activities* (e.g., saving the universities historic oak trees, and ensuring graduation took place on University C's campus) and tapping into *spirituality* as a means to promote healing and foster recovery.

Yet the President and members of the leadership team also received extensive criticism from some interviewees who perceived that key administrators had not effectively *facilitated awareness* within the rank and file as to what university leaders were doing in the aftermath of Katrina, had not viewed certain key challenges from both short and long term perspectives (*Janusian thinking*) before making decisions (e.g., the decision to layoff all non-tenured employees and only non-tenured employees), and had not exhibited enough *trust* in employees by incorporating them into recovery processes – instead relying on a very small subgroup for most decisions. Multiple contributors also perceived that university leaders were, on occasion, so focused on rebuilding facilities and fundraising that they may not have noticed the adverse impact of heavy turnover and declining enrollment figures on the morale (*emotional competence/intelligence*) of the university's faculty and staff.

However, in addition to the previously identified themes and subthemes of leader behavior, three new potential subthemes of leader behavior in the aftermath of disaster (not identified in the previously proposed conceptual framework) were cited by contributors as having played important roles at University C in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, including: 1) the ability of a university to *navigate the external environment* (e.g., to be self-sufficient, avoid obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary); 2) *connecting post-disaster*

communications to the mission of the university (with a particular focus on uniting the campus community around the rich history from which the mission of the institution emerged); and 3) *the timing of post-disaster decisions*.

Thus, while some current and former employees of University C may have reason to question the specific methods or decisions of key university leaders in the aftermath of Katrina, and the institution likely has challenges ahead (unless or until enrollments grow to pre-Katrina levels), the highly regarded HBCU has indeed survived an unprecedented disaster and made noteworthy strides toward recovery. As such, a key university leader sites his aspirations for how the story of University C will be told 50 to 100 years from today:

When they write the story about University C 50 years from now, 100 years from now, they will write the story of a very special place at the turn of the first decade of the 21st century, and that there was a leadership team and the university community that was determined to bring the school back. And out of that big disaster has come epic opportunity... I believe that resolutely, that that will be the history of this school in terms of what happened during this span of time. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

The chapter to follow compares and contrasts the experiences of University A, University B, and University C as their leaders sought to effectively respond to and facilitate recovery from Hurricane Katrina. More specifically, the chapter highlights the themes and subthemes of leader behavior that were identified as pertinent to university response and recovery efforts at all three institutions, and the degree to which the relevance of the previously identified themes varies by institution. The results of this comparative (or cross-case) analysis serve as the foundation for a *revised conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster* presented in Chapter X.

CHAPTER IX

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Chapter Overview

The previous chapters (Chapter VI – VIII) highlighted the impact of Hurricane Katrina (and the ensuing levee failures) on three New Orleans based universities. Of particular emphasis was the role of leader behavior in facilitating effective (and in certain cases less effective) response and recovery efforts at each of these institutions in the aftermath of that devastating disaster. In this chapter, the results of the individual case studies are synthesized via a cross-case analysis, to determine whether the types of leader behavior cited by contributors as influencers of response and recovery efforts in one university setting, bear relevance across settings.

While nearly all of the themes and subtheme identified in the previously proposed conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster were perceived by contributors at each institution to be important influencers of response and recovery efforts, there are clear differences in the degree to which specific leader behavior was exhibited at each institution, and the degree to which interviewees viewed such behavior as vital to the success of response and recovery efforts. Possible explanations for these distinctions are discussed in the pages to follow.

The chapter concludes with the identification and discussion of three new subthemes of leader behavior that emerged from this study and played a central role in response and recovery efforts at each institution. These important new subthemes will be incorporated into the revised

conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster, advanced in the final chapter.

The comparative analysis begins with a brief comparison of the features of the universities included in this study, and a synopsis of their experiences with Hurricane Katrina.

Institutional Comparison

Three private universities with long, rich histories in New Orleans participated in this study, including: *University A* – a major research university, *University B* – a Catholic/Jesuit affiliated university, and *University C* – a historically Black university (or HBCU). Each institution faced severe (and at times unique) challenges in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and is briefly reintroduced below. For a comparison of these institutions by type, key features, and pre/post-Katrina institutional data (including progress towards recovery), please refer to *Table 9.1, Appendix I*.

University A – A Major Research University

University A's is a private, nonsectarian institution, with a 170+ year history, and is categorized by the *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching* (2011) as a university with “very high research activity.” The university jointly owns and operates a major *Medical School and Hospital* (in partnership with a major health care corporation) at a location in New Orleans a few miles from the institution's main campus. It serves as the largest private employer in New Orleans – with approximately 1,100 full-time faculty and 1,540 full-time staff members, who together serve 8,338 undergraduate and 5,021 graduate and professional students, from all 50 United States and 40 different countries.

University A suffered severe damage as a result of Katrina. In total, its leaders indicate that the university suffered upwards of \$400 million dollars in structural damage and \$600

million in total losses (structural damage + lost revenue) as a result of Katrina,³¹ prompting the institution to declare *financial exigency*. Over the months following the disaster, University A laid off several hundred employees, including nearly 10 percent of its faculty (roughly 230 total – 65 of whom were tenured). Additionally, in conjunction with the university's *Recovery Plan*, the university eliminated eight undergraduate and graduate-level engineering programs, phased out more than one-third its doctoral programs, and eliminated half of its athletic programs.

As of today however, according to institutional data and all interviewees (leaders, faculty and staff), the University has fully recovered, and according to multiple participants has actually exceeded its status prior to Katrina, is now more efficient and better positioned to handle future disasters. In interviews with senior leaders, faculty and staff, the President and members of the University's leadership team received praise from nearly all participants (often repeatedly) and were credited time and time again for having rescued the university from potentially dire circumstances and for facilitating the institution's recovery.

University B – A Catholic University with a 100-year History

University B is a private, Catholic (Jesuit) affiliated institution, founded in 1911. The institution also maintains a well-regarded Law School at an adjacent location. University B currently represents the largest Catholic university south of St. Louis in an area extending from Arizona to Florida, and is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities nationwide (AJCU, 2012). It is currently home to 4,982 students, including 2,965 undergraduates and 2,017 graduate/professional students. Nearly half (45%) of University B's current undergraduate population stems from out-of-state, along with 62% of its graduate student, and 28% of its law

³¹ The specific breakdown of damages varies by reporting source. According to Mangan and O'Leary (2010): Total physical damage to University A reached \$480 million – \$129.7 million of which was covered by federal sources.

student populations. The institution currently hosts international students from some 47 different countries.

Hurricane Katrina posed significant challenges for University B. While the institution was fortunate that the structural damage (estimated between \$5 to \$6 Million) to its campus was far less severe than that sustained by University A or University C, as an institution that is heavily dependent on tuition as a source of revenue, the inability to recruit students for the next admission's cycle (while the university was closed in Fall 2005), the deep drop in the number of residents of New Orleans (traditionally the source of between 20% and 40% of total student enrollment at University B) (Kurland, 2006), the operational costs were substantial (estimated at \$22.5 Million). While University B did not declare *financial exigency*, the university laid-off 17 faculty members (11 of whom were tenured), eliminated several dozen full and part-time staff positions, eliminated 15 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, and suspended 12 others (University B's Recovery Plan, 2006).

As of today, according to institutional data and most interviewees (leaders, faculty and staff) the University is very close to full recovery, if not fully recovered. Several participants in this study, indicate that the university may actually be better positioned post-disaster; while a smaller group suggest that the university still has a bit further to go before achieving a full-recovery. The President and the remaining members of his leadership team received praise from multiple participants, who in noting the challenging circumstances faced by university, credit the leadership team for having been willing to make difficult and at times unpopular decisions (resulting in a vote of "no confidence" in the President and Provost's Office – by faculty in its largest college) in an effort to reestablish the university's financial security, recover enrollment

totals and move the institution beyond Katrina, as well as for playing a visible role in helping facilitate the City's recovery.

University C – A Renowned HBCU

University C is a private, religiously affiliated (United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ), historically Black University (*HBCU*), with roots that can be traced back to 1866. Initially founded out of a post-Civil War desire to educate newly freed Black slaves and their children, University C has evolved into one of the most highly regarded *HBCUs* and liberal arts focused institutions in the country. The university currently (as of Fall 2011) serves an undergraduate population of 1,249 – which consists of students from 29 states and 10 foreign countries (University C, Application for Admissions). The institution employs 82 full-time and 45 part-time faculty members.

The impact of Katrina on University C was both severe and costly. Combining storm and flood related capital losses (estimated at \$280 Million) with lost tuition, and other sources of revenue (*e.g.*, from special events and merchandise) – total damage to University C's campus is estimated to have reached approximately \$400 million (Hughes, in de Vice, 2010). As a small institution, flooded and/or otherwise damaged in its entirety, while lacking the advantages of large alumni base and endowment, Katrina proved catastrophic to University C (at least in the near term). In November 2005 (just three months after Katrina), University C laid-off 201 of the 344 faculty and staff members employed by institution prior to the disaster. Student enrollment fell swiftly and dramatically, with just over 1,100 of the more than 1,993 enrolled at University C for the start of the Fall 2005 academic term returning for the Winter semester (a loss of approximately 45% of its student population in just 4 months). In 2010, the university reduced

the number of majors it offers from 32 to 26 and transitioned from a division to college-based organizational structure (Pope, 2010).

As the extent of the devastation faced by University C became clear, the immediate focus of the HBCU's leadership team was on ensuring the mere survival of the historic institution versus fostering full recovery. Surrounded by a low income community that was severely and disproportionately impacted by Katrina, and possessing more limited resources than either University A or University C (*e.g.*, fewer alumni, more limited non-tuition based revenue streams, and a smaller endowment) – to survive and recover – University C not only had further to climb than the previously mentioned institutions, but had fewer means by which to do so.

Perspectives on the extent to which University C has recovered since Katrina vary widely and to a greater extent than the perspectives of interviewees at either University A or University B. While some university leaders, faculty and staff contend that the institution has nearly achieved full-recovery and is beyond pre-Katrina status in certain key areas, most argue that the University still has some distance to climb, with estimates varying from 60% to 90% recovered. The strong majority of participants indicate that *facilities-wise* the University has rebounded considerably with estimates ranging from 80% to 90% repaired/renovated. In terms of *student enrollment*, however, most participants contend that the university is has far to rise to achieve full-recovery, and amongst those who offered percentage values, assessments ranged from 50% to 75% recovered.

Several members of University C's leadership team received praise from contributors, including the University President (who also was the subject of some strong criticism), Vice President for Development, and the University Chaplain – particularly for their efforts during the 12 months immediately following Katrina, where given the devastation to University C and its

surrounding community, campus leaders focused primarily on securing the institution’s near-term survival (versus matters related to its longer term recovery) – a feat that they no doubt accomplished.

Please refer to *Table 9.2* below for a comparison of University A, University B, and University C in terms of progress towards recovery to date.

Table 9.2: Assessing Recovery from Hurricane Katrina at University A, University B & University C.

Name	Total Undergraduate Applicants 2004 to 2011	Total Enrollment Comparison 2004 to 2011*	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005 v. 2011	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04 v. 10/11 Cohort**	6-year Graduation Rate 1999 v. 2004 Cohort***	Financial Viability	Facilities & Campus Repairs	General Assessment of Contributors
<i>University A</i>	Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Recovered	Recovered/Beyond Recovered
<i>University B</i>	Beyond Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Recovered	Recovered	Nearly to Fully Recovered (enrollment remains 12% below pre-Katrina levels)
<i>University C</i>	Beyond Recovered	Far from Recovered	Far from Recovered	Nearly Recovered	Far From Recovered	Mixed (Tuition Revenue ↓ Debt ↑ Fundraising/Grants ↑)	Nearly Recovered (Dorms still under repair, but two new "state of the art" facilities have been built)	60% to 90% Recovered (facilities nearly recovered, enrollment and faculty totals remain 40% below pre-Katrina levels)

Cross-Case Comparison: Leader Behavior in the Aftermath of Katrina

As highlighted above and in prior chapters, the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the three universities in this study varied, as did the behavior and experiences of the leadership teams and the accounts of contributors. Ultimately, however, as all contributors shared, the driving factor in determining whether their university’s disaster response and recovery efforts are ultimately successful, involves the behavior, skill and quality of their institution’s leaders and/or leadership team (Cameron & Lavine, 2006). This was particularly the case in the midst of Hurricane Katrina, where the City of New Orleans and its infrastructure were devastated, local officials

were overwhelmed, and any thoughts of waiting on the state or federal government to rescue the region's universities (as fiscal and logistical challenges continued to mount) would have proven futile and likely resulted in the institutions in this study, never reopening (Contributor 4 – Leader, University A; Contributor 2 – Leader, University B). Thus, university leaders and their teams were left to deal with the crisis and develop/implement strategies to facilitate institutional survival (with a longer term goal of full recovery), as events were continuing to unfold. All the while, they heard ever-changing reports of devastation to the region and their universities, and worried for the safety of employees, family members, friends, and personal property.

Profile of Contributors

In analyzing the *impact of leader behavior on institutional response and recovery efforts*, this comparative case study and cross-case analysis relied on the accounts of senior and mid-level leaders, faculty, staff, and at least one external actor with specific knowledge on the efforts of each institution during Katrina aftermath.

At University A, interviews were conducted with 16 current/former University A employees, along with an external expert (a former University President) who was asked by the President of University A to serve in an advisory capacity at the outset of the institution's response and recovery efforts. Of the 16 participants directly affiliated with University A, 6 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (1 of which also held a faculty appointment), 4 filled mid-level leadership roles (2 of which also served in faculty capacities); 2 filled traditional faculty positions, and 4 served in staff-level positions with the university.

At University B, a total of 14 current/former University B employees were interviewed, along with a representative of a professional association (with a higher education focus) who worked closely with the university in during its initial response and recovery efforts. Of the 14

participants directly affiliated with University A, 5 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (two of which also held faculty appointments), 7 filled mid-level leadership roles (two of which also served as faculty), and 2 filled staff-level positions with the university.

Similarly, at University C, interviews were conducted with 14 current/former University C employees, as well as two emergency response professionals who interacted with university leadership during its response and recovery efforts. Of the 14 participants directly affiliated with University C, 4 served in institutional leadership/executive team capacities (one of which also held a faculty appointment), 8 filled mid-level leadership roles (five of whom also served in faculty capacities); and 2 who held pure faculty positions.

In total, 48 interviews were conducted as part of this comparative case study – 44 of these contributors are current/former university employees, while 4 are external experts with specific knowledge of leader behavior at one of the three institutions in the aftermath of Katrina. The themes and subthemes of leader behavior noted by contributors as important in facilitating disaster response and recovery efforts at University A, University B, and University C are discussed in detail below. The degree to which each theme/subtheme of leader behavior (whether previously or newly identified) was exhibited by leaders and/or perceived by contributors at University A, University B, and University C as an important influencer of disaster response and recovery efforts, is noted in *Table 9.3* and discussed in detail below – beginning with *leader driven organizational dynamics*.

Table 9.3 Leader Behavior Across Institutions: Degree Exhibited by Leaders and/or Cited by Contributors as Important During Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts at University A, University B and University C.

<u>Leader Behavior</u>	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important at University A	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important at University B	Degree Exhibited/Perceived as Important at University C
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>			
<i>balancing structure with flexibility</i>	High	High (emphasis on flexibility)	High (emphasis on flexibility)
<i>reliability</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>mindfulness</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	High	High	High (emphasis on financial)
<i>managing the external environment</i>	High	High	High
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>			
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	High	High (emphasis on technical)	High (heavy emphasis on technical)
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>	High	Low	Low
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	High	High	High
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	Medium	Medium	Low
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	High	High	High
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>	High	High	High
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>			
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	High	High	High
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	High (emphasis on Janusian)	High	High
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	High	High	High
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	High (balance of both)	High (balance of both)	Low (emphasis on instinctive)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	Medium	High	High
<i>timing</i>	High	High	High
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>			
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	High	High	High
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	High	High	High
<i>symbolic actions</i>	High	High	High
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	High	Medium	High
<i>emphasizing institutional mission</i>	High	High	High (mission & history)
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>			
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	High	High	High
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	High	High	High
<i>spirituality</i>	Low	High	High
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	High	High	Medium

Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics

Based on the accounts of contributors, the theme of *leader-driven organizational dynamics* played an important role in facilitating effective responses to and recovery from

Hurricane Katrina at each university included in this study. Contrarily, participants also noted that in certain instances the absence of desirable organizational attributes inhibited the effectiveness of post-disaster response and recovery efforts.

Collectively, participants at each institution emphasized the role of three important leader influenced organizational dynamics. The first two, *balancing structure with flexibility* and *relational/financial reserves*, were included in the conceptual framework developed at the outset of this study. The third, *navigating the external environment*, is a newly identified subtheme of leader behavior that emerged from the accounts of contributors, and is discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter. Each of the aforementioned organizational dynamics were either influenced favorably by a given leadership team, or in hindsight (based on contributors accounts of lessons learned) would have been arranged or cultivated differently by leadership, as doing so may have yielded benefits to a given university as members sought to navigate the challenging and rapidly shifting circumstances that emanated from Katrina.

Structure vs. Flexibility

As alluded to above, the *leader-driven organizational dynamic of balancing structure with flexibility* was commonly referenced by participants at each university in this study. Collectively, interviewees (across institutions) emphasized the benefits of need for a balance between *structure* and *flexibility* during response and recovery efforts – ideally with an overall guiding, well thought out, and rehearsed structure having been put in place pre-disaster, so that where necessary organizational leaders can focus their energy on adapting to changing circumstances post-disaster, rather than having to create an overall (emergency-focused) structure at that time. However, while interviewees note that at each institution some amount of structure had been established prior to Katrina (*e.g.*, via disaster response plans), these efforts

were incomplete, did not take into account worse case scenarios, and did not anticipate communications challenges or an extended evacuation from the city. Thus, accounts reveal that a greater amount of time had to be spent adapting to situations and trying to create a new sense of structure than university leaders had hoped pre-disaster.

At *University A* nearly all interviewees highlighted the role and importance of *organizational structure* in facilitating/inhibiting university response and recovery efforts. Multiple contributors cited the President's decision to "flatten the organization," and temporarily move away from the university's standard "shared governance model," as being a central (and some say a necessary) aspect of the institutions early response, given rapidly changing circumstances and the need to make a multitude of decisions almost instantaneously. Coinciding with the flattened structure was a clear *chain-of-command*, with the President serving as the ultimate decision maker when/where issues rose to that level.

However, at the same time, contributors noted that the ability of the "flattened organization" to operate in a very *flexible* and *adaptable* fashion was one of the primary positive influencers of University A's response and recovery efforts. Those involved with such efforts, spent the first three to four months after Katrina conducting operations from Houston, with a team of senior and mid-level leaders, faculty and staff that were willing to do "whatever was asked for the university" (Contributor 15 – Leader, University A) to help foster its survival and recovery, regardless of whether the tasks they were assigned were consistent with their standard (day-to-day) responsibilities, work schedules and/or locations. Hence, while a clear structure was developed post-disaster, once responsibilities were assigned by senior leaders, the ability to operate of the university to operate in a *flexible and adaptable fashion* became essential.

Similarly to interviewees at University A, contributors at University B underscored the role and importance of combining *structure* with *flexibility/adaptability* in facilitating its response and recovery efforts, with most emphasizing the importance of having a structure in place pre-disaster, in order to facilitate effect post-disaster actions and decisions, even when such actions and decisions may need to deviate from previously established procedures. However, just as with University A, the institution's disaster preparedness plans were not sufficient to deal with the scope and magnitude of the devastation caused by Katrina, as they were based largely on the assumption that campus would reopen within a few days, hence, university leaders were forced to primarily rely upon and look to facilitate *organizational flexibility/adaptability*. In doing so, the institution relied upon a subgroup of administrators, faculty, and staff, who were largely split between Alexandria, Louisiana and Houston, Texas and were "doggedly determined to do everything that we put on the table" to help foster the institution's survival and recovery (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B).

Multiple contributors praised the leadership team at University B, in particular the President, for enabling flexibility/adaptability by empowering those responsible for campus infrastructure (*e.g.*, technology and facilities) to do what they believe is in the best interest of the university during and in the aftermath of Katrina, allowing them to make decisions at the local level, rather than requiring that they wait for higher level leaders (who may or may not be experts on a given subject and were on occasion unreachable during communication outages) to approve and/or make the decision for them.

Contributors provided numerous examples of organizational flexibility/adaptability at play in University B's response and recovery efforts, including: quickly fostering a caravan of vehicles (university van's, and personal automobiles of faculty, staff and students) to facilitate a

large scale student evacuation to Baton Rouge; arranging for temporary work and living arrangements in both Alexandria and Houston; enabling the university's technology to secure data storage space and vendors of their choosing; keeping students on track toward graduation (and facilitating their return to University B); by offering two abbreviated semesters between January and July; and altering procedures to make it easier for students to transfer in coursework that most had taken while temporarily enrolled at other institutions during the prior semester.

Finally, at *University C*, where nearly all contributors highlighted the role and importance of *structure* in managing a disaster, most indicated that *flexibility/adaptability* became the primary means by which university leaders sought to facilitate response and recovery efforts. The limited role of structure (at least early in the institutions response) stemmed largely from the fact that aside from well-established evacuation procedures, limited comprehensive disaster planning had taken place at University C, and the new President had little time to update procedures prior to the disaster. That being said, contributors (some of whom acknowledged that scope of the disaster might have made it difficult to follow any one script) commonly stressed that they would have preferred to have been given a better sense of where and what people were doing in the aftermath of Katrina, and wished leaders had specifically laid out *institutional priorities* to avoid confusion over what needs to be done and when.

However, the lack of a clear recovery plan had the effect of necessitating and enabling organizational flexibility/adaptability in the midst of the rapidly changing circumstances. Concrete examples of organizational flexibility in the aftermath of Katrina include: the Provost secured space and set up a base for operations in Atlanta (as the university lacked a pre-identified evacuation site for the leadership team); facilitating the departure of students via plane, bus, train and other methods from the evacuation site in Shreveport; reconstituting and conducting

operations out of a New Orleans based Hilton Hotel – which also served as a temporary residence for more than 1,100 leaders, faculty, staff and students; and offering a full year’s worth of courses (two-semesters) over a seven month period to keep seniors and juniors on track towards graduation.

Financial & Relational Reserves

Financial and relational reserves played vital roles in response and recovery efforts at the three institutions in this study. However, it also became clear, given the substantial physical and operational costs suffered by each institution, that the mere possibility of institutional survival and recovery depended to a great extent on the possession of *financial reserves* and/or the ability to secure funding from other sources swiftly, whether via loans, grants, business interruption insurance or government assistance. Moreover, contributors at each institution noted that as of the end of 2011, they were still awaiting disaster recovery funding from FEMA, making the need to secure financial resources via other means even more crucial.

At *University A*, which suffered \$600 million in losses, the university “did not have cash reserves adequate to address the situation” and had to make “immediate decisions to curtail the outflow of cash” (Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A). While the institution did have business interruption and other commercial insurance coverage, just \$100 million in proceeds had been received as of June 2006 (University A’s Financial Report, 2006) and after several years of litigation that amount increased to roughly \$275 million (U.S. Department of Homeland Security –Office of the Inspector General, 2012). Thus, unable to await for the receipt of such funding, institutional leaders rapidly laid off all part-time employees (and eventually hundreds full-time faculty and staff), worked with members of the banking

community to secure a large-scale \$150 private loan to meet payroll and other financial demands, and engaged in a massive fundraising campaign.

In contrast with the lack of sufficient financial reserves, nearly all participants at University A indicated the presence of substantial *relational reserves* both at the leadership level and in various other segments of the university. This in part stemmed from the fact that the President of the University had been hired 7 years prior to the disaster, thus, he and many fellow senior and mid-level leaders had established favorable professional and personal relationships well prior to Katrina. Contributors note that these relationships and the pre-existing camaraderie between those who assisted with university response and recovery efforts enabled swift decision making, solid communication and collaboration in the aftermath of the crisis.

At University B, *financial reserves*, primarily generated through *business continuation insurance* proceeds, was perceived by interviewees as key in facilitating institutional survival and recovery – serving as a buffer, as the organization took steps to rebound from the physical and operational costs associated with Katrina. Several contributors indicate that University B’s ability to eventually resume the majority of its operations, and delay laying off employees until months after most institutions in the region had done so, stemmed from some good fortune (along with the proactivity and good-timing of a staff member), in that just one month prior to Katrina, University B’s “risk management coordinator” persuaded university officials to triple the amount of its *business interruption insurance coverage* from \$5 million to \$15 million – covering a large percentage of the overall operational costs suffered by the university (Contributor 8 – Staff, University B).

Relational reserves were similarly perceived by interviewees at University B as having positively impacted recovery both at the organizational and individual levels. Contributors

regularly referred to the feeling of “community” within the university, and a “sense of family” that existed in the aftermath of Katrina, particularly amongst those with a long history at the institution and/or who had pre-existing feelings of trust stemming from prior collaboration. Hence, where existent, *relational reserves* helped foster a team environment in the disasters aftermath, and according to accounts made it easy to work with one another. However, in situations where *relational reserves* did not exist (as in the case of relations between two senior leaders), witnesses indicate that there was a reluctance to share information, which to some extent inhibited recovery operations.

Similarly to the accounts of contributors at University A and University B, interviewees at *University C* noted the importance of *financial* and *relational reserves* in enabling (and the lack thereof in hindering) the response and recovery efforts of their institutional leaders. The *financial reserves* possessed by the university were primarily in the form of insurance proceeds which while significant (\$110 million), were dispersed over time, and not at level sufficient to cover the University C’s Katrina related physical and operational costs (\$400 Million), thus, university leaders were forced by circumstances, to engage in a variety of efforts to generate the liquidity required for near-term institutional survival, to fill the gap between the institution’s damages and the insurance proceeds. Ultimately, the President and Vice President for Development spent nearly three months in Washington D.C., living and lobbying the federal government for disaster aid, securing millions in federal grants and a \$160 million federal loan in the process.

Relational reserves on the other hand, received limited mention by participants at University B, and when discussed, was perceived by interviewees as to some extent missing in the organization’s upper leadership ranks – posing challenges during response and recovery

efforts. A primary reason for the perceived lack of relational reserves stems from the fact that university president had been hired just less than two months prior to the storm, and had inherited a team that did not have experience working with the new leader and vice versa. At the time of the disaster, only one member of the executive team (the Vice President for Development) had been selected by the president; the remainder of the team had been inherited from her predecessor. Thus, according to a mid-level leader, the time to build rapport, familiarity and trust was not sufficient to foster *relational reserves* at the upper echelons of the organization (prior to the disaster), which prompted the President to rely a great deal upon the one leader with which she had prior relations – the Vice President for Development.

[Note: Organizational *reliability* and *mindfulness* (which appear in the comprehensive conceptual framework presented in Chapter III and the revised framework appearing in Chapter X) are subthemes noted for their ability to foster pre-disaster features (*e.g.*, preparedness for and/or avoidance of disaster) versus post disaster phases (*e.g.*, response and recovery), thus are beyond the scope of the current study and not discussed in this section.]

Theme #2 – Exhibited Personal Attributes

A theme of leader behavior on which interviewees provided a great deal of insight is that of *exhibited personal attributes*, wherein participants provided their perceptions of the characteristics displayed by senior and mid-level leaders in the aftermath of Katrina, with a particular emphasis on the qualities and skills exhibited by the university president in guiding response and recovery efforts. Additionally, many participants at each institution provided self-assessments – sharing what they believe to be traits that enabled (or inhibited) their personal performance during response and recovery efforts, while others provided overall assessments of a given leadership team and/or highlighted what they now perceive it takes to effectively serve as a university leader in the midst of crisis.

