Role of Values Actions and Dialogic Change in Maintaining Culture: A Comparative Case Study of Franciscan Universities

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Abstract

In a competitive higher education market, mission and culture provide critical differentiation for small private nonprofit colleges and universities. Because of the transition from religious to lay leadership in Catholic Franciscan higher education, institutions are grappling with how to ensure the continuance of the mission of their founding religious orders. Through the lenses of culture, values, institutional work, and dialogic organization development, this research examines how values are used to maintain distinctive institutional cultures through a changing institutional field. Cases were constructed from data collected at three Franciscan universities and analyzed by using a cross-case comparison method. Findings suggest that institutionally orchestrated and personally driven individual values actions have a major impact on change and institutional maintenance. Orchestrated values actions are institutionally created structures and tools that provide shared language for employees to enact stated values in sanctioned ways. Individual values actions are deeply connected to personal and organizational value congruence and role enactment in concert with those values, both of which enabled ongoing micro-interactions that reinforced cultural pillars. Findings also indicate that dialogic change is an ongoing feature of organizational life that supports change outside of formal change processes. The dialogic approach is supported by visible leadership and organizational actions as well as empowerment of individuals to act in congruence with the values. Overall, normative cultural foundations can be maintained during change through institutional scaffolds and dialogic microactions, so long as employee involvement and empowerment are enabled at all levels.
Dedication

To Ilyana and Evelyn: may you always remain curious, take joy in the journey, and believe in yourself as much as I believe in you.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Higher education in the United States is encountering its first significant demographic decline in over 20 years. Enrollment in institutions of higher education grew at record numbers between 1994 and 2010 due to large numbers of 18–24 year olds and a larger percentage of students enrolling in college (Bok, 2015; McGee, 2015). However, a major downward trend in national demographics, plus the Great Recession, led to a steady decline in enrollment (Bransberger & Michelau, 2016). By some predictions, over half of the higher education institutions in the United States could close or merge in the next decade (Lederman, 2017; Woodhouse, 2015). McGee described three simultaneous disruptions occurring in higher education: demographic decline, downward pressure on the cost of college as a college degree becomes a commodity, and a lack of differentiation between college offerings as colleges start to “look and act more alike than unalike” (McGee, 2015). Further pressure on higher education includes concerns over campus climate. The national narrative raises concerns that colleges are too ideologically liberal, racial tensions are increasing on campuses as more minority students are enrolled, and deep differences in the goals of university administration and federal administration policies are causing rifts between campuses and their communities (Rudgers & Peterson, 2017).

Private Nonprofit Higher Education

Private nonprofit (PNP) institutions of higher education are particularly vulnerable in this environment. Unlike community colleges and public institutions with taxpayer funding, PNP institutions are entirely dependent on tuition dollars. While large private institutions get significant press for having large endowments and out-of-touch faculty, most PNP institutions have a teaching focus and modest financial resources and are continually
dependent on the number of students enrolled in each class. Of 1,600 PNPs, 120 represent three-fourths of the national total of endowment funds (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2017), representing an uneven distribution of flexible resources. In addition 75% of all PNPs have enrollment of less than 2500 students (US Department of Education, National Center for Education statistics, 2016), showing a vulnerable majority of tuition-dependent institutions. The climate for private higher education reflects national demographic pressures: more than four in 10 private colleges missed their goals for enrolment in 2016 (Rudgers & Peterson, 2017), and numbers are flat or declining across the board for PNPs (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2016).

In general, tuition pressures and enrollment declines are concentrated in PNP institutions that are small, draw students from a narrow region or demographic, and are not as selective (Moran, 2016). The homogenization of expectations in the higher education marketplace, as noted by McGee (2015), and the shifting search for sources of revenue have caused many of these institutions to lose their distinctiveness and their focus. In striving for more secure revenue streams, expensive forays into the online instruction, and growth in broadly available graduate programs have undermined the purposes of many small PNPs. This dangerous change in focus has been noted by a number of scholars (e.g., Bok, 2015; Lewis, 2006; McGee, 2015), especially in shifting away from commonly held values between faculty, staff, and administrators. PNP higher education needs to address and reverse these trends; the key to avoiding demise in the current higher education marketplace relies on accessibility, affordability, sustainability, and strategic differentiation in an age of commodity-based education.
Catholic Higher Education
One segment of PNPs that could have an advantage in this new marketplace is Catholic higher education (CHE). Unlike other faith traditions that have largely abrogated their stewardship of higher education, the Catholic church and its orders have retained active management of their institutions. There are currently 200 CHE institutions in the United States, the majority of which are sponsored by 26 religious orders (“About Catholic Higher Education,” 2017).

Like most colleges founded on a faith tradition, CHE institutions were founded to provide training to clergy. With the influx in Catholic immigrants to America in the mid-1800s and the formation of stand-alone seminaries for the education of priests, religious orders took up the primary charge in providing higher education for the faithful (Kriss, 1984). Major growth in CHE occurred in 1880 when the third plenary council of Baltimore declared that every Catholic parish should have a primary school to educate all children, including girls (Herrick, 2011). This decision resulted in an incredible growth in schools led by women religious, whose focus customarily lay in teaching and in the helping professions. Unlike the seminarians and brothers, sisters were anxious to structure their institutions like other academic institutions in America; they did not have the “luxury of even hoping for a precise, single purpose; instead they were faced with the extraordinarily difficult task of trying to educate women along liberal lines and at the same time fit them for service to the Church as teachers in schools” (Oates, 2002). As the events of Vatican II changed the focus of religious orders and invited laypersons into service of the church, CHE gradually moved closer to building a hybrid identity, maintaining the catechetical instruction for
strengthening Catholic practice but choosing to affiliate with the wider academic community instead of holding themselves apart (Newton et al., 2015). As CHE identified more with higher education as a whole and as more faculty and staff were hired from outside the orders and the church, struggles with purpose and identity began to emerge.

Central to the discussion of the evolving purpose and identity of CHE are sponsorship and the normative foundation of Catholic institutions. Sponsorship is a concept that relates to a religious order or congregation maintaining the Catholic mission of a particular institution. While this term does not appear in canon law, religious orders commonly use the term sponsorship to designate their stewardship over institutions that represent their ministry (Caretti, 2013). Sponsorship has evolved as founding orders have diminished and Vatican II encouraged more laity to be involved in the mission of the church. While sponsorship used to primarily mean congregational control, ownership, and authority, it now means a shared ministry (Kriss, 1984). In the current context, Catholic sponsorship is critically important, since the history and life of the religious community are deeply tied to the mission, goals, and values of the college or university (Herrick, 2011; Kennelly, 2005; Kriss, 1984). The story of the institution, and part of its distinctive mission, comes from the intertwined history of the sponsoring order and the university. As the sponsoring orders diminish in numbers, however, CHE needs to strive to intentionally maintain connections to its history and values. While discussion of boards and leadership involve shifting the conversation from active participation to upholding the legacy of the order (Megley, 2005), something can be lost in translation if that legacy is not carefully maintained.
The normative and values-laden purpose of sponsorship cannot be overstated. CHE institutions sponsored by religious congregations “must not only be uniquely Catholic, but…must be uniquely in the tradition of their own religious community” (Kriss, 1984). Researchers in higher education have commented on the importance of driving purpose and soul, in part due to the differentiation issues mentioned above, but also to retain the values-laden creative spark that drives the educational mission (Glanzer, Alleman, & Ream, 2017; Lewis, 2006; Murphy, 1991). Beyond the question of values lies the issue of how a college or university retains its canonical connection to the Church, since the university retains status as a Catholic institution through the order’s sponsorship (Newton et al., 2015).

Indeed, as orders decline, researchers call for CHE to maintain a tight focus on values and keep a connection to the sacred, story-formed community brought together by charism (Glanzer et al., 2017). Murphy (1991), in his study of Catholic institutions, and Blecker (1992), reflecting on the survival of church-related schools, both concurred that this focus on mission, strength of charism, and intentional enactment of values were critical for CHE to continue past the decline of sponsoring traditions.

CHE is at a critical junction to determine how best to accomplish the maintenance of the values-laden traditions of sponsoring orders while they are still among us. Given that their influence will likely decline as numbers diminish or orders cease to exist, now is the time to reflect and act. Much can be learned by investigating institutions that have strong traditions, numerous universities, and extant sponsoring members. The Franciscans are one such order.
Franciscan Higher Education
In the United States there are 24 Franciscan colleges and universities, almost all founded by religious orders, and the majority founded by women religious (Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities, n.d.; Kriss, 1984). Unlike other normative founding orders, Franciscans have multiple branch orders and numerous interpretations of the core values of their founder, St. Francis of Assisi. Many orders create their own rules through common discernment of Francis’ teachings and writings. While there are central tenants in Franciscanism relating to contemplation, conversion, poverty, and the concept of minores (not being above anyone else) (Monti, 2005; Moore, 2016; Spoto, 2002), how these translate into values and actions is highly dependent on the founding context of the orders and universities. This situation has led to many interpretations of Franciscan values being practiced in Franciscan colleges and universities. Part of this is the Franciscan focus on meeting whatever specific local needs exist wherever an order finds itself. St. Francis was known for throwing himself into the needs of the minores, becoming one with them whether they were lepers, the poor, the outcast, or those unpopular in the highly regimented medieval caste system (Spoto, 2002). Franciscan colleges enact “that vision with which we form our relationships, our fraternitas, and finally the vision with which we embrace our mission to the world within the public forum. There, in that public form, those who are lesser and marginalized by the cross of injustice and suffering will find our embrace” (Hellman, 2009).

These multiple interpretations of the Franciscan charism, or spiritual gifts, of their founding orders push Franciscan institutions to be particularly mindful of their values and traditions. The Franciscan nature of each institution emerges “from its own founding story, the ongoing presence of Franciscans living in it, the Franciscan spirit which animates it, and the
quality of its conversations with the Catholic and Franciscan intellectual traditions” (Blastic, 2007). This critical importance of founding story and presence of its members is both a strength and a risk for Franciscan institutions; the normative and value-laden tradition is strong but often relies on the presence of founding order members to provide visible examples of those values in practice. Understanding the process of how values can be embedded in current educational and institutional practice is critical for the successful evolution of Franciscan institutions from relying on their founding orders to finding their way to maintaining the Franciscan tradition in today’s educational and social environment.

**Statement of the Problem**

Because of the transition from religious to lay leadership in Franciscan institutions, those institutions have been grappling with how to ensure that the lay leadership continues the mission of the founding orders and maintains their distinction from other small PNPs. The shift from lived values centered in the practices of a faith community to espoused and transmitted values through sharing understandings is a difficult undertaking and has been done poorly in faith-based institutions in the recent past (Benne, 2001). The current economic crisis in higher education makes the need to maintain these traditions even more important. Having a distinctive selling point in the competitive higher education marketplace is critically important, and the values and culture of an institution are key to living out that marketable distinction. While leaders have a key role in organizational values (Schein, 2010), leaders cannot own the values conversation alone (Herrick, 2011). Especially in values-based, normative institutions “organizational members are co-creators of organizational values and presidents depend on them for the dissemination of
organizational values, especially to new members” (Murphy, 1991). Institutions need to make a specific shift from relying on the founders to carry the tradition to somehow embedding those values in the organization. Having clarity on institutional values practices can mean the focused thriving of small institutions, and lack of clarity can lead to isomorphic behaviors that cause institutions to disappear into the uniformity of the institutional field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Ultimately, this research can uncover how values are used to support the maintenance of institutional life in faith-based higher education, especially when the symbolic enactors of the founding order are no longer present.

**Research Questions**

Exploring this problem requires an understanding of the facets of institutional values, which are both seated in and influencers on organizational culture, and how individuals influence organizations and their normative traditions, especially when the founding orders diminish in size or disappear completely. How are values used through change in organizations to maintain institutions? What values practices undertaken by employees have an impact on maintenance and organizational change? Are there themes in how individuals intentionally or unintentionally use values to frame their understanding and reinforcement of the institutions in which they reside? How do the values permeate, and how do the values emerge in organizational conversations?