In illustrating their efforts in the aftermath of Katrina, University leaders were at times compared to championship athletes, military brass, medical professionals, emergency response personnel and former elected officials. Most participants however, honed in on specific leader attributes that they perceive played a role in fostering (or in certain cases inhibiting) response and recovery efforts at their respective institutions. These leader-based attributes include: 1) *competence* – with an emphasis on *technical competence* (knowing what to do and when) versus *social competence* (e.g., knowing the skills of the people around them and who to assign specific tasks to), 2) *charisma/ability to inspire*, 3) *trust/authenticity*, 4) *ethics/morality/virtuousness*, 5) *self-awareness/self-control*, and 6) *resourcefulness/adaptability*. While each of these subthemes are included in the previously crafted conceptual framework, contributors vary (by institution) over the degree to which specific attributes played a significant role in response and recovery efforts and/or were perceived to exist within a given leadership team.

Competence (Technical & Social)

At *University A*, one of the *attributes* most frequently perceived by interviewees as evident in members of their leadership team during institutional response and recovery efforts (often with the President being positively singled out), is *competence*. Contributors indicate that *University A*'s leaders possessed both *technical competence* – stemming from prior experience, the perception that their leaders understood the challenges in front of them, and had the skillset to meet those challenges; and *social competence* – indicating that university leaders appeared to be familiar with people and skillsets around them, and made effective use of those skillsets by strategically delegating responsibility and authority. Examples cited of leader competence include: utilizing nitrogen cylinders to create a “freezer farm” to save an estimated \$150 million in university research assets, possessing an in depth understanding the institution and its financial

situation before making decisions, and of the president – a sense that “he knows what he’s doing” (Contributor 2 – Leader, University A).

At *University B*, *leader competence* was frequently perceived and noted by interviewees as important and evident in the actions of specific senior and mid-level leaders in Katrina’s aftermath. Nearly all such accounts focused on the *technical competence* of leaders, stemming from: relevant prior professional experience inside and outside of higher education (*e.g.*, working in an intensive care unit), previous crisis management experience, an in depth understanding of the institution itself, and/or the sense that a leader is effectively executing their area(s) of responsibility even under immense pressure. Leaders also exhibited *social competence* by empowering facilities managers and information technology personnel to make decisions relevant to their areas of expertise, a behavior discussed in more detail under the theme of *thinking and decision making*. Finally, multiple contributors highlighted what they perceived to be the *collective competence* of the administration stemming from the length of their tenures with the university and the wisdom attained through their time with the institution. Examples of exhibited leader competence illustrated by contributors include: efforts on the part of a mid-level leader responsible for Information Technology (who had significant experience managing smaller scale crises) to quickly secure the university’s data and reestablish the university’s web presence; and the ability of the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, who with significant crisis management experience, successfully managed the university’s evacuation efforts, even amidst shifting circumstances (*e.g.*, when the university was informed that its pre-designated evacuation site would not be available) – purveying a sense of calm to her colleagues.

Similarly to *University B*, at *University C* the *technical competence* (versus *social competence*) of specific mid and senior-level leaders was perceived by contributors to have

positively influenced response and recovery efforts. However, aside from broad based compliments of the competence and knowledge of the overall leadership team, accounts of technical competence at University C in the aftermath of the disaster primarily involved self-assessments, versus perceptions of one contributor regarding another. As evidence of technical competence, leaders typically focused on the benefits of prior experience. For example, an executive level leader noted that the knowledge she attained through prior participation in FEMA sponsored emergency management workshops and her academic training in organizational management and organizational psychology, informed and enabled her efforts to manage elements of the university's recovery. A leader/faculty member indicated that prior experience guiding smaller scale evacuations, contributed to her ability to help direct the evacuation of students in the midst of Katrina. While a senior leader with experience working in both educational and medical settings, noted that having managed non-weather related crises provided him with the skillset necessary to help direct aspects of University C's response and recovery in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Charisma/Ability to Inspire

Perceptions differ considerably by institution over the extent to which the leader attribute of *charisma* or the *ability to inspire* was exhibited and/or played a significant role in post-Katrina response and recovery efforts. While contributors at each university indicate that this subtheme of leader behavior is both desirable and can positively influence recovery efforts by uniting the university community, and motivating employees to perform at a high level to help foster institutional survival and recovery, it is at University A where leader *charisma* or the *ability to inspire* played the most visible and tangible role.

The President of *University A* in particular, is repeatedly credited by contributors for not only inspiring other university actors to perform at a high level in the aftermath of Katrina, but also for providing those involved with day-to-day recovery efforts (as well as faculty and staff members within the broader university community) with the confidence that if they follow his lead, the institution would indeed recover. Amongst those activities cited as sources of inspiration, interviewees noted: efforts to rally the university community at town hall meetings, audio recordings and letters to the university community; balancing a sense of *hope* with the *reality* of difficult circumstances; repeatedly stating the goal of moving the university beyond pre-disaster status; celebrating “wins;” and leading by example.

In contrast, at *University B*, leader-based *charisma* and/or the *ability to inspire* received little mention from contributors for its role in university response and recovery efforts. Instead, participants suggested that motivation and performance in the aftermath of Katrina stemmed mostly from intrinsic values, and/or a connection to university/city versus having been encouraged by members of the leadership team. This finding may in part stem from the fact that visible damage to University B was far less severe than that suffered by University A or University C, while personal losses suffered by faculty and staff in terms of homes and other property remained significant. Hence faculty and staff may have had a reasonable level of confidence in the institution’s eventual reopening, thus, needed less encouragement from university actors in that arena.

Additionally, it is possible, given the strong religious tradition of the institution, that university actors primarily sought inspiration/guidance through their Jesuit faith, which is embraced by the majority of university’s employees, rather than seeking such inspiration from university administration. As illustrated in Chapter VIII, the subtheme of *spirituality* played a

far more visible role in the recovery efforts of University B than was the case at University A. Moreover, the *Jesuit mission* of the university was cited by multiple contributors as a driving force for many who chose to return to University B for the winter semester, rather than seeking employment elsewhere.

On the other hand, at *University C* leader-based *charisma* and/or the *ability to inspire* was cited frequently by interviewees both for its presence, and at times absence, in response and recovery efforts of the institution. Multiple contributors noted the need for leaders who take the time to motivate and inspire others in the aftermath of disaster, but some questioned the degree to which it was exhibited by senior executives at University C, who they indicate seemed to have their hands full with logistics. Most others, however, presented strong examples of institutional leaders inspiring other university actors, from inspiring confidence in the dispersed student population, by promising that if they returned to New Orleans in January 2006, they would indeed have the opportunity to graduate from University C, and carry on the institution's long standing tradition of "walking through the oaks," to efforts on the part of the University Chaplain to inspire the university community through *guided prayer*. Other example cited include: encouraging the university community at the Hilton Hotel to *share in the celebration of successes* by announcing the receipt of major grants and donations; and motivating staff members, by tapping into the *uniqueness of circumstances*, and *highlighting the opportunity* to have a positive career defining impact by helping foster the university's recovery.

Trust/Authenticity

In contrast with *charisma/the ability to inspire*, the degree to which senior and mid-level leaders are perceived to be *trustworthy* or *authentic* played an important role in response and recovery efforts at each university in this study. Where perceived to exist, *trust/authenticity*

played help foster confidence in the behavior (decisions, actions, and communications) of the leadership team post-disaster, and in the believability of leaders' claims that each institution would indeed re-open or recover. When trust/authenticity was perceived to be lacking, the opposite appears to have taken place, which according to interviewees contributed to atmosphere of negativity, decreased morale, and/or increased turnover.

At *University A*, perceptions that the leadership team (in particular the President) is *trustworthy/authentic* stemmed from the fact that many key leaders had been at the institution for several year prior to the disaster, thus, had significant prior experience working with one another and were familiar names/faces within the university community. Moreover participants indicate that the leadership team further fostered trust by being honest with the university community amount the difficulties the university faces, by the President being "true to his word," and by having placed trust in others. In essence, trust is a two-way street whereby "If you put trust in us, we put our trust in you" (Contributor 9 – Staff, University A). Trust in the leadership team at University A inspired loyalty, and in the belief that the institution would indeed reopen. As stated by one university leader of the President "we felt like he said it was gonna happen so it's gonna happen" (Contributor 2 – Leader, University A).

Similarly, at *University B*, the perception that university leaders were *trustworthy* or *authentic* appears to have played an important role in fostering (and in certain circumstances where lacking, inhibiting) disaster response and recovery efforts. Collectively, contributors indicate that trust and authenticity stemmed from the degree to which leaders were able to successfully *manage expectations*, exhibit *transparency* by sharing the data on which decisions were based, and a willingness of leaders and colleagues to stand up for what they believe, even if it means respectfully disagreeing with others over post-disaster decisions.

Participants widely perceived that the *level of trust* in university leadership shifted over time in accordance with the announcement of key decisions and institutional changes, and varied by constituency (*e.g.*, faculty or staff). Prior to the announcement of the university's recovery plan and the initiatives therein, perceptions of the President, the Provost and many other university leaders for their efforts post-Katrina were generally positive. However, after the recovery plan's announcement in April 2006, concerns emerged over the accuracy of the data utilized as the basis for the plan, and whether the university's standard principles of shared governance were violated – prompting distrust within its faculty population, a vote of no confidence in the President, Provost and two Associate Provosts (by faculty within its largest college), along with a series lawsuits.

The degree to which leaders at University C were perceived as *trustworthy* or *authentic* appears to have played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts at *University C*. However, in this case, there was largely a lack of pre-established trust for and between some members of the leadership team, due largely to the fact that Katrina occurred less than two months after a new President and Vice President for Development were hired, and as a result, had little time to get to know other senior leaders, mid-level administrators, faculty and staff (and vice versa), nor had they yet had the shared experiences necessary to build trusting relationships (on either personal or professional levels). However, the President and the Vice President for Development did have trust in one another from having worked together in prior settings (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C). Thus, according to some contributors, the President did not make full use of the leadership teams talents, as the two new leaders seemed to rely primarily on each other to make and execute decisions, at the exclusion of other university actors (including some on the

leadership team), preventing matters from being addressed as quickly as they might have otherwise been, with an “all hands on deck” approach.

Consequently, some contributors questioned the *intentions* and *authenticity* of the President’s actions, in part because did not know her well given her recent hiring and/or felt that they were not being appropriately entrusted with responsibilities. Others contend that that President was not as visible as to the university community in the aftermath of Katrina as they had hoped, but was regularly profiled by the media – causing a few interviewees to question whether she was “too concerned public opinion,” to focused on “credit seeking,” and whether her actions were intended to benefit the institution or her personal profile. However, other contributors contend that the President (along with the Vice President for Development) was spending much of her time in Washington, D.C. and at times with the media to garner the resources and attention necessary to help foster the university’s recovery.

Ethics/Morality/Virtuousness

Perhaps the subtheme of *exhibited leader attributes* noted most irregularly by interviewees at each institution for its role in facilitating recovery from Katrina involves the perceived *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* of leader behavior. It is likely however, that some interviewees viewed *ethics/morality/virtuousness* as a character trait that overlaps with the perceived attribute of *trust/authenticity* and/or leaders’ willingness or ability to *tap into spirituality*. However, the subtheme was noted with enough regularity at University A and University B to warrant a brief discussion of relevant findings, and merit its continued inclusion in the revised conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster, advanced in the concluding chapter. Moreover, when cited by contributors

ethics/morality/virtuousness appeared to serve as the rationale or foundation behind many leader-based decisions post-Katrina.

At *University A*, perceived *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* on the part of leadership was noted sporadically by contributors. However, two key university leaders specifically noted the importance of possessing “a very strong moral compass” to guide decision-making and other forms of leader behavior in a constantly changing post-Katrina environment. Contributors also observed that this sense of *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* was evident in the decision on the part of University leadership to continue paying full-time employees during the semester in which the university was closed, while meeting other human needs by ensuring that those who temporarily relocated to Houston had access to housing, food, and local schools for their children, and that faculty and staff who returned to New Orleans for the Spring semester (whose homes were still being repaired) had access to university owned or rented housing.

Along the same lines, at *University B*, *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* on the part of leadership was mentioned infrequently for its role in facilitating recovery from Katrina at University B. However, as a group, contributors noted the importance of possessing integrity, while others indicate that university leaders possessed sense of *ethics/morality* or *virtuousness* stemming from the institutions Jesuit foundation. Some praised the university president (who also serves as a Father in the Catholic Church) for his expertise in *ethics/morality* as well as his emphasis on social justice and desire to put the concerns of people first, even while seeking to facilitate institutional survival. The post-Katrina act most commonly referenced as evidence of *ethics/morality* on the part of the President involves the decision to retain and continue paying nearly all full-time employees, while the university remained closed for the Fall semester – a

decision that helped build goodwill and prevented many employees from seeking employment elsewhere.

The subtheme leader-based *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* was not specifically cited by contributors for its role in response or recovery efforts at *University C*. However, as previously noted, it is likely that some contributors viewed the previously discussed subtheme of *trust/authenticity* as a character trait that overlaps with a sense of *ethics, morality* and *virtuousness*. Others at *University C*, likely consider *ethics, morality* or *virtuousness* as a key component of *spirituality*, which was widely perceived to have played an important role in disaster response and recovery efforts at *University C*.

Self-awareness & Self-control

One of the attributes most commonly cited by interviewees at each university, as vital to facilitating response and recovery from disaster was the need for and ability of key university leaders to maintain a sense of *self-awareness* and *self-control* in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances. Generally speaking, *self-awareness/self-control* was perceived to be exhibited by leaders who remained calm and composed along did not publicly “lose their cool,” even when under immense pressure. This sense of calmness, further purveyed confidence, and/or the feeling that if a leader is not panicking, perhaps the situation is under control and recovery efforts are progressing in a positive manner.

At *University A*, contributors indicate that the university’s leaders exemplified *self-awareness/self-control* by never seeming to get flustered, not publicly raising their voices, not overreacting or adopting an alarmist mentality, but instead serving as a “voice and model for calm in a chaotic situation” (Contributor 4 – Leader, *University A*). Several mid and senior level leaders indicate that personality-wise, they tend to be (and sought to remain) even-tempered and

do not get rattled very easily, and when people around them acted negatively or belligerently in the aftermath of the disaster (*e.g.*, over decisions not to allow employees into campus buildings until deemed safe) they refused to “take the bait,” calmly explained the situation at hand and helped deflate their anger or anxiety. The *self-control* exhibited by members of the leadership team was not lost on others, and according to contributors inspired an added sense of confidence in the recovery effort, along with the perception that leaders had circumstances under control.

Similarly, at *University B*, multiple contributors illustrated the need for and positive influence of self-awareness/self-control on the part of leaders in the aftermath of Katrina. As one university contributor surmised, institutions benefit from leaders who possess “the ability to stay calm... kind of like a good general... and make tough decisions under fire” (Contributor 14 – Leader, University B). As examples of self-awareness/self-control, participants praised mid and senior level leaders who remained composed during the evacuation and temporary relocation of hundreds of students, maintained their patience after suddenly finding themselves sharing office space with multiple people (at a given evacuation site), stayed calm by focusing on the big picture, did not lose their temper in public, and possessed “thick skin” – or the ability to make decisions, stand by them, and not panic or lose composure even in the face of significant criticism. Contributors indicate that leaders who exhibited *self-awareness/self-control* helped facilitate sense of confidence in the leadership team and in broader recovery efforts.

Along the same lines, the ability of key leaders to maintain a sense of *self-awareness* and *self-control* under immense pressure, uncertainty and rapidly changing circumstances, was perceived to have played a major positive role in response and recovery efforts at *University C*. Collectively, contributors indicate that most senior leaders displayed a “sense of levelheadedness,” were “calm” and “under control.” Contributors also revealed that self-

awareness/self-control should involve “humility,” “knowing what you don’t know,” and a leader who can say “look, these are my skills.” For instance, after surveying the devastation to campus, a senior leader sought guidance from experts at both Brown University and Princeton University to assist with rebuilding University C’s campus. Moreover a mid-level leader, who acknowledges that she lost her temper on a couple of occasions, proactively sought counseling to assist with breaking some of the “bad habits” she realized she had adopted in response to the trauma of Katrina.

Resourcefulness/Adaptability

A subtheme of leader behavior that was cited by nearly every interviewee, at each university in this study, as both as necessary and evident in the actions of effective senior and mid-level leaders in the aftermath of Katrina, is *resourcefulness* and the *ability to adapt* in the face of rapidly changing circumstances. Whether it involved fundraising, lobbying the state or federal government, securing a temporary site to conduct university operations, building relationships with potential sources of assistance, taking on new responsibilities/positions, or rapidly shifting gears when new information dictated a change in course, resourcefulness and adaptability were crucial attributes exhibited by senior and mid-level leaders at all three institutions – attributes that may have ultimately ensured each institutions’ survival (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A).

At *University A*, leader *resourcefulness/adaptability* played a crucial role in disaster response and recovery efforts. As one leader noted “...so much of the early response required just picking up the phone and calling anybody you could in a position of power to get some help and relief” (Contributor 1 – Leader, University A). Others saw their day-to-day responsibilities change completely and repeatedly in the aftermath of the disaster to ensure that whatever needed

to be done was done. Examples of resourcefulness and adaptability in the aftermath of Katrina were prevalent at University A and include (but are not limited to): the President's ability to arrange for the temporary (one-semester) relocation of students other colleges and universities around the country; the efforts of the President's Chief of Staff to evacuate senior leaders from campus by helicopter, while simultaneously securing an evacuation site in Houston; finding schools at which to enroll their children of evacuees, and helping manage payroll; the successful execution of a \$700 million capital campaign; a health sciences employee being tasked with identifying a cruise ship to temporarily house faculty, staff and students; and a mid-level leaders efforts to secure the university's potentially hazardous biological research assets, saving the university approximately \$150 million in the process.

Just as with University A, the *resourcefulness/adaptability* of leaders at *University B* played a central role in response and recovery efforts. With fewer employees involved with day to day operations post-Katrina, senior and mid-level leaders commonly took on new roles, in addition to their traditional responsibilities. As evidence of resourcefulness and adaptability, contributors highlighted: creative efforts on the part of the university's technology experts and facilities managers to reestablish operations; the ability of a key vice president to leverage his New Orleans-based banking relationships to allow for financial transactions, and loans by word of mouth (as meetings in New Orleans were not possible in the disasters aftermath); facilitating the temporary placement of student at institutions throughout the country (both inside and outside the Jesuit network); and successfully working with federal officials in Washington D.C. to establish procedures for determine how financial aid will be allocated when/if students temporarily attend other institutions.

Along the same lines, at *University C*, *resourcefulness/adaptability* was the perceived leader attribute most frequently highlighted by interviewees for its role in facilitating disaster response and recovery efforts. In many respects the President of University C is viewed by contributors (including some critics) as a leader who exemplified *resourcefulness*, particularly during the year immediately following Katrina – when she successfully tapped into relationships nationally, to secure financial resources and hands on assistance with the university’s recovery efforts. Others heaped similar praise on the Vice President for Development, for his efforts to lobby the federal government and secure funding in the disasters aftermath.

As examples of *resourcefulness* and *adaptability* in the aftermath of Katrina, leaders cite: the President’s (and other key university leaders’) efforts to quickly establish a “symbiotic relationship” with the local Hilton Hotel, ultimately relocating the entire university (its students, faculty and staff) to that destination from two condensed semesters (between January and July 2006); the President’s willingness to *connect with other university leaders* to ensure that the dispersed students were able to temporarily enroll at institutions throughout the country; the efforts of the President and Vice President for Development (along with other key mid-level leaders) to *secure major disaster assistance* – successfully lobbying federal officials for a \$160 million federal loan (at 1% interest over 30 years, with no payment on principal and interest due for the first 3 years), and roughly \$72 million in federal grants; efforts on the part of Vice President for Student Life, who in addition to assigning hotel rooms and securing classroom space at the Hilton, managed issues related to student conduct, and helped locate housing for students when campus reopened in Fall 2006, when multiple dormitories had yet to be repaired; and the efforts of a mid-level leader/faculty member who commonly started off the day at the Hilton Hotel dealing with academic responsibilities, followed shortly thereafter by meetings with

engineers and contractors at University C's heavily damaged campus, while wearing hazmat clothing and boots.

Theme #3 – Leader Thinking & Decision Making

According to interviewees, leader *thinking and decision making* played a critical role in the response and recovery efforts of each university. Collectively, contributors indicate that in many respects the success of response and recovery efforts hinge upon the ability of their institutions' leaders to effectively and accurately process a tremendous amount of rapidly changing information, listen to different perspectives, and make good decisions based on that information (and those perspectives), in a quick timeframe, after having considered the potential consequences of various alternative actions.

Moreover, in noting the importance of *thinking and decision making* to university response and recovery efforts, interviewees consistently highlighted the subthemes of leader outlined in the previously proposed conceptual framework, including: 1) *utilizing multiple mental frames*, 2) *Contrarian & Janusian thinking*, 3) *viewing disasters as opportunities*, 4) *instinctive & vigilant decision-making*, and 5) *avoiding common traps*. Additionally, a new subtheme of leader thinking and decision making emerged from the collective responses of contributors – the *timing of post-disaster decisions*. This new subtheme appears to have had a major influence on response and recovery efforts at each institution, and is discussed in more detail with at the end of this chapter. However, participants vary over the extent to which they perceive that the aforementioned subthemes were exhibited at their respective universities, and regarding which behaviors seemed to have the greatest impact on response and recovery efforts. Nevertheless, at each institution, contributors noted the particular importance of making the best out of challenging circumstances by seeing the *opportunity in the midst of crisis*. This section

begins, however, by discussing the need for examining challenges and potential solutions to disaster scenarios through *multiple frames*.

Utilizing Multiple Mental Frames

Contributors at each university in this study, consistently spoke to the importance of and preference for leaders who explore crisis related challenges from a variety of angles, and/or take into account different perspectives when making key decisions in the aftermath of a disaster – particularly those decisions that involve major changes to the overall structure of an institution (e.g., the elimination of departments, mergers/consolidations, and/or addition of new programs). Several who maintain this stance, contend that viewing challenges through *multiple mental frames* and/or taking the time to fully vet decisions before they are made, improved the quality of decisions and thus made them more likely to favorably impact recovery efforts. However, perspectives over the degree to which university leaders indeed viewed items through *multiple frames* and/or sufficiently took into account the perspectives of others in the aftermath of Katrina varies substantially by institution, and by constituency. Faculty were more likely to express concerns over a perceived discontinuation or circumvention of *shared governance processes*, which they view as a means to ensure that variety of perspectives are taken into account and that higher quality decisions are ultimately made. In contrast, senior administrators generally contend that when the very survival of a university is at stake, and a broad array of decisions need to be made in a narrow time frame, engaging in standard (non-emergency) shared governance processes and fully soliciting the perspectives of various constituents is not only impractical but unwise. Hence, instead university leaders (to a varying degree at each institution) surrounded themselves with a limited group of key senior and mid-level leaders, and certain cases external

advisors, to assist with thinking through challenges and with deciding between alternative courses of action.

At *University A*, contributors at all levels of the organization regularly cited and praised what they perceived as the ability of university leaders to view issues through multiple frames while guiding response and recovery efforts. Faculty, staff and members of the leadership team highlighted the importance of prior experience, and knowledge of how University A (as a multifaceted organization) operates, as key in being able to explore crisis related issues from multiple frames. Staff members commonly praised university leaders for their willingness to listen and take into account the views of those at different levels of the organizational hierarchy, before making decisions – while still recognizing that both the responsibility for making decisions and ultimately the consequences those decisions still falls on the shoulders of the leaders themselves. Generally speaking, in the aftermath of the disaster, university leadership employed the *task force* or *committee structure* (with concrete deadlines for decisions or recommendations to be made) to help ensure that issues were examined from multiple angles, while recognizing that the process cannot go on indefinitely. The leadership team also put together an advisory committee, consisting primarily of current and former university presidents to help ensure that the institutions recovery plan had been considered from multiple angles before shifting toward implementation.

Just as with University A, multiple interviewees at *University B* cited the importance of exploring issues from multiple angles or utilizing *multiple mental frames* to help facilitate effective decisions in the aftermath of Katrina. Leaders, faculty and staff all cited the importance of collaboration, hearing different views, looking at different sides of the argument and examining the pros and cons before making key decisions. A particularly noteworthy example

of university leadership looking at an issue from multiple mental frames, involved the challenge of “re-recruiting” university’s dispersed student population for its Spring semester reopening. The institution’s multi-level outreach and marketing efforts (starting with an invitation to visit campus while still closed to collect personal belongings) contributed to the return of roughly 92% of the students who were enrolled at the university prior to Katrina’s arrival.

However, while the President occasionally received praise for taking into account feedback from legal affairs, student affairs and other units before making some decisions, accounts differ over the degree to which university leaders generally took the time to examine issues from multiple angles or perspectives prior to making major institutional changes, with several faculty contributors openly questioning whether Katrina-related challenges and alternative courses of action were fully or adequately reviewed before decisions were made. More specifically, those who questioned the degree to which issues were explored from multiple angles, were frustrated by what they perceived was leadership’s circumvention of its standard (non-emergency) “shared-governance processes” whereby multiple constituencies are given the opportunity to provide input, ideally ensuring that to some extent issues are viewed from multiple angles before decisions are made. Critics note the decision to eliminate the institution’s education programs at the very time New Orleans was undergoing substantial educational reform and needed new teachers as evidence of not fully exploring issues through multiple frames.

Much like interviewees at University A and University B, contributors at *University C* regularly highlighted the importance of exploring issues from multiple angles or utilizing *multiple mental frames* to assist in facilitating effective decision making in the aftermath of a disaster – emphasizing the benefits of *listening*, *explore differing viewpoints* and *collaborating* with others before making key decision. However, many contributors (particularly faculty and

mid-level leaders) openly questioned whether Katrina-related challenges and potential courses of action were indeed viewed from multiple frames or considered from multiple perspectives before decisions were made. Instead contributors commonly perceived a lack of willingness to fully engage the perspectives of others during the recovery process, prompting some units to operate in “silos,” whereby some senior and mid-level leaders made decisions focused on protecting their units rather than the broader university. Others (primarily faculty with shared administrative roles) expressed frustration over what they perceived was leadership’s circumvention of standard non-emergency “shared-governance processes,” and noted an unwillingness to listen to those with different perspectives on pending academic restructuring decisions.

Consistent with the viewpoints above, a key senior leader acknowledged that during first few months following the disaster, university leadership focused on doing what they felt needed to be done to facilitate the survival of the institution, versus concerning themselves with reestablishing shared governance processes (which eventually resumed, in part, at the Hilton Hotel), noting that in the immediate aftermath of Katrina “it was not important at all” (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C). Hence, a mid-level leader, who received praise from multiple contributors for her efforts to help the organization heal over the months since Katrina, indicates that leaders often underestimate the degree to which they have been personally impacted by a disaster, thus, in the absence of shared governance should rely heavily on the *perspectives of unbiased external experts* to help broaden their thinking.

Contrarian & Janusian Thinking

Contributors across institutional settings, highlight the important role *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* on the part of leadership in influencing the quality of post-Katrina decisions and ultimately the direction of recovery efforts. Administrators, faculty and staff agree that

university leaders need to be able to think “outside the box” in the midst of disaster to develop creative solutions to multifaceted challenges (an element of Contrarian thinking), and must be able to balance what at times can be competing dynamics (Janusian thinking) including the short versus long term impact of decisions, institutional goals versus financial realities, and the tangible benefits of a specific action versus the public perception of that action. Generally speaking, where Contrarian and/or Janusian thinking was evident in the behavior of leaders, their decisions had results that were perceived favorably by the university community (at least in the long term), whereas the decisions that contributors singled out for the greatest criticism, tended to be those where such thinking patterns were lacking, and one or both techniques were required.