**Significance of the Study**
This work contributes to filling the gap in research on how faith-based organizations grapple with changes or diminishment of founding orders. Little work has been done on Franciscan institutions in general and on Franciscan higher education in particular. Franciscan institutions are a good microcosm of order-driven higher education because of the diversity in charism and value sets. In this research one has an opportunity to see both commonality in theme and focus, but also diversity in approach based on the unique focus of the order. A strong argument also can be made that Franciscans embody practical and action-oriented modes of change, since “first and foremost, Franciscanism is a way of life, a praxis. Reflecting on our experience today from our own location in history, society, and the church, in the light of the life of the early brothers and sisters provides a starting point for naming our Franciscan differences” (Blastic, 2007).

In addition, understanding how individual actions reinforce institutions through values actions and values work can help leaders understand how to balance necessary changes with the parts of a culture that organizations desire to keep (see, e.g., Trompenaars & Wooliams, 2003). As change becomes more continuous and accelerates in pace (Pasmore, 2015), being able to understand the actions of individuals in organizations is increasingly important. In addition, maintaining a core of identity and values is critical for organizations to keep their focus in an environment of continuous change. Further, there is a call for organization development to explore how institutions impact people through their work experiences over the course of their career (Pasmore & Woodman, 2017). This research answers this call by understanding both sides of the coin in values work, in terms of discovering employee actions that use values imposed on them by the institution, but
also their motivations to use them over time. This exploration supports understandings of ways to engage organization members in continuous change.

**Summary**

The current crisis in higher education makes it clear that higher education needs to respond more effectively to its market. In addition, values-based Catholic colleges and universities are at a critical crossroads with declining professed religious and major strategic challenges. Understanding how institutional values are embedded in the daily life of Franciscan institutions leads to a deeper understanding of how leaders can manage change but keep the distinctiveness of their founding traditions. This dissertation delves into research on culture, values, and the foundations of institutions in order to fully understand the active processes by which members engage in values-laden actions that maintain or change the organization.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This research examines the use and embeddedness of values in faith-based higher education institutions in the Franciscan tradition during founder withdrawal. Three primary streams of research can shed light on the question of practiced values in Franciscan universities: organizational culture, values and values-based actions, and institutional work. Dialogic approaches to organization change are also discussed. The intersection of these theories with approaches to change also are examined. This research brings perspective and context to discovering how values structures maintain institutions over time.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture has been explored by researchers in many forms since the concept first surfaced in the literature. According to Denison (1996), organizational culture emerged from an anthropological approach of social construction and symbolic interaction developed by Mead in 1934 and Berger and Luckmann in 1966. The terminology of organizational culture is attributed to a study by Andrew Pettigrew, who
studied the development of a boys boarding school through several leadership and mission transitions. He identified culture as “the system of such publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time” (Pettigrew, 1979). In the 1980s, amid the movement to strategic organization development and the drive to understand competitive advantage, culture researchers used these ethnographic approaches to understand how organizations worked and to discuss organizational life as experienced by members (Denison, 1996). Researchers in organizational culture used descriptive ethnographies as their primary methodology, with deep qualitative analysis to determine culture. Some argue that this methodological difference makes culture research distinct from more quantitative research on climate, although there have been conflicting views on this assertion (Denison, 1996; Martin, 2002).

Organizational culture, much like other cultural forms, is a collective phenomenon (Berger & Luckmann, 2011; Pettigrew, 1979; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Culture grows as individuals interact with each other and respond to uncertainty and ambiguity in their environment until their actions become taken for granted and become “how we do things around here” (Briody, Pester, & Trotter, 2012; Weick, 1979). Trice and Beyer describe characteristics of culture as collective, emotionally charged, historically based, inherently symbolic, dynamic, and inherently fuzzy (1993). They place particular emphasis on the socioemotional aspects of culture and how symbols, narratives, language, and practices are the forms through which culture is enacted. Culture is also embedded in the
institutional structures that are created to respond to environmental uncertainty, so structural elements can support or undermine desired cultural states (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Lorsch, 2016). Culture is also an evolving, not fixed, phenomenon: every addition to the organization changes the culture, since a new set of perspectives affects the social interactions that make up culture (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Processes of dialogic sensemaking within organizations are critical for culture to be transmitted and embedded successfully (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Rindova, Dalpiaz, & Ravasi, 2011; Schein, 1993; Trice & Beyer, 1993; Weick, 1996), whether they be organizationally sanctioned (e.g., onboarding) or evolve informally through time and practice.

Given the socially constructed, narrative, and structural elements of culture, researchers in culture sought to further specify how it can be effectively studied. Edgar Schein is an influential organization development researcher who formulated a clear and widely discussed framework for understanding culture. He defined organizational culture is a “pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration…to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 2010). He divided cultural components into three elements: artifacts (visible organizational structures and processes), espoused beliefs and values (strategies, goals, philosophies), and underlying assumptions (taken for granted, unconscious beliefs, perceptions,
thoughts and feelings). The work of Schein and his contemporaries attempted to label or quantify cultural factors and use them as ways to influence organizations (Cameron, 2008). By giving a framework and language around these elements, researchers can engage in contextual discovery of cultural factors while being able to draw connections to other organizations and industries. These concepts of cultural dimensions are evident in most contemporary research on culture, especially in articles addressing culture change.

Schein also looked at the influence of leader behaviors on organizational culture, including how they hire, fire, reward, and promote; what they pay attention to; and how they allocate resources. His argument, based on work of Lewin and McGregor, is that the leaders have a strong influence on the culture of the organization, and they can change culture by changing their focus (Schein, 2010). In addition to leader influence, the concept of the influence of founders on culture and their impact as time goes on has been further explored in the literature. Pettigrew discussed the great influence of founder beliefs on organizational culture, as well as the fact that “purpose, commitment, and order” are developed early in an organization’s life (1979). Schein echoes Pettigrew’s notion of the influence of early founders, showing the influence of a founder’s strategies for containing and absorbing uncertainty and risk on the structures and strategies the organization pursues (Schein, 1989). He further discussed how founders need to have clear enough insights into their own cultures to encourage the persistence and continuance of those cultural values and practices. Hofstede et al. discussed a key
difference between how leaders and followers engage in organizational cultures, noting that leaders shape culture and determine values but members of the organization experience culture through shared practices (Hofstede, 1998; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990). This connects with what Trice and Beyer (1993) discussed about the individual and collective processes that make up culture; ideologies, often espoused by leadership, are made tangible and concrete through conscious and unconscious processes within the organization.

Much of the literature, especially as articulated by Schein, focuses on a leadercentric model of organizational culture, where leadership holds the primary levers for establishing and managing culture. Certainly many researchers, including the studies cited above, support the visible influence of leaders and founders on culture. However, the socially constructed nature of culture challenges the notion that leaders are the only carriers of culture. Meaning of cultural cues is highly dependent on the interactions between individuals, and one individual’s experience of culture can be very different from another’s (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Trice & Beyer, 1993). It could be argued that culture exists in organizations at all times but is discussed and examined only during times of upheaval and change. Trice and Beyer discuss how cultural assumptions surface during times of new leadership, change, or upheaval: “Even a new member of a workgroup may be a sufficient disruption to make otherwise hidden values and norms evident” (Trice & Beyer, 1993).
Founder influence is especially important because culture is embedded and transmitted through a combination of structural, relational, leadership actions, and organizational stories (Schein, 1989), all of which have their roots in the highly relational nature of young organizations. However, uncovering how organization cultures are maintained requires digging into how these structural and social components of culture are carried forward after the founding period using both leader influences and the actions of individuals. Values, especially in mission-driven organizations, have a heavy influence on culture through moral narrative, collective identity, and commitment to the culture (Vivian & Hormann, 2013). Given the broad use of the phrase “Franciscan values” in discussions about Franciscan colleges and universities (Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities, n.d.) and the prominence of founders values and beliefs in the literature on organizational culture, an exploration of values follows.

**Values**

Before exploring values in the context of institutional research, it is important to define what is meant by values. In general philosophical terms, value is defined as that worth having, getting, or doing, and is at its core a relational concept (Becker & Becker, 2001). Without reference to a person or other living being, value does not exist, whether it is valuable as an end or valuable as a means. In philosophy, values provide reasons for action or nonaction and are forces for social cohesion, whether they are taken for granted by the cultural context or agreed upon as morally right by subcultures. Values
provide guidance in ordering preferred actions and are related to both affect and natural
tendencies, but not necessarily direct cognition (Gaus, 2001). This implies an
embeddedness of values in the emotional and instinctual life of social interaction, which
can partially explain how difficult values are to pin down in people and organizations.

The psychological and sociological views of values agree with many of the philosophical
tenets (e.g., values guide action) and include specific and preferred modes of conduct
(Malle & Dickert, 2007; Rokeach, 1973; “Values,” 2001). Views in these fields have a
stronger connection to the impact of values on organizational life. Rokeach, a
psychologist who did research on the impact of values changes in a city in Washington,
disagreed with the primarily affective philosophical assertion about values, stating that
there are cognitive as well as affective and behavioral components to values. One knows
cognitively that things are desirable, affectively can feel emotional about that value, and
behaviorally can be led to action by a particular value (Rokeach, 1973). This concept of
values leading to action when activated is echoed in social psychology and the work of
biologist David Sloan Wilson, who held that values bind communities together and create
a group bond that unifies individual actions into a group mind-set and organization
(Malle & Dickert, 2007). Values-based actions have an impact on building and
maintaining societies, creating the norms and rules for guiding behavior that are
understood by, or at least enacted by, in-group cultural members (“Values,” 2001).
Philosophically and psychologically, values are things worth having or worthwhile states
of being that are socially constructed within a given society or group and drive individuals to take action based on their primarily emotional and sometimes cognitive responses to those things or states.

In definitional writings about organizational values, values are said generally to be based on the influence of the founder(s), family, or circumstance in which an organization was founded (Boyatzis, 2008; Richley, 2008). Values are espoused or implied and are found in the stories, myths, and symbolic actions within an organization (Schein, 1989, 2010). As definitions lead to corporate values, the discussion leans away from the socially constructed and emotional behavioral responses to values and leans more toward the dichotomy between espoused and lived values (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013; Richley, 2008). This implies a more top-down approach and diminishes the action of human agency in supporting or undermining value systems. However, writings on organizational values indicate that the impact of the individual is still considered, albeit around corporate action toward influencing individual action. The tension of the collective corporate action on the individual versus the individual action on their environment is evident here.

Opportunities exist to balance the view of the individual and organization through values actions as defined in sociology and psychology. Research in organizational behavior and culture as they relate to values wrestles with this apparent dichotomy.
The exploration of organizational values goes back more than half a century. Lewin (1951), consistent with his psychological background, saw values as part of individual behavior but also as acting as limiting or restricting factors in organizational fields. Emery and Trist (1965) built on Lewin’s field-level concepts and discussed organizational values and their impact on organizational environments. They held that social values are coping mechanisms for dealing with unstable and uncertain environments. Using values, organizational members can make decisions under the guidance of their ethical code so that an organization does not have to dictate or structure every outcome. They also discussed values as a control mechanism, using shared values as a way to ensure that members within an organization behave a certain way.

Related to Emery and Trist’s work is that of Argyris (1964) on value and goal congruence between individuals and organizations and the effects of incongruence on the same (see also Lamm, Gordon, & Purser, 2010). Argyris discussed the difference between espoused values and values in use; individuals may state that they hold a particular value or value approach, but their actions show what values they actually hold in practice. Given the action-oriented definitions of values, the implication is that values actions have more firmly grounded meanings than those that are espoused (Argyris, 1964). Therefore, the greater the congruence between an individual’s enacted values and an organization’s values, the more likely an individual will act in concert with the organization’s goals. This is particularly
relevant to the context of mission-driven institutions, where individuals must connect to the organization’s values at a fundamental level in order to support its success (Lamm et al., 2010). Additional research has shown that employee self-interest is a mediator between personal values and organizational values (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007). While an employee does not have to hold a value in order to act within the context of those values, the closer an employee’s values is to the organization’s, the more strongly tied the individual is to the organization.

An interesting finding of the research by Paarlberg and Perry (2007) was that middle managers played key roles in linking employee values to organizational values. By translating strategic values into employee values and actions, middle managers engaged in dialogic sensemaking activities (Weick, 1996), reinforcing how the employees and their actions were connected and more congruent than they thought with organizational values. A distinction was drawn in the research between dialogic processes and more impersonal approaches; when managers discussed strategic goals and employee behaviors with the employee, those employees showed a greater congruence with the organization and had higher performance than those who simply received forms and feedback through electronic or paper means. This research reinforces the socially constructed, action-oriented nature of values as defined above.
Values dialogue and employee commitment also has an important place in organizational change. One particularly salient example is in Michael, Newbert, and Michael’s study on organizational values change and formation. They asserted that values provide direction for organizational action and that commitment to values by organizational members is key in guiding employee actions and building trust (Michael, Neubert, & Michael, 2012). They contrasted two common forms of value transmission, directed top-down and emergent from organizational actions, as less effective in contested values environments than their third approach, which is dialogic change between employees and leaders. This reinforces Paarlberg and Perry’s (2007) finding of the importance of dialogue in forming employee values commitment, but it goes further in showing the efficacy of a two-way participatory dialogue between leadership and employees. In the spirit of appreciative inquiry and other dialogic open-systems approaches (Bushe & Marshak, 2014), the interactive dialogical process helps provide consensus, attunes the values to the current context throughout the organization, and reformulates values in a way that is useful, broadly accepted, and enacted (Michael et al., 2012; Zwack, Kraiczy, von Schlippe, & Hack, 2016).

This element of social translation of values and participation continued in a study of employee actions based on a review of corporate value statements. This study confirmed the social construction of values, as values are constantly interpreted, re-interpreted, and embodied through employee and organizational actions (Jonsen,
Galunic, Weeks, & Braga, 2015). In addition, this research showed the importance of dialogic processes involving values, since companies that espoused values did better than those who did not communicate values at all, and organizations that shifted values or changed values language to respond to environmental shifts did better than those who stayed consistent and stable in their values language. Additional research by Martin showed the importance of narrative in conveying values information to newcomers, another dialogic process. He found that narrative in the values context provides the opportunity to reduce uncertainty for newcomers by giving examples of normative, values-based behavior within the organization. The organization also benefits from these actions, as new members behave in ways that maintain rather than undermine organizational values (Martin, 2016). An additional concept of note is that peers telling stories about organizational peers or founders who supported the values acted as a surrogate for actually viewing these values-based actions, and values were correctly reinterpreted for the current context. This concept of narrative reinterpretation is important in both studies mentioned above: since values are socially constructed processes, stable espoused values can become meaningless over time if not discussed, reinterpreted, and applied through direct action in new contexts.

Founders have a major influence on the culture of organizations, in that their values are expressed through their actions, the structures they create, and the individuals they bring into the organization in its early life (Schein, 1989, 2010). This influence
in translated at first through observation of founder actions, then through storytelling of founder activities, and then through other organizational narratives and structures that support or show consequences of not supporting those values. As organizations mature, implied values are made explicit if cultures are to be maintained, and values-based actions are transmitted through example and dialogic processes to new members of the organization. Still, much depends on top-down understandings of values transmission and does not provide insights into how values actions work at all levels to maintain the organization. In the current literature, values are most related to manager/leader influences on employees, changing values to change organizations, or values transmission through onboarding. Some explicit discussion was made about values themselves, such as how founders imprint values during the creation of a firm, how values are impacted by institutional logics, and values that support an institution’s strategic pursuits. However, there is also explicit acknowledgment that values are both “personal cognitive structures and collective social structures” and that values come both from power-laden organizational sources and individual preferences (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). Given research in the dialogic nature of organizational life (Lamm et al., 2010; Stackman, Pinder, & Connor, 2000) there is an opportunity to approach values as a discursive, action-based framework, based on the sociological and psychological constructs, for engaging in institutional maintenance (Gehman, Trevino, & Garud, 2013; Jonsen et al., 2015). Since values dialogue becomes more explicit during times of change as opposed to times of stability, and since the social
construction of organizations requires many individuals to be engaged in complementary actions, individual member value actions must play a role in maintaining institutions.

**Institutional Theory and Institutional Work**

The following concept of institutional work provides a framework of understanding the influence of individual on organizations through values actions.

**Institutional Theory**
Institutional work is derived from institutional theory and is best understood with a foundational understanding of institutionalism. Institutional theory holds that institutions are social structures composed of cultural, normative, and regulative elements that provide stability to social life (Scott, 2004). Institutions are part of organizational fields, a collection of related organizations such as suppliers, customers, and organizations offering similar goods or services (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organizational fields become more structured over time as what it takes to be successful in that field (e.g., legitimate practices, expected cultures, and outputs) becomes distributed to organizations through isomorphic processes. A legitimate member of the field is supposed to look and act a certain way, and diversity in approach is discouraged through coercive, mimetic, or normative isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).
Various isomorphic influences are evident in Catholic higher education, especially in cultural elements. An institute of higher education is expected to have a certain set of services and resources for students, a specific kind of curriculum, and the outcome of employable graduates. Normative isomorphism has led to more professionals in occupations previously occupied by members of the founding order, changing the shape of how work is enacted at colleges. For example, business officers have to make policies around forgiving debt or allowing enrollment on credit, as opposed to previous practices driven by the sisters’ desire to open opportunity and not penalize the poor for seeking education. Coercive isomorphism in the shape of increased regulation has also changed how education is delivered, forcing more routine responses and less flexibility, which small institutions were founded to offer.

Despite these pressures, differentiation within the field is also key for institutions to be successful, so smaller colleges are balanced on a razor’s edge of isomorphic expectations and the need for market differentiation.

Values are connected to institutionalism as “organizational values are the product of values prevailing in institutional fields, which form the basis for organizational structures and routines.” (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). However, institutionalism implies the normative transmission of social facts, primarily from the professions (Zucker, 1987). The values enacted through the lives of the religious orders running institutions are being replaced by professional values, asking the question of how founder values can be reinforced in the face of isomorphic pressures. An answer
may be in the concepts that Zucker shares on the process of institutionalization. She holds that institutional elements arise primarily from small group or organization level processes, instead of fully from field-level influences (1987). This view is supported by other researchers who hold that macroinstitutions are really a network of micro actors that seem “superhuman in size” (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996) and that microinteractions have the ability to garner collective momentum to change institutions (Gray, Purdy, & Ansari, 2015). This implies a dual role of the institutional field and the individual in influencing institutional elements such as values, culture, processes, and other elements of legitimacy.

Zucker (1987) highlighted organizational routines supporting institutionalization when they are enacted over time and are embedded in organizational practices to the point that changing them would necessitate change in other structures. To compliment this perspective, Oliver (1992) dug deeper into the concept of deinstitutionalization, or how processes are eroded or discontinue over time. This perspective is key for understanding how organizational practices, such as those related to values, stop influencing organizations or stop being practiced altogether. Oliver (1992) synthesized research by Zucker and by Hinings and Greenwood (1988), discussing institutionalized behaviors as “the force of habit, history and tradition within the organization,” that “creates value congruence among organizational members around the property of re-enacted activities, causing these activities to have a rule-like status.” She further discussed erosions in once-shared
understandings or the gradual lack of interest in maintaining an institutionalized organizational activity, which happens over time through political, functional, and social pressures.

Of particular interest to the discussion of culture and values are the social pressures that lead to deinstitutionalization. In spite of desires to maintain the status quo, organizations can lack the ability to consciously recognize the need to continue established activities that reinforce social norms. The fragmentation of social groups, sometimes influenced by professionalization and specialization, exacerbates the gradual abandoning of key processes of social cohesion. Related to this is the disaggregation of structures that lead to a lack of interaction among organizational members. In particular, as organizations grow, members have less opportunity to learn from each other (Oliver, 1992). This connects to research on organizational values practices, as bureaucratization provides more structural certainty but less opportunity for organizational members to witness values actions, thus removing mechanisms to reinforce institutional practices through observational learning (Peng, Pandey, & Pandey, 2015).

One of the most important contributions of Oliver’s work is the concept of institutions needing constant maintenance, as opposed to their continuing by virtue of their structure or embeddedness. She questioned what activities might constitute institutional repair or what fills the void when practices are discontinued (Oliver,
These ideas connect to the socially constructed view of organizations, as researchers have found that culture changes over time with new institutional actors and must be explicitly maintained through onboarding and reframing. Research that supports this assertion includes the perspective that institutionalized organizations are not made up of coherent desired values systems but are instead full of “competing and conflicting principles and values enacted in discourse and action” (Lawrence, 2008). The question of actions needed to support institutions leads to a discussion of agency in institutional theory.

Some institutional theorists have held that the organizational field has the strongest impact on changes in institutions, but others argue that individual agency plays an equally important role (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Zilber, 2008). DiMaggio and Zilber separately argue that institutionalization is the product of meaning-laden political efforts of actors to influence their environment and to get work accomplished. DiMaggio (1998) pointed to the inadequacy of institutional theory to explain how organizational forms and actions begin, are maintained, and disappear. Zilber (2008) went further by connecting institutional theory to social constructionism, showing that institutions are understood as meanings encoded and enacted through structures and practices through those that observe them. Change and maintenance of institutions rely on discursive language constructs, institutional vocabularies, and individual interpretation of that discourse on an ongoing basis.
Zilber also pointed out the lack in an understanding of how beliefs are enacted over time.

**Institutional Work**

Researchers in institutional theory confidently express understanding of the macroinfluence of the organizational field on institutions, but they acknowledge the social construction of organizational life and the lack of understanding of what microinfluences support institutions (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Lawrence, 2008). This lack led researchers to question how individual agentic action affected institutions (DiMaggio, 1998; Lawrence, 2008) and ultimately to the development of the theory of institutional work.

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) defined institutional work as “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, or disrupting institutions.” This definition has several important components. The first is the use of the word purposive. This comes from the view of institutions as patterns of interactions by members supported by institutional control mechanisms and the product of actions taken to create or destroy them (Jepperson, 1991). It implies action and participation in the life of the organization on the part of a wide variety of members. Another facet of this definition is the practice theory orientation that the use of the terms creating, maintaining, and disrupting implies. Practice theory focuses on the actions of individuals and groups situated in a social context.
A practice orientation focuses on the life within institutional processes (Brown & Duguid, 2000); where processes focus on steps to reach an outcome, practice theory discusses the “intelligent activities of individuals and organizations who are working to…achieve that outcome” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Another underlying implication of this definition is the absence of the assumption that institutional work is conducted by autonomous, independent actors in institutions; the practice theory combined with action implies that institutional work is not necessarily autonomous strategic action but still represents intentional actions of individuals to impact their organizations (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). This theory recognizes the agency of actors in organizations, whether through strategic reflection on the institutional context they are in or through “coordinated and uncoordinated efforts of a potentially large number of actors” (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011). Institutional work opens up dialogue into the contributions of multiple actors with distributed agency responding to their institutional environment, whether through conscious dialogic processes or through less conscious emotional responses (Coule & Patmore, 2013; Hargrave & Van der Ven, 2009; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009; Moisander, Hirsto, & Fahy, 2016; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Ultimately, institutional work creates a framework for engaging in the “how” of the micropatterns of institutional life, which in turn helps in understanding the institutional context as a whole.
Lawrence and Suddaby identified three primary kinds of institutional work through their review of institutional research: creating, maintaining, and disrupting. Creating work involves advocacy, defining boundaries and creating rule systems, vesting power in rule structures, constructing identities, changing normative associations to specific sets of practices, constructing normative networks through which practices are sanctioned, mimicking taken-for-granted institutional practices that lend legitimacy, theorizing causes and effects, and educating actors in skills and knowledge to support institutions. Maintaining institutions involves enabling work that authorizes agents or diverts resources to support institutions, policing work to ensure enforcement of norms and processes, deterring institutional change, valorizing and demonizing examples of normative foundations of the institution, mythologizing to preserve normative underpinnings of the institution, and embedding and routinizing normative foundations into the day-to-day routines and organizational practices. Disrupting institutions involve disconnecting sanctions and reward systems from specific institutional rules, disassociating the moral foundations of practices from the institutional context, and undermining assumptions and beliefs to decrease perceived risks of innovation. (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Several authors have taken up the study of institutional work in a variety of contexts. Lawrence and Dover discussed the importance of place in institutional
work (2015). Individual actors’ work to shape organizations influences the space they are in. The authors focused on institutional work and the impact of place in three ways: as the effort expended to achieve a result, the drawing on material and symbolic resources that can be used to shape actions, and places hold material and symbolic resources that may affect the intended and unintended consequences of institutional work. Places can mediate institutional work by providing an interpretive lens, as they represent things to the actors in the organization. Related to the impact of place as individual interpretive lens is the work of Dacin, Munir, and Tracey (2010) on the impact of ritual enactment on institutions. They observed dining rituals at Cambridge colleges, which despite the fact that not all college members are from the upper class, reinforce and reproduce the British class system. They found that organizational rituals support institutional maintenance by teaching roles and values to participants, by evoking in participants a powerful desire to maintain those rituals, and by impacting behavior and social interaction beyond the ritual context. This research, along with Lawrence and Dover’s on place, reinforces the concepts of institutional work as situated within an individual’s perception, as institutions are “refracted through context and individual experience” (Dacin et al., 2010).