While contributors at *University A* specifically complement members of their institution’s leadership team for their willingness to “thinking outside box,” a characteristic of *Contrarian* style thinking (e.g., by choosing to reopen in New Orleans after some experts suggested that the University had a 1/3 chance of survival, and that its hospital/medical school may have been better off in another state), it is *Janusian* thinking in particular, whereby two-seemingly contradictory thoughts were taken into account in an effort to craft more effective decisions, that interviewees cited as having played a central role in leader thinking as it relates to the university’s recovery efforts. One leader notes that as soon as she joined the leadership team in Houston, the University President greeted her and began facilitating a dualistic mindset – encouraging her and others to embrace reality while also moving forward from it towards a new vision. Other contributors indicate that university leaders considered both academic quality and financial viability when determining whether or not a given program should be eliminated in an effort foster institutional recovery, and were careful to consider decisions from both short and long term perspectives. To ensure that university leaders did not get lost in the immediacy of

circumstances (short-term thinking), they utilized a team of external advisors (current and former university presidents) for objective guidance, and to help foster a long term vision for the institution.

Although mentioned less frequently by interviewees at *University B*, *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* played an important role in decision making and in influencing the direction of recovery efforts. *Contrarian* thinking was evident in the successful mission of a mid-level leader to convince senior leaders to recognize that in a post-Katrina world, the University had temporarily lost a bit of stature with the national audience, and needed to shift its approach and methods to facilitate enrollment – by marketing more aggressively to prospective students (and the parents of prospective students) outside the institution’s historic target market. *Contrarian thinking processes* were also evident in the leadership team’s decision to have the university offer two-full spring semesters between January and July, in an effort to keep students on track towards graduation. However, in this instance key decision makers did not successfully adopt *Janusian thinking patterns*, and as a consequence, failed to anticipate a major future challenge; namely, that many freshman, sophomore, and junior level students would also take courses during both semesters, lessening their time to graduation, just as the university’s incoming student population was beginning to wane (due to post-Katrina recruitment challenges), magnifying the impact of the university’s budget shortfall.

Janusian thinking, however, did play a role in the response and recovery efforts of the university leaders at University B, as (with the notable exception above) they generally received praise from contributors for their ability to simultaneously focus on the short and long-term impact of decisions. Moreover, a combination *Contrarian* and *Janusian* thinking patterns were evident in the development of post-Katrina admissions related initiatives – as although the

university is heavily dependent on tuition revenue to conduct operations, to facilitate prospective student visits and ideally attendance at University B, the University offered monetary incentives (*Contrarian* and short-term *Janusian* thinking, that would in essence reduce the tuition dollars received (albeit modestly) from each incoming student, but ideally increase the student population from which such tuition dollars are received (long-term *Janusian* thinking).

At *University C*, both *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* (and a times the lack thereof) were cited by contributors as having played important roles in decision making and in influencing the university's post-Katrina recovery efforts. A noteworthy example of *Contrarian thinking* involves the University President's decision to evacuate campus on Saturday afternoon, rather than waiting for the mayor's decision to declare a mandatory evacuation, (which did not take place until Sunday morning). Many other campuses and businesses in the region waited until Sunday to evacuate, which would have posed added evacuation and traffic related challenges. Additionally, a mid-level who played a major role in recovery efforts – indicates that she attempted to think about potentially sensitive post-Katrina initiatives from opposing viewpoints (a *Janusian trait*) to anticipate resistance and facilitate better decisions.

One of the most significant and favorable decisions made by university leaders in the aftermath of Katrina – the decision to return to New Orleans and temporarily relocate the university to a local Hilton Hotel – involved a blend of *Contrarian* and *Janusian thinking* patterns. The decision was *Contrarian*, in that at the time many constituents were openly questioning whether the New Orleans would ever be a sustainable city again and some key university officials (*e.g.*, members of its Board of Trustees) were lobbying fellow officials to move the institution to Atlanta. The President and other key officials however, were ultimately successful in persuading the Board to support a return to New Orleans. The decision

characterizes *Janusian thinking*, as in making the decision to remain in New Orleans, the leadership team examined the situation from both historical and present day lenses, recognizing: 1) the University's unique status as an institution that grew directly out of a post-Civil War desire (on the part of faith based organizations) to educate newly freed African Americans (in the Deep South) and, 2) the University's subsequent evolution into one of the most highly regarded *Historically Black Universities* (or *HBCUs*) in the country, as well as a symbol of success for generations of African Americans and American's more broadly. Hence, the leadership team recognized that its alumni and faculty, staff and students (as a whole) would be far more likely to unite around and support a rebuilt University C at the site of its birth, than at a new location in Atlanta, without the same history, as some Board Members and senior university leaders were proposing (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C).

On the other hand, several contributors presented the same example of a decision that would have potentially benefitted from *Janusian thinking*, by examining the matter from both *short and long term perspectives*, rather than what appears to have been a predominant focus on immediate circumstances. Specifically, the decision to lay off all non-tenured employees (in November 2005) may have had some short-term budgetary benefits, but in the long-term, according to multiple participants, it has posed significant challenges for the institution, as the university lost some talented young faculty members. Although some non-tenured faculty were rehired by University C shortly after being laid-off, the remaining tenured faculty members generally had the highest salaries, and there remains a mismatch in some departments between the number of faculty members employed and the number of students they serve.

Viewing Disasters as Opportunities

Without question, the most frequently noted subtheme of *leader-thinking and decision-making* emerging from the interview process, involves the importance of leaders seeing, purveying and utilizing Hurricane Katrina as a potential *opportunity*, by making the best out of difficult circumstances, making desired changes to their institutions (that were more difficult to facilitate under non-emergency circumstances), and seeking (in statement and deed) to improve their university's to beyond their pre-disaster status. Moreover, leaders at each institution strongly contend that even if they had hoped to return their institutions to their pre-disaster status, this was not a realistic possibility, as Hurricane Katrina permanently changed circumstances at each university and in the City of New Orleans more broadly.

At University A, one expert who maintains an affiliation with the institution notes that, the university, led by its President, "has given new meaning to the phrase 'silver-lining,'" and sought to "capitalize on the special opportunities post-Katrina," by creating new institutes, including those focused on public service, enhancing urban communities, and the study of race and poverty (Issacson, in Mayhew, 2007, p. xiii). University leadership also utilized Katrina as an opportunity to facilitate greater *administrative efficiency*, reducing staff redundancy, eliminating underperforming departments, and merging others (*e.g.*, academic advising services are newly centralized), while flattening its organizational structure. The institution's leaders tapped into "public empathy" and recovery-focused "momentum," and dramatically increased fundraising – generating hundreds of millions of dollars towards its \$700 million capital campaign (which had begun just months prior to the disaster), ultimately exceeding its goal by \$30 million (University A's Capital Campaign, 2008). Additionally, University leaders utilized the word "opportunity" or "opportunities" in numerous public statements and communications

post-Katrina, hoping that other members of the community would come to view circumstances with a similar mindset, return to New Orleans, and become a part of the University's and the City's recovery.

University B's leadership team similarly adopted a *mindset* of viewing the aftermath of Katrina as an *opportunity* to strengthen and improve aspects of the institution, in essence, seeking to position the university more favorably or competitively for the future than it had been prior to the disaster. Multiple contributors praise the President and his leadership team for having taken the opportunity to examine the university and facilitate greater *administrative efficiency* by streamlining operations, eliminating underperforming departments, and merging others schools/departments. Some university leaders openly acknowledge that several of the institutional changes made in the midst of recovery efforts should have been made long before Katrina, but it took a crisis and budget cuts to both force and enable such changes. Finally, Hurricane Katrina was utilized by *University B's* leadership team as an opportunity to enhance the university's involvement within the New Orleans community and to become *better prepared for future disasters* – potentially preventing operations from being halted to the extent that they were during Fall 2005.

As with *University A* and *University B*, contributors at *University C* commonly noted the importance of seeing and taking advantage of any potential opportunities inherent in aftermath of a disaster. *University C's* leadership team recognized the opportunity to make the best of a difficult situation, and utilized the word “opportunity” or “opportunities” in numerous public statements and communications post-Katrina, and make similar positive declarations (*e.g.*, “We’re coming back better and stronger” in NACUBO, 2007), hoping members of the university community would adopt the same outlook, and would return to New Orleans to be a part of the

University's recovery. Much like University A, University C tapped into public empathy in the aftermath of the disaster to dramatically increase fundraising efforts – raising \$38 million in private gifts, \$72 million in federal grants, and subsequently launching a successful \$70 million capital campaign (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C).

University leaders also utilized the disaster as an opportunity to enhance institutional features that existed (or were lacking) prior to the disaster by breaking ground on two state of the art LEED certified energy efficient buildings; build relationships with two-year colleges in order attract transfer students (hoping to alleviate the impact of declining enrollment of first time freshman); enhance the university's involvement within the community; eliminate underperforming programs; forge new partnerships and consortiums with universities in the region (including University A and B); recruit high profile graduation speakers including Bill Cosby and Hilary Clinton; and approve a new course offering specific to Hurricane Katrina and its impact on New Orleans.

Instinctive & Vigilant Decision-making

The subtheme of *blending instinctive* with *vigilant decision-making* (and or relying on one versus the other) emerged from the accounts of interviewees on multiple occasions (particularly at both University A and University B), primarily when depicting the processes by which individual leaders made decisions during the first few weeks following Katrina. Several participants, however, stressed that the mere “willingness to make a decision” may be more important than how it came to be made, as there were so many issues and challenges to deal with, under a variety of time-related constraints, and as a contributor with University A's medical school notes “it's just easier to steer a moving ship” (Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A). Others, however, noted the benefits of either *instinctive* or

vigilant decision making, while most contend that a balancing *instinctive* with *vigilant decision making* is most effective in a time of crisis – knowing when to listen, when to continue gathering information, and when it’s time to make a decision.

At *University A*, university leaders relied on a combination of *instinctive* and *vigilant* decision making processes. Multiple interviewees perceived and appreciated the willingness of the part of the leadership team at *University A* – in particular the president – to make decisions, often in a rather quick, *instinctive* manner, noting that they “had a willingness to act,” that they “realized they had to make a decision and they had to make it now,” that “hope is not a plan” (a statement the President became known for post-disaster) and “making a decision is in many ways more important than making the right decision.” Others, however, recommend that where possible university leaders seek a balance between *instinctive* and *vigilant decision making* – by knowing when to listen, when to continue gathering information, and when it’s time to make a decision. Generally speaking contributors indicated that the institutions leaders were successful in establishing such a balance, by putting time constraints on the process of deliberation and/or committee based collaboration. However, in quickly and instinctively committing to meet payroll by a particular date (via direct deposit since local postal services had shut down and most employees had evacuated), university leaders appear not have realized that thousands of employees had yet set up direct deposit accounts, and given technology related failures, new systems would have to be created to facilitate the payment process. While payroll was met on time, the process posed challenges and placed significant burdens on some technology experts and some human resources personnel who were not consulted prior to the commitment being made.

Similarly to University A, mid and senior level leaders at University B relied on a combination of *instinctive* and *vigilant* decision-making processes, and similarly noted that at times, the mere “willingness to make a decision” became the most important aspect of decision making post-disaster, as there were so many decisions that needed to be made in an abbreviated time frame and under a rapidly shifting state of affairs. For those reasons, two key university leaders indicate that Hurricane Katrina prompted members of the leadership team to (out of necessity) alter more methodical patterns of shared governance – in favor of quick, largely *instinctive* decision making processes. Others indicate that time constraints presented an environment that necessitated *vigilant decision making*, noting that a recovery plan that might normally take 2 to 3 years to craft, had to be developed with more limited consultation over a 4-month time frame. However, most mid and senior level leader noted that during crises university leaders should embrace a deliberative approach to decision making, one that balances *instinctive* with *vigilant processes* – knowing when to listen, when to continue gathering information, and when it’s time to make a decision – while also recognizing whether adjustments need to be made time when/if the leader becomes aware of new information.

The subtheme of *blending instinctive with vigilant decision-making* (and in certain circumstances relying on one versus the other) was rarely addressed by interviewees at University C, as most contributors (aside from a couple of senior leaders) assert that they had a difficult time determining the processes by which many key decisions at their institution were made – in part due to post-Katrina geographic separation between fellow members of leadership team (Atlanta and Washington DC), and between leaders and the broader university community. However, multiple contributors did note the benefits of what they perceived to be *instinctive decision making* on the part of the President in choosing to reopen the university in New Orleans,

despite many questioning whether the City would return and the institution would be viable; and in quickly partnering with the New Orleans-based Hilton Hotel – enabling the university to resume operations at that location in January 2006, and begin the recovery process. However, an external expert, who interacted with key leaders at University C in the aftermath of Katrina and illustrated the importance of *vigilant decision making* in the midst of crisis, and complemented the President of University C for what he perceived as being “one of those remarkable people that wasn’t gonna sit around waiting to see who was gonna do what...”

Avoiding Common Decision Making Traps

A subtheme of leader behavior that contributors at each institution referenced – both directly and in some cases indirectly – is the need to be cognizant of and avoid a variety of common crisis-based *decision making traps*. At times leaders were complemented for their ability to sidestep maladaptive decision-making processes (*e.g.*, hemming and hawing, or becoming overwhelmed with information), while others were criticized for having knowingly or unknowingly fallen into poor decision making patterns (*e.g.*, hyper-vigilance, and not sufficiently considering the long term ramifications of actions). Regardless of the direction of contributors accounts, the degree to which leaders were able to avoid falling into decision making traps in the aftermath of Katrina had a tangible influence on recovery efforts at each institution.

At *University A*, the primary *decision making trap* evident in response and recovery efforts, which impacted a small group of mid and senior-leaders, involved allowing themselves to become so *overwhelmed with information and post-disaster circumstances* that they in essence froze up, and were unable to make decisions. In direct contrast, some key university decision-makers, sought to consciously avoid falling into decision making traps, by recognizing that in a midst of a major disaster like Katrina, one person cannot think comprehensively about all issues

– and that so much had to be responded to and addressed immediately to ensure survival in the short-term, leaders risk neglecting the potential long-term consequence of decisions. To combat that possibility, key leaders (in particular the President) relied on the previously highlighted team of external advisors to challenge their thinking on pertinent matters. On the other hand, mid and upper level leaders sought to prevent their teams from being distracted away from what needs to be done in the short-term (adopting the saying “no decision before its time”) and/or from becoming overwhelmed by focusing too much on issues unrelated to the current task, and/or on matters over which they have no control (*e.g.*, the local, state or federal government response).

Multiple contributors at *University B* emphasized the need to be cognizant of and avoid falling into a variety of common crisis-based *decision making traps* in the aftermath of Katrina including: *waffling, hemming and hawing*, and/or *jumping too quickly* into making decisions. One key decision maker at University B, who sought guidance from a colleague at Harvard (with prior experience managing crises) to avoid maladaptive decision making patterns, notes the importance of not waiting to make the “perfect decision” contending that in the midst of disaster no decision maker will ever have all of the information they wish to have access to prior to making the call. The President, Provost and other senior leaders were also repeatedly praised for managing to largely avoid a particularly common trap, namely, *being overly concerned with public opinion*. They chose not to utilize public outcry as a barometer or basis for decision making, seemingly recognizing that “the public” lacked much of the information that leaders were relying on as the basis for decisions, can have interests other than what is best for the overall university in mind, and constituents’ perceptions can shift with the benefit of hindsight.

Participants at *University C* also addressed the importance of *avoiding common decision making traps* in the aftermath of a major disaster and noted its impact on response and recovery

efforts. While some praised leadership's ability to skillfully make large-scale unwavering decisions (*e.g.*, the decision to rebuild the university at its historic home of New Orleans), others expressed concerns over what they perceived to be mistakes in the way decisions were made – alluding to decision making traps that are common in the midst major crises. Evidence of leaders falling into such traps include: making recovery-focused *decisions that seem contradict other decisions or institutional priorities*, without explaining the contradictions (*e.g.*, building two new state of the art buildings, when the institution is not yet bringing in the tuition revenue sufficient to occupy them and cover the increased utility related costs); *not setting up a process to vet ideas* or engage many of those who wished to assist with response and recovery efforts, as at times leaders become so focused on larger-scale issues that many lesser but still important decisions were delayed and some administrators, faculty, and staff came away with “the impression that they are not needed” and resulted in the loss of “some good people... they just moved on” (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C); and *letting personal views or standards get in the way* of deliberative decision-making (*e.g.*, the unwillingness to declare *financial exigency* in the aftermath of the disaster and reduce the number of tenured faculty where warranted) and/or doing what needs to be done, as the impact of not seeking to objectively think through matters in the short term, can have significant consequences over the long term.

[Note: The subtheme of *devil's advocacy/scenario-based planning* was identified in Chapter II as crucial in fostering disaster preparedness, versus a behavior to be engaged in during disaster response and recovery; hence, the subtheme falls outside the scope of the current study. It is, however, important to note that much like with University A multiple interviewees at University B stressed the importance of *devils advocacy/scenario-based planning*, noted that planning for the ultimate worst-case scenario had not taken place at University B (nor other universities in the region) prior to Katrina, and contend that such planning would have benefitted response and recovery efforts. Thus, given the potential that *devils advocacy/worst-case scenario* planning has to save institutions and lives, and the frequency with which the topic was voluntarily discussed by participants, the subtheme will be addressed briefly in Chapter X.]

Theme #4 – Leader Communication Style

As might be expected given the tendency to associate leaders with memorable and inspirational speeches during difficult times, *leader communication* was consistently cited by faculty, staff, and key administrators at each institution in this study as essential in the aftermath of disaster, and as key in influencing the direction of recovery efforts. For all postsecondary institutions in the New Orleans area (and businesses and citizens more broadly), the aftermath of Katrina posed significant communications challenges. These challenges stemmed largely from the combination of technological failures throughout the region (whereby phones with New Orleans-based area codes could not be utilized for voice communication for several days to weeks), the initial geographic separation between members of each leadership team, and more longer term geographic separation between members of each university's recovery team and their broader populations of faculty and staff. Thus, in many respects the each leadership team's initial response to the disaster involved trying to reestablish communications with one another as quickly as possible and by whatever means necessary – from texting (a feature that many contributors indicate that they utilized for the first time after Katrina), to posting messages on a temporary web-based message board, to evacuating New Orleans via helicopter to resettle in a common location so mid and senior level leaders could communicate in person. Soon such communications extended to the broader university community, and similarly included text messages, along with recorded videos, web-chats, audio-taped messages, emails, town hall meetings and where possible phone calls.

Generally speaking, the person who, by choice or necessity, became the primary (albeit not the sole) communicator both in addressing the university community and external audiences was the President of each institution. Irrespective of the source of post-disaster communications,

each subtheme of *leader-based communication* identified in the previously advanced conceptual framework was regularly highlighted by contributors at University A, University B and University C, for having influenced disaster response and recovery efforts. These subthemes include: 1) *facilitating awareness*, 2) *clarity of terminology and message*, 3) *symbolic action*, and 4) *creating context for meaning and action*. However, accounts vary significantly regarding the degree to which these key subthemes of leader communication were evident in the responses and recovery efforts of each institution. Moreover, contributors shed light on an important new subtheme of leader communication that emerged from this study – *emphasizing the mission of the university* in post-disaster communications. This new subtheme of leader behavior, which (according to firsthand accounts) played a central role in disaster response and recovery efforts at each institution, will be discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter along with the other newly identified *subthemes of leader behavior* that emerged from this study. This section begins by addressing the commonly noted subtheme of *facilitating awareness*.

Facilitating Awareness

As highlighted above, university leaders at each institution pursued a number of methods by which to reconnect with the university community, and keep it informed as to the status of each institution's response and recovery efforts. Moreover, each university had to battle against perceptions stemming from the national media's rather consistent negative coverage of the impact of Katrina and devastation to New Orleans (generally without differentiating by region). By *facilitating awareness* in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina university leaders hoped to send a message to both internal (administrators, faculty, staff and students) and external audiences (general public, prospective students and their parents) that their respective university's still exist and would be reopening for the Winter semester.

While all contributors (across institutional settings) cited the importance of facilitating awareness amongst the university community in the aftermath of disaster, assessments differ over the degree to which each leadership team was successful in doing so. Where leadership teams were perceived to be successful in facilitating awareness, contributors indicate that they felt well-informed, valued as a member of the university community, and maintained confidence that their university would eventually re-open and recover. On the other hand, where leaders were not viewed as placing enough emphasis on facilitating awareness, contributors indicate that response and recovery efforts were to some degree slowed, rumors were more likely to spread, employees were more likely to feel “out of the loop,” and were less confident that the leadership team knew what it was doing and/or was capable of facilitating recovery.

At *University A*, multiple contributors indicated that rather than withholding information in an effort to avoid causing fear within the university community, leadership leaned towards *transparency* and providing detailed information. Key university leaders involved with post-disaster communication efforts indicate that in addition to fostering credibility and trust in leadership, *promoting awareness* can help lower anxiety and foster a sense of certainty. The President of *University A* became the institution’s primary spokesperson, and communicated with the university via email, web-based postings, live web-chats, recorded audio and video tapes, and town hall meetings. Moreover, in a rather unique effort to facilitate awareness, the leadership team (at the time stationed in Houston) welcomed embedded reporters from both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, who shadowed the President, and published updates and articles with their respective publications. Additionally, once *University A* re-opened, the institution engaged in creative methods to spread the word that institution is once again a viable option for undergraduate studies (and to alleviate a projected long-term

decrease in enrollment figures) – creating an admission’s DVD for parents to address any post-Katrina concerns regarding the institution’s continued viability, crime, and the potential for future hurricanes, while dramatically expanding its high-school guidance counselor fly-in program, so those in contact with high school seniors will be able to speak to the recovery and merits of attending University A.

Much like with University A, *University B’s* leadership team pursued a number of methods by which to connect with one another, students, faculty, and staff, as well as keep the university community informed as to the extent of the damage suffered by University B and the progress of recovery efforts, including: text messaging, email updates, web-based postings, conference calls, advising sessions, and town hall meetings held near campuses where large numbers of University B’s student population had temporarily relocated. The university also established a toll free 24-hour hotline (a 1-800 number) to field inquiries from students and parents. University leaders also had to battle against perceptions stemming from an anonymous blog which (according to contributors) in chronicling the university’s response and recovery presented a mix of accurate and inaccurate information along with some flawed assumptions and personal attacks.

According to multiple interviewees, the leadership team placed a particular emphasis on and did an effective job of facilitating awareness amongst the dispersed student population, conducting town hall meetings and preparing marketing videos intended to re-attract the dispersed student population, and inform them as to the condition of University B and plans for the institution’s re-opening. Such efforts helped facilitating a 92% student return rate. However, assessments of the leadership’s efforts to facilitate awareness amongst faculty and staff were mixed, with most indicating that the leadership team could have been more much more effective,

particularly with regard to the development and announcement of the university's post-Katrina restructuring plan. Those involved with preparing the plan acknowledge that the university community would have benefitted from receiving information on the development of the post-Katrina restructuring plan directly from the president, provost or other key leaders in an unfiltered manner, rather than relying on and hoping that standing university committees would swiftly and accurately relay information to their constituents, which some members of these committees did not do.

Similarly, the leadership team at *University C's* utilized a variety of methods to connect with one another, and *facilitate awareness* within the broader community regarding the extent of the devastation suffered by institution, and the progress of recovery efforts. However, during the weeks immediately following Hurricane Katrina, text messaging became the primary mode of communication. Once key members of the leadership team established a presence in Atlanta and Washington D.C., the leadership team relied primarily on a combination of in person meetings and conference calls with one another and the broader community. In contrast with University A and University B, the university did not put as much emphasis on reestablishing its website, and relied in part on other universities to post press releases on the university's behalf. Hence, the accounts of contributors vary significantly regarding the degree to which University C's leadership team successfully facilitated awareness.

According to leaders, faculty, and staff, university leaders placed a particular emphasis on and did an effective job of reconnecting with and facilitating awareness amongst the dispersed student population, by flying to those cities with a significant student (and parent) presence, and holding town hall meetings (led by the University President) to inform them as to the condition of University C, plans for the institution's re-opening, and of the university's commitment to

those who choose to return to New Orleans in Winter 2006 that they will have the opportunity to graduate by walking through the “avenue of the oaks” (and important university tradition).

However, multiple interviewees also contend that in terms of facilitating awareness amongst faculty and staff, the leadership team was much less effective, and many felt “out of the loop” regarding the leadership team’s efforts, and as a result, some who wanted to assist with recovery efforts were not made aware of how they could assist and/or were not utilized. The need for better communication and awareness was particularly apparent when it came to announcing the university’s post-Katrina academic restructuring efforts. Faculty (and several mid-level leaders) felt that in addition to not being included in conversations regarding proposed restructuring measures, they were not made aware of the rationale behind the decisions that resulted from those discussions – prompting frustration amongst faculty and the eventual departure of several Deans.

Clarity of Terminology and Message

Another key aspect of leader-based communication noted by multiple interviewees at each institution involves the overall *clarity and consistency of terminology and message* stemming from the leadership team. In the aftermath of Katrina, the nation was both captivated and troubled by images and stories of what was taking place in New Orleans. Members of the university community (most of which had evacuated pre-storm) saw these same images, and heard the same (often contradictory) stories regarding the extent of the damage and the possibility that New Orleans would never again be an inhabitable city. Hence, according to contributors, university administrators not only needed to help shape the message employees and the nation were hearing about the City and campuses in the region, but had to inform the community in a clear, consistent, and accurate manner in order to prevent rumors from

spreading, and/or prevent members of the university community from seeking positions elsewhere in response to false information.

At *University A*, the leadership team sought to foster *clarity* by communicating frequently and in a predictable manner, noting that if they did not “shape the message,” someone else might do it for them. Hence, rather than leaving faculty and staff guessing as to when the next communication from the leadership team would be received, university leaders designated specific times that the university community could expect to receive communications (generally through the institutions emergency website), and even if/when there was no new information to share, the University President (or a fellow leader) would inform the community that “we have nothing new to share at this time” and informed viewers as to when the next update would be taking place. When communicating, senior leaders indicate that they sought to speak candidly, while balancing reality with a sense of hope and optimism. Moreover, in an effort to prevent the spread of inaccurate information and ensure that relevant concerns are being addressed, university leadership deployed staff to monitor blogs and news sources depicting events related to *University A*, and subsequently crafted communications specific to the concerns noted by various university constituencies via such sources.

While the *clarity and consistency of terminology and messaging* was similarly noted as important in the aftermath of disaster at *University B*, multiple contributors, including some members of the university’s leadership team, indicate that at times such clarity was lacking. More specifically, contributors noted that while university leaders posted updates frequently, they did so irregularly (*e.g.*, only when there was new information), rather than at a set time each day, leading to occasional confusion and the feeling amongst some employees that institutional leaders “have fallen off the face of the earth” (Contributor 4 – Mid-level Leader, *University B*).

Others indicate that on occasion a lack of clarity resulted from key decision-makers having not directly disseminated information on controversial decisions (and the rationale behind those decisions) to the university community, relying instead on departmental representatives to relay information to their constituencies. Moreover, in the absence of clear information dictating otherwise, some faculty and staff attempted to visit University B prior to the campus's official reopening, only to be turned away. Institutional leaders acknowledge that mistakes were made in communicating with the broader university community and plan to be more regimented and consistent with communication processes in the event of future disasters.

Along the same lines, contributors at *University C* commonly noted the importance of *message clarity and consistency* both in informing the university community and in mobilizing leaders, faculty and staff behind recovery efforts. Some participants suggested that *communication*, is a skill that administrators, faculty and staff “on Black campuses” find particularly important in campus leaders (during both emergency and non-emergency circumstances) with one contributor noting that “the highest compliment a west African can pay another West African is ‘he or she speaks very well’ ” (Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University C). However, perspectives vary widely over the degree to which leaders at University C exhibited one important aspect of communication post-Katrina – clarity and consistency in messaging.