Other research shows the importance of dialogue and dialectic in institutional work. Through a discussion of the deinstitutionalization of sports medicine practices at an athletic club, Gilmore and Sillince (2014) noted how dialogic processes not only
created sports medicine practices through institutional entrepreneurship but also disrupted the practices upon departure of leadership and the institutional entrepreneurs. Intentional dialogue and engaging in dialectic work also played a strong role in internal identity revision as Intel moved from a supply chain organization to a platform focus in response to market changes (Gawer & Phillips, 2013). In both cases, the practices of discussing, reframing, and applying revised understandings of the organization or its practices impacted both the organization and the field in which it operated. This research reinforces Hargrave and Van de Ven’s (2009) suggestion that the effective institutional actor takes actions to stabilize and change institutions and that institutional work, formed through dialectic action, shapes the identity and actions of an organization.

Connected to dialogue and dialectic, the role of emotions in institutional work has also been explored by researchers. Gilmore and Sillence (2014) noted the connection between dialogue, change, and emotions in their work, stating that the lived-affective factors of individual’s experience in institutions had just as much influence on deinstitutionalization and change as cognitive-reflective ones. Emotions are intrinsically tied to behavior, and both influence and are influenced by the social context in which they occur. Voronov and Vince (2012) argued that high emotional investment and low cognitive investment in an institution lead to either disrupting or maintaining institutions on a scale based on institutional capital. They further argued that emotional displays and experiences are fundamentally political.
because they either reproduce the current institutional order or subvert it. Their work provides a framework for understanding how disruption and maintenance are linked through structures of power. Emotions are also used to control discursive spaces that open up during times of change or disruption, thus reinforcing their importance in institutional work (Moisander et al., 2016). This line of research seems to challenge the intentionality of institutional work. However, emotions are embodied but also socially constructed structures of knowledge, feeling, and ethical reasoning that guide and constrain action and interaction that support institutions (Moisander et al., 2016). Since emotions have a deep impact on individual action and drive to impact structures and discursive spaces, they are integral to institutional disruption and maintenance.

The research cited supports institutional work as a means for understanding the influence of actors on creating, disrupting, and maintaining institutions. Concepts of emotions, dialogue, dialectic, power, and action are well represented in this work. In seeking to further understanding of the persistence and use of values in faith-based higher education, the process of maintaining institutions is of particular interest. While research has been done on maintaining institutions, there are further calls to more clearly understand maintenance processes (Lawrence, Leca, & Zilber, 2013). In framing maintaining institutions, “relatively few institutions have such powerful reproductive mechanisms that no ongoing maintenance is necessary” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In addition, maintenance and disruption seem to be two sides of the
same coin, as actors who seek to maintain institutions may be in positions that mean their actions cause disruption, no matter how well intended (Voronov & Vince, 2012), and that those who seek to disrupt institutions on some level are trying to maintain the organization by changing it to fit their conception of it (Hargrave & Van der Ven, 2009). The symbols and rules of organizations in particular need maintenance in order to persist. Zilber (2009) brought identity and values work back to the cultural concepts of Schein, where she discussed maintaining the symbolic institutional elements of shared values and meanings. Organizational actors in her research undertake dialogic sensemaking processes to both reproduce the institutional order and reproduce those values and meanings in an evolving context. Moisander, Hirsto, and Fahy (2016) extended this concept of dialogic sensemaking to the use of emotions, showing that actors can open up “discursive spaces” during institutional change or disruption by using emotions, which allow them to put forward supportive or alternative narratives. They further showed that emotions in institutional work have a strong influence on the normative underpinning of institutions, a key element in maintaining institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Further research has discussed the use of actors in nonprofit organizations using normative discursive and action-based practices to draw upon institutional values and logics to maintain their view of the institution’s place in the field (Coule & Patmore, 2013). Maintenance work can also be undertaken to repair an institution’s image in the organizational field through purposeful action to reestablish norms (Micelotta & Washington, 2013). Research has also examined the use of moral
emotions by actors embedded in organizations to undertake work that maintains the institution’s normative foundations by reproducing its values in everyday work (Wright, Zammuto, & Liesch, 2017).

These last three pieces of research have particular application to understanding the use of values in institutional maintenance. The drive of emotion to inspire action on behalf of institutional members, the use of enacted values on the micro level to maintain an institution’s normative pillars, and the reestablishment of norms in a field facing disruption all speak to the situation of faith-based higher education. There are clear similarities and connections to the work of Gehman et al. (2013) in values work. Stable-seeming values practices are actually created and interpreted through distributed and interactive processes, much like the dialogic practices of institutional work (Gehman et al., 2013). Values practices actively intervene in situations, much like practice-based institutional work, contributing to the enactment of normative realities. A clear opportunity exists to extend and test this work by exploring explicit maintenance work through culture and values in organizations. This dissertation argues that disruption and values dialogue occur during times of stress or disconfirmation in organizations, whereas subtle shifts are negotiated through an ongoing process of sensemaking in institutions during times of relative stability. Are cultural values used as instruments of institutional work to change or maintain organizations? How do values that persist over time impact
individual actions that maintain institutions? The connected frameworks of values and institutional work will provide a means to explore these questions.

**Institutional Work and Change**
A clear opportunity exists to explore institutional maintenance work as it relates to change in this study of Franciscan universities. As Lawrence and Suddbay (2006) state:

> It seems that maintaining of institutions must be distinguished from simple stability or the absence of change: rather, institutional work that maintains institutions involves considerable effort, and often occurs as a consequence of change in the organization or its environment. That is, in order to maintain institutions, actors must cope with the entrance of new members into the organization of the field, the evolution of the field in new and unexpected directions, and change in pan institutional factors such as technology or demographics….Understanding how institutions maintain themselves thus must focus on understanding how actors are able to effect processes of persistence and stability in the context of upheaval and change.

Since change processes are embedded in maintenance, this research will shed light on the tensions between maintaining institutional norms and responding to the environment through change. In addition to maintenance, key markers of disruption (redefining, recategorizing, reconfiguring, abstracting, problematizing, and generally
manipulating the social and symbolic boundaries that constitute institutions) (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) are remarkably similar to how to make the case for change (urgency, coalition building, reframing organization into a vision, manipulating the boundaries of the organization to make the change make sense in the context of the organization, general dissatisfaction with status quo) (Burke, 2008; Cummings & Worley, 2015; Kotter, 2007).

The action-oriented approach of institutional work and values actions also connect to dialogic modes of change in organization development. The general concept of the dialogic approach is that since reality is socially constructed, people make sense of change through shifting their narrative experiences, and generative images provide compelling options for thinking and acting differently (Bushe & Marshak, 2014). In short, change occurs within conversations, and change is more likely to succeed in dialogue with the system rather than dictated to it. Strategies discussed above in disruptive institutional work and creating the case for change are generally dialogic in nature, and at their most effective they embrace multiple levels of feedback and input through the organization. The dialogic approach is particularly evident in writings on group and system approaches to change (Bushe, 2005; Bushe & Kassam, 2005; D. Cooperider, 1994; Marshak, 2006; Marshak & Grant, 2013). Since one of the focuses of dialogic organization development is the narrative, approaches that form a compelling narrative with the whole system can change the foundations of an institution.
The institutional work literature also provides theoretical richness within which to address change and OD interventions. Zietsma and McKnight (2009) challenged the notion that “heroic institutional entrepreneurs” bring change to organizations through force of will. They balanced the leader-heavy narrative in change with the concept of collaborative co-creation of institutional change, highlighting the tradeoffs that actors need to make when moving change forward. Leaders would do well to heed their finding that everyone, including leaders, can be constrained by or need to negotiate with institutional forces. Through institutional work, organizational members craft “pockets of agency” during times of change by using emotions (Voronov & Vince, 2012) in order to push alternative understandings of change (Moisander et al., 2016), which can broaden understanding to ways to engage with resistance to change. These findings and the pervasive theme of the socially constructed nature of organizational life should inspire leaders to approach change from a multilevel perspective. Overall, a better understanding of the micro-actions of individuals in institutions to respond to new institutional logics (Gawer & Phillips, 2013), the timing of change (Grandqvist & Gustafsson, 2016) and the power dynamics inherent in change (Moisander et al., 2016) can help deepen perspectives of implementing and building capacity for change. Indeed, insights from the discursive, situated, and embodied aspects of institutional work could have a great impact on addressing institutional change.
**Summary**

Within these streams of research is an opportunity to explore what impact individual actions have on the persistence of organizational values through maintenance and disruption actions defined by institutional work. Exploring the connection between values work and institutional maintenance work will fill a gap in the literature of how values-based actions lead to cultural persistence over time. This will have a strong impact on values-based organizations, organizations seeking to maintain strong organizational cultures for strategic advantage, and institutions seeking to maintain distinctive cultural elements during times of change. The combination of a deep understanding of values work and the intentionality of institutional work practices will certainly bring clarity to the central tenants of Franciscan educational practice while also identifying how values are used to support the maintenance of institutional life.
Chapter 3 - Methodology

A strong connection exists between values actions, institutional theory, and institutional change, as described in the preceding chapter. These theoretical connections help shed light on how values practices undertaken by employees can have an impact on organizational maintenance and change. The inherent meaning-making in values work indicates that a dialogic, exploratory approach is an appropriate methodological frame to discover whether and how organizational members engage in this work. Since exploring organizational phenomena is best done with an understanding of the context of an organization (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Corbin & Strauss, 2008), a case study design provides a bounded way to investigate an organization more deeply, aiding the exploratory nature of the research. Therefore, a qualitative comparative case study research design lends itself to an exploratory yet bounded dialogic investigation with organizational members.

Research Questions

The purpose of this comparative case study was to explore how values-based actions support the distinctive cultures of Franciscan institutions of higher education. Through semi-structured interviews, the following questions were explored. (1) How are values used through change in organizations to maintain institutions? The literature on values implies that operationalized values language aids in maintaining institutional structures while navigating through change, as they provide a linguistic
and action-oriented framework for meaning-making and understanding. Therefore, interviews with individuals reflecting on change should surface values-laded statements. (2) What values practices undertaken by employees have an impact on maintenance and organizational change? Since values in use are more internalized and actualized than espoused values (Argyris, 1964), employee use of values-based language, when used to describe and justify the purpose behind employee actions, can shed light on whether or how values-driven practices impact organizations in times of change. (3) Are there themes in how individuals at all levels of the organization intentionally or unintentionally use values to frame their understanding and reinforcement of the institutions in which they reside, and how do values permeate and emerge in organizational conversations? Interviews encouraging self-reflection on change and their organization facilitate the exploration of this intersection of emotion, dialogic understanding, and institutional maintenance (Gilmore & Sillince, 2014; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Moisander et al., 2016). Further, by explicitly seeking employees at multiple hierarchical levels of the organization, this research addresses the gap in understanding incurred by the heavy focus on the executive team in values and culture research.

**Research Sample**

The research setting is three Franciscan universities in the U.S. Midwest that were founded by women religious orders. These were selected for several reasons. Most
Midwestern universities sponsored by religious orders were founded around the same time, in the late 1800s to early 1900s. More important, they are at similar points in their organizational lifecycle because of the age and declining presence of their founding order members. Franciscan institutions also have other similar characteristics, including program portfolios in the education, helping and healing professions, and similar student profiles (e.g., low income, first generation, mix of adult and traditional learners). Furthermore, most Franciscan institutions have a focus on the values basis of their organizations, making it more likely that the phenomenon being studied will emerge (Pettigrew, 1988). These similarities provide a strong foundation for comparing results and creating transferable findings across cases.

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<th>Table 1. University Profile</th>
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<td><strong>University A</strong></td>
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<td>Founding Period</td>
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<td>Carnegie Enrollment Profile</td>
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<td>Carnegie Size and Setting</td>
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Participants in the study are a cross-section of employees from three levels in the organization: executive, middle management, and frontline staff. Executive members are defined as those in the president’s cabinet or leadership team. Middle managers are those faculty and staff who hold significant leadership positions, such as department chair, director of an administrative unit, or program director. Frontline
staff are teaching faculty and staff who do not hold management positions. While faculty hold a unique and powerful role in institutions that generally affords them more perspective than a frontline nonfaculty employee, nonmanagerial faculty can have the same limited scope and lack of institutional perspective as their staff colleagues. All individuals selected have an institutional tenure of more than two years. This ensures they have had the opportunity to be part of change in the organization as well as time for the values of the organization to be transmitted to them and potentially operationalized in their work.

Participants were identified by the researcher’s key contact at the institution through critical criterion sampling. Critical sampling seeks individuals who can make a point more dramatically or have some kind of connection to the study at hand (Patton, 2015). Since qualitative sampling often focuses on where data is likely to be found by selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are particularly knowledgeable (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), critical sampling ensures that the phenomenon of interest will be more likely to emerge. Criterion sampling ensures that participants have certain qualities (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016), specifically in this case their length of employment at the institution and their position in the hierarchy. In order to mirror organizational hierarchy, individuals were further sampled by using a pyramid design, with one or two executive interviews, five to ten middle-manager interviews, and seven to fifteen frontline interviews. This additional sampling was to ensure a sufficiently broad perspective outside of the executive and management level,
reducing the reliance on elite actors (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994). When saturation was not reached with initial participants, snowballing additional participants ensured that a sufficiently broad population within each institution was consulted. Because of changes in the key contact at University A, the pyramid of participants was heavier on the executive level than desired, but sufficient numbers of middle and frontline employees were identified to balance perspectives.

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<th>Table 2. Study Participants</th>
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<td>Middle Managers</td>
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<td>Total Interviews</td>
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**Research Design**

This research was designed as an exploratory comparative case study of three Franciscan universities in the U.S. Midwest. The case study methodology suits the research at hand, as the “boundaries between the phenomena and the context” are not clear (Yin, 2015). The research sought to answer whether and how values actions are used to shape organizations by organizational members. Case studies are well suited to answering “how” questions, especially when there is no desire to influence the event at hand. They also provide an opportunity to build theory in institutional work through the discovery of key variables in values actions and institutional theory, which the case method also suits (Eisenhardt, 1989). An exploratory frame enables this comparative case study to discover connections that are only loosely identified by
current theory. This connects to previous concepts of case studies as theory elaboration, as discussed by Strauss and Corbin (1994).

A comparative case design, shown in Figure 1, of three different institutions supports theoretical sampling with the goal of replication, as identified by Yin (2015) and Eisenhardt (1989). In studying three Franciscan institutions, which generally have highly developed values statements and foundations, values actions and dialogue are more likely to be present. This approach is supported by Pettigrew (1988), who recommends case selections where the process of interest is “transparently observable.” Institutions were studied and analyzed in sequence, not concurrently, allowing for one case to be completed prior to engaging in another, thus reinforcing the internal validity of each case and increased the reliability of the final result.

**Figure 1. Data Collection Process**
**Data Collection**

The case research commenced with an inquiry to executive members of the three Franciscan universities. Those that expressed interest in participating designated a key contact. After a brief period of contracting (Jamieson, 2009) and discussing the research goals and outcomes, permission was secured to interview participants on all three sites. The visits were arranged sequentially, with approximately 3–5 weeks between each visit over the course of four months.

Three forms of data collection were used to support triangulation of results (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Eisenhardt, 1989). Prior to each site visit, a historical profile of the institution was created, including details about the founding order, key facts about the history of the institution, and formal values statements. Archival research also focused on values statements and efforts to define organizational values in each institution. Additional details were gathered through interviews with each site’s mission officer or president. This profile and data provided grounding in what conversations already occurred around values at the research site and provided key language to listen for in subsequent interactions with participants. Gathering this information beforehand was also key to refining my professional knowledge and providing an understanding of the environment (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gummesson, 1992): I had previously worked in a Franciscan institution, but each Franciscan university has a slightly different focus and values basis.
The primary data collection method while on site was semi-structured interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These interviews were designed to elicit themes around values, change, and individual actions in order to better understand the meaning of those actions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). A phenomenological interviewing stance was taken in order to refine the participant experience with values from their point of view (Seidman, 2013). Since organizational maintenance is based on individual actions and a key way to understand the motivations underneath those actions is dialogue and self-reflection, this interviewing approach provided the best opportunity to understand institutional maintenance through values.

One-on-one interviews as well as three interviews that had two interviewees present were conducted using a loosely structured interview guide, provided in Appendix A. Broad, exploratory questions were utilized to give the interviewees breadth to share what was important to them. Initial questions encouraged dialogue about the interviewees’ role and motivations for working at their institution (e.g., “What drew you to work here”). Substantive questions focused on recollections of organizational change, employee responses to change, and their roles in such change, in order to elicit “situations and action sequences in the world of the interviewee” (King, 2004). The participants were directly asked about values and the stated values set at their institution only after giving the language opportunities to emerge. Participants were also asked at the end to discuss their institution’s position in higher education as a way to elicit more information about how they perceive institutional actions in a

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changing environment. Open-ended closing questions invited any other commentary the interviewee wished to share. Interviews were audiorecorded via a digital recorder, then transcribed into text files by the researcher using a combination of computer-aided and manual transcription.

Field notes and observations were kept in a research journal, forming a data source for triangulation. This approach is supported in the literature as a way to examine researcher bias, promote reflexivity, and capture analytic thoughts during data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Initial analytic memos were also collected in this journal in order to capture themes emerging at different stages of the research.

**Case Construction**

After the data-gathering process, full cases for each site were constructed. Yin (2015) advocates having an analytic plan prior to data analysis in order to frame the approach to the case. The analytic strategy to construct the cases was a combination of working the data from the ground up (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013), utilizing theoretical propositions to guide coding (Yin, 2015) and utilizing multiple sources of data to examine rival explanations and ground the case in the research setting (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2015).
Interviews were initially transcribed by using a machine transcription service and then corrected while listening to the recording in real time. During the transcription process, a log was constructed for each interview on emergent themes and observations. Handwritten researcher notes taken at the time of the interviews were added to this log. After transcription was complete, the transcripts and transcription log were analyzed for first-order themes (Gioia et al., 2013). Quotes were coded and collated into a spreadsheet for sorting and collation across interviews. The coded quotations, transcription log, researchers log, and archival profile of the institution were then analyzed to construct the case. Quotes from every respondent were used in case construction, and themes were cross-checked for reliance on too few key informants. Draft cases were shared with the key contact at the institution. The key contact was given the opportunity to correct errors in fact in the background data and share initial impressions of the findings. This process reduced errors in reporting or magnifying unimportant events by testing research assumptions (Gummesson, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Once the case process was complete for one site, compilation began on the next site. Researcher notes were kept during the analysis of each individual case and were used in conducting the cross-case analysis. After the third case was written and verified, the cases were examined for themes from the literature review and additional emergent themes. This iterative case analysis process allows for within-case analysis.
for validity and broad themes as well as generalizable comparative conclusions when all results are reviewed (Eisenhardt, 1989; Meyer, 2001; Yin, 2015).

**Cross-Case Analysis**

The three constructed and member-checked cases were compared by using a cross-case synthesis approach (Yin, 2015). Each case was re-examined for second-order themes based on the literature and incorporating the emergent first-order themes (Gioia et al., 2013). As Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) recommend, a combination of case-oriented and variable-oriented case analysis was utilized to understand the data. Specifically, the case-oriented analysis looked at the types of values language, responses to change, and other families of responses that formed patterns across the cases. The variable-oriented strategy allowed each unique theme pattern across the cases in a systematic display, showing how the cases intersect. By combining the values and change responses in each case and across all cases, a clearer understanding of the questions emerged. The unique situation of each case was respected with this approach, as well as the desired outcome of collation and understanding of common themes in case synthesis. Given the exploratory focus of this research, a linear-analytic and theory-building frame (Yin, 2015) was used to complete the cross-case analysis. A linear-analytic approach allows for the exploration of the challenges and themes posed by the research questions, and the theory-building approach supports exploring the gaps in the literature and developing concepts that can lead to refined constructs. By presenting both the unique situation
of each institution briefly for context but focusing primary on broad themes, both internal and external construct validity are supported in the analysis.

**Limitations**

This study was limited by typical characteristics of field and case study research, in that a bounded phenomenon is studied with a discrete set of data points. An additional potential limitation is that I have previously worked in the setting of Franciscan universities, which could magnify patterns in values use. These limitations are addressed in a number of ways. The comparative case methodology helps provide multiple perspectives on the same phenomena, reducing the tendency for extreme cases, creating replication, and increasing the generalizability of the findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Yin, 2015). Triangulation is also carefully addressed in this study, with complementary archival, interview, and researcher observations providing a variety of perspectives on the data. Regarding my knowledge of and potential bias toward Franciscan universities and their value systems, the research notes and analytic strategies helped limit this bias, for example by using rival explanations and getting feedback from informants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In addition, since the three institutions studied have set values codes, these were utilized as validation of themes. Gummesson (1992) also notes that familiarity with the participants under study can also be viewed as an asset to address limitations, since it increases both theoretical sensitivity and practical understanding of the environment studied, enabling me to connect more quickly with research subjects and understand their environment.
Summary

This comparative case-study of three Franciscan institutions explores how values-based actions support the distinctive cultures of Franciscan institutes of higher education. A series of interviews at all levels of the organization, archival data regarding the founding orders and values codes of the institution, and researcher observations work together to form a powerful picture of values in use. The comparative case study approach is an ideal vehicle for this study, as it allows site-specific analysis of values actions in change, dialogic sensemaking through interviews, and triangulated analysis both within and across cases. Triangulation at each site through archival data and field notes helped avoid common fallacies and errors in analysis, and the use of a pyramid structure of informants reduced the reliance on elite perspectives. Overall, the structure for data gathering and analysis provided a solid foundation for further theorizing and generalizing findings.
Chapter 4: Cross-Case Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents data collected from members at three Franciscan institutions of higher education to answer the following questions: How are values used through change to maintain institutions? What values practices are undertaken by employees and how the impact institutions? and are there themes in the ways values emerge in organizational conversations? This chapter starts with a discussion of the concepts of preunderstanding and my perspectives on entering the three institutions in that frame. A brief description of each university case and their situation is presented, followed by data involving change and values themes across the three cases.