The President and Vice President for Development received particular praise for their clarity and consistency in communicating to the Board of Trustees and broader community that University C should and would return to New Orleans, rather than Atlanta or another location proposed by some Board members and campus leaders. As rumors began to spread regarding various proposals, the President put an end to the speculation and “galvanized” the community

around a commitment to rebuild the university in New Orleans. Others, however, indicate that there was a serious lack of clarity and certain cases lack of accuracy in post-disaster leader communications – with some leaders perceived as at times having difficulty portraying optimism without overpromising. Examples of a lack of clarity and consistency in messaging include: faculty being encouraged by senior administrators not to get jobs at other institutions, suggesting that they would continue to have employment at University C, only to be laid-off weeks later; indicating that a major post-Katrina restructuring plan had resulted from and been analyzed by a university committee, however, some members of the committee claim that they had never even received notification of the relevant meeting(s); and the perceived lack of a “unified leadership message” over what structural changes would be taking place, prompting a mid-level leader/faculty to send “cryptic messages” to her team, encouraging them to prepare for the possibility that their employment would not be secure indefinitely.

Symbolic Actions

In addition to standard forms of verbal or written form of communication, another key subtheme of leader behavior evident the response and recovery efforts of university leaders in this study involves *symbolic action*. Multiple contributors expressed their view that symbolic action is the most important aspect of leadership post-disaster. In the aftermath of Katrina, symbolic action appeared in many forms, from *written words* and lines delivered in *speeches*, to *special events* and *monuments* placed around campus, to the *priorities* implied in key decisions, to simply *being visible or present* for faculty, staff and students. According to contributors at all three institutions, symbolic action was not only prevalent in the actions of university leaders, but also had a strong influence on response and recovery efforts by impacting employee morale, their motivation to perform, and in bringing the university community together to celebrate post-

Katrina survival and progress along the path to recovery. Many contributors came to view their university and/or university leaders themselves as symbols of survival and/or the path to recovery.

At *University A*, *symbolic action* on the part of or facilitated by university leaders played a major role in university response and recovery efforts. While some such efforts were intentional, symbolic meaning was also derived from behavior and decisions intended for purposes other than symbolism. For example, multiple contributors indicate that the mere *presence or visibility* of key university leaders during response and recovery efforts became a source of pride and a sign that the institution was on its way to recovery, and gave them the feeling that the President, Vice Presidents and some key Hospital Administrators were “rolling up their sleeves” and “walking amongst the troops.” Many within the university community also came to see the institution’s *athletic teams* (which continued to compete during the Fall semester) as the public face of the university, contending that “by merely being visible [they] were keeping the hope of an entire university alive” (Mayhew, 2007, p. 82). Several contributors also cited the decision to *continue paying full-time employees* while the university was closed for the fall semester, as symbolic both in signifying that the university is still operational, and that its employees are valued by university leadership.

Symbolic action also played a major role in response and recovery efforts at *University B*. First and foremost, multiple contributors indicate that efforts to reach out to every employee to check on their well-being, combined with decision *continue paying full-time employees* while the university was closed for the fall semester, had important *symbolic meaning*, both in signifying that the university is remains operational, and that its employees are valued by university leadership. Moreover, the decision by the President and his team to quickly deploy the personnel

necessary to protect and repair campus facilities, while also encouraging the National Guard to create a base of operations on campus received praise allowed university leadership to *present the image* of a university that was secure and had essentially survived the storm. Finally, at various locations throughout campus, university leadership placed and/or approved the placement of *statues, monuments and other symbols* of the institution's survival in the face of Katrina, which one leader contends were intended to show that "whether it's recovery or stages of it – that we're back" (*Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*).

The subtheme of *symbolic action* played a central role in the in the efforts of leaders at *University C* in the aftermath of Katrina, and was evident in many forms – from specific decisions and leader-based communications, to celebrating successes, to smaller scale tributes. In many respects, university actors came to view the institution as itself "a symbol of hope for the community, the city and nation" (*University C's Strategic Plan, 2008*). Where utilized effectively, contributors generally note that symbolic action served as an effective means to unite the university community, remind members of their personal (and the institution's) resilience in the face of disaster, and/or mobilize the community around future recovery efforts. When leader behavior triggered undesirable symbolic meaning, such action contributed to frustration and decreased confidence in members of the leadership team and/or the wisdom behind their efforts.

A particularly noteworthy example of leaders understanding the importance of symbolic action in the aftermath of Katrina, stems from efforts to *quickly repair the traditional landscape of the university*, and focus on preparing the university to host its *first post-Katrina graduation* in Summer of 2006 – hoping to impress upon the university community and symbolize to broader public that the *University C* has survived and on the path to recovery. In so doing, the *University President* focused on saving the university's historic oak trees, which line a pathway that

student's traditionally walk through as a *rite of passage* at graduation "or they just feel like they haven't done it" (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C). Moreover, as a *tribute* to those institutions who temporarily hosted students during Fall 2005, at the institution's first post-Katrina graduation (Summer 2006); each graduating student carried the flag of the university they attended that semester. Institutional leaders also sought to facilitate momentum and symbolize recovery by *publicly announcing and celebrating successes* both at graduation (and at other times throughout response and recovery efforts).

On the other hand, the leadership team was also the subject of significant criticism by some faculty and staff, for not having placed enough emphasis on *being present*. Multiple contributors indicate that in aftermath of Katrina, they did not have a good sense of where university leaders were at a given moment or what they were doing – in part because New Orleans was uninhabitable and university members were initially spread throughout the country – but also due to the fact that two key university leaders (President and Vice President for Development) spent much of their first several weeks post-Katrina, in Washington D.C. lobbying for federal assistance. The dynamics depicted above prompted some faculty and mid-level leaders to feel "out of the loop" regarding what response and recovery related activities university leaders (both those in Washington D.C. and others who had temporarily relocated to Atlanta) were engaging in on a day to day basis –leaving some with the impression that top leaders were either disengaged or not up to the challenge of facilitating recovery.

Creating A Context for Meaning and Action

While closely related to symbolic action, a subtheme of leader behavior in which accounts of contributors vary greatly (by institution) involves the extent to which university leaders intentionally or unintentionally fostered a *shared context for meaning and action* in the

aftermath of Katrina. Differences between institutions also exist regarding the time frame during which such a shared context was created. Collectively, several methods were utilized to help craft a shared context for meaning and action, from *shared living and working arrangements* at a given evacuation site, to *large scale events* (e.g., graduation), to *memorials*, to *group reflections and religious services*, and other activities. Where leaders successfully fostered a shared context for meaning and action, contributors indicate that such experiences helped facilitate a common understanding of circumstances, fostered a sense of unity and a family environment, enabled personal healing, and gave people the sense that they were working, not just for themselves, but for a larger purpose in seeking to facilitate organizational recovery. Where non-existent, unless made up for with *pre-existing relational reserves*, it appears that the lack of a shared context for meaning and action posed communication and decision making challenges, and did not enable the bonds that contributors indicate were fostered where such a shared context existed.

Interviewees at *University A* noted several methods by which institutional leaders (whether intentionally or unintentionally) created a *context for meaning and action* in the aftermath of Katrina. First and foremost, were circumstances where large groups of employees (at various levels of the university hierarchy) were brought together in the aftermath of the disaster to assist with recovery efforts and celebrate successes. As noted by several staff members, when such interactions were combined with the recognition that all employees, regardless of position, were in some way impacted by the disaster, Katrina came to be viewed as a “great equalizer.” Living and working in the same location also had the added benefit of ensuring that the decision makers, executors and communicators of those decisions were all in close proximity and had access to similar information when/if issues required immediate attention. Organized events, from town hall meetings, to BBQ’s, to holiday parties, became

opportunities to share stories, and foster common understandings and healing. As a faculty member/mid-level administrator with the university's medical school notes:

We had lots of parties. Lots of parties. And we celebrated every major holiday we could. Other country's holidays, I don't care... the key piece that it put everybody together in the same room. ... And when everybody was together in the same room, there was, you could look side to side and see that you're going through this too... And then it becomes, once the loneliness goes away, then things get a lot easier."

Contributor 7 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A

In comparison with University A, the subtheme of *creating a context for meaning and action* was not mentioned frequently by interviewees and was less prevalent in the actions of *University B's* leaders; however, there were clear instances in which the leadership team sought to foster such a context. One key effort on the part of university leaders to craft a *context for meaning and action* involved *faculty and staff reconnecting events* hosted by the institution during the first week of the Spring 2006 semester. These events have been followed annually (generally on or around the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina) with *seminars, memorials, community projects, the recognition of heroic acts* by first responders, and other activities intended to bring the university community together and help establish a shared context for meaning after Katrina. Moreover, those departments whose leaders arranged for their employees to temporarily live and work at the same evacuation sites, benefitted from having decision makers and the executors of those decisions in close proximity, with access to the same information. In contrast, the lack of a common destination for all key senior and mid-leaders occasionally resulted in different interpretations of events, and misunderstandings as to the processes and facts utilized to make decisions. Hence, in preparation for future disasters, university leadership has arranged to evacuate response and recovery team members and their families to a location in Texas, where they will live and conduct university operations until it is safe to return to New Orleans.

At *University C* on the other hand, the ability of leaders to *create a shared context for meaning and action* played a vital role in recovery efforts, and provided a foundation from which to facilitate survival and begin the recovery process. Initially however, a *shared context* was hindered by the fact that the university did not have a pre-established evacuation site for its leadership team (as university administrators had not anticipated a prolonged absence from the region, accompanied by a near complete shutdown of communications), prompting key university personnel to spread throughout the region, making it difficult to reconnect with one another given the inoperability of cell phones with New Orleans based area codes (aside from texting capabilities, which many had not previously utilized). This challenge was alleviated (in part) by mid-September, when the university provost was successful in securing office space in Atlanta, and was joined by dozens of additional senior and mid-level leaders – some of whom made periodic visits – to assist with various aspects of the institution’s response and recovery efforts. According to a faculty member, establishing a base of operations in Atlanta not only benefitted recovery efforts, as decision makers now had access to similar information and could more easily communicate with one another, but by *living and working together* they began to view the *University C* community as *family*.

Moreover, between January and July 2006, at the Hilton Hotel in New Orleans, the *sense of family* grew to include the broader institutional community including the 1,100 students who returned to the region. It was also during this time frame that university leaders more intentionally (versus out of necessity) sought to establish a shared context for meaning and action. Living and working at the Hilton Hotel for seven months provided an opportunity for members of the university community to *share stories and experiences*, and participate in *group prayer sessions* with colleagues who truly understood what they were going through. The

university hosted *parties, dances* and other *special events* that in combination, nearly all contributors indicated helped unite the community, while helping to facilitate a level of enjoyment and healing.

Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions

The theme of *managing human reactions* was directly referenced by every contributor to this study. This may stem from the fact that all employees at each institution were impacted both professionally and personally by Hurricane Katrina, and often quite severely. While interviewees commonly argued that leaders cannot truly predict how specific individuals (including themselves) will respond until actually faced with a disaster, collectively, contributors indicate that effective leaders in the midst of crisis are able to anticipate and respond effectively to an array of potential human actions and emotions.

The accounts of participants further reveal that the ability to manage human reactions depends largely on a leader (or leadership team's) understanding of the population they serve, their general understanding of how people tend to react in times of trauma, and their ability to overcome people-related obstacles as they emerge. The degree to which university leaders can effectively manage and navigate such factors, and channel human reactions and emotions in a desirable direction can go a long way towards determining whether or not the organization and its members are able to heal and recover from a crisis. As such, human considerations were frequently noted as “a” or “the” primary rationale for key post-disaster decisions and leader based communications.

Hence, the previously identified subthemes of *managing human reactions* in the midst of disaster were highlighted by multiple participants at each university for having influenced disaster response and recovery efforts at their respective institutions. These subthemes include:

1) *navigating common responses to trauma*, 2) possessing *emotional competence/intelligence*, 3) the ability and willingness to tap into *spirituality*, and 4) the ability to *navigate* and/or *overcome resistance*. Perceptions differ, however, over the degree to which specific subthemes were displayed by each leadership team and regarding the skill with which they did so.

Understanding Common Responses to Traumatic Events & Possessing Emotional Competence/Intelligence

As discussed above, each contributor to this study was impacted by Hurricane Katrina (and often severely), and their ability to function in the midst of challenging personal and professional circumstances, as well as effectively contribute towards the university's disaster response and recovery efforts, varied considerably (including amongst members of the university's leadership team). As such the subthemes of *understanding common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence* were noted by nearly all interviewees as crucial in responding to Katrina. Additionally, the vast majority of contributors linked these two subthemes in their responses, addressing them as if they are 'two sides of the same coin'; thus, the subthemes, while distinct for purposes of the conceptual framework (as understanding how people tend to react in times of trauma and developing strategies in accordance, differs from the ability to detect, manage and/or provide the resources to manage emotional reactions) are jointly addressed in this section. Moreover, the accounts of contributors also revealed, that in addition to understanding how people commonly react in times of crises and possessing emotional intelligence, what ultimately is most important, is how university leaders utilize that knowledge, and the degree to which they adopt behaviors and/or strategies that successfully facilitate individual and organizational healing post-disaster.

Interviewees at all levels of *University A*, cited specific behaviors and strategies implemented by University leadership, as evidence that key leaders recognized the importance of understanding how people tend to react in times of crisis, and sought to address the needs and emotions (linking the aforementioned subthemes) of its human population post-Katrina, including: 1) *visibly putting people first* – which at University A involved a) leaders recognizing that university members were suffering in their personal lives (outside of work), b) helping ensure that their immediate needs were met, c) demonstrating the centrality of “people” within the organization via concrete decisions and actions (*e.g.*, by continuing to pay all full-time employees even while the university was closed for the Fall semester, and d) providing housing, food and other basic necessities for members of the Houston-based response and recovery team), which in turn created an environment whereby employees could more comfortably and fully dedicate themselves to the university’s efforts; 2) *fostering a family environment* – by a) arranging for those who had evacuated to Houston to live and work side-by-side in hotels and shared apartment complexes, and b) securing a cruise ship for those faculty, staff and students who returned to New Orleans in January but were awaiting home/apartment repairs; and 3) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – by a) looking for opportunities to reestablish routines (*e.g.*, starting each morning with a meeting in the Presidents hotel room), b) celebrating victories (*e.g.*, the completion of assignments), and c) helping employees regain a sense of control by keeping them busy and productive.

Additionally, a small group of contributors at University A specifically highlighted the importance of *managing emotional reactions*. Generally speaking, such references came from members of the university’s leadership team, who noted the importance of paying attention to the psychological health and well-being of employees in the aftermath of a disaster, and to look for

opportunities to *lift people's spirits*. Some university leaders encouraged their employees to make use of *crisis counselors*, which some noted using themselves. Others noted the importance of giving employees who seem overwhelmed the opportunity to *take time off*, take care of personal business, and/or recharge before reengaging in recovery efforts.

Along the same lines as participants at University A, most interviewees at *University B* cited the subthemes of *understanding common responses to trauma* and possessing *emotional competence/intelligence* as vital and clearly evident in leader behavior in the aftermath of Katrina, and added that it is a matter of “when” not “if” a disaster will impact employees (including members of the leadership team) on a personal level. Collectively, the specific post-Katrina decisions, communications and strategies, cited as evidence that key leaders recognized the importance of understanding and addressing the needs and emotions (linking the aforementioned subthemes) of its human population post-Katrina, fell into two primary categories, including: 1) *visibly putting people first* – which at University B involved a) showing *empathy*, by recognizing that university members may be suffering in both their personal and professional lives and *demonstrating concern* for the safety and well-being of students and university personnel above all other institutional concerns, b) committing to pay all full-time employees for the Fall 2005 semester, even as the university remained closed, c) delaying staff/faculty layoffs until having a clearer picture of Winter (and projected future) enrollment totals, even as most other universities in region had already conducted at least one round of layoffs, and d) working with FEMA to provide temporary housing for faculty and staff on university owned property while they awaited the completion of home repairs; and 2) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – by a) seeking to facilitating a *sense of security* and *meet the basic needs of employees* (e.g., by paying salaries and providing housing), b)

helping employees regain a *sense of control* over life events by reestablishing routines, keeping them busy through work-related responsibilities, and c) making counselors and other mental resources available to the campus community.

Additionally, a small group of contributors specifically highlighted the importance of *managing emotional reactions*, as at University B, roughly 60% of faculty and staff reported a total or significant loss of their homes, resulting in the expression of a range of emotional and physiological reactions (Contributor 5 – Leader/Faculty, University B; Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B; PlanItNow, 2012). Mid and senior level leaders indicate that managing emotions begins with *knowing your people* and getting a sense for both their individual circumstances and the well-being of the unit as a whole. Contributors further note that to avoid overwhelming employees in the aftermath of a disaster, it is important for leaders to not to continuously focus on the bottom-line (*e.g.*, improving the financial status of the university or recovering enrollments), and to recognize when it is time to lessen an employees workload and/or encourage them to temporarily step away from recovery efforts or other university related activities.

As with the prior institutions in this study, each interviewee at *University C* noted the importance of university leaders' ability to *understand and anticipate common responses to trauma* and/or the degree to which they possess *emotional competence/intelligence* as important influencers of response and recovery efforts. Collectively they indicate that while it can difficult to predict how specific individuals will react in a disaster, most will become more resilient, adaptable and energetic than anticipated once they enter survival mode, but adrenaline will only last for so long and at some point people begin to wear out.

Moreover, contributors highlight specific post-Katrina decisions, communications and strategies, as evidence that key senior and mid-level leaders recognized the importance of understanding and addressing the needs and emotions of its human population post-Katrina, as well as examples where they perceive that university leaders did not adequately anticipate or address the needs of the institution's people. Examples of the former, largely fall within the two categories evident at University A and University B: 1) *visibly putting people first* – by a) showing *empathy* and *demonstrating concern* for the safety and well-being of students and university personnel rather than merely focusing on institutional concerns, b) helping meet employees *basic needs* (e.g., committing to pay all tenured employees during the Fall semester), c) being present, and actively walking around and listening to concerns of employees, and d) hosting events to express appreciation for faculty and staff who returned to New Orleans; and 2) *establishing a sense of normalcy or certainty* – by a) helping employees regain a *sense of control* over life events by reestablishing routines, b) keeping them busy through work-related responsibilities, c) making use of the ballrooms at the Hilton Hotel to sing, dance and host celebrations, d) providing employees with downtime to address personal matters related to the disaster (e.g., by cancelling the standard summer semester and facilitating 4-day work weeks); and e) making resources available to the campus community to meet their mental health needs.

However, both a senior and a mid-level leader add that while it is imperative to show true empathy and concern to the university community, it is also important to *balance empathy* with an atmosphere that prevents faculty and staff from simply dwelling on the disaster, and instead fosters healing while encouraging community members to move beyond the disaster. That being said, contributor note that on occasion senior leadership became so preoccupied with repairing facilities, fundraising and managing logistics (perhaps given the scale of the devastation suffered

by the institution) that the *spirit of the people* was to some extent neglected, prompting a mid-level leader to form a committee to work behind the scenes to reestablish the university's identity in the aftermath of disaster and spread a sense of optimism in an environment that remained challenging. As one leader contends, "it wasn't just about going through a checklist, we've got the clean water, we've got this – no, you need more than that" (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C).

Additionally, a small group of interviewees specifically highlighted the emotional impact of the disaster and the importance of anticipating and being prepared to *manage emotional reactions*. Collectively, mid and senior level leaders who were generally perceived as effective in doing so, indicate that they monitored the emotional well-being and needs of staff, sought to recognize when employees need time away from work to handle personal circumstances, provided access to counseling services (which a large number of faculty and staff took advantage of), and attempted to reestablish or reinforce a sense of community – even when living at a distance – by actively communicating with employees, via all available methods.

Spirituality

The subtheme of managing human reactions in which there was the greatest distinction between institutions involves the degree to which leaders emphasized and/or were perceived to have *tapped into spirituality* in the aftermath of Katrina. More specifically, this study revealed that *spirituality* played a far less visible role in the efforts of leaders at University A (a private, non-religiously affiliated institution) than it did either University B (a private, Jesuit affiliated university) or University C (a private HBCU, with a Methodist affiliation). That being said, when *spirituality* was evoked by university leaders during response and recovery efforts, it served as a valuable method to inspire, unite the university community, help answer questions

that major disasters or trauma can evoke (*e.g.*, Why is this happening to us?), and help facilitate individual and organizational healing.

At *University A*, according to the accounts of contributors, *spirituality* did not play a major role in the efforts of university leaders to foster organizational response of recovery efforts. Interviewees who referenced having *tapped into spirituality*, tended to do so on a private basis, to assist with healing on a personal level and/or to help address the question running through the minds of many, “*Why is this happening to me?*” When spirituality was referenced by leaders at the organizational level, it was done primarily for the purpose of motivating employees – encouraging them to ask themselves “why they were put here at this moment in time,” to recognize Katrina as “defining moment” and an opportunity “to find out what [they’re] made of” and/or to “rise to the occasion.” The limited role of *spirituality* in the response and recovery efforts at University A likely stems from the fact that it is not a religiously-affiliated university; thus, regular references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders (at least while engaging as representatives of the institution) are not a part of the organizational culture to the extent that they might be at religiously affiliated institutions.

In stark contrast with University A, at *University B*, *spirituality* played an important and far more visible role in the efforts of leaders to facilitate recovery. This finding is likely due to the fact that University B is formally affiliated with the Jesuit (Catholic) faith, and is led by a President who also serves as a Father in the Catholic Church. Thus, references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders (while engaging as representatives of the institution) are more commonly a part of the organizational culture at University B (during both emergency and non-emergency circumstances), than they are non-religiously affiliated institutions, like University A. While some interviewees referenced tapping into *spirituality* on a private basis, to assist with

personal healing and/or to help come terms with *how and why such a major disaster took place*, several interviewees also indicate that institutional leaders tapped into *spirituality* in an effort to promote healing at both the organizational and individual levels, hosting *religious services* and *memorials*. *Spirituality* played an important role in the decision-making of the university president – who as a Father in the Jesuit tradition, according to contributors, seemed to have a faith driven concern for people – understood that employees had personal obligations that extended beyond the university, committed to pay employees during the semester campus was closed, and secured temporary housing for many faculty and staff whose homes were still being repaired or rebuilt at the time of the university’s reopening.

Similarly to at University B, leadership’s ability and willingness to tap into *spirituality* at *University C* played a particularly visible and vital role both with helping people coming to terms with the devastation suffered by the institution and in helping facilitate healing at both the organizational and individual levels. As an HBCU with Methodist and Protestant affiliations, and a predominately Christian population, references to *spirituality* and *religion* by university leaders (while engaging as representatives of the institution) were commonly a part of the organizational culture prior to the disaster; thus, references to faith in Katrina’s aftermath were not unexpected. Institutional leaders commonly and proudly note that the only building on campus that did not sustain severe wind, mold, or flood related damage as a result of Katrina was the university chapel. Moreover, the university Chaplain (in this case a Reverend) was lauded repeatedly for her role in helping members of the faculty, staff, students and top university leaders unite and around their faith, along with the mission and history of the university, while providing a “safe space” in which to share their stories (often emotional) and experiences with Katrina.

Contributors indicate the university's members drew on faith as a way to help *interpret the disaster* and *draw meaning* from the experience – a practice that has historical precedence in the African American community (in the aftermath of other tragedies from slavery to Jim Crow segregation). Additionally, post-Katrina addresses, documents and articles written by university leaders, frequently tapped into the subtheme of spirituality. In a letter to students three weeks after the disaster (on September 19, 2005), the President of University C wrote “Let us walk by faith and not by sight toward the University C that is rising out of the struggles of these difficult days” a phrase that is repeated in university documents including its recovery plan. The President adds, in an editorial penned on the Fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, “University C’s journey to renewal and transformation began in prayer” (in de Vise, 2010), a statement she follows with a passage from James Weldon Johnson's (1899) famous poem turned song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing:"

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who has brought us thus far on the way. Thou who hast by thy might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Overcoming Resistance

The majority of contributors in this study indicate that they were pleasantly surprised by the way most administrators, faculty, staff and students were able to function in the aftermath of the disaster, and impressed by the willingness of so many members of each university community to remain with their respective institutions and help meet the challenges involved with helping facilitate organizational survival and recovery. However, collectively, contributors also indicate that amongst those involved with recovery efforts, some were unable (for varying amounts of time) to execute their responsibilities effectively. Moreover, there were multiple instances at each university, whereby institutional leadership encountered *significant resistance*,

and *public criticism* in response to their efforts and/or proposed post-Katrina institutional changes.

At *University A*, the ability for leaders to manage and/or overcome resistance had a substantial impact on response and recovery efforts. Along with pressure from the AAUP, alumni and faculty associated with the university's eliminated engineering programs, and alumni opposed to the merger of its historic women's college with the general university, *University A's* leaders on occasion faced challenges and resistance at the individual level, including (but not limited to): 1) senior or mid-level leaders who were unwilling or unable to constructively engage in the recovery process, and by default left matters to be handled by subordinates; 2) leaders, faculty or staff who were unable or unwilling to engage in activities that were not consistent with their written job description or title; 3) employees who felt that they should receive special treatment and/or that their units should be exempt from the impact of Katrina or subsequent institutional changes; 4) lawsuits from faculty members related to the merger and elimination of departments, and faculty positions; and 5) the parents of students who did not seem to grasp the full scope of the devastation suffered by the university, and on occasion made unreasonable requests.

Strategies employed by *University A's* leaders to help manage resistance were manifold and largely focused on recognizing the fragile post-disaster mental or emotional state of some employees. Contributors noted the importance of trying to "remain calm, very diplomatic and open to hearing people's complaints," paying attention to staff/colleagues and watching for warning signs that circumstances are beginning to overwhelm them. In certain cases, a direct *one-on-one conversation* with a university leader or colleague was sufficient to pull an employee who was having difficulty performing post-disaster out of their immobilized state, while in other

instances, employees were encouraged to *take time away* from recovery efforts to deal with personal issues. In more extreme cases, where employees were having difficulties to the point of becoming an impediment to the university's post-Katrina efforts, they were relieved of some or all their recovery related responsibilities.

The ability for leaders to *navigate and overcome resistance* also played an important role in response and recovery efforts *University B*. While a few mid and senior-level leaders indicate that amongst those involved with recovery efforts, some were unable or unwilling to execute their responsibilities in a constructive or team-oriented fashion (resulting in direct *one-on-one conversation* with a higher level officer, and in a more extreme circumstance – assistance with finding employment elsewhere), much of the resistance encountered by leaders at University B stemmed from the development, passage and implementation of the institutions controversial recovery plan (proposed in April 2006 and approved the following month). A leader/faculty member noted that such resistance was to be expected, as he argues, “you can't cancel programs without it engendering hard feelings...” (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty Member, University B). Others indicate that some members of the university community felt they should be able to return to University B and have everything be exactly the same as it was prior to the storm, a possibility that was not realistic, as the status of the university and city had shifted after-Katrina.

Hence, along with pressure from the AAUP and faculty associated with the university's largest college prior to Katrina, the *College of Sciences and the Arts*, who were opposed to the process by which the university developed its post Katrina recovery plan (which opponents contend violated the university's shared governance processes and principles associated with tenure) and several of the decisions associated with it, institutional leaders also needed to navigate challenges and resistance at the individual level from public criticism, to student

protests on behalf of faculty, to a series of lawsuits. Obstacles or resistance, however, did not solely stem from university actors, as negatively-oriented media reports regarding the devastation and crime in the City of New Orleans, made it far more difficult to attract out of state students who (along with their parents) were initially influenced by such reports. In response, and in an effort to steer the message in a more favorable direction, the university nearly doubled its marketing budget.

In comparison to University A and University B, the subtheme of *overcoming resistance*, whether *intentional* (e.g., opposition to post-Katrina policies or initiatives) or *unintentional* (e.g., the inability to function effectively as a result of disaster induced trauma), was noted infrequently by contributors at *University C* for its role in leader behavior in the aftermath of Katrina, and when mentioned, generally addressed obstacles posed by external constituents. For instance, during the evacuation process, leaders repeatedly encountered circumstances whereby the parents of students sought to board University chartered buses intended solely for the evacuation of university members (students, and any remaining faculty and staff). Ultimately university leadership allowed parents to board and/or remain on the buses – erring on the side of humanitarianism. Moreover, obstacles emanated from public perception of the devastation, crime in the City of New Orleans, and hype regarding the likelihood of future Katrina’s – stemming largely from negatively-oriented media reports. However, unlike University A and University B which have more extensive marketing budgets and are in located in a part of New Orleans that generally sustained less damage, these perceptions continue to pose challenges for University C and its student recruitment efforts.

Internally, multiple contributors cited strategies that they found effective in alleviating the obstacles and resistance resulting from the post-disaster mental or emotional state of

employees. While at the Hilton Hotel, a mid-level leader indicates that on a couple of occasions each month, he would call his team together, to get a sense of how his staff members were dealing with the aftermath of the disaster. Recognizing that “some people had harder times than others,” he utilized these team meetings as an opportunity to determine when/if it might make sense to let a staff member(s) take some time away from work to deal with personal circumstances. Additionally, in an effort curtail the divisiveness that had begun to emerge in segments of the university community during the recovery process, the leadership team began holding regular meetings wherein participants agreed that despite any internal disagreements, once they left the conference room, members of the team will keep such disputes discrete and support one another.

New Subthemes of Leader Behavior

Through the document analysis and interview processes, a number of themes and subthemes of leader behavior were identified and/or discussed, most of which mirror those identified in the previously highlighted conceptual framework. However, it is important to note that three new subthemes of leader behavior emerged from this study, and were cited with such frequency, that they warrant further discussion, and will serve as key additions to the *revised conceptual framework for college/university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* presented in the concluding chapter (Chapter X). These important new subthemes include:

- The ability to *navigate the external environment* (e.g., be self-sufficient, manage obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary);
- Focus on *connecting post-disaster communications to the mission of the university*; and
- The *timing of post-disaster decisions*

Navigating the External Environment

The first new subtheme of leader behavior that emerged from this study, *navigating the external environment*, is closely related to the attribute of *resourcefulness/adaptability*, exhibited at the individual level by leaders post-Katrina. However, this study also revealed that each university, as an “organization” (while represented by leaders, faculty and staff and students), was in many ways constrained (*e.g.*, via the dysfunctional local, state, and federal government response, a downturn in the U.S. economy, the rumors/overgeneralizations and consistent negative portrayals of New Orleans chances of recovery in the media) and in other ways enabled (*e.g.*, via new collaborations with local universities, enhanced fundraising, and new research opportunities and centers) by the external environment, thus, rather than classifying the ability to *navigate the external environment* as an individual attribute, the behavior is more accurately categorized as a *leader-driven organizational dynamic*. Moreover, the complexities of the external environment (both the constraints and potential opportunities it presented) necessitated additional strategizing and coordination efforts at the organization level.

Along the same lines, contributors at each university emphasize the importance of recognizing that post-secondary institutions while often forced to rely more heavily on internal actors in the aftermath of a disaster, do not merely exist in a void, but are part of a broader community and context. In many respects the City of New Orleans and their respective universities are intertwined – as successes or failures within the City have influenced institutional recovery efforts and vice versa. As one key university leader notes:

University A has become tremendously important in the recovery of the City of New Orleans. As soon as University A opened in doors in January the population in this parish grew 20%, students were back as were faculty and staff. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University A*

In the aftermath of Katrina, contributors indicate that linkages between the status and perception of the City of New Orleans and the status and perceptions of university's in the region grew tighter. As expressed by a mid-level administrator:

Katrina tied the city and the university together even closer because now whatever happens in New Orleans affects us a lot more than it did before. Because I think the picture of New Orleans was we were sort of an oasis maybe in a city and the relationship was not as – if something happened to the city it didn't necessarily affect us in terms of our enrollment, but Katrina taught us that that's not the case. That whatever happens in New Orleans, we are affected, whether we believe it or not. And even more so now than in the past. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Moreover, university leaders had to *stay aware of occurrences at other post-secondary institutions* in the region, to ensure that their actions or decisions were not deviating unfavorably from or in a more risky manner than other colleges and universities. For instance, a mid-level leader at University B indicates that in the future, when/if neighboring University A evacuates, his institution will likely have to follow suit and vice versa, or university leaders risk a public relations nightmare.

We're right next to University A. When I mean right next door, we're separated by a fence basically. And if they go, and we don't, that's a problem.... So that's the other thing that we have to keep in mind. What's going on with University A? What's going on with [other University's in the region]? What's going on with the city? *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Multiple contributors at each university illustrated the need for their institutions to navigate a series of constraints stemming from the environment, as at the time each institution resumed operations in New Orleans (Winter 2006), much of the city's infrastructure had yet to be fully restored, many businesses had yet to reopen, and much of the city's population had yet to return. Hence, colleges and universities had to work around these barriers, and as multiple contributors noted, had to create their "own villages." At University A, environmental

constraints resulted in the institution forming its own charter school, to serve the children of returning employees.

We decided early on that for the most part, our recovery was not going to be dependent on the city. That if we were going to come back and open in January, we pretty much had to provide for ourselves. We were not going to be able to count on the city... So we took the lead on initiating the formation of a charter school out of one of the former public schools that was here in the city, nearby the campus, where we had a lot of our faculty sending their children. Contributor 3 – Leader, University A

Other contributors illustrated the importance of university leadership teams possessing the ability to *navigate external political dynamics*, particularly when seeking exceptions to the policies of the federal agencies and/or professional associations (*e.g.*, seeking exceptions regarding how retention and graduation rates are reported to the federal government, and maintaining NCAA membership even if offering fewer athletic teams than generally required) and/or seeking disaster aid relief. In pursuing federal disaster assistance, contributors indicated that local postsecondary institutions chose to band together and “present a united front” to Congress and other governments entities, hoping to ensure that all institutions would receive some amount of financial assistance, rather than spending added time and resources competing against one another – potentially resulting in some institutions receiving funding at the expense of others. A university leader, who was heavily involved with these efforts, explains how local institutions “put aside their differences” and worked together to secure three rounds of federal funding – resolving a dispute over what entity should be responsible for allocating the funds in the process.

The first disaster supplemental (October 2005) we were able to obtain \$95 mill for the state of Louisiana higher education system.... a mistake... we allowed those moneys to be distributed by the Louisiana Board of Regents... and we did not receive those funds til June/July 06. So we as a group of New Orleans institutions sat down and essentially put aside our differences and came up with a formula to distributed funds fairly... so the second and third supplemental, we essentially told Senator Landrieu “we want your money but if you send it through the Board or Regents we don’t want your money it’s

too painful, it's ridiculous, it's inefficient" ... so we essentially had it go through the Department of Education in Washington and ... The Department of Ed was very effective for us... during the immediate aftermath... compared to the other federal agencies. *Contributor 14 – Leader, University B*

Ultimately, such efforts to “present a united front” to the federal government resulted in longer term partnerships and collaborations between universities in the region, intended to help foster both institutional and city-wide recovery – including jointly operated research centers, community service initiatives, and the opportunity for students at University C to take courses at University A and vice versa.

However, such *external partnerships* necessarily extended well beyond local colleges and universities, to hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the country, along with private businesses, churches and professional associations. Post-secondary institutions served as evacuation sites for students from both University A and University C, hosted and facilitated the temporarily enrollment of thousands of dispersed students for the Fall semester (with many passing along tuition dollars to each student's New Orleans based institution), some provided temporary office space for faculty and/or select administrators, while others lent the New Orleans based institutions expert personnel (*e.g.*, engineers and landscaping experts) to assist with university repairs.

At *University A*, noteworthy *partnerships expanded beyond higher education* to include: a highly regarded hotel in Houston offering steeply discounted rates to host disaster response and recovery team members, along with their families and pets; and privately owned helicopter companies assisting with the evacuation of hospital patients, medical personnel and key administrators. At *University B*, such partnerships include: a Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana serving as an evacuation site for its student population; and fundraising on the part of various Jesuit organizations. Finally, at *University C* examples of key external partnerships

include: the community of Shreveport raising \$55,000 to fund the transportation costs of students who wished to reunite with their families; and a Hilton Hotel in New Orleans, which for seven months served as the base of operations, and primary residence for its leaders, faculty, staff and students.

In many respects, the post-Katrina partnerships noted above (and others), fostered with entities both inside and outside the higher education community, helped facilitate the survival and recovery of the institutions in this study, in the face of immense challenges. Hence, the ability to *navigate the external environment* is an important new subtheme of leader behavior (a *leader-driven organizational dynamic*), that not only played a significant role in the efforts of college and university leadership teams in aftermath of Katrina, but stands to play a major role in the aftermath of future disasters.

Emphasizing the University's Mission

A second newly identified subtheme of leader behavior that emerged from this study – and was repeatedly cited by contributors at each of the institution as key element of disaster response and recovery efforts – involves uniting and *focusing the university community around a common connection and/or mission* and consistently linking communications (including those explaining the basis of recovery-related decisions) to that mission. The mission of the university along with the broader post-disaster goals of “facilitating institutional recovery,” and “building the university beyond pre-disaster status,” serve as effective unifiers in the aftermath of a crisis, due to the fact they are statements over which there typically is little disagreement and more likely widespread support within a given university community. They serve as effective “centering points” to keep people motivated and focused on larger university objectives, versus day-to-day setbacks or disappointments. Supporting the important finding above, contributors

frequently noted that those who remained at their respective institutions in the aftermath of Katrina (including many of the contributors themselves) felt a connection to the mission of the institution, its history, the city, and/or the population they serve (which is often incorporated in the university's mission).

Explaining his leadership team's dedication to the mission of the institution, a mid-level leader at University A states that "it's part of why you're here, you believe in the mission and you just do it" (Contributor 16 – Mid-level Leader, University A). A fellow mid-level leader explains that those involved with response and recovery efforts are dedicated to the institution and the people it serves.

I think you had a dedicated group to begin with... I would say maybe the resolve. We knew that some had sacrificed everything in order for this to continue on and you felt a responsibility to them I think all of us did you know – we have to do this we have to make certain that it succeeds not only for future employees and student athletes or students but also for the ones who paid the ultimate price... or I would not feel complete or that I upheld my responsibility. *Contributor 16 – Mid-level Leader, University A*

At University C, however, institutional leaders not only sought to unite constituents around the current mission of the institution, but also sought motivate the community by reminding faculty, staff and fellow leaders of the rich history from which the mission of the institution emerged. Multiple contributors indicated that that they felt an added sense of dedication when reminded that the 140+ year old HBCU grew out of the desire to provide educational opportunities for Black children in the aftermath of slavery, served as an avenue of opportunity for African-Americans during legislatively supported racial segregation of the late-19th /20th century, and since that unfortunate time period, has become a highly regarded university both regionally and nationally (Contributor 5 – Faculty, University C). As expressed by a senior leader at University C:

It became very important to the president and myself and several others to notice the fact that this school's future was in its history. And so when you think about it in that the school's future is in its history, you can't help but become caught up in the fact that you can't let the school close or flounder on your watch. There are too many people whose shoulders it was built on. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Additionally, some contributors noted that when hiring university leaders, faculty and staff, it is important for search committees, to get a sense of the degree to which prospective hires feel a connection to the actual mission and vision of the university they are seeking to join, as those most connected to the mission (who are not otherwise laid-off or concerned with other institutional dynamics), appear to be more likely to remain with a university in the aftermath of a disaster, and seek to play an active role in fostering the institution's recovery. A mid-level student affairs professional at University B believes that to foster recovery and future loyalty in the face of disaster, his institution needs to refocus on hiring faculty and staff who feel a connection to the Jesuit mission of the institution.

We're a Catholic Jesuit university and I think that that's something that we have to really emphasize. We've got a lot of people coming from state universities, not that that's a bad thing. It's just different and I think we got away from what were our roots and our tradition a little bit. I think we're working our way to get back to that. *Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

A fellow mid-level leader at University B, who has played an important role improving the University's admissions and recruitment strategies, indicates that the ability to be a part of the recovery is what brought him to the institution in the aftermath of Katrina and motivates him to remain with the university today.

I thought it was a real opportunity for University B and for myself personally to be part of the recovery here, the renaissance... it all sort of worked together. Katrina was very devastating but then after that, there's always a chance for people to help. And to fill some role. So I felt like I could do that. *Contributor 3 – Mid-level Leader, University B*

Hence both prior to and in the aftermath of a disaster, university leadership should regularly remind the community of the institution mission and history and directly connect post-disaster communications, and the link the announcement of recovery plans/institutional changes to that mission. By reminding members that at the institution and performing the post-disaster tasks they are performing for a larger mission, or to continue to serve a particular community (*e.g.*, New Orleans) or demographic (*e.g.*, young adults), leaders can unite the community, help maintain loyalty to the institution, and potentially prevent external critics of the institution (*e.g.*, former employees whose departments or positions were eliminated) who may or may not have the same post-disaster goals/objectives in mind, from impacting the psyche of those who remain. As surmised by a mid-level leader/faculty member at University C:

We knew the whole world was looking at us and that we could not give up. We had to not only do it for University C and for New Orleans, but for other people who might go through the same thing. That you can recover. That you can make it and that nothing's impossible. There was really a lot of that within the first year, the first eighteen months.
Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C

Importance of Timing

A final important new subtheme of leader behavior that emerged via a comparison of the post-Katrina experiences of the universities and accounts of contributors in this study underlies the theme of *leader thinking and decision making* and involves the *timing* in which important post-disaster decisions were made. While this new subtheme of leader behavior was only addressed (specifically) in the chapters discussing the experiences of University B and University C, the timing in which key decisions were made and implemented in the aftermath of Katrina, had a major influence on the direction of recovery efforts at all three institutions. The issue of timing is an important factor in this study and for leaders to consider going forward for two primary reasons. First, each leadership team was forced to operate in the midst of rapidly

changing circumstances, and faced extreme pressure to make decisions (ideally the right decisions) quickly, to prevent circumstances from worsening, stabilize their institutions, and begin facilitating recovery. Second, the time-frame in which similar key decisions were made at each university in this study, not only differed, but so did the level of resistance encountered, as well as, it appears – the consequences of those decisions (*e.g.*, the speed with which institutions have moved towards recovery). While each university faced unique circumstances in the aftermath of Katrina (*e.g.*, level of damage to facilities, and size of their alumni networks), and the results of decisions are largely based on their quality, the impact of key decisions also appears to have been influenced by the timing in which they were made. As stated by McCain and Salter (2007):

Timing isn't everything. Quality matters more. But good ideas have often failed because the time was not yet propitious for their introduction, and moments have passed when a sound decision might have seized an important opportunity or averted a disaster. Important decisions... often have proved effective because their authors sensed a moment arriving or passing in which they could do some good... (p. 147).

Particularly noteworthy and consequential, was the variance in the timing in which each University's recovery plans were unveiled, and decisions were made regarding employee layoffs. *University A* unveiled its recovery plan during the month of December 2005 (while the University was still closed), and made many of its layoffs decisions in conjunction with the plan's announcement. *University B* on the other hand, did not unveil its post-Katrina restructuring plan until April 2006 (final version approved in May), and did not make or announce most of its layoff decisions until the University had already been open for several months and many university operations had assumed some semblance of normalcy. In contrast, *University C's* leadership team made its initial layoffs decision in November of 2005 – laying off dozens of staff members and all non-tenured faculty members (some of whom were rehired just

weeks later), but did not announce its formal recovery plan until 2008 (although some smaller changes had been made prior to this date) and announced additional significant organizational changes in 2010.

While *University A*'s leadership team sought to quickly move forward with institutional changes, and as a result did suffer criticism and resistance from the alumni associated with the school of engineering, the university's former women's college, and was censured by the AAUP, by developing its recovery plan and receiving approval from the Board of Trustees while the institution remained closed, and while empathy for the university's plight in the aftermath of Katrina remained at its highest point, the degree of criticism and resistance did not reach a point of causing the university long term harm, and appears to have resulted in a speedier path to recovery.

While University B's leaders indicate that they largely delayed restructuring and layoff decisions until the Spring semester, in order to determine how many students had returned to the university and get a sense of budget/enrollment projections going forward, hoping to ensure that decisions were not being made prematurely – the delay appears to have also had some unintended consequences.³² More specifically, by waiting for operations to shift back towards some semblance of normalcy before announcing the university's recovery plan (and laying off employees), after having also announced the impressive return of 92% of its student population for the Winter semester, university leaders may have inadvertently given faculty and staff the impression that the institution did not need to undergo changes and was already on the path to recovery. Hence, faculty and staff anticipated that any major structural changes would take place within the framework of standard shared governance process (which some contributors

³² A few contributors to this study suggested that the desire to delay layoff decisions also stemmed from the Jesuit/Catholic foundation of the university, and desire to meet the needs of the institution's people for as long as possible given that 60% of faculty and staff sustained significant damage to and/or total loss of their homes.

indicate took place in a more limited fashion, over a swift time frame, and without the typically weight attached to the committees' perspectives on proposed changes). Moreover, while according to most contributors the university has nearly to fully recovered, over the months immediately following the recovery plans adoption and ensuing layoffs (May 2006), the university endured, numerous faculty lawsuits, censure by the AAUP, votes of no-confidence in the President, Provost, and two Associate Provosts by the university's largest College, occasional student protests (on behalf of faculty), turnover within the President's cabinet and Provost's office, and an undertone of negativity, that some contributors indicate, did not begin to heal until 4 or 5 years after the disaster.

In contrast, at *University C*, according to institutional leaders, the rationale behind initially laying off employees in November 2005, but waiting to making significant institutional changes until years later, is that given the sheer devastation to its campus, university leaders felt that during the first 2-3 years post-Katrina, the top priority had to be on facilitating institutional survival versus focusing on longer term matters (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C; Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). After University C's leadership team became more confident that the institution would indeed survive, they chose to refocus on recovery efforts, and on transforming aspects of the university to enhance its competitiveness going forward (Contributor 7 – Leader, University C).

However well intended, much like with University B, the timeline chosen may have had some unintended consequences and contributed to the frustration expressed by many faculty members and mid-level leaders regarding the institution's response and recovery efforts. For instance, as highlighted in Chapter VIII, the decision by University C's leadership team to layoff all non-tenured employees in November 2005, rather than systematically analyzing the needs of

each unit, declaring financial exigency, and laying off a mix of tenured and untenured employees, according to some contributors may have merely prolonged fiscal challenges and delayed an inevitable reduction in high salaried tenured faculty. While the decision to rehire some non-tenured faculty just a couple of weeks after they were initially laid-off, caused some to lose confidence in the leadership team's strategy going forward.

Additionally, much like University B, by delaying various restructuring decisions, the leadership team at University C may have missed a "window of opportunity" (Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C) to make controversial changes in the immediate aftermath of the storm, when the university community and broader public maintained its highest level of empathy for the severe circumstances faced by the institution, and had anticipated the possibility of major changes. By waiting for operations to shift back towards some semblance of normalcy, with a resumption of shared governance processes, then announcing major restructuring decisions in 2008 and 2010 without fully utilized such processes (according to contributors), the leadership team appears to have contributed to the frustration, turnover and low morale (amongst some remaining employees).

Hence, the timing of key decisions in the aftermath of a disaster, cannot only influence the degree to which such initiatives are successful, but can contribute to whether a recovery plan receives limited long-term resistance, or receives significant ongoing attention and criticism from faculty, staff or alumni. University leaders must have a sense for when resistance is likely to be at its lowest or least intractable point and have an understanding of who (if anyone) needs to be brought on board to help garner support for the decision(s) at that time. Additionally, there appears to be an expiration date on how long a disaster can be utilized and or accepted as reasonable justification for major structural changes that do not go through standard shared

governance processes – as doing so at a later date can prolong angst and potentially inhibit momentum towards recovery. Hence, it is important for university leaders to recognize and ensure that they do not miss out on the limited “window of opportunity” that presents itself in the aftermath of disaster, to raise funds, harness public sympathy, draw attention to the university’s plight, and make difficult decisions.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a detailed comparative analysis of the experiences of three New Orleans based universities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (and the ensuing levee failures). Of particular emphasis was the role of leader behavior in facilitating effective (and in certain cases, less effective) response and recovery efforts at each of these institutions in the aftermath of that devastating disaster. After briefly reintroducing each university – highlighting their distinct features, the impact of the disaster, and the degree to which each institution is perceived by contributors to have recovered to date – the results of the individual case studies were synthesized by theme and subtheme of leader behavior, to determine whether the types of leader behavior exhibited and identified by contributors as having influenced of response and recovery efforts in one university setting, did so across settings.

While nearly all of the themes and subtheme of leader behavior identified in the previously proposed *conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster* were perceived by contributors at each institution to be key influencers of response and recovery efforts, there were clear differences in the degree to which certain behavior was exhibited by leaders at each institution, and the degree to which interviewees view specific leader behavior as vital to response and recovery efforts. Possible explanations for such distinctions were identified within the discussion of relevant themes and subthemes of leader behavior.

This chapter concluded with the identification and detailed discussion of three new subthemes of leader behavior that emerged from this study and played a major role in response and recovery efforts at each institution. These important new subthemes include:

- *Navigating the external environment* (e.g., be self-sufficient, manage obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary);
- *Connecting post-disaster communications to the mission of the university*; and
- *The timing of post-disaster decisions*

The chapter to follow incorporates these important new subthemes of leader behavior into a revised *conceptual framework for college/university leader behavior in the midst of disaster*.

The chapter also presents a brief summary of the study, and builds upon the discoveries highlighted via the comparative analysis by presenting additional important findings. These findings are followed by a brief discussion of study's limitations, implications (for practice/future research), and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER X

KEY FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

If I was to say anything to other universities, I would say “it can happen to you” whether it’s a hurricane or tornado or a tsunami or what have you. Things that you don’t expect can happen to you. Plan for the worst, and if you do, you are really prepared. We did a lot of crisis management on the fly as we were going along... a lot of these things can be prepared for, systems can be put in place, you can be ready, if you just plan ahead for that one eventuality you hope will never come your way.

Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University B

The previous chapter compared and contrasted the disaster response and recovery efforts of leaders at three universities in New Orleans in the face of devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee breaches. More specifically, Chapter IX synthesized the results of individual case studies, to determine whether the types of leader behavior cited by contributors as influencers of response and recovery efforts in one university setting, bear relevance across settings. This final chapter presents a brief summary of this study, and builds upon the discoveries highlighted via the comparative analysis by presenting key findings including a revised *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster*. This is followed by a brief discussion of study’s limitations, implications (for practice/future research), and concluding remarks.

Summary of the Study

This comparative case study explored the impact of leader behavior at three postsecondary institutions in New Orleans in the aftermath of a major disaster – Hurricane Katrina. After the severe storm and flood waters from the subsequent levee breaches had subsided, each institution faced severe physical damage and ongoing operational costs, not to

mention a devastated city, dilapidated infrastructure, and rumors of rising crime (in certain parts of the New Orleans), even as much of its population had evacuated to other cities/states.

More specifically, this study began with the development of a *holistic conceptual framework for leader behavior* in a disaster management context. This framework emerged from an interdisciplinary review literature of leadership in the midst of crisis, and in doing so: 1) identifies key themes and subthemes of leader behavior; 2) specifies the disaster management stages during which the identified leader behaviors have been found to be influential; 3) takes into account the features of post-secondary institutions as *self-contained communities*, the feelings and emotions of people within them, and their role in facilitating (and/or inhibiting) the efforts of organizational leaders in a disaster management context; and 4) integrates the leader behaviors identified as important by scholars and researchers from a *variety of disciplines* who have in turn explored leader behavior in a *variety of organizational settings* (both inside and outside higher education) – providing a broad foundation from which to study leader behavior at colleges and universities in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The study employed a variety of traditionally qualitative techniques for data gathering and analysis consistent with the *comparative case study* approach, including: 1) heavy document collection and review; 2) formal in-person and phone interviews; 3) site visits/observations; and 4) a multi-stage coding process (Cresswell, 2003; Yin, 1994). The aforementioned combination of methods were chosen to allow for the emergence of new themes and subthemes of leader behavior, beyond those highlighted in the previously developed conceptual framework, and to facilitate an understanding of college/university leadership in the midst of disaster from the words of those who have experienced such an event (postsecondary leaders, faculty and staff) – in this case, Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath – firsthand (Merriam, 1998).

The postsecondary institutions selected for this study varied to some extent by size, type, and the degree to which they were impacted by and have recovered from Katrina in an effort to: 1) better determine whether the elements included in the previously developed conceptual framework for leader behavior bear relevance in more than one setting; and 2) uncover linkages between differing leadership traits, behaviors, and decision-making processes – and the extent to which each postsecondary institution (or elements of each institution) has (to date) recovered from Katrina. This study has resulted in several key findings, most importantly, a revised and enhanced *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster*. This enhanced framework incorporates three new subthemes of leader behavior, identified by university leaders, faculty and staff as central to response and recovery efforts at their respective institutions. Key findings from this study are presented below.

Key Findings

As evident from prior chapters, and alluded to above, this comparative case study, has resulted in some important findings and lessons, which if understood and implemented by leaders at colleges and universities, will not only enhance the disaster response and recovery efforts of their respective institutions in the event of a disaster, but may also enhance the resilience and protect the lives of those who work, teach, study, conduct research, and/or reside within them. This section begins by addressing the *applicability of conceptual framework* utilized as the basis to explore leader behavior at colleges and universities in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Finding #1 - Applicability of the Prior Conceptual Framework

Based on an in depth document analysis and the firsthand accounts of 48 contributors, the interdisciplinary conceptual framework advanced at the outset of this study, which drew

primarily on the experiences of leaders and organizations outside the field of higher education, is also a useful tool for studying the impact of leader behavior in the midst of disaster at colleges and universities (even prior to post-study revision of the framework). *Each of the previously identified themes of leader behavior were noted by contributors at each institution as vital to response and recovery efforts, while the underlying subthemes were cited by contributors as important elements of response and recovery efforts at least two of the three universities in this study, with most being perceived as impactful at all three institutions.* However, in addition to providing evidence for the validity of the previously proposed conceptual framework, the study resulted in the discovery of three new subthemes of leader behavior that were major influencers of response and recovery efforts in each institutional setting, and as such, will be added to the revised *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster*, presented later in this chapter. These three new subthemes of leader behavior (which were discussed in detail in *Chapter IX: Comparative Analysis*) are as follows:

- Ability to *navigate the external environment* (e.g., be self-sufficient, manage obstacles, and develop partnerships where necessary);
- Focus on *connecting post-disaster communications to the mission of the university*; and
- The *timing of post-disaster decisions*

A fourth potential subtheme of leader behavior, namely, leader *sense of humor*, was only noted by contributors as an important component of response and recovery efforts at one institution – University A; hence, this subtheme will not be added to the revised conceptual framework presented later in this chapter. However, given its prominence amongst the accounts of contributors at University A, leader *sense of humor* is discussed later in this section.

Moreover, future research should be conducted to explore whether *sense of humor* on the part of

university leaders has been observed as positive influencer of disaster response and recovery efforts at other postsecondary institutions, or this finding is unique to University A.

Finding #2 - Revised Definition of Disaster Management

In Chapter I, a new definition for disaster management was proposed. Specifically, the definition for disaster management advanced in that chapter was as follows:

A set of (ideally pre-established) routines, organized behaviors, and collective beliefs, that together enhance the capacity of an individual, organization, or other societal entity to: 1) prepare for; 2) minimize the damage from; 3) effectively respond to; and 4) bounce back from a disaster or trauma.

The definition had emerged from and largely integrated the depictions of the process from various experts and scholars. However, it has become clear through the literature review and study, that the previously identified definition lacks one important element, namely, an overall goal of *enhanced resilience, or emerging stronger and more prepared for disaster than prior to a given event*. Most definitions of disaster management, including those adhered to by insurance companies and FEMA (historically speaking) seek to merely return institutions to a pre-disaster *state of normalcy*. This state of normalcy can intentionally or unintentionally replicate the status quo, and result in the very vulnerabilities that existed at an institution(s) prior to a disaster having taken place.

Thus, *disaster management* can and should be more comprehensively defined as:

A set of (ideally pre-established) routines, organized behaviors, and collective beliefs, that together produce the capacity of an individual, organization, or other societal entity to: 1) prepare for; 2) minimize the damage from; 3) effectively respond to; and 4) bounce back from a disaster or trauma – with the goal of emerging more resilient than prior to disaster.