Preunderstanding

As I prepared to enter three Franciscan universities as a researcher, it was important to examine my own knowledge, views, and biases as someone who has worked both in Catholic higher education and Franciscan higher education during my career, although not in my current position. Gummesson discussed the concept of preunderstanding applying to researchers and consultants as “involving their personal experience as an essential element in the process of collecting and analyzing information” (1992, p. 60). He asserted the importance of utilizing both this personal experience while balancing theoretical sensitivity and the ability to change paradigms if needed. Danger also exists in “blocked preunderstanding” (Gummesson, 1992, p. 62): if researchers are too closely associated with a context or theories, any models
could be prejudiced as a result. However, having experience in an environment in the past gives the researcher insight into contextual cues and cultural elements that can ease the research process.

In entering these organizations and analyzing the data, I took pains to ensure I was continually examining my frame of reference through my research log and interview notes. Having worked at a Franciscan institution clearly did assist me in gaining entry to the organizations through professional relationships, and interviewees expressed ease in talking to me because I understood both the Catholic church and Franciscan higher education. I did, however, find that while knowledge about Franciscan education earned me trust with research subjects, individuals were readily interested in sharing their story whether I revealed that or not. Preunderstanding in this case served to provide me the context to get to deeper details faster and to be sensitive to certain cultural factors such as the emotional relationship to founding orders or the funding paradigms in Catholic higher education. I was also better able to make sense of the cultural environments that revealed themselves during the research visits, as they all had similarities to my previous institution. Even with these benefits, I always worked to maintain the role of observer in order to avoid blocked preunderstanding or “going native” (Miles et al., 2014). It is important to surface these experiences as data when doing research in organization development, especially given the intertwined nature of professional practice and research in the field. I found that my preunderstanding aided analysis and construction of the cases for each university,
leading to positive responses during member checking. Preunderstanding was also an asset in conducting the cross-case analysis, although I took particular care to avoid blocked preunderstanding through literature checks, rereading cases, and consulting the original data for clarification.

**Research Settings**

The three Franciscan institutions of higher education were each visited for approximately one week over the course of four months. While the institutions had several factors in common, salient differences existed in their market position, current challenges, and prospects for the future. Each institution is briefly described below so that data presented later will have the appropriate context. Table 3 summarizes key characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>University C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment (FTE)</strong></td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Founding Period</strong></td>
<td>Early 1900s</td>
<td>Early 1900s</td>
<td>Late 1800s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Founding Order</strong></td>
<td>Franciscan Sisters</td>
<td>Franciscan Sisters</td>
<td>Franciscan Sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signature Programs</strong></td>
<td>Education, Health Professions, Business</td>
<td>Education, Nursing, Social Work, Business</td>
<td>Health Professions, Business, Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Theme</td>
<td>Uncertain.</td>
<td>Intention to be a survivor.</td>
<td>Current leadership strong, but uncertainty about what’s next.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**University A**

University A was founded by a group of Franciscan sisters around the turn of the 20th century. The university’s program portfolio has expanded from a normal school to include four divisions in education, health professions, business, and the liberal arts. University A experienced significant growth in the 1980s and 1990s at a booming time in higher education when students were plentiful and the economy supported a large number of educational opportunities. Over the past 10 years, however, enrollment has steadily declined from a high of around 9,000 students to around 2,000 today. Numerous layoffs have occurred and positions left unfilled, and many individuals feel the pressure to serve a similar variety of programs with far fewer people. A combination of the recession, demographic shifts in available students, and an improving economy has hit the whole university. Members were well aware of this situation and commented about how the contraction in the institution impacted them and the university. Most expressed a clear conviction that knowing the situation and managing it was preferable to previous times when they were not aware.

The changes we are going through right now are exhilarating and exhausting.

I mean, I'm not joking when I say every six months there's been a major
change, it's been ridiculous. Not all of those changes have been structural, some have been a newfound understanding of our financial urgency. Some of them have been “oh, our enrollment is now this bad.” We’ve had a lot of self-inflicted wounds. (Interview A15)

Well, you know [the president] is very honest about it. We might be having to tighten the belt. But you know I think with any position I’ve held whether it be in the offices or here, knowing that up front you can handle the change. Not knowing that and then all of a sudden you know you have a change that’s unsettling. So you know it’s better to know what you're dealing with. (Interview A14)

The institution is at a critical point in operation, and the next few years will determine whether it will continue or closes its doors.

On the leadership front, the university president was a member of the founding congregation until about a decade ago. While some conversations started in the mid-1990s about what the institution would look like once the founding congregation was no longer a part of the university, the sisters remained heavily involved in leadership and campus life until the past ten years. As a result, the university is just now grappling with the transition from sister-led to lay leadership. There have been three lay presidents since the last sister to serve in that role, the most recent appointed by the congregation within six months of this writing. The first lay leader served for a
year and had a difficult transition into leadership, partially because of the involvement of the founding congregation. After an interim, the second lay president served for several years. Once they departed, the founding congregation appointed a president to serve. Many interviewees commented on this transition when discussing change.

It happened over the summer, but the announcement of the president’s appointment as interim was a surprise because they didn't have any visible relationship with the university. There was no affiliation that folks were aware of and it came very abruptly. (Interview A04)

I’m curious and intrigued with the new president...The structural changes that are going to happen with a president who is not a traditional academic leader. I think they pride themselves on not being a traditionalist. (Interview A08)

Despite comments about the leadership “honeymoon period,” the promise of the new leader generated a significant amount of excitement for, especially with their transparent communication style about the state of the institution and clear direction on the work ahead.
University B

University B was founded by a group of Franciscan sisters around the turn of the 20th century. Over the course of several years, their mission expanded from educating their congregation to teaching lay women and ultimately to serving the needs in the community through degrees in education; social work; business; and other helping, healing, and social justice professions. This program portfolio includes four divisions in education, business, liberal arts, and nursing.

The university has steadily grown over the course of its history, encompassing first the single historic building where students and sisters lived and took classes and then gradually adding other facilities. Enrollment has grown slowly but steadily over the years, and the university has been particularly good at diversifying its program array to include undergraduate, graduate, distance, and online programs as community needs arise.

A particular feature of University B and its history is the embeddedness in the community in which they reside. Choices in facilities use and building were frequently made in consultation with the city, and a strong collaborative relationship exists between the university athletics program and the city in particular.

I think because they do so much for the community. They have the fingers on the pulse of what this community is about, its diversity, what it means. And I've seen employees, students, go above and beyond to help people in the community. (Interview B03)
Oh, yeah, I think the city understands how lucky they are to have us. And vice versa. (Interview B06)

While members of the founding congregation have over time disappeared from active roles of the university, their spirit of serving the community is evident on campus and influenced from their engaged role on the Board of Trustees and its committees.

In recent years, University B has taken on additional properties of their founding congregation and built another building in order to serve the community and meet the needs of their programs. Members are grappling with the changes that multiple campus locations are bringing to the institution, its processes, and the culture, but the attitude about the changes is generally positive.

For a long time the campus included only the buildings here, not even this building. We’ve also expanded our [professional] program that’s on a campus a few miles away. Then we have another campus with a couple different programs down there. So I think that’s good change any time you can get bigger...You know the only changes are really more from a logistics standpoint. But in terms of the day to day operations and the collegiality, I don't think that's really changed. (Interview B11)
I think with the investment in the new building on campus and the changes with the investment in the other campuses and stuff like that...I personally love the perspective that I think they needed to happen, you had to show some growth. I mean you can’t show yourself to be just the stagnant old institution. You’re not going to get people to come. So you have to show growth.

(Interview B16)

I’ve had to get used to us being separate. A lot of my friends are at [other campus]. And just to get the shuttle to go there, you know it’s a short distance, but it’s taking time out. It changes the feel of the place. (Interview B07)

While the university has a growth agenda to support these expenses, it is feeling the same demographic squeeze facing other universities. University B is working to balance the need for revenue, strategic growth, and fiscal responsibility in a highly competitive higher-education marketplace. A recent step to maintain that balance was a reduction in force approximately one year prior to this writing. Individuals wrestled with the values foundation of the institution and the family atmosphere versus the need to reduce expenses. Most individuals were understanding of the change, but others still struggled with the reasons and cultural impact.

I will tell you, we had a reduction in force. And it was very costly in terms of communication, do we really believe the person is important, that kind of
thing. We’re on the other side of that, I think we’re coming more even at this point. (Interview B01a)

It was a really emotional time for us. I feel like it was because we’re a Franciscan institution and we think about things like values that hit us especially hard. I think that was what made it so hard is that we always talk about how we’re a family and these are values that we’re a community, and people had to be let go. That’s really hard to reconcile those things. So I do feel like it was maybe a bit of an identity crisis at the time…Hindsight helps you heal. It was really difficult, but looking back I understand why it had to happen. I think everyone does. (Interview B05)

In past decisions people were like “oh, I guess I never realized we didn’t need that.’ Now we do realize we need those things and we’re finding a way to function around it…we’re all patiently waiting for the payoff to come so we can fix some of those things we didn’t realize we needed…So I think we’re a little anxious in that. (Interview B16)

Overall, the institution is in a stable financial position, but it understands that strategically growing enrollment is necessary for it to continue to thrive.
University C

University C was founded by a group of Franciscan sisters in the early 20th century. Similar to the other two institutions, their congregational mission expanded to serve lay students through degrees in education, nursing, and the liberal arts. This program portfolio now includes five divisions: business, education, arts and sciences, and two in the health professions.

Enrollment was relatively small but stable throughout its early history. A financial crisis within the past two decades sharpened the institution’s focus on its revenue and programs, and new leadership instituted a growth agenda to first repair financial damage and then grow further.

It was a difficult change from operating in a legitimate, if ill advised, accounting rules to something that gave a clearer picture of what the real cash was…It was a sobering experience for the board, and even though the board has changed over the years there’s still the memory of that time when we got trapped in this. (Interview C15)

Back then the school was in really bad financial straits and nobody seemed to have known that… [the president] and the finance people and others were able to pull the school out of the problem. (Interview C02a)

After this period of challenge, the university grew dramatically with the addition of sports teams, campus life, programs that tie into the Catholic heritage of the
institution, and numerous graduate programs. A combination of strong leadership and strategic institutional moves has enabled and sustained this growth trajectory. With this growth came new buildings, increased visibility of the institution on the local, statewide and national levels, and questions about what the future will hold. Members commented on the many impacts of such rapid growth, including processes, workloads, and commitment.

So the growth happened faster and I don’t think we had the organization underneath to be really prepared for it. Now we are reactively creating versus proactive. My only downside is that…it was on the shoulders of a lot of people that were already here versus building an organization prepared to handle it. And so we’ve been hustling. It’s probably hurt some people who didn’t want to feel like they were working all the time. But the institution somehow found the right people to keep that moving. (Interview C08)

I think that we’re lucky to be in growth where there’s a lot of schools not experiencing that growth. But I also think we’re tapping into new programs that we haven’t had before and kind of building on the community with our graduate programs. I think the challenge [University C] is going to face is we’re not going to be able to continue to row forever. At some point you have to come to some sort of plateau. You can’t always keep going. (Interview C17)
So when you say capacity, I see that as probably one of the primary concerns that will face this university. If you’re competent at something, you know it’s the whole thing, right, if you want to get something done find someone who’s really busy and they’ll be good. And so I think that tends to happen, they find people who are, because they’re getting stuff done and you’re seeing results, like oh, we’ll have them do it. And the next thing you know you’re on every task force, you’re on every committee here. You know you’re serving in multiple roles and…it is very easy to get stretched to your limit. (Interview C12)

An inescapable feature of University C is the determined and hard-working energy that permeates campus. To a person, interviewees commented on the pace of change, the strategic goals of the institution and their role in it, and the strength of leadership in enabling the growth of the university. The institution has changed its image from being one of the best kept secrets in its community to an entrepreneurial and responsive organization.