College and university leaders should ensure that their institutions' disaster preparedness plans and recovery efforts incorporate the aforementioned definition and goal of *enhanced resilience* into all elements of disaster planning. FEMA should consider similar actions –

perhaps even adding cost-sharing mechanisms or other incentives to ensure that taxpayer funds that are designated to help institutions recover, do so in a way that they *enhance resilience* – making it less likely the same institutional leaders will find themselves requesting financial support from FEMA (ultimately from taxpayers) for a similar disaster in the future.

This philosophy is embraced by the President of University C, in a written statement distributed on September 3, 2005, just days after the disaster:

“We face tremendous challenges; however, I want to personally reassure the University C community and the public that we will continue to offer education for our students. Our spirits are strong and our will unbroken. University C will be back and better than ever.” *President – University C* _____

Finding #3 - Linkage between Preparedness and Recovery: Plan for the Worst Case-Scenario

While the focus of this study is on leader behavior during the response and recovery stages, it is important to note that several participants at each university highlighted the crucial link between actions taken prior to Katrina (and in many cases the lack thereof) and the ability of the university to withstand damage, respond effectively to and recover from the disaster. A mid-level leader at University B notes that leaders “have to understand that the time to make sure everything works in an emergency is not during the emergency, but before. So being proactive and planning and preparation is key” (Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B). These sentiments are elaborated upon by a mid-level leader/faculty member at University A (and former Marine), who provides a military analogy.

We said that your battle plan ends when you first make contact with the enemy. But if you had no plan, then it takes a lot longer to organize people so that they make some coordinated move. So the plan allows you to be able to adjust more quickly from a common reference point. So there’s a great deal of value of having plans. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

A leader/faculty member at University B adds that continually planning, reviewing and updating disaster management plans can prevent university actors from having to “create everything on the fly.”

People need to be thinking about disaster management all along. You can't wait until it happens to create everything on the fly. Now some of that is going to happen just because it's going to happen because every situation is different. But I think people need to be constantly reviewing and updating and thinking about, what would we do should this happen? Or that, or the other?... the planning and management has to be an ongoing set of activities for people who are in leadership. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

Multiple contributors indicate that while some amount of planning had taken place at their institutions prior to the disaster, like most private and public entities of New Orleans, each campus failed to plan adequately for the *worst-case scenario*, prompting them to scramble in the midst of rapidly changing circumstances. A senior leader, who noted the lack of worst case scenario planning at all institutions in the region, indicates that much of the impact of Katrina could have been anticipated.

It's more than likely that we could have anticipated the flooding and that we wouldn't be able to get back into the city. That's probably not that far-fetched. Knowing what I know about the city, having lived here for so long, that's not unreasonable. *Contributor 3 – Leader, University A*

Yet, according to a leader/faculty member at University B, who remained in New Orleans until after the Hurricane had passed through the City, prior planning lacked a sense of *devil's advocacy* or *outside the box* thinking, and was based on the limiting assumption that in the event of a major disaster evacuees would either be able return to the city in a few days, or no one would ever return because the City no longer exists.

It seemed to me that all of our planning was predicated on the assumption that storm comes, we evacuate, storm goes. And either one of two things happen. Either we come back or we never come back because the city's just gone. But we never had the planning for what really happened where the storm came and the flooding came

afterwards and the city was uninhabitable for six weeks, eight weeks. *Contributor 2 – Leader, University B*

This lack of devil’s advocacy in thinking about and planning for disasters is further illustrated by a leader/faculty member at University B – who explains the generally accepted pre-disaster mindset – namely, that Katrina would a short-lived crisis involving a short-term evacuation.

When we evacuated from New Orleans, none of us had any idea that we would be leaving for such an extended period of time. We had a number of evacuations here at the university since I’ve been here and generally, no matter what the forecast was in terms of the intensity of the hurricane, we were generally back in town in about 3 days, 4 at most. *Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B*

As a result, institutional leaders largely found themselves having to determine processes, procedures and next steps “on the fly” (Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University B). As expressed by a mid-level leader/faculty member at University C who was heavily involved in helping plan for the institution’s Spring 2006 reopening at the Hilton Hotel in New Orleans:

I think we kind of had to make up things as we go. And for a university that in the city of New Orleans, that’s probably not the way you want to do business. I mean, it’s kind of like, in the disaster plan, we always say, you always plan for the absolute worst scenario, hoping that the worst scenario will never come. Kind of like, expect the best but prepare for the worst... anybody that lives in New Orleans new that the law of physical probability said it was only a matter of time *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C*

Contributors also frequently note, what the senior leader below describes as “a key lesson” – namely, that it is not sufficient to merely develop a disaster management plan, but university leaders and others who bear responsibility for executing elements of the plan must *receive proper training*, the plans must be *communicated* to the university community and *simulated* “to ensure proper execution when the real thing occurs” (Contributor 4 – Leader, University C). The senior leader explains that mid to upper level managers should also be exposed to some amount of pre-disaster *cross-training*, as in circumstances where a key leader or

manager departed due to the disaster, University C found itself without the appropriate personnel to fill in.

I think the one consideration that's clear in my mind is that there had not been sufficient effort put in, in training staff at the mid-level and higher and at the tier of management below vice presidents... what was needed was a lot more in the way of job sharing if you will and professional development. Because invariably what happens in crisis is that not all of your leadership is going to stay... So that left us at a situation where we did not have a significant amount of institutional memory at the highest levels and we didn't have, in some of those positions... individuals who had the exposure, experience or exponential background in key technical areas to step right in. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University C*

Finding #4 - Interrelatedness of Themes & Subthemes

The accounts of contributors to this study revealed that in many respects the *themes and subthemes of leader behavior* identified through this study are *interrelated*, in that successfully (or not so successfully) engaging in one theme or subtheme can result in the perception that a given leader is also effectively (or ineffectively) engaging in other behavior. For instance, multiple contributors noted that the ability of the President of University A to communicate effectively (*e.g., via clarity of communication or symbolic action*), not only inspired other university actors to perform (*charisma/ability to inspire*), but also at times prompted them to view a leader as in control of the situation (*technical competence*) and credible (*trustworthiness/authenticity*). In contrast, when the President of University C was primarily stationed Washington D.C. but was not consistently visible or present to constituents (*symbolic action*), some viewed her favorably for seeking and securing financial assistance (*resourcefulness*), whereas others viewed her more skeptically and suggested that she was perhaps more interested in high profile activities than being involved with day to day recovery activities (*perceived lack of trustworthiness/authenticity*).

The interrelatedness of themes and subthemes is consistent with the finding of James and Wooten (2011), who via their proposed *crisis leadership orientations*, indicate that *effective communication*, and *demonstrations of concern for others*, can foster *expectations of trust*. Additionally, they contend that leaders with a *propensity for seeing possibilities or opportunities* in the midst of crisis tend to be *adaptable or improvisational*, and have the ability to *frame challenges from multiple perspectives* (James & Wooten, 2011). Hence, just as comprehensive planning to prepare for disaster can influence the effectiveness of response and recovery efforts, the degree to which leaders engage in one type of behavior in the aftermath of disaster, may suggest the presence of others and/or impact perceptions of the degree to which others are evident.

Finding #5 - Organizational Flattening: Fewer Decision Makers Involved Post-Disaster

This study has revealed quite clearly that in the midst of disaster at a postsecondary institution, fewer individuals will be involved with making decisions during response and recovery processes, and standard (non-emergency) shared governance processes will likely be suspended (whether or not such provisions are noted in the university's bylaws or faculty handbook), and from a leadership perspective, necessarily so. That is not to say that university leaders should not make efforts to include individuals of various constituencies (*e.g.*, faculty, legal counsel, student affairs personnel) in post-disaster decision making and recovery processes, and communicate the rationales behind decisions once they have been made. However, when decisions need to be made on an hourly to daily basis and the university is closed/inaccessible, damaged electrical and technological infrastructure makes communication difficult, and university personnel are spread throughout the country – the ability to run proposed changes through standard shared governance processes and academic committees may be difficult to

impossible. Attempting to do so would not only delay decision making processes, but in circumstances where an institution is already in financial peril, such delays could push the university towards insolvency.

As explained by a mid-level leader/faculty member who played an important role in protecting millions of dollars' worth of high priority research assets at University A in the aftermath of Katrina:

We also have lots and lots of very detailed procedures that are absolutely meaningless because as soon as something happens, it's going to come back down to people making decisions on the ground. It always does. It always comes down to the individuals. And no amount of paperwork and no amount of manual or procedural documentation is going to change that. You're still going to have to have people who are confident, trained and able to make decisions. *Contributor 10 – Mid-level leader/Faculty, University A*

Thus, to help curtail some of the inevitable frustration and resistance that may result from faculty and staff who were anticipating standard shared governance process would remain in effect, even in the midst of disaster, university leaders should pre-designate a cross-section of university personnel (including select faculty and staff) to serve on disaster preparedness and recovery teams, providing them with the training specific to their area of responsibility, while also providing clarity as to how important decisions will be made and who will ultimately bear responsibility for making them in the aftermath of disaster. Having some degree of faculty and staff participation may reduce concerns regarding changes in overall shared governance process, while ensuring that key decision makers: 1) have the opportunity to hear from representatives of the constituencies that may be most impacted by post-disaster decisions, ideally strengthening those decisions and/or helping leaders anticipate possible areas of resistance; and 2) potentially benefit from including representatives market the proposed changes or decisions to the constituencies that they represent.

Additionally, university bylaws and faculty handbooks should clearly outline the manner in which institutions' standard governance processes will be altered in the midst of disaster, and the specify the criteria under which "disaster" will be deemed to have occurred. Not doing so, opens the door to vocal criticism and potential lawsuits beyond that which might be expected to occur in the midst of any disaster (as was the case at University B, in particular). When layoffs and restructuring decisions are made without such clearly defined policies and procedures in place, they can further contribute to an "us versus them" mentality, between faculty and administration, at the very time when it is most important to unify the university community around the goal of institutional recovery. The "us versus them" mentality, which was evident to varying extents at each university in this study, had a lasting negative impact on the atmosphere at each institution, and delayed organizational healing.

Finding #6 - Disaster Response/Recovery Teams Must Evacuate to a Common Location(s)

Multiple contributors noted the importance and value of ensuring that members of the disaster response and recovery team *relocate to a pre-designated evacuation site* – as by having key players working and living in the same location it not only enables communication at a time when cell towers may be malfunctioning, but has the added benefit of ensuring that the decision makers, executors and communicators of those decisions all in close proximity when if issues require immediate attention. As noted by a leader/faculty member at University B, the ability to communicate and make decisions can be "tough when everyone isn't in the same place" (Contributor 1 – Leader/Faculty, University B). This is supported by a mid-level leader at University B who indicates that based on the experience of being "scattered" after Katrina, in the future, senior and mid-level leaders will convene at a single, pre-designated location in Dallas.

The plan is now to take the leadership team to Dallas... And certain administration like the vice president now go to Dallas as opposed to before they were just sort of scattered

all over the country... So now we have a plan to be able to operate the university, we don't close any more, we suspend operations, students can get on blackboard and take their classes, the administration goes to Dallas so they can run the university from there. So there's a more coordinated plan than there was when we had to go through Katrina.
Contributor 11 – Mid-level Leader, University B

Other contributors, including a senior leader at University A, suggest that having key players in one location (often with their families) can help *build a sense of camaraderie*, and maintain a degree of “social sanity” in the midst of rapidly changing, high-stress circumstances.

We took the whole families. So we got an apartment building in Houston and we gave everybody apartments and they were big enough for the entire family and their pets and we lived together 7 days a week and we'd have BBQs ... We tried to do whatever we could to keep some social sanity. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Interestingly however, the university leadership teams whose behavior was the subject of this study, appear to have *learned slightly different lessons* from their evacuation experiences in the aftermath of Katrina. For instance, the leadership team at University A which met at a location in Houston, Texas (arranged for by the President's Chief of Staff), found themselves having to evacuate a second time (from Houston to Dallas), as Hurricane Rita approached. Hence, leaders at University A have decided that in the midst of future disasters, those involved with response and recovery efforts will be split between two locations, as in the event of a *double punch* (or second disaster scenario) – university officials will have the option of joining their colleagues situated at the second evacuation site. University B, on the other hand, whose leadership team was split between two locations during Katrina (Alexandria, Louisiana and Houston, Texas), found communicating and decision making to be difficult when key players were in distinct locations; thus, in future disaster scenarios plan to meet at a single evacuation site. Similarly, leaders at University C, whose officials initially scattered before much of the team regrouped in Atlanta (with other select leaders settling in Washington D.C.) have arranged to meet at a single evacuation site in the midst of future crises, but this time in the neighboring

state of Texas, rather than in more distant Georgia. However, despite these distinctions, members of each leadership team agree that pre-designating a meeting location(s) – rather than waiting to determine and secure a location after it becomes clear that circumstances will require an extended absence – will make the response and recovery processes easier and facilitate better communication, quicker decision making and implementation.³³

Finding # 7 – Recovery Efforts May Benefit From Leaders with a Sense of Humor

At University A, a campus that many contributors note, and institutional data suggests has recovered beyond pre-Katrina status, leader-based *sense of humor* was highlighted by interviewees (primarily members of the leadership team) as having played a key role in response and recovery efforts, particularly while living and working together, at a Houston based-hotel, during the weeks immediately following the disaster. For contributors at University A, *sense of humor* appears to have served a *cathartic function*, possibly helping reestablish a sense of normalcy in the midst of dealing with frightening, stressful and rapidly changing circumstances. This is consistent with Gonzales (2003), who found that *humor* can help keep people in contact with reality and/or what’s happening around him/her in dire circumstances, and may also foster a degree of *sensemaking*. It is however, also plausible that when leaders willingly exhibit their sense of humor in the midst of a major crisis, the behavior purveys (to those in lower level positions) that: 1) the leader and/or fellow leaders *have things under control*, thus, there is no reason for anyone to panic; and 2) the leader is *authentic/trustworthy*, as they are willing to openly *reveal their own humanity* in their presence.

However, due to the fact that leader-based *sense of humor* was only identified as important by contributors at one of the three institutions in this study, it would be prudent to

³³ The importance of evacuating to the same location(s) applies to natural disasters and/or other situations whereby campus may be inaccessible. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) will provide guidance in the event of a pandemic.

conduct future research that specifically inquires as to the role of *sense of humor* in the aftermath of disaster. The current study has sought to prevent researcher bias (which can result from entering a study with a pre-established conceptual framework), by affording participants the opportunity to self-identify leader behavior that they perceived to have played a role in response and recovery efforts in the aftermath of Katrina, rather than providing them with a template of behaviors from which to steer responses. Thus, while leader *sense of humor* may have played a role in leader behavior at University B and/or University C in the aftermath of Katrina, such behavior was not identified by contributors at these institutions as an influencer of recovery efforts.

Finding #8 - Role of the University President is Magnified Post-Disaster

An additional important finding that emerged from this study involves the role of the University President. More specifically, based upon the document analysis and interview processes, it is clear that in the midst of a disaster, the *role of the President is magnified considerably*. At the institutions in this study, as soon as Katrina approached, the President quickly became the person to whom all eyes turned, and the one who determined when and whether to order an evacuation. S/he becomes the face of the university, the primary spokesperson (both internally and externally), primary decision maker, a more prominent fundraiser, the liaison with the Board of Trustees and local community, and a lobbyist for federal assistance. While it takes a team to manage response and recovery efforts, the President sets the tone for recovery, and must find a way to keep their composure even when/if others are losing theirs. At times s/he is forced to serve as the person who helps nudge and employee out of a frozen post-disaster state or resolve disputes between senior leaders to keep the recovery process moving, while at other times they must serve as a cheerleader or contrarily – a disciplinarian.

When a decision is viewed as generous or humane (*e.g.*, the decision to continue paying employees while the university was closed for the fall semester), the President receives much of the praise and appreciation; however, when a decision is perceived as negative, or even simply “alters the status quo,” the President become the primary recipient of the blame and often quite public vitriol (*e.g.*, after the recovery plans were released at University A and University B). All the while, the President has to navigate the same concerns for family, friends and personal property that other university actors must manage (including those who are not actively assisting with university recovery efforts), but must also ensure the survival of an institution, on which those same university actors depend.

Hence, as noted by House, Spangler & Woycke (1991), there is a reason we tend to remember those who have filled leadership roles (successfully or unsuccessfully) in the midst of crisis – as such circumstances can bring attention to previously unperceived attributes of such leaders. As one contributor notes of the President of University A:

Well, my own view is that we recovered so beautifully because of the character and the force of our university president... His character, his strength, the force of his personality. He was spectacular. He did a great job. His leadership skills were really put to the test and he was spectacular. I've told him this many times, as have others – I'm not alone in this view – and he always replies by saying, it was a team effort and I couldn't have done it without the team. That's really true... But his leadership and direction was spectacular and I really think he's responsible. *Contributor 13 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University A*

Finding #9 – College and Universities Present a Unique Organizational Context for Managing a Disaster

As explained in Chapter I, colleges and universities are unique organizations, with features, dynamics and constraints distinct from those of the typical private corporation, government agency, or military unit. In contrast with most organizations, colleges and universities are “loosely coupled” – they operate with ambiguous goals, outcomes that can be

difficult to measure, dispersed governance structures, and resources that often are not clearly linked with results (Alfred, Thirolf, Harris & Webb, 2012; Cohen, et al., 1972; Weick, 1976; Baldrige, et al., 1977; Birnbaum, 1988; Fish, 2007). Alfred et al. (2012) note the differences between educational and commercial organizations, by comparing them along five key features: *Results, Goals, Resources, Actions, and Consequences* (see *Table 10.2, Appendix J*). However, despite such distinctions, there remains a shamefully limited number of journal articles, books, and reports on *college and university leader behavior in the midst of a disaster* in comparison to the number of such studies on leaders in other organizational contexts. Hence, researchers and college/university administrators have had to rely primarily on disciplines and studies of organizational settings outside of higher education – in seeking to uncover key leader behavior that can influence campus disaster management efforts. The conceptual framework advanced at the outset of this study (Chapter III) represents a case in point.

While it quickly became clear that the themes and subthemes of leader behavior included in the aforementioned framework were also important influencers of the disaster management processes at University A, University B, and University C in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, it is also evident that some *unique features of colleges and universities* as “organizations” interacted with these themes and subthemes of leader behavior, at times altering their impact on response and recovery efforts. Of particular note were the concepts or principles of *tenure* and *shared governance*, which while widely accepted and embraced by university leaders, faculty and staff at the institutions in this study during non-emergency circumstances, posed challenges in the aftermath of Katrina, given divergent opinions over whether such principles should or even could continue to be adhered to in the disaster’s aftermath, without jeopardizing the very survival of each institution.

For instance, the decision amongst the leadership teams at University A and University B to lay off tenured faculty, as part of broader post-Katrina university recovery efforts, resulted in vocal public criticism, the loss of alumni support from those units most impacted (as cuts in tenured faculty were generally associated with program eliminations), censure from the AAUP, and a series of faculty based lawsuits – many of which took years to resolve and involved settlements in excess of \$100K. These often quite public lawsuits delayed organizational healing. As one member of University B’s leadership team put it “I think lawsuits are kind of like a wound... an open wound. And once it’s resolved, you get into a healing process... As long as the litigation was pending, it was difficult to move forward” (Contributor 12 – Mid-level Leader, University B).

However, while the intense public criticism and series of lawsuits did delay organizational healing at University A and University B, such occurrences were not necessarily a sign that the decisions themselves were flawed. As a matter of fact, university leaders at both institutions commonly note that given the circumstances post-Katrina, and the degree to which their universities have recovered, they would make many of the same departmental elimination (and personnel reduction) decisions, today (*e.g.*, Contributor 4 – Leader, University A; Contributor 2 – Leader, University B). Moreover, at University C, where the principle of tenure was upheld, and only non-tenured faculty were laid-off, university leaders may have avoided the immediate criticism and legal challenges that such decisions can evoke, but there have instead been several longer term adverse consequences, including: 1) *budgetary strains* – as the remaining tenured faculty members have much higher salaries than the non-tenured employees who were laid off – posing continued budgetary challenges; 2) *student/faculty imbalances* – as some academic units do not have the student population to justify the number of tenured faculty

employed by them and vice versa; and 3) *lost human capital* – as several talented, relatively new, non-tenured faculty members – many of whom were held in high regard by colleagues and students, and had the potential to remain at the university for an extended period of time – were amongst those laid-off, swiftly found employment elsewhere, and are unlikely to pursue future opportunities at University C . Hence, according to multiple contributors, the university now finds itself in a situation where some institutional leaders wish the institution had declared *financial exigency* and made more deliberative (case by case or department by department) layoff decisions at the outset, to alleviate challenges the institution now faces (*e.g.*, Contributor 6 – Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 10 – Mid-level Leader/Faculty, University C; Contributor 13 – Mid-level leader/Faculty, University C).

An additional contrast between post-secondary institutions and other organizations, that can pose challenges in the aftermath of a disaster, involves the principle and expectation of *shared governance*. At a private corporation, during emergency and non-emergency circumstances, when the CEO or President makes a decision that they believe is best for the organization, others organizational actors will be expected to implement that decision or can expect to find work elsewhere. In a military unit, personnel must follow the orders of higher ranking officials, or they can expect some level of disciplinary action for “insubordination.” In a college or university setting, however, during non-emergency circumstances (and even some smaller scale emergency scenarios), decisions impacting the academic side of the institution, are commonly made as part of an *iterative process* – over an extended period of time, after having given various constituencies the opportunity to weigh in on those decisions and/or make specific recommendations. However, in the midst of a disaster, shared governance processes will more than likely be suspended, in whole or in part (whether or not such provisions are noted in the

university's bylaws or faculty handbook), and fewer individuals will be involved with making decisions during response and recovery processes, in comparison to standard non-emergency circumstances.

From a university leader's perspective, as evident from this study, the suspension of standard shared governance processes in the aftermath of a disaster is a necessity – as decisions need to be made swiftly and generally without “complete information” (*e.g.*, Contributor 2 – Leader, University B; Contributor 7 – Leader, University C). Moreover, as noted earlier in this chapter, in circumstances where an institution is already in financial peril, any significant delays in the decision making process could push the university towards insolvency. That being said, when post-disaster decisions begin to impact the academic sphere of the university, and those most impacted by those decisions (*e.g.*, departmental administrators and faculty) have not had a chance to participate in the process from which they emerged, as they were historically accustomed to doing, leaders can anticipate resistance, public outcry, and some loss of trust in the leadership team. While in the previously noted organizational contexts, resistance can be dealt with in a more heavy handed fashion (*e.g.*, via suspension or firing – in conjunction with written company policy), in a college or university setting, even when the specific source(s) of the resistance can be determined, the person may be difficult to remove or quell, as *tenure* protects *academic freedom* and with that the rights of faculty to voice opposition to the decisions of university administrators (although faculty bylaws at private colleges and universities may place restrictions on such standards). Moreover, each leadership team had to navigate resistance stemming from the decision (or need) to temporarily shift away from standard shared governance processes in seeking to manage disaster response and recovery efforts.

The *definition of recovery* can also differ significantly at postsecondary institutions in comparison to other entities. At a private corporation, recovery from disaster may focus on pre versus post-disaster revenue, earnings, or sales totals. In a military unit it might involve (re) establishing primacy on the battle field, or securing a country until infrastructure has been rebuilt and a new government is in place. At a college or university, on the other hand, post-disaster measures of recovery are to some extent arbitrary, and vary by constituency – with some university actors arguing that the consolidation of academic units into fewer high performing programs is a sign of recovery, while others contend that having fewer majors than prior to the disaster is evidence of continuing challenges. While a Vice President of Admissions may view a return to pre-disaster enrollment figures as a sign of recovery, a Vice President for Student Affairs may perceive retention and graduation rates as better indicators.

Finally, in a corporate setting, *change* is commonplace, given the desire to improve efficiency, increase profits, and be at the forefront of future trends. At colleges and universities, however, as illustrated by contributors to this study, there is a tendency amongst many constituents to fight to maintain the status quo, yet *after a disaster, the status quo no longer exists*, and continuing to fight for a return to pre-disaster status would merely replicate the same vulnerabilities that existed prior to the disaster. Hence, while university leaders can expect to encounter post-disaster pressure to maintain the status quo, *the goal of disaster recovery must be to move the institution beyond pre-disaster status towards an improved, more resilient university*, which can involve significant change. As explained by a senior leader at University A:

Early on, we said that there were three objectives we had to achieve. One was to survive, one was to recover, and the third one was to renew. Because our feeling was, just to survive and just to recover was not sufficient. Now that was a very important break-through in our thinking. So this renewal piece was really important... what we said is, the university can never come back and be just the way it was before... we who are there have a responsibility to make it better so it doesn't happen again and that the

next generation falls into the same problems we ran into. *Contributor 4 – Leader, University A*

Revised Conceptual Framework for Leader Behavior

Taking into account the uniqueness of a college or university context (represented by the shaded area) and the new subthemes of leader behavior that emerged through this comparative case study, a revised *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* is presented in *Figure 10.1* below. Consistent with the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter III, this enhanced model: 1) integrates the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified as important by scholars and researchers from multiple disciplines; 2) specifies the disaster management stages for which scholars have found specific leader behaviors to be influential; 3) takes into account the unique features of post-secondary institutions (as self-contained communities with multiple constituencies), the feelings and emotions of people within them, and their role in facilitating (and/or inhibiting) the efforts of organizational leaders in a disaster management context; and 4) integrates the findings of research exploring leader behavior in a variety of organizational settings (both inside and outside higher education) – providing a broad foundation from which postsecondary institutions can yield information to more comprehensively prepare for disasters. Additionally, the new framework incorporates the findings of this comparative case study – resulting in the addition of three new subthemes of leader behavior, and the recognition of the broader college/university organizational context in which such behavior took place.

By applying the key interdisciplinary themes and subthemes of leader behavior to the model of the disaster management process proposed in Chapter III, *Figure 3.4*, a new *holistic conceptual framework for facilitating campus disaster management efforts via leader behavior* emerges. This framework builds upon the earlier model by listing the key themes and subthemes

of leader behavior (as identified in the *literature review and thematic analysis* chapter, and supported via this study) in a table format, while indicating whether such behaviors have been identified as potential influencers of *pre-disaster phases* (e.g., disaster preparedness and mitigation), and/or *post-disaster phases* (e.g., response and/or recovery). Given that this study focused on examining leader behavior during university response and recovery efforts, the post-disaster column is highlighted in accordance. Moreover, the college/university organizational context within which the phases of disaster management and leader behavior relevant to those phases occurred is represented by an all-encompassing circle. The *conceptual framework for college and university leadership in the midst of disaster* appears in *Figure 10.1* – the phases of which are reintroduced below.

As indicated in Chapter III, the disaster management process flows clockwise as follows:

→ a potential *risk* or *hazard* (or set of *risks* and *hazards*) is (are) determined to exist via formal research and planning efforts → leadership takes action to both *mitigate* (e.g., reinforce facilities) and *prepare* (e.g., conduct practice exercises) for the possible effects of the previously identified hazards (a process that should begin long before and ideally independent of a specific ensuing disaster) → a *disaster strikes* → organizational leaders and emergency management agencies *respond* (both during and after the disaster) → the institution enters the *short* followed by the *long-term recovery phases* (e.g., restoring critical infrastructure prior to repainting facilities) → while engaged in the recovery process, a post-disaster *evaluation* of the organization's disaster preparedness and response efforts takes place – to improve upon flawed processes, reduce vulnerabilities, and prevent a repeat of mistakes, while also clearly identifying “what worked,” to better ensure that such activities are repeated under similar circumstances → organizational leaders seek to achieve *sustainability* – by moving *beyond pre-disaster normalcy* and

reducing/eliminating the flawed processes and vulnerabilities identified in the post-disaster *evaluation phase* (prior to *re-engaging* in the disaster management process – starting with the *hazard or risk assessment phase*).