I think we have become known for being sort of entrepreneurial and open to new ideas and scrappy, and whatever other adjective you want to use, unlike a lot of other higher ed brethren in this community…the leadership team thinks of themselves with sort of a startup mentality. (Interview C04)
The energy and commitment in the campus culture is worth noting as a distinctive feature of the organization.

**Data: Change Dialogue**

Participants were asked to reflect on organizational change, their role in it, and how they experienced that change. Individuals reflected broadly about recent organizational events and operational changes that impacted their work. Similar themes emerged across the institutions when reflecting on change, although not all themes emerged at all three sites. Common themes in change across the three institutions involved the university’s strategic situation (discussed in the preceding section), leadership commentary, and changes in the institutional culture. Members of University B and University C discussed engaging with the mission of the founding order.

| Table 4. Change Dialogue Themes |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **University A**              | **University B**| **University C**|
| Leadership                    | Leadership Impact| Leadership       |
| Internal Challenging Culture  | University Culture Changes | Culture Change with Growth |
| Engagement with Mission       |                 | Decline in Sisters |

**Leadership**

Despite not being a focus of any questions, the theme of leadership emerged in all three cases. Leaders played an important symbolic and practical role in the working lives of members and were mentioned in almost every interview. Individuals reflected
on the impact of a lack of leadership, the importance of how leaders enact their roles, the challenges and opportunities of leadership transitions, and the deep significance of leadership formation and representation of the values of the institution.

Impact of Lack of Leadership
Individuals asked about change expressed concern about the lack of leadership and fears of lack of leadership in the future. Universities A and B had grappled with significant turnover in the leadership ranks; and University C, at the end of a long period of leadership stability, was fearful for what the future would bring. Respondents reflected on how organizational life had to continue without that leadership stability.

The past leader was not strong enough, and by that I mean decisive nor a visionary. Nice person but really seemed to go with the wind. Not decisive in taking control of situations....We managed with the leadership team in place to actually function quite well without a president. (Interview A01)

We’ve had a lot of change in leadership: we had a vice president who left, an interim, another vice president, then two additional. Our current vice president has been here just a few years and they’re fantastic, I hope they never leave. (Interview B06)

All three institutions expressed concern about how leadership impacted the daily life of the organization. Throughout conversations they discussed that while operations had continued during a lack of leadership, the overall direction of the institution had
suffered as a result. Conversely there was pride in some cases that the institution had persevered at the frontline level regardless of the upheaval at the top.

You talk about organizational change, one of the things that is astonishing to me is that at the top has been chaotic and moving and sometimes extremely disconnected. And yet the teaching and learning has remained. Systems have broken down, but the fundamental teaching and learning in the classroom has remained really strong. (Interview A02)

[Changes at the executive and board level] brings with it inconsistency of understanding the value of the culture that you're walking into and being able to continue to take the baton from the sisters and keep moving it forward. There's gaps in that knowledge... When you're here long enough you stay with what you know to be true and what works for your students and your colleagues and then you almost just wait it out. You keep moving the legacy of the sisters forward in the unit that you've been entrusted with. (Interview A08)

Several individuals expressed knowledge of how leadership had impacted the organization and how the organization could fall apart in the future. While individuals were cognizant of their own role in supporting the institution, they pinned a lot of the institution’s identity on the leadership teams, especially the president.
Two presidents ago we had a divider. Distanced us from everyone, the community, the sisters…The previous president was a healer. And he did some good things in healing relationships. And then this president is much more strategic. (Interview B09b)

That’s probably the most significant risk that I have experienced here at this university. Where the wrong person or someone whose vision doesn’t pan out in that position that could mean the beginning of the end for the university. (Interview C13)

**Importance of Leader Role Enactment**
The way in which leaders enacted their roles was another persistent theme. Individuals commented about how public and visible enactment of leadership had a major impact on institutional morale and culture, especially in how a role was enacted. While the message was important, the way in which it was delivered had an impact on the intimate cultures of these institutions.

Keeping up with our president, my gosh, they are energetic. As I mentioned before it’s very very lofty goals and they want things done quickly…But they’re supportive, they are the first to reach out to students whenever we ask. They are the president who will stop a tour in the middle to talk with them and walk them through a construction zone…They just resonate with students and families and parents. They remember people. (Interview C11)
So I think when they came people were really excited that they came in right away and started spending money in ways the previous president hadn’t. They were also very lively and people talked ‘Oh did you see they went to his event.’ So they talked about how they were more engaging with staff and students. (Interview B10)

So I was very impressed because although they hadn't made a big public show when they came in they did call us rather than sending an email, which in the past did not happen. They had a very positive message. They made decisive action that I thought was really good and make good strategic sense. (Interview A01)

I’m a big supporter of [the president] but it doesn’t help to make it fictional. The thing about [the president] is that it’s not just fundraising ability. It was that they have a vision and they are constantly…Whatever persistence is, [the president] is an example of it…It’s doing something different, and having a vision and being willing to take a chance, and recognizing when to insist on buy-in and when to await buy-in. (Interview C15)

Many of the initial comments focused on the president because of the situations of the institutions, but other senior leaders were also considered critical in their role enactment. Members at University A discussed how one of the more prominent senior
leaders espoused but did not buy into the values and said that their enactment was transparently calculated. University B respondents discussed the changes in leadership, and how the mission officer was a key lynchpin in shepherding the institution through challenging times. University C, facing a transition in senior leadership, specifically reflected on the importance and role of the chief academic officer.

So the person who comes after [the president] is not going to be required to be a visionary to change the world. Their job is going to be to come in and let’s maintain this vision and keep it moving where we’re supposed to be going, and raise money to support it. The person replacing [the provost] has to continue to rally the troops, has to continue to get them moving towards. I think that’s going to be the critical position, and I’m not trying to diminish the president’s role. I’m just saying I think that’s the first domino that has to be considered. (Interview C12)

Overall, leader role enactment, especially when reflecting on change, arose frequently and powerfully in member narratives. The tie of enactment to the mission and values was particularly strong in member responses, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Leader Role Enactment

| "You know, it’s too early to tell…but they at least come across as very caring and positive and team oriented. And those are their positive attributes to me as faculty. I want to hear that we’re working as a team. That there’s somebody driving the ship that is leading us. You know, that one department might be failing and another doing well but that doesn’t make the university survive. Everybody, we all have a stake in it. And that’s their message and they are fabulous about it.” Interview A13 |
“I’ve always found...true leadership comes from the person who combines those theories into action...[The president] is a servant leader in what they are vocally sharing. They are bringing their strategic planning. They are a charismatic leader, you could tell in how they took control of the room. They are trying to be deliberate.” Interview B14

“[The president] has taken us further than we were...There were rose colored glasses in the beginning, and I think they’ve been forced to show more of a hardnosed side. But I think that’s them pulling the curmudgeons along to at least get us farther than were we were.” Interview B16

“[The president] is a maximizer. I always tell them that just give us five minutes to enjoy this goal before we go on, just cool it. Because if you’re supposed to have 20 students, if you get 20 it’s not 20 it’s 23. It just keeps going, but that’s how they’ve gotten stuff done.” Interview C02a

“[The president] is so strong willed. Because when I was hired there was really just the sense that the doors were going to close. And I thought okay, I’ll get a year or two of experience and move on. And so here we are all these years later and we’re still open. So that is to their credit.” Interview C19

Importance of Leadership Transitions

Related to the themes of role enactment is the importance of leadership transitions.

Individuals were mindful of how transitions felt currently and in the past. They described the transitions as opportunities for renewal, for changing direction, and for moving the institution closer to desired organizational states. Despite the agency many individuals described in making change or impacting their own areas, the transition of a leader was a deeply impactful moment for all who discussed it.

We're struggling whenever we have a leadership transition like this. It's very difficult because there's no stability. Stability is critical when it comes to leadership. And stability is only achieved by sticking around, and by really investing. But you have to also have knowledge and vision and commitment to the mission. (Interview A16)

[The previous president’s] departure, and then my VPs departure created an environment where we could now get everything on the table. There were these things that you couldn't talk about and couldn't take to your boss or the
president. That all opened up. So I think that’s a positive change where you've now got a culture where there's a president who wants to uncover, and learn, and ask, and push, and encourage, and root out things and get what is THE information. And to be specific with the whole campus community and to be open. (Interview A09)

One thing I’m mindful of is the fact that I really like them and how much of what I like about them is just me being enamored with the things they have brought that I felt have been missing for years. Now, they just got here, five or six months, so they need time...I am willing to not have that questions answered and to just be excited because they deserve that. (Interview A15)

I’ve been here for four different presidential searches. I think for probably all but one were filled with just a lot of excitement because, it wasn’t a scared thing for change. Most of the time these were very excited; we were ready for a change, for something different. (Interview B08)

Succession planning in leadership transitions came up specifically at University C since it had enjoyed nearly two decades of stability in the management team. Individuals at the other two institutions had similar comments regarding the criticality of the transition but spoke from a point of experiencing upheaval rather than stability. Members at University C reflected from a point of having a near-perfect combination
of leadership talent while knowing that had to end at some point. Trepidation and caution were the most frequently expressed emotions.

Succession is another concern or challenge. The provost is retiring, and the president is the same age basically. I’m not sure about our chief financial officer, probably a little younger than they are, but not long in those key roles. They’re really strong leaders in all three places and they will be difficult to replace when the time comes. (Interview C10)

Sometimes I wonder, is the brand of [University C] because of our programs or growth or is it because of the leadership we have? And I think that really makes me nervous. We’re going to be going through a provost change. And then I think about the president, how will that impact the university? Because that’s a huge thing. (Interview C17)

Leadership Formation and Values Representation
Succession concerns combined with leader role enactment connect to comments around leader formation and representing the values foundation of the universities. In all three cases, regardless of where they were in leadership transitions or stability, members commented on the need for leaders to embody and represent the faith tradition and values set of the founding orders. Most members felt that leaders must have a personal investment in the faith and values tradition.
Obviously, [the provost] is just about as important as it gets to maintaining one’s Catholic Franciscan identity. And so we’ve had a fantastic provost who was really supportive of that…but the higher up you are in at the University the more you need to own and promote the values and the mission and identity. And so at the provost level, you know, it can’t be an intellectual effort but it really needs to be a part of who the person is, and evident in all they do, and the decisions they make. (Interview C02b)

In my observations some [faith based institutions] have been really intentional about hiring for mission, you know, being really intense about formation. We haven't been....I suspect that after we're gone all these institutions will be gone. Because leadership isn't properly formed. We can't even get people to articulate their own faith in a way they are comfortable with and in a way that is compelling, let alone lead people in that area. (Interview A02)

I remember when they were interviewing for the president’s position. The underlying goal was to find someone that fit the Franciscan values. That compassion and respect, those things were very paramount and approachable. And I think they did a great job. (Interview B03)

The rise of the laity taking many of these works...the dawn of the fact that these people are needed, but they have to be properly formed. So, if people are going to step up - with the sisters leaving those works don't go away. When
we write about if our legacy has carried on, it is about asking “Have we enabled enough people?” (Interview A16)

While members did not explicitly seek Catholic leadership in most cases, they did specifically seek leaders who were able to both embody and enact the values of the institution in service of their role. Senior leadership were seen as responsible for both symbolic and tangible action, and their acts were framed in the lens of the institutions values.

They’re a very nice combination because they came out of business, strategy and operations. So they’re very good at applying that. And at the same time they are so committed to the Catholic Franciscan education and values. They’re not trying to make us successful at any cost, they are trying to make us successful in a Catholic Franciscan way. (Interview B09a)

I feel like since we brought in the president, part of their leadership and part of their vision has been we really need to know and understand Catholic Franciscanism. So while it may have been a business reason to begin to take those things on I think the outcome has been very good. It’s been good for business, but it’s also been good for the community because I feel like we can articulate now both words and action and branding. I feel like we get it and it’s impacted us in a positive way. I don’t know if we’d had a Franciscan person as president or a religious or an educator, I don’t know we would have
come to the same place in the same way of understanding that, because [the president] us have an expectation of ourselves that we’ll be leaders in the Catholic Franciscan world. (Interview C03)

[The president] took into consideration how it impacted people. We have a tuition program here for employees. When those employees were let go their children were still able to go to school. So things like that, I think they were being really sensitive and considerate. And mindful of how it was affecting people. (Interview B03)

Leader role enactment, transition, and formation were common themes that emerged on these sites. An important point is that leadership commentary came from multiple respondents in the organization at all hierarchical levels and with diverse lengths of tenure. The emergent theme is notable, especially given the lack of focus on any research questions relating to leadership.