Ultimately, as illustrated via this comparative case study, it is the responsibility of college and university leaders to guide their institutions through the aforementioned phases, by considering and applying the *five critical themes of leader behavior* (at the center of *Figure 10.1*) to each phase of the disaster management process, by incorporating and executing the *key underlying subthemes* (as identified below the flow chart) in accordance with their pre and/or post-disaster relevance. By doing so, college and university leaders drive the overall process forward, and enable their institutions to emerge more resilient and better prepared to deal with, alleviate the impact of, and/or (where possible) altogether avoid the impact of similar events in the future. This adaptive process, in which an institution utilizes prior experience to develop new routines or behaviors to create opportunities for enhanced performance, while eliminating those linked to prior failures, has been referred to by researchers as *organizational learning* (e.g., Levitt & March, 1998; Cyert & March, 1963; James & Wooten, 2011). It is through this process, that college and university leaders can transform (at least in part) an otherwise traumatic situation into an *opportunity for organizational improvement* (Monday, 2005).

Figure 10.1 Conceptual Framework for Examining the Impact of College and University Leadership in the Midst of Disaster.



<u>Leader Behavior</u>	<u>Pre-Disaster (Preparedness & Mitigation)</u>	<u>Post-Disaster (Response & Recovery)</u>
<u>Theme #1 – Leader-Driven Organizational Dynamics</u>		
<i>balancing structure with flexibility</i>	X (primarily structure)	X (primarily flexibility)
<i>reliability</i>	X (to avert disaster)	
<i>mindfulness</i>	X (to avert disaster)	
<i>financial & relational reserves</i>	X (both cultivated)	X (both applied)
<i>managing the external environment</i>		X
<u>Theme #2 -- Exhibited Personal Attributes</u>		
<i>competence (technical & social)</i>	X	X
<i>charisma/ability to inspire</i>		X
<i>trust/authenticity</i>	X	X
<i>ethics/morality/virtuousness</i>	X	X
<i>self-awareness & self-control</i>	X	X
<i>resourcefulness/adaptability</i>		X
<u>Theme #3 -- Thinking & Decision Making</u>		
<i>utilizing multiple mental frames</i>	X	X
<i>contrarian & janusian thinking</i>	X (to avert disaster)	X (to solve problems)
<i>devils advocacy & scenario-based planning</i>	X	
<i>viewing disasters as opportunities</i>	X	X
<i>instinctive & vigilant decision-making</i>	X (balance both)	X (slight emphasis on vigilance)
<i>avoiding common traps</i>	X (cultivated here)	X (applied here)
<i>timing</i>		X
<u>Theme #4 – Communication</u>		
<i>facilitating awareness</i>	X (most important here)	X
<i>clarity of terminology and message</i>	X	X
<i>symbolic actions</i>		X
<i>creating context for meaning and action</i>	X (cultivated here)	X (cultivated & applied here)
<i>emphasizing institutional mission</i>	X	X
<u>Theme #5 – Managing Human Reactions</u>		
<i>common responses to traumatic events</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>emotional competence/intelligence</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>spirituality</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)
<i>overcoming resistance</i>	X (learn about reactions)	X (apply lessons)

Limitations

As highlighted in Chapter IV, a number of steps were taken to ensure an accurate and informative dissertation, including: 1) the *Interview Protocol* was reviewed by and *pilot interviews* conducted with individuals that had previously experienced a major disaster while affiliated with California State University, Northridge – to help ensure that interview questions were appropriately phrased, and facilitated open and informative responses consistent with the purposes of the study; 2) the data were *triangulated* by comparing and contrasting: a) the responses of interviewees with fellow interviewees, b) the interview data with data revealed through document analysis process, and c) the data gathered through direct observation with that gathered via the interview and document analysis processes; 3) consistent with the overarching purpose and iterative nature of this study, the interview and document analysis processes *sought out disconfirming data* in an effort to ensure the validity of individual accounts, and determine (and ultimately enhance) the efficacy of the initially proposed conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster (Creswell and Miller, 2000); 4) interviews were conducted with at least one external expert with specific knowledge as to the events that took place at a given university to further ensure validity; and 5) experts in the field of higher education, crisis management and on my dissertation committee were asked to review and critique the results of the study upon completion – a validity enhancing technique Merriam (1998) refers to as *peer examination*.

However, despite these extensive efforts, the study does have some potential *limitations* – some of which also present *validity* related challenges. Perhaps the most significant *limitation* involved the *atmosphere of secrecy* that frequently surrounds college and university disaster preparedness efforts, and crisis management more broadly. This *atmosphere of secrecy* could

have resulted in limited access to key documents and hesitance on the part of some interviewees to share important information. As noted by James and Wooten (2011), given “the negativity and potential legal ramifications that surround organizations in crisis, there is generally little desire for firm leaders to talk openly (or provide survey or other forms of data) about their experiences” (p. 891). Whether such concealment stemmed from the desire to hide institutional vulnerabilities (for security reasons), possible legal ramifications, or to hide the possibility of inadequate planning or responses to the disaster – data gathering and interview processes that explore “leadership in the midst of crisis” are often constrained. However, in this study participants were made aware that: 1) the primary focus of the interview processes was on university leader behavior during response/recovery (versus what could or should have been done to adequately prepare), 2) extensive steps were taken to protect the confidentiality of sources and prevent responses from being linked to specific sources, and 3) if requested, participants would be given the opportunity to review their responses before inclusion – the anticipated *atmosphere of secrecy* was to a large extent non-existent. If a contributor was uncomfortable answering a particular question, they generally made a direct referral to someone who would be more comfortable doing so. Moreover, most key senior and mid-level leaders, faculty and staff took pride in knowing and sharing that their institution had survived Katrina, and in part due to their efforts, either fully recovered or made significant strides towards recovery from the severe disaster.

Another limitation of this study, stemmed from the *timing of interviews*. The majority of the nearly 50 interviews took place more than 6 years after the Katrina, thus, it is possible that some of the more intimate details of the decisions and events surrounding the disaster were forgotten, or were not recounted correctly by specific interviewees. Since I was neither in New

Orleans at the time of, nor present in the immediate aftermath of the disaster to observe the behavior of university leaders in person— the results of this study (as with most case studies) largely rely upon the accuracy of the accounts and perspectives of participants, the veracity of documents gathered, and after-the-fact site visits. To help combat this potential limitation, the data were *triangulated*, *disconfirming information* was sought and included in this study, and key findings or conclusions were drawn (and included in this study only) when/if they were *verifiable* and/or *perceived by multiple sources*.

Finally, some important *personal dynamics of participants* were largely unaccounted for in this study. For example, the institutional leaders interviewed may have different definitions or standards for what they consider to be “mistakes” and/or “successes” – as the definitions of these terms are largely subjective, institutionally specific, and dependent on the perspective of the participants. Additionally, while this study shed significant light on the importance of leaders understanding and effectively managing human reactions in the aftermath of a disaster, and emphasized the need for leaders to exhibit self-control around constituents, this study did not focus significant attention on the impact that personal circumstances (concerns over the loss of friends or family members, the loss of personal property, etc.) faced by leaders as a result of the disaster may have had on their the ability to perform effectively and/or exhibit the behaviors found to favorably impact university response and recovery efforts. It is possible that there were differences in the extent to which leaders had suffered personal losses or damage as a result of the storm, and that these differences, in part, accounted for variances in the degree to which they exhibited specific leader behavior in the aftermath of Katrina. While multiple leaders indicated that they valued the opportunity to work and stay busy because it helped distract them from personal circumstances, helped establish a sense of normalcy and control over their lives, and

gave them something to work towards, that does not mean that personal circumstances simply disappeared or were forgotten in the process of guiding (or contributing towards) university response and recovery efforts. However, given the consistency of the responses of contributors across cases, and the fact that all university leaders, faculty and staff were impacted by the storm had damages been equally distributed (or otherwise controlled for), it does not appear that the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified as important to response and recovery efforts at each institution, would have differed – likely just the degree to which they were embraced/engaged in.

Implications & Application of the Conceptual Framework

This study and revised *conceptual framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster* has a number of possible applications. Due to the fact that the framework integrates the work of scholars from multiple disciplines, its utility and relevance may span well beyond the borders of postsecondary institutions. That being said, the most immediate value of this study and conceptual framework will likely be to the intended audience of: 1) *college and university leaders and policymakers* seeking guidance as to how they might facilitate (or avoid hindering) disaster preparedness, response and/or recovery efforts at their respective institutions (and ultimately foster and/or achieve a level of sustainability); 2) *college and university leaders and disaster management experts* seeking a holistic tool for educating others (*e.g.*, future campus leaders, faculty and staff members in current leadership capacities, students interested in organizational behavior and management, and emergency response trainees) on the subject of disaster management; and 3) *researchers* seeking a holistic framework with which to explore and/or evaluate leader behavior in the aftermath of prior disasters and/or in the midst of future disasters.

While important, “contrary to popular belief, disaster management is not merely the process of allocating human and material resources in accordance with various checklists” (Moseley, 2004, p. 29). The accounts of contributors and findings from this study present a case in point, and the implications for practice and research presented below will help steer institutional and public policy, education, and leadership training towards recognizing important components of leadership and disaster management that extend well beyond items that can easily be checked off of a list – enhancing the resilience of colleges and universities in the process.

Implications for Practice

For *college and university leaders and policymakers* seeking guidance as to how to facilitate disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts – and those seeking a holistic tool for educating others on the subject of disaster management – this study not only synthesizes the literature and research from a variety of disciplines in crafting a conceptual framework, but also provides valuable insights from the perspective of university leaders, faculty and staff with firsthand experience in dealing with the aftermath of a major disaster. More specifically, this study has resulted in: 1) an updated model of the disaster management process, 2) the presentation of a series of themes and subthemes of leader behavior that have been found to positively influence disaster response and recovery efforts, and 3) multiple examples of lessons learned from the disaster (*e.g.*, mistakes made, and how response and recovery efforts would have been managed differently with the benefit of hindsight).

More specifically, in terms of *education and leadership training*, both the disaster management process, and the overarching framework for leader behavior in the midst of disaster could serve as the basis for a variety of courses and workshops whereby degree-seeking (undergraduate and graduate) students and/or university personnel (*e.g.*, administrators, campus

employees seeking future leadership roles, and/or those serving on disaster response/recovery teams) receive training regarding: 1) the benefits of applying a holistic approach to disaster management – taking into account both organizational and human concerns, and tangible actions that do not lend themselves to written disaster management plans (*e.g., symbolic actions and relational reserves*); 2) the importance and requirements of each phase of the disaster management process; 3) the themes and subthemes of leader behavior that have been shown to enhance disaster response and recovery efforts at colleges and universities (and other organizational types); and 4) effective and ineffective methods of employing each theme and subtheme of leader behavior.

Courses and workshops (particularly those geared towards personnel with senior and mid-level leadership responsibilities) should incorporate real life case studies, table-top exercises, and drills focused on variety of smaller scale to worst-case scenarios so that future leaders in a time of crisis have a sense of not just what types of behavior should be applied, but how, and when it might be best to do so. Current and future campus leaders (as well as those appointed to campus-based disaster response and recovery teams) must also be trained to view challenges and solutions from *multiple angles or perspectives*, to assume the role of *devil's advocate*, and to practice making both minor and more consequential decisions, within *restrictive time parameters* and *without perfect information*, to as much as possible replicate the circumstances and constraints within which post-disaster communications and decision making would need to take place. Response and recovery teams should also be provided with opportunities to receive *cross-training*, whereby team members are provided with exposure to the responsibilities of at least one other team member in the event that a given individual is

inaccessible and/or otherwise unable to perform their responsibilities in the aftermath of a disaster.

Moreover, current and future campus leaders must learn to embrace a dualistic post-disaster mindset – focused on both *meeting the immediate needs of the organization's people* and *enhancing the quality and resilience of the organization going forward* – never minimizing the disaster, but openly acknowledging the challenges ahead, genuinely empathizing with individual circumstances, directing resources to assist personnel with navigating and moving forward from the disaster – while simultaneously recognizing that it is the *responsibility of leaders to make the best out of difficult circumstances* – and to pursue opportunities to make the institution better or stronger than it was prior to the disaster. Not adopting such a mindset, by instead seeking to merely return an institution to its pre-disaster status, exacerbates already difficult circumstances by inhibiting full recovery (as disasters have lasting consequences on people and institutions, which makes “returning to normal” an unrealistic and artificially limiting goal), while reproducing the very vulnerabilities that existed prior to the disaster.

This study also has important policy implications for colleges and universities. At the institutional level, when crafting policy (especially governance processes or procedures) college and university leaders must distinguish between how a given policy will apply in both *standard* (e.g., under normal day-to-day operations) and *non-standard circumstances* (e.g., in the midst of a disaster). In so doing, campus policymakers should consider the following questions:

- How would this policy work in the event of a disaster?
- What alternative mechanisms or processes should we put into place?
- Will standard governance or decision-making processes related to this policy/procedure, or a related policy/procedure be temporarily suspended?

- Who has the institutional authority to determine when a situation is of sufficient severity to necessitate a change from standard policy(ies) or procedure(s), and based on what criteria?
- How will decisions instead be made and executed, by whom, or by what committee?
- When (or based on what criteria) will standard policies or processes resume?

Anticipated post-disaster shifts in campus policies and procedures should be considered from multiple angles, placed in writing, adopted well in advance of a disaster occurring (*e.g.*, in hurricane prone regions, policy distinctions should be addressed prior to hurricane season), and accessible to faculty and staff (with the exception of policies that pose safety or security related concerns), so that members of the campus community have a sense for how institutional policies and procedures will change post-disaster, and how such changes are likely to impact their professional roles and responsibilities. Moreover, by outlining projected policy shifts prior to a disaster, leaders can to some extent manage expectations and curtail some of the frustration, resistance, negative publicity, and lawsuits that this study revealed can result when a relatively small group of decision makers suddenly assumes greater control of and authority over campus operations – particularly when/if the revised governance structure results in: 1) the exclusion of others (*e.g.*, faculty and staff) who are accustomed to having input into decision making processes, 2) major institutional changes (*e.g.*, departmental eliminations and layoffs), and/or 3) procedures that are inconsistent with written institutional policies and faculty/staff handbooks. Hence, in addition to taking into account both *standard* and *non-standard* circumstances in crafting new policies and procedures, college and university leaders should regularly review existing organizational policies to incorporate stipulations for periods of disaster.

Within the framework of institutional policy, it is important to incorporate the issue of disaster management into college and university *hiring decisions* – particularly as it relates to

employing mid and senior level leaders who would be expected to assume some level of responsibility for response and recovery efforts in the aftermath of a disaster. As evident from this study, when a disaster strikes all campus employees will be impacted emotionally and/or physiologically. However, the timing of and degree to which such symptoms will be evident to others, and/or will interfere with an employee's ability to perform varies considerably. In the aftermath of Katrina, a select group of personnel at each institution "rose to the occasion" and performed at levels beyond what they and others thought was possible – particularly (albeit not exclusively) those who had previously experienced hurricanes and/or other types of disasters (*e.g.*, earthquakes and tornados) or held positions in fields where smaller scale crises/emergencies were common place (*e.g.*, emergency rooms and technology recovery units). On the other hand, there were multiple instances whereby personnel including mid and senior level leaders became so overwhelmed by personal and professional circumstances that they "froze-up" and/or were otherwise unable to perform at or near the level expected of them. Some ultimately became obstacles to response and recovery efforts and had some or all of their post-Katrina responsibilities assigned to others.

Hence, when interviewing candidates for mid and senior level positions at a college or university, particularly in regions of the country historically prone to various forms of disaster, hiring committees should consider asking prospective employees some of the following questions to assess the likelihood that they could be relied upon to execute their responsibilities in the aftermath of a disaster:

- Have you previously been employed at a college or university at the time of a disaster or other form of crisis?

- If so, what was your role at that time? Were you responsible for tasks connected with the university's (or your unit's) disaster response or recovery efforts? What worked well and what might you (or your institution) have done differently?
- What is important to consider when preparing for and responding to a disaster?
- What factors should a campus leader (or leader of your unit) be most concerned with when leading in a time of disaster?

In addition, campus *hiring committees* should seek to determine whether prospective employees feel a deep *connection with the overall* mission of the institution and/or the surrounding community, as this study has revealed that those administrators, faculty and staff who possess such connections are more likely to remain with an institution post-disaster and feel an added sense of motivation to assist with facilitating recovery efforts.

Additionally, college and university leaders must prepare for disasters that may require an *extended absence* from campus, as the extent to which preparedness plans existed at post-secondary institutions in New Orleans pre-Katrina, they were based on the false assumption that any disaster would only require a short term absence from the city, and necessitate the closing of campus for no more than a few days. Thus, in addition to pre-arranging an evacuation site for students (and any faculty and staff who assigned to evacuate with them), and a separate location capable of hosting the longer term presence of mid and senior level leaders (and others who asked to participate in disaster response and recovery related efforts), campuses should ensure that disaster response and recovery teams incorporate a broad based group of experts capable of managing/reconstituting basic operations from a satellite location.

Moreover, college and university leaders should ensure that their campuses are *prepared technologically* to respond to and facilitate recovery from disaster, by: 1) regularly backing-up institutional data at an location outside the region in which the campus is located (to decrease the

likelihood of exposure to the same disaster); 2) securing the technology necessary to conduct operations and access to university data from a remote location; and 3) enable communication with the campus community. Campuses should also adopt and faculty/student be trained to utilize an online course management platform, so that educational processes can continue in the midst of an extended absence and potentially prevent students from having to temporarily enroll at campuses throughout the country. Since Katrina, the universities in this study have taken similar steps to secure data and facilitate continued operations in the event of future disasters.

This study also has important policy implications at federal, state and local government agencies. First, policymakers at all levels of government, must account for the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities of colleges and universities when crafting policies intended to enhance the preparedness and or resilience of communities and/or campuses to disaster. In addition to requiring and/or providing incentives that encourage colleges and universities to plan comprehensively for disasters (ensuring that they meet basic standards and providing a federal or state agency with the authority to audit such plans and make recommendations for improvement), while also seeking to facilitate the participation of campus leaders in disaster management training offered through FEMA or relevant state agencies.

Additionally, government entities should require that campuses conduct annual drills in coordination with local first responders (which a segment of post-secondary currently do), while also incorporating faculty, staff and students into such drills (an approach that far fewer campuses currently embrace) to: 1) better ensure that campus personnel will know what do, where to go, and who they can expect to receive instructions from in the event of a disaster; 2) afford university leaders the opportunity to observe and fine-tune aspects of their university's current disaster response and recovery procedures prior to experiencing an actual event; and 3)

become accustomed to working with fellow members of their institution's disaster response and recovery teams, as well as local first responders – ideally fostering a level of familiarity, trust and/or relational reserves that will enable better working relationships in the midst of stressful circumstances. It is both unrealistic and unnecessarily risk to assume that members of a campus community will automatically know what to do or how to act in the event of a disaster, and equally unrealistic to assume that campus leaders will know how best to work with first responders, local officials, and/or FEMA without having had the opportunity to do so outside the parameters of an actual disaster.

Moreover, federal, state, and local governments and affiliated agencies (including FEMA) must embrace a definition of *disaster recovery* that focuses on a goal of *enhanced resilience*, versus merely restoring campuses or communities to the way they were pre-disaster. This will help ensure that taxpayer funds that are designated to help institutions recover, do so in a way that they *enhance resilience*, making it less likely the same institutional leaders will find themselves requesting financial support from FEMA (ultimately from taxpayers) for a similar disaster in the future. Policymakers should similarly ensure that adjustments have been made to federal and state policies regarding the transportability of financial aid and the reporting institutional data (*e.g.*, graduation and retention rates will fall for those cohorts impacted by the disaster), while ensuring that in the future, colleges and universities affected by disaster will have the ability to immediately apply for long term, low-interest, emergency loans to facilitate immediate liquidity, rather than having to wait several months for grants to be approved/received, and many months to years for funds to be received from FEMA.

Implications for Research

According to James and Wooten, “methodologically, crisis research has been hampered by the sheer nature of crises. Crises often take us by surprise and yet generally require an immediate response” (p. 891). Moreover, they contend that the negativity and potential legal matters that surround crisis make it less likely that an organization’s leaders will speak openly about their experiences. As a result, “the ability to prepare an empirically sound and pre-tested research protocol is limited” (James & Wooten 2011, p. 891). This study however, has not only resulted in findings stemming from the accounts of senior leaders involved with managing a major disaster, but has resulted in a framework for conducting future studies.

Hence, further research opportunities stemming from study and the resulting *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* are broad and manifold. Referring to the three primary variables considered in selecting a setting for the current study, including: *institutional type or control* (e.g., public v. private, and secular v. religiously affiliated); *type of disaster* (e.g., in this case Hurricane Katrina); and *recovery status* (e.g., nowhere near recovered v. fully recovered v. recovered beyond pre-disaster status), a variety of options for potentially valuable future studies emerge. These *context specific options* are displayed in the following diagram. The current study is consistent with options “e” and “f” in the chart below (as the degree to which the institutions have recovered varies, but were not known until after conducting this study), which allow for the comparison of leader behavior exhibited at different types of institutions, having faced the same disaster, while yielded some similar but overall largely different recovery results.

Table 10.1: Site Selection: Context Specific Options for Future Studies.

Type of Institutions (x) Type of Disaster (x) Level of Recovery

- a) Similar types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Similar recovery results
- b) Similar types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Different recovery results
- c) Similar types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Different recovery results
- d) Similar types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Similar recovery results
- e) Different types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Similar recovery results
- f) Different types of institutions (x) Same disaster (x) Different recovery results
- g) Different types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Different recovery results
- h) Different types of institutions (x) Different disasters (x) Similar recovery results

Referring to the chart above, it would be of particular value for researchers to examine the impact of college and university leader behavior in a circumstance where *similar institutions* (e.g., two private religiously affiliated Master-level institutions) were impacted by the *same disaster* (e.g., a hurricane or earthquake) and had *substantially different recovery results*, in order to determine whether specific themes or subthemes of leader behavior could primarily account for those distinctions. Similar lessons and benefits could result from studies exploring: 1) scenarios whereby *similar types of institutions* (e.g., public research universities) encountered *different disasters* (e.g., two separate tornados) and yielded *similar recovery results*, to determine whether the same types of leader behavior were evident in the aftermath of each disaster, or 2) scenarios whereby *similar types of institutions* (e.g., public research universities) encountered *different disasters* (e.g., two separate tornados) and *yielded significantly different recovery results* (e.g., one university recovered, while the other continues to struggle), to determine the extent to which leader behavior differed in the aftermath those disasters, and may have accounted for some of the variation in results. The conceptual framework resulting from this study presents a useful tool with which to conduct such investigations.

Future studies could also focus on exploring a *single theme or subtheme* of leader behavior at multiple institutions in a variety of disaster scenarios, to determine the degree to

which individual themes and subthemes of leader behavior vary in importance as determined by the *size* (e.g., a major research institution v. a small college) or *type of institution* (e.g., private v. public, or state university v. community college), and/or *type of disaster* (e.g., hurricane v. a mass shooting) – as in this study alone, there is evidence to suggest that the degree to which leaders *tap into spirituality* in the aftermath of a disaster (in an effort to foster organizational healing), plays a far more important role at religiously affiliated institutions (and potentially HBCU's) than it does at private, non-religiously affiliated institutions. On the other hand, it appears that *symbolic action* on the part of university leaders in the aftermath of a disaster has an important influence on response and recovery efforts regardless of the type or size of the institution.

Future research can also seek to determine whether conceptual framework for leadership may apply to the management of *less severe campus crises* (e.g., localized emergencies and economic challenges) or *severe crises of longer duration* (e.g., a pandemic–flu), versus the more commonly researched time-bounded disasters (e.g., severe storms or fires). As noted by Kiefer et al. (2006) there is considerable evidence to suggest that human-caused disasters illicit different reactions than natural disasters, with the former being more likely to trigger long-lasting mental health difficulties (Erickson, 1994). Also supporting the need for the varied application of the newly proposed framework is the recent increase in reports of campus-based shootings, as well as recent campus-based outbreaks of norovirus and swine flu.³⁴ According to the Department of Homeland Security (2006), if international containment of a virus were to fail today, “unlike geographically and temporally bounded disasters, a pandemic will spread across the globe over the course of months or over a year, possibly in waves, and... in terms of its scope... may be

³⁴ The 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic (which has since been coined “the forgotten pandemic”) killed upwards of 550,000 Americans in 10 months -- more U.S. citizens than died in combat during all the wars of the 20th century (Crosby, 1976; 2003).

more comparable to that of war or a widespread economic crisis than a hurricane, earthquake, or act of terrorism” (p. 21). Hence, the knowledge gained from investigating leader behavior in the midst of a variety of types of crises/disasters could dramatically enhance the ability of college and university leaders to facilitate campus preparedness, response and recovery efforts – ultimately saving both institutions and lives.

Future research on leader behavior in the midst of disaster should seek to shed additional light on the experiences of: 1) groups historically underrepresented in studies of leadership, disaster and/or crisis management; and 2) international leaders in the midst of crises in their home countries. As stated in Chapter III, the majority of published books and peer-reviewed journal articles on the subject of leader behavior generally, and in the midst of crisis more specifically – have focused on the actions of white male leaders and the impact they have had on predominately white (male and female) followers. Yet, as this study illustrated, exposure to disasters is not equally distributed – as lower income African American’s were overrepresented in the most vulnerable and heavily damaged areas of New Orleans (Kiefer et al., 2006). Hence, not seeking to capture the perspectives of those who are most vulnerable to disaster (whether as leaders, or those impacted by leader behavior) represents a serious omission from the literature base, and has limited the depth and breadth of our knowledge in the areas of leadership and disaster management.³⁵

³⁵ This study included the experiences of contributors at a highly regarded HBCU, and incorporated the perspectives of women at all levels of each institution. While doing so broadened the base from which to identify college and university leader behavior of importance to disaster response and recovery efforts, the degree to which various demographics were represented in this study was largely determined by whether: 1) contributors were a part of their respective institutions (as leaders, faculty or staff) during response and/or recovery efforts, 2) they played a specific role in response/recovery efforts and/or had a potentially unique perspective (based on publicly available data or a referral source), and 3) they were accessible for interview purposes. Moreover, the focus was on identifying similarities and differences in leader behavior exhibited at each institution versus similarities or differences by demographic group.

Yet, when the noteworthy omission above is coupled with the rather sparse scholarly literature on the behavior of international leaders during crises – who (given varied geographic vulnerabilities) often have more experience with disasters than their U.S. counterparts (*e.g.*, the contained outbreak of SARS in Southeast Asia, earthquakes in Japan, typhoons in Taiwan, and terrorism in the Middle East Region) – it is clear that there are lessons yet to be learned, and a number of possibilities for applying the conceptual framework advanced in this study.

Finally, it would also be of great value for future studies to explore the degree to which the themes and subthemes of leader behavior identified in the interdisciplinary literature review (see Chapter III) as central to the pre-disaster phases of *hazard mitigation* and *preparedness* in (primarily) non-higher education settings, also enhance the resilience of post-secondary institutions, just as the previously identified themes and subthemes of leader behavior were found to enable the post-disaster phases of *response* and *recovery* at the institutions in this study. Focusing specifically on pre-disaster phases could result in additional important discoveries, and/or the emergence of new subthemes of leader behavior –adding to the findings and conceptual framework that emanated from this study, while yielding information that could further secure post-secondary institutions and the lives they serve.

Conclusion

Each year citizens of the United States are forced to respond to a myriad of natural, man-made, and technological disasters (Ballard, Smith, Johnson & Range, 1999). Recent high profile disasters including 9/11, the 2011 Japanese Earthquake/Tsunami, and the subject of this study, Hurricane Katrina, have drawn increased attention to and prompted research in the area of disaster management. Unfortunately, however, to date, the research community has largely neglected the subject of disaster management in the context of some of our largest and most

cherished institutions – our colleges and universities. Nor have scholars shed much light on the role that leaders of postsecondary institutions (*e.g.*, campus presidents, chancellors, and other select university officials who bear primary decision making authority and accountability for the overall management, coordination, and consequences of an institution’s actions in the midst of a disaster) can and do play in fostering (and/or inhibiting) organizational preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Consequentially, until this study, it appears that the research community had yet to propose a *holistic conceptual framework* for examining the impact of leader behavior in the aftermath of a disaster, in any organizational setting, let alone for colleges and universities.

This is troublesome, since in the past decade alone, the nation has witnessed record breaking devastation from hurricanes, tornados, floods and fires, in addition to mass shootings, terrorist attacks, and an H1N1 pandemic. Moreover, considering only natural disasters, the Brookings Institute in a March 2006 policy brief, cautions that the “costs for Katrina could be dwarfed by other possible natural catastrophes of the future” (Litan, 2006, p. 2). Amongst such potential disasters, the think tank cites the possibility of: 1) a *major earthquake* along the West Coast (with many known fault lines) or the Midwest (the *New Madrid fault line*), or 2) a series of category 4 or 5 hurricanes in quick succession hitting either the Gulf Coast or along the East Coast as far north as New York. Aside from the devastation that such a catastrophic disaster (or set of disasters) would impose on property, the economy and lives more broadly, the scenarios highlighted above would directly impact dozens to hundreds of colleges and universities. Even absent such large-scale catastrophic scenarios, colleges and universities, remain vulnerable to disasters that can impact campuses on a more targeted basis – from tornados, to chemical spills, to mass-shootings.

However, despite the aforementioned vulnerabilities, in a recent study funded by the US Department of Education, which explored the perspectives of college and university disaster management professionals, and representatives of campuses that had received either Emergency Management for Higher Education (EMHE) or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants, Kapuco (2010) found that only 31.8% of respondents were either “very confident” or “agreed” (albeit not at the “very confident” level) that their campuses could be categorized as *disaster resilient*.

This is unsettling news, as colleges and universities (*e.g.*, those devastated by Hurricane Katrina) have “concentrated value, not just because of their facilities and specialized contents, but also because of the public investment they represent in terms of students and research” (University of Washington, 2003). They provide housing, food services, academic and recreational services, libraries, and (often) medical services for students, faculty, and staff. Moreover, they play a major role in the economic well-being of their surrounding communities by: providing jobs; attracting talented individuals to the area; and training a future workforce (University of Washington, 2003). Thus, the cost of not comprehensively planning for a variety of disasters and not uncovering leader behavior (*e.g.*, thinking and decision making processes) – that are more (and contrarily less) likely to facilitate the preparedness, response, and recovery efforts of colleges and universities when faced with a disaster – can be catastrophic for postsecondary institutions, their constituents, and their surrounding communities. The current study and the resulting *conceptual framework for college and university leader behavior in the midst of disaster* represent important steps toward filling that unfortunate void.

“The one aspect of business in which a chief executive's influence is measurable is crisis management. Indeed, the very future of an enterprise often depends on how expertly he or she handles the challenge.”

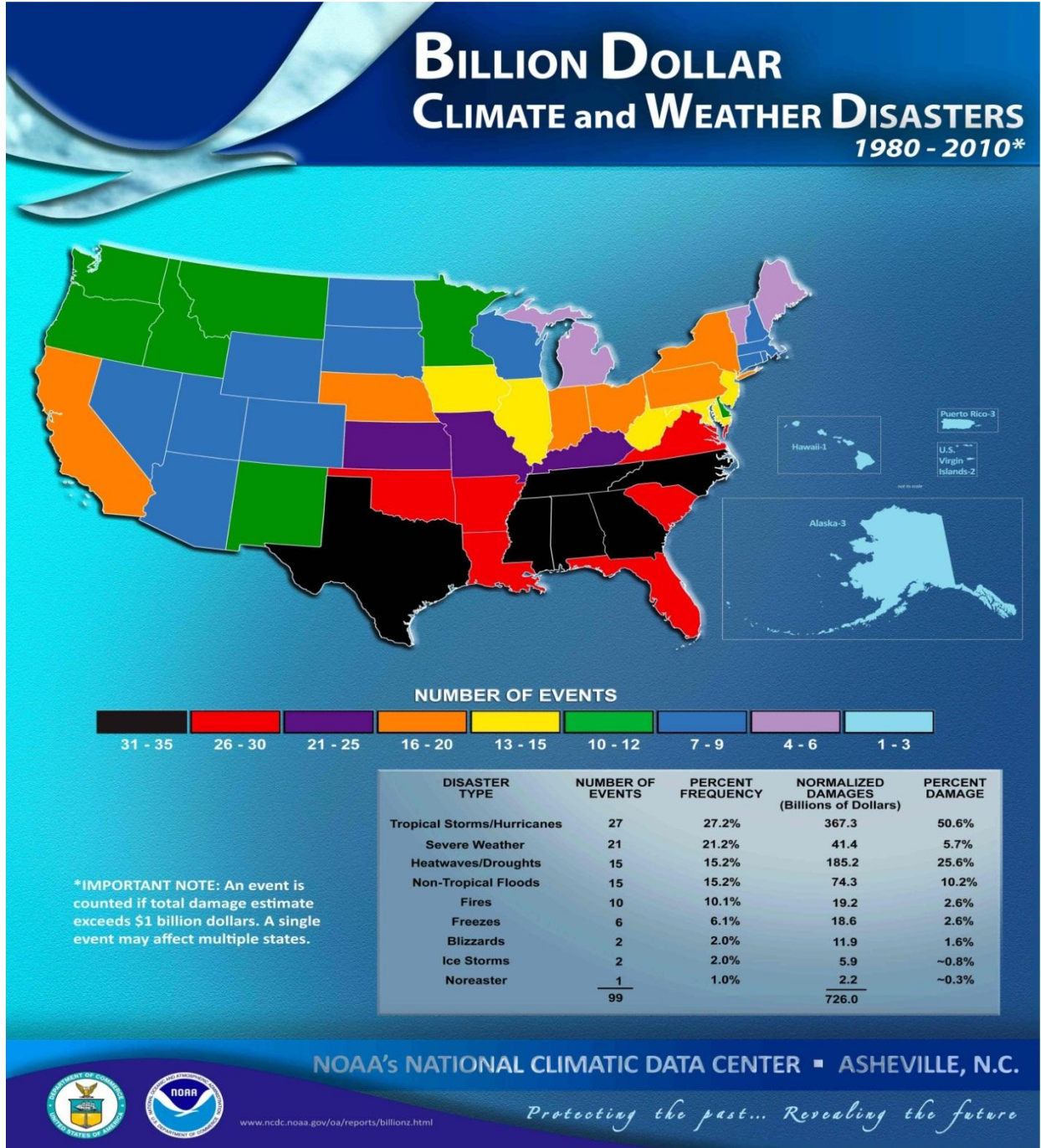
– Norman Augustine, *Harvard Business Review on Crisis Management*

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Billion Dollar Climate and Weather Disasters

Figure 1.1: National Map Showing Spatial Distribution of Billion Dollar Climate and Weather-related Disasters by State.



Ross, T. & Lott, N. (2011). Billion Dollar U.S. Weather Disasters, 1980 – 2010. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov>

Appendix B

Prior Models of the Disaster Management Process

Figure 3.1: Herrmann's Conceptualization of the Disaster Management Process (as cited in NYDIS Manual, 2007).³⁶



Figure 3.2: FEMA's (2007) Conceptualization of the Disaster Management Process.



³⁶ Note: The NYDIS's model of the Disaster Management Process (Figure 3.1) was reproduced with the express permission of the National Disaster Interfaiths Network (NDIN), the continued copyright holder of this diagram.

Appendix C

New Orleans Demographics

Table 5.1: Population by Age, Race, and Ethnicity Groups by parish, New Orleans Metro, 1980 – 2010.

Released: May 27, 2011

Parish	Year	Population	Population by age groups				Asian population by sub-groups							Hispanic or Latino by sub-groups					Total Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
			Under 5 Years	5 to 17 Years	18 to 64 Years	65 Years and Older	Asian	Other	Total Asians	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Hispanic or Latino						
Jefferson	1980	454,592	37,737	102,521	282,452	31,882	701	982	714	267	317	2,603	0	5,584	3,419	1,127	2,722	14,504	21,772
	1990	448,306	32,777	87,662	282,095	45,772	1,275	1,526	1,024	265	599	4,604	592	9,885	3,469	1,426	3,359	18,357	26,611
	2000	455,466	30,226	85,029	285,896	54,315	1,942	2,194	1,177	293	692	6,601	1,166	14,065	4,822	1,670	3,364	22,562	32,418
	2010	432,552	28,366	69,031	276,167	58,988	2,201	2,334	1,207	201	652	8,288	1,800	16,683	10,194	2,682	3,840	36,986	53,702
Orleans	1980	557,515	43,939	116,393	331,860	65,323	501	581	631	268	170	5,030	0	7,181	3,707	959	2,846	11,714	19,226
	1990	496,938	38,574	97,888	295,818	64,658	752	753	579	283	175	6,546	471	9,559	2,421	1,023	2,340	11,454	17,238
	2000	484,674	33,496	95,912	298,613	56,653	1,195	958	515	283	358	7,118	545	10,972	2,578	1,031	1,615	9,602	14,826
	2010	343,829	22,040	51,175	232,975	37,639	1,153	1,196	452	186	368	5,994	621	9,970	4,298	948	1,285	11,520	18,051
Plaquemines	1980	26,049	2,445	6,701	15,231	1,672	3	2	72	9	5	7	0	98	198	23	11	483	715
	1990	25,575	2,152	5,864	15,527	2,032	4	13	59	6	4	356	67	509	217	39	2	332	590
	2000	26,757	1,977	5,839	16,328	2,613	27	21	40	10	7	476	119	700	149	41	39	204	433
	2010	23,042	1,592	4,737	14,136	2,577	25	18	72	12	17	403	184	731	504	116	54	393	1,067
St. Bernard	1980	64,097	5,169	14,576	39,737	4,615	34	17	220	9	2	49	0	331	446	57	125	4,534	5,162
	1990	66,631	4,917	13,222	40,913	7,579	93	46	265	7	5	169	35	620	428	126	166	3,463	4,183
	2000	67,229	4,242	12,713	41,012	9,262	216	30	283	6	9	302	43	889	562	147	178	2,538	3,425
	2010	35,897	2,848	6,329	23,432	3,288	20	54	197	4	5	367	43	690	783	152	143	2,231	3,309
St. Charles	1980	37,259	3,558	9,433	21,891	2,377	45	3	8	5	5	4	0	70	314	52	43	414	823
	1990	42,437	3,896	9,483	25,924	3,134	68	22	42	5	18	5	10	170	194	138	58	680	1,070
	2000	48,072	3,511	11,062	29,191	4,308	87	28	32	8	14	78	18	265	329	155	87	775	1,346
	2010	52,780	3,696	10,512	33,337	5,235	119	82	47	14	12	92	74	440	703	175	188	1,582	2,648
St. John the Baptist	1980	31,924	3,268	8,271	18,252	2,133	13	4	5	8	2	18	0	50	222	31	43	382	678
	1990	39,996	3,838	9,810	23,519	2,829	40	21	30	15	16	12	19	153	192	71	72	619	954
	2000	43,044	3,463	9,964	26,261	3,356	56	20	50	14	14	55	20	229	299	81	70	780	1,230
	2010	45,924	3,368	8,988	28,832	4,736	72	37	66	9	10	103	25	322	654	156	114	1,251	2,175
St. Tammany	1980	110,869	9,685	27,545	65,350	8,289	29	74	51	77	30	69	0	330	620	141	178	1,316	2,255
	1990	144,508	11,614	32,434	87,587	12,873	103	181	150	82	62	83	64	725	832	266	264	1,808	3,170
	2000	191,268	13,556	40,843	117,709	19,160	277	330	273	93	110	233	104	1,420	1,387	544	433	2,373	4,737
	2010	233,740	15,244	44,892	143,976	29,628	475	573	458	130	186	744	406	2,972	3,593	933	816	5,628	10,970
New Orleans Metro Total	1980	1,282,305	105,801	285,440	774,773	116,291	1,326	1,663	1,701	643	531	7,780	0	13,644	8,926	2,390	5,968	33,347	50,631
	1990	1,264,391	97,768	256,363	771,383	138,877	2,335	2,562	2,149	663	879	11,775	1,258	21,621	7,753	3,089	6,261	36,713	53,816
	2000	1,316,510	90,471	261,362	815,010	149,667	3,800	3,581	2,370	707	1,204	14,863	2,015	28,540	10,126	3,669	5,786	38,834	58,415
	2010	1,167,764	77,154	195,664	752,855	142,091	4,065	4,294	2,499	556	1,250	15,991	3,153	31,808	20,729	5,162	6,440	59,591	91,922

Sources: GNOCDC analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau.

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Appendix D

Official Hurricane Katrina Weather Forecast

(Issued by the New Orleans, Louisiana, Weather Forecast Office)

URGENT - WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE NEW ORLEANS LA
1011 AM CDT SUN AUG 28 2005

...DEVASTATING DAMAGE EXPECTED...

HURRICANE KATRINA...A MOST POWERFUL HURRICANE WITH UNPRECEDENTED STRENGTH...RIVALING THE INTENSITY OF HURRICANE CAMILLE OF 1969.

MOST OF THE AREA WILL BE UNINHABITABLE FOR WEEKS...PERHAPS LONGER. AT LEAST ONE HALF OF WELL CONSTRUCTED HOMES WILL HAVE ROOF AND WALL FAILURE. ALL GABLED ROOFS WILL FAIL...LEAVING THOSE HOMES SEVERELY DAMAGED OR DESTROYED.

THE MAJORITY OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS WILL BECOME NON FUNCTIONAL. PARTIAL TO COMPLETE WALL AND ROOF FAILURE IS EXPECTED. ALL WOOD FRAMED LOW RISING APARTMENT BUILDINGS WILL BE DESTROYED. CONCRETE BLOCK LOW RISE APARTMENTS WILL SUSTAIN MAJOR DAMAGE...INCLUDING SOME WALL AND ROOF FAILURE.

HIGH RISE OFFICE AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS WILL SWAY DANGEROUSLY...A FEW TO THE POINT OF TOTAL COLLAPSE. ALL WINDOWS WILL BLOW OUT.

AIRBORNE DEBRIS WILL BE WIDESPREAD...AND MAY INCLUDE HEAVY ITEMS SUCH AS HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES AND EVEN LIGHT VEHICLES. SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES AND LIGHT TRUCKS WILL BE MOVED. THE BLOWN DEBRIS WILL CREATE ADDITIONAL DESTRUCTION. PERSONS...PETS...AND LIVESTOCK EXPOSED TO THE WINDS WILL FACE CERTAIN DEATH IF STRUCK.

POWER OUTAGES WILL LAST FOR WEEKS...AS MOST POWER POLES WILL BE DOWN AND TRANSFORMERS DESTROYED. WATER SHORTAGES WILL MAKE HUMAN SUFFERING INCREDIBLE BY MODERN STANDARDS.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF NATIVE TREES WILL BE SNAPPED OR UPROOTED. ONLY THE HEARTIEST WILL REMAIN STANDING...BUT BE TOTALLY DEFOLIATED. FEW CROPS WILL REMAIN. LIVESTOCK LEFT EXPOSED TO THE WINDS WILL BE KILLED.

AN INLAND HURRICANE WIND WARNING IS ISSUED WHEN SUSTAINED WINDS NEAR HURRICANE FORCE...OR FREQUENT GUSTS AT OR ABOVE HURRICANE FORCE...ARE CERTAIN WITHIN THE NEXT 12 TO 24 HOURS.

ONCE TROPICAL STORM AND HURRICANE FORCE WINDS ONSET...DO NOT VENTURE OUTSIDE!

National Weather Service, New Orleans, Louisiana. *Urgent Weather Message: Hurricane Katrina*. Issued on August 28, 2005 at 10:11 AM. Reposted at: http://celebrating200years.noaa.gov/events/katrina/side_katrina.html

Appendix E

Location of New Orleans-Based Campuses in Relation to Katrina-Induced Flooding

Figure 5.1: Approximate location of New Orleans-Based Colleges and Universities in relation to Katrina-induced Flood Levels.



Please note: This diagram presents the approximate location of New Orleans-based colleges and universities in relation to the flooding that resulted from Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee breaches. The map does not capture the precise location or size of those campuses listed. Larger circles denote more expansive campuses.

For Original Map (without campus locations) and measurement grid (without additional notes) please refer to: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (2005). New Orleans and Gulf Coast Flooding Maps: August 31, 2005. U.S. Department of Commerce: Retrieved from: <http://www.katrina.noaa.gov/maps/maps.html>

Appendix F

University A: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data

Table 6.1: University A Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data).

Name	Type	Carnegie Classification	2004 to 2011 Total Undergraduate Applicants	2004 to 2011 Total Enrollment Comparison*	Post-Katrina Freshman Enrollment Comparison 2006 to 2011	Student/Faculty Ratio	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005-2011	Post-Katrina Student Return Rate	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04** v. 10/11	6-year Graduation Rate (Fall 1999 v. 2004 Cohort) **	2011 Endowment
University A	4-Year, Private, Not-for profit, non-sectarian	<i>RU/VH:</i> Research Universities (very high research activity)	17,572 to 37,767 (115% increase)	13,214 to 13,359 1.1% increase	882 to 1630 84% increase	11 to 1	1,166 to 1,140 2.2% decrease	86%	88% to 90% 2% increase	74% to 70% 4% decrease	\$888.5 Million

Data Compiled via synthesis of 2011 NCES (College Navigator), Carnegie Foundation and Individual Campus Data. See below for NCES and Carnegie citations.

* University A did not report enrollment totals for Fall 2005, as it closed for the semester.

** Did not report retention rates for 2004-2005 due to school closure prior to Fall 2005 semester beginning.

*** The Fall 1999 Cohort is the final group for which 6-year graduation rates were calculated without being impacted by Katrina. Fall 2004 is the most recent cohort for which University A has calculated “official” 6-year graduation rates.

U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2011). *College Navigator: Side by Side Institutional Comparison*. Retrieved from: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). *The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education*. Retrieved from: <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

Appendix G

University B: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data

Table 7.1: University B Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data).

Name	Type	Carnegie Classification	2004 to 2011 Total Undergraduate Applicants	2004 to 2011 Total Enrollment Comparison*	Post-Katrina Freshman Enrollment Comparison 2006 to 2011	Student/Faculty Ratio	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005-2011	Post-Katrina Student Return Rate	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04** v. 10/11	6-year Graduation Rate (Fall 1999 v. 2004 Cohort)**	2011 Endowment
University B	4-Year, Private, Not-for profit, Roman Catholic (Jesuit) Affiliation	<i>Masters L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)</i>	3,713 to 6,386 <i>72% increase</i>	5,423 to 5,008 <i>7.7% decline</i>	520 to 879 <i>69% increase</i>	11 to 1	344 to 366 <i>6.3% increase</i>	92%	80% to 77% <i>3% decrease</i>	68.8% to 57% <i>11.8% decrease</i>	\$231.5 Million

Data Compiled via synthesis of 2011 NCES (College Navigator), Carnegie Foundation and Individual Campus Data. See below for NCES and Carnegie citations.

* University B did not report enrollment totals for Fall 2005, as it was closed for the semester.

** Did not report retention rates for 2004-2005 due to school closure prior to Fall 2005 semester beginning.

*** The Fall 1999 Cohort is the final group for which 6-year graduation rates were calculated without being impacted by Katrina. Fall 2004 is the most recent cohort for which University B has calculated “official” 6-year graduation rates.

U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2011). College Navigator: Side by Side Institutional Comparison. Retrieved from: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Retrieved from: <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

Appendix H

University C: Institutional Profile & Recovery Data

Table 8.1: University C Institutional Profile (with Recovery Data).

Name	Type	Carnegie Classification	2004 to 2011 Total Undergraduate Applicants	2004 to 2011 Total Enrollment Comparison*	Post-Katrina Freshman Enrollment Comparison 2006 to 2011	Student/Faculty Ratio	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005-2011	Post-Katrina Student Return Rate	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04** v. 10/11	6-year Graduation Rate (Fall 1999 vs 2004 Cohort)**	2011 Endowment
University C	4-Year, Private, not-for-profit, HBCU, United Church of Christ & United-Methodist Affiliations	<i>Bac/A&S: Baccalaureate Colleges--Arts & Sciences</i>	3,106 to 5,589 <i>80% increase</i>	2,155 to 1,249 <i>42% decline</i>	222 to 354 <i>59% increase</i>	12 to 1	145 to 82 <i>43.4% decrease</i>	55%	69% to 61% <i>8% decrease</i>	41% to 27% <i>14% decrease</i>	\$65 Million (includes recent \$25 Million contribution)

Data Compiled via synthesis of 2011 NCES (College Navigator), Carnegie Foundation and Individual Campus Data. See below for NCES and Carnegie citations.

* University C did not report official enrollment totals for Fall 2005, as it closed for the semester. However, university leaders indicated that enrollment stood at 2,000 just prior to Katrina (Fall 2005) as a large class had recently graduated. Hence a portion of University C's enrollment decline may have been unrelated to Hurricane Katrina.

** Did not report retention rates for 2004-2005 due to school closure prior to Fall 2005 semester beginning.

*** The Fall 1999 Cohort is the final group for which 6-year graduation rates were calculated without being impacted by Katrina. Fall 2004 is the most recent cohort for which University C has calculated "official" 6-year graduation rates.

U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2011). College Navigator: Side by Side Institutional Comparison. Retrieved from: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Retrieved from: <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

Appendix I

Institutional Comparison

Table 9.1: Institutional Profile Comparison: University A, University B, & University C (includes recovery data).

Name	Type	Carnegie Classification	Degrees Offered	Campus Setting	2004 to 2011 Total Undergraduate Applicants	2004 to 2011 Total Enrollment Comparison*	Post-Katrina Freshman Enrollment Comparison 2006 to 2011	Student/Faculty Ratio	Total Faculty (Full-Time) 2005 v. 2011	Post-Katrina Student Return Rate	1st to 2nd Year Student Retention Rate 03/04** v. 10/11	6-year Graduation Rate 1999 v. 2004 Cohort***	2011 Endowment
University A	4-Year, Private, Not-for profit, non-sectarian	<i>RU/VH:</i> Research Universities (very high research activity)	Associate's, Bachelor's, Postbaccalaureate certificate, Master's, Doctoral (Research/Scholarship & Professional Practice)	Mid-to-large sized, primarily residential	17,572 to 37,767 <i>115% increase</i>	13,214 to 13,359 <i>1.1% increase</i>	882 to 1630 <i>84% increase</i>	11 to 1	1,166 to 1,140 <i>2.2% decrease</i>	86%	88% to 90% <i>2% increase</i>	74% to 70% <i>4% decrease</i>	\$888.5 Million
University B	4-Year, Private, Not-for profit, Roman Catholic (Jesuit) Affiliation	<i>Masters L:</i> Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)	Bachelor's, Postbaccalaureate certificate, Master's, Post-Master's certificate, Doctoral (Professional Practice), Other	Mid-sized, primarily residential	3,713 to 6,386 <i>72% increase</i>	5,423 to 5,008 <i>7.7% decline</i>	520 to 879 <i>69% increase</i>	11 to 1	344 to 366 <i>6.3% increase</i>	92%	80% to 77% <i>3% decrease</i>	69% to 57% <i>12% decrease</i>	\$231.5 Million
University C	4-Year, Private, not-for-profit, HBCU, United Church of Christ & United Methodist Affiliations	<i>Bac/A&S:</i> Baccalaureate Colleges--Arts & Sciences	Bachelor's	Small-sized, primarily residential	3,106 to 5,589 <i>80% increase</i>	2,155 to 1,249 <i>42% decline</i>	222 to 354 <i>59% increase</i>	12 to 1	145 to 82 <i>43.4% decrease</i>	55%	69% to 61% <i>8% decrease</i>	41% to 27% <i>14% decrease</i>	\$65 Million (includes recent \$25 Million contribution)

Data Compiled via synthesis of 2011 NCES (College Navigator), Carnegie Foundation and Individual Campus Data. NCES/Carnegie citations appear below.

*The institutions did not report enrollment totals for Fall 2005, as each university closed for the semester. However, University C reports that enrollment stood at 2,000 students just prior to Katrina (Fall 2005) as a large class had recently graduated. Hence a portion of University C's enrollment decline may have been unrelated to Hurricane Katrina.

** Did not report retention rates for 2004-2005 due to school closure prior to Fall 2005 semester beginning.

*** The Fall 1999 Cohort is the final group for which 6-year graduation rates were calculated without being impacted by Katrina. Fall 2004 is the most recent cohort for which each university has calculated "official" 6-year graduation rates.

U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2011). College Navigator: Side by Side Institutional Comparison. Retrieved from: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Retrieved from: <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

Appendix J

Differing Features of Educational and Commercial Organizations

Table 10.2: Differences between Educational and Commercial Organizations.

	Educational Organizations	Commercial Organizations
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ambiguous goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly defined goals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goal displacement/ goals shift as external conditions change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goal continuity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • problematic preferences/ organizational priorities ill-defined and inconsistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priorities focused and coherent to facilitate goal achievement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals reflect a loose collection of changing ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals tightly configured to achieve specific ends
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action precedes priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priorities precede action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uncertain and permeable boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impermeable boundaries
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals emphasize equilibrium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals emphasize profit and return to the organization
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals stress interaction with, and adaptation to, the external environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals buffer the organization from the external environment
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals emphasize responsiveness to multiple constituencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals emphasize return to stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization functions as a sum of parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization functions as a whole
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board controls administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administration controls board
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structure of organization disconnected from activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tight connection between organizational structure and activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activity disconnected from results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activity linked to results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conforms to environment and adjusts processes and products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulates processes and products
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programs and departments at center of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administrative core at center of activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unclear technology/ staff do not understand processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technology closely aligned with processes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization is loosely coupled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tightly coupled organization
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work force specialized by professional expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work force specialized by function
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenured faculty protected by academic freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workers do not receive protections
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decentralized/ high autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centralized/ tightly coordinated
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal structure does not describe power or responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal structure enforces accountability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nature of rewards intrinsic (expressive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nature of rewards extrinsic (instrumental)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding not linked to performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding depends on performance 	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intentions follow action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action follows intentions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intentions and actions loosely coupled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intentions and actions tightly coupled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decisions require consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decisions do not require consultation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision making is collective and participative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decisions are made by top managers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locus of decision shifts with issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locus of decision consistent across issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fluid participation in governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • governance dictated by hierarchy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processes are diffuse and confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processes are clearly defined
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authority is unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lines of authority are clear
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authority challenged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • top down control
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checks and balances to authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authority drives power and influence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trial and error procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedural certainty
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change through imitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change through innovation
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes are long-term and insidious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes are direct and short-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bottom line is difficult to measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bottom line simple and easy to measure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process as important as product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • product more important than process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people as end product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goods and services as end product
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means loosely coupled to ends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means and ends tightly coupled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ends disconnected from activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activity and ends connected in causal chain
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results not consistently evaluated or controlled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results evaluated and tightly controlled
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation remote from action and removed from controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation directly linked to action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relaxed performance controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tight performance controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results not rationalized by meaningful and accurate outcome measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results justified by clearly defined outcome measures
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple and changing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited and constant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • divergent in outlook, need, and expectation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convergent in expectation
Valuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectiveness is non-economic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectiveness is economic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efficiency is not expected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efficiency is valued and expected
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretation of performance is equivocal/ multiple interpretations could explain same outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretation of performance is uniform
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anarchy prevails/ stakeholders decide how they want to view performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistency prevails/ performance interpreted for stakeholders by top management

Appears as Table 2.2. in and reprinted with the permission of: Alfred, D., Thirolf, K, Harris, N., & Webb, J. (2012). *Performance: The Dynamic of Results in Postsecondary Organizations*. The ACE Series on Higher Education. Rowman and Littlefield, Inc.: Lanham, Maryland.

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