**Institutional Culture Changes**

Cultural change and cultural legacy was a major change theme at all three institutions. Engaging with the values culture was discussed broadly as well, which will be discussed in the values section below. Individuals at all three institutions discussed organizational culture in terms of the changing landscape of the institutions and a
sense of nostalgia for past times. When reflecting on change, members brought up how the culture has changed as a result of the stresses the institutions are facing.

Members at Universities A and B commented on how a reduction in resources changed the culture, and University C respondents made similar comments as the university grappled with growth. Almost uniformly, individuals referenced a past time where the institution was more tight-knit, more in congruence with its values, or more a complete community.

A particular theme across Universities B and C was explicit reference to the institution’s operating less like a family or community and more like a business, especially with more hard-nosed business decisions brought on by changing financial circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Institutional Culture Changes at Universities B and C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>University B</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“There’s a fairly large group of individuals that have withdrawn either moderately or even aggressively from a lot of those things because they’re fearful if they’re seeking participating in all of these activities, the assumption is that they have all this free time. If they have all this free time are they really necessarily doing all the work they are supposed to be doing. It fits in the corporate model of more and more, busy, busy, busy…There’s a lot of feeling culturally over the last ten years that have brought that cloud over.” Interview B08</td>
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“The biggest difference for me is that… I guess it was more of a family values and trust as a family. Now it’s more of a business. And you if you think as a business, then you have to run as a business.” Interview B04

“I do feel like sometimes I work for a for profit institution. And so the financial push, and the ever present figure kind of thrown around all the time is difficult.” Interview C16

“So the business side of the house, we’re a nonprofit business but a business nonetheless. I get the [president] standpoint of we have to look at the numbers and do what makes sense because Franciscanism is great, but if you can’t keep your doors open you can no longer serve anybody. But I still see all the Franciscan values and character in who we are and what we do. So they work together.” Interview B14

“I think my concern is that as we grow we lose who we are. And just the fact that, I mean when I came to campus as a faculty member you still knew everybody. And now I mean the growth is so rapid that, I mean, people can be here for five years and I still you know maybe I know their name and maybe I don’t. We’ve always been known as a university that has a real sense of community. And so have do we maintain that in a larger population.” Interview C14

“We’ve had to sort of grow up as a business, if you will. And that has been very difficult for some colleagues over the years.” Interview C03

University A members commented more on the toxic subculture that had emerged during the severe financial contraction. The theme of longing for a past, more gentle cultural moment was the same.

So he left lots of hard feelings... and then what was happening, which I'm greatly opposed to, is we start gossiping. And then there were little cliques. We have to stop that, we're not building community, we are not creating a caring community. (Interview A03)

I wouldn't say it’s as cliché as high school cliques, but I do think that workplaces will form familiar groups and they tend to be departmental, and I think those are the roots and basis of silos. Competition is good, but when you
take it to a point where you actually step on other people, that's not respectful, that's not showing compassion. So people can take it too far or become disrespectful without knowing the entire story. (Interview A10)

You know at the end of the day I tell my direct reports that we have a mission, vision, and philosophy that aligns to the university. This is our charge and you need to be able to distance yourself from the noise and the fray because the drama can get too overwhelming and distracting. So I’ve charged them with intentionally keeping their eye on the ball in what we’re here to do and let's move forward together. (Interview A05)

Despite conversations about feeling challenged about the current state of the culture an equally vocal number of individuals, and sometimes the same individuals, commented on how their university was different. Members commented on how the university had a unique value proposition for students that focused on caring, one-on-one interactions, and the values being incorporated into the curriculum and university life. Personal connections with students and each other were deeply valued and considered part of what made working and attending the universities unique.
"I think that's the beauty of this institution. It's really about that personal connection. That's what keeps our students here. Once we get them I don't think they leave. I know for myself and the faculty we all individually work on that individual personal care. And with that I think I can honestly say students stay once they get here and see the curriculum and we make that connection." Interview A14

"There's a young woman that just finished her MBA, and she got her associates and bachelors here too. She said 'I wouldn't have done it any other way. I can't imagine anywhere else I would go that when I graduated the [administrator] would go to dinner with me.' And I said well, you've been here for years! How can I not celebrate with you. And you know I think that's the kind of feeling you need. You get to know the students and you celebrate with them." Interview A12

"Parents ask me 'will you take care of them?' I mean it's a genuine concern to me and the parents that their children will be safe, loved. So a transfer student's dad came to me and he said 'you're taking care of her and she's comfortable and she's not scared anymore.' I say well, praise the Lord, you know?" Interview A16

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**Table 7. University Unique Caring Culture**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>University B</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I think that's the beauty of this institution. It's really about that personal connection. That's what keeps our students here. Once we get them I don't think they leave. I know for myself and the faculty we all individually work on that individual personal care. And with that I think I can honestly say students stay once they get here and see the curriculum and we make that connection.&quot; Interview A14</td>
<td>&quot;Definitely the people. You know that’s key because no matter what structures are, good people, collegial people makes life less difficult. So in general there’s really positive people who are here for the right reasons.” Interview B09b</td>
<td>&quot;I have this sense of almost having worked at two completely different institutions. We went from being a physically small intimate community…and then moved away from an academic model president to having a ‘businessman’ but who had worked in education. It was a time where everything changed very quickly…there were sort of a kind of clinical perspective taken on the institution. And so it's been interesting to watch the sense of how the community has changed. It is still a small intimate community. It’s a different small intimate community than it used to be.” Interview C03</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;There's a young woman that just finished her MBA, and she got her associates and bachelors here too. She said 'I wouldn't have done it any other way. I can't imagine anywhere else I would go that when I graduated the [administrator] would go to dinner with me.' And I said well, you've been here for years! How can I not celebrate with you. And you know I think that's the kind of feeling you need. You get to know the students and you celebrate with them.&quot; Interview A12</td>
<td>&quot;After working here for eight weeks, I just got to know everybody here. And what stuck me was that there was a community here. People cared about each other. I liked working in that environment, it just feels right to be here.” Interview B13</td>
<td>&quot;I also take it very seriously that I’m teaching other people’s children, and model that as a person. People are trusting me and people I choose to kind of wrap around the students. We talk about each kid at our staff meetings. We take teaching young people very seriously and teach in a way that’s responsive.” Interview C08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Parents ask me ‘will you take care of them?’ I mean it's a genuine concern to me and the parents that their children will be safe, loved. So a transfer student's dad came to me and he said 'you're taking care of her and she's comfortable and she's not scared anymore.' I say well, praise the Lord, you know?&quot; Interview A16</td>
<td>&quot;People of goodwill can come together. I think if you can make these substantial changes is that you have to keep evolving and you have to be responsive to the stakeholders involved and best practices for students. But it is possible to do.” Interview B15</td>
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Mission and Sisters

Universities B and C had compatible themes involving mission and the sisters. In University B’s comments regarding engagement with mission, employees expressed dedication to the university and its mission as driving personal motivators for continued employment. They also spoke about taking on the mantle of the sisters as part of their work. At University C, the university was actively wrestling with the decline of the founding order in its midst. While there is an intimate connection between the theme of values and these themes regarding mission, this change theme is still distinct. These themes combined represent a specific type of change that the institutions were facing that was critical to continued operation – the continuation of the distinctive mission. This theme involves personal calling to the mission of the organization, taking on the mission role with founder withdrawal, and the importance of mission formation.

Personal Calling
One powerful line of commentary involved individuals expressing a specific calling to serve at the university or a deep connection to the serve its mission in that vein. Members also referenced checking their values or the congruence in how the values were enacted with those of the institution.
I’ll start with I think I was called here. I found myself with a family and I didn’t want to travel anymore. And so just doing my job search [University B] found me and I found [University B]. The rest is history. (Interview B14)

“I think it would be hard to stay at an institution for 20 plus years if you didn’t support the values, the mission, if you didn’t feel like the university was living the values. That’s all in sync. I don’t know that I could, I don’t know, I would not personally be able to stay at a place that long, something would not be right if that was the case. (Interview C11)

There is a spirit that pulls people here, that draws them to us. Some people don’t feel it, but other people can feel our spirit. I’m glad it’s here and alive here. I do believe God wants me to be here. (Interview B13)

Even though this theme did not explicitly arise at University A, there were parallel comments regarding personal values congruence and the values being a draw to the institution. Those themes will be discussed further in the values section.

**Mission Role Ownership**
Members at both institutions expressed the need to take on the mission of the founding congregation, either because the last sisters had withdrawn or were immanently and intentionally withdrawing from the organization. Individuals
expressed the significant practical and symbolic change that shift represented, and how they were drawn to continue that work.

I think the other change we will have to be cautious about is the dwindling number of sisters, because they serve as a reminder, right? Their physical presence here is a reminder…Each one we lose on campus is a potential step away from our tradition. And I so that would be a challenge we’ll have to face. How do we figure out how we’re going to manage that, how do we maintain. They are an institution into themselves, a living example of the values. (Interview C12)

I told the university staff about the sisters and I told the university “You are now the Franciscan charism” (Interview B01b)

I remember when I first came here we didn’t have the four values we have now. So there was a group that went through and came up with the values. In the last 20 years there’s been a real rediscovery of the Franciscan intellectual tradition…But until that point it had just been well, ‘we have nuns here so that’s why we’re Franciscan. We don’t have to worry about the Franciscan piece.’ That change of faculty and administrators tying into what it means to be Franciscan has been a really positive thing, because it makes everybody ask “What am I doing to make this a Franciscan institution” rather than saying that’s up to the religious folk. (Interview B09a)
Individuals also expressed concerns about the loss of the founders’ presence and how that loss would impact the character of the institution. At the same time, others expressed how the interaction with mission had become more focused.

So the concern is what happens when that voice is gone. So hopefully there will be enough faculty who feel passionate enough about our mission that they will continue to voice that. I think part of the concern is that it’s different when its spoken from the mouth of a professed sister in the community as opposed to a faculty member who is not a member of the community. And that’s the reality we have to live with. (Interview C14)

One of the most dramatic changes was when the last sponsored congregation member who worked on campus. The loss made a significant impact…I think their interaction is more intentional, and it’s been very positive. (Interview B01a)

I think we talked about the values more often the fewer sisters we had left here. And I think there was a real push to make sure that everybody knew what the values were. But the intent was that the sisters were getting older and they didn't want to lose the reasons why we’re here and the value of education here. (Interview A12)
I think their presence is still very much felt…I still feel the presence is there. I love at commencement when they do their blessing over us and sing their blessing at the opening school as they do as well. And [one of the sisters] is just everywhere, the number one fan. So I feel like there’s still that presence, and I’m a firm believer in the power of prayer, and I do know that the sisters are praying for us all the time. (Interview C18)

I don’t know, just having that voice, and those sisters involved, just kind of connection to the past. And not having the connection to the past for me means that there’s a much greater possibility that we move into the future without keeping that past as our guiding principle. (Interview C19)

Mission Office and Formation
While leadership formation was a common theme across all three institutions, formation and mission work supporting all employees was more prevalent in Universities B and C. Respondents discussed the need for the intentional formation of lay people to serve since the sisters have departed, lest the tradition be lost entirely.

When the previous president came we started talking about the transition to less sisters with a great deal of intentionality. To the point to how the lay secular people were going to have to pick up and continue the mission of the founding congregation. (Interview B09a)
More of our faculty and staff have been predominantly trained at state schools, and certainly not in Catholic institutions. So they don’t even have that sort of piece in their background. So we really at times are starting from ground zero, which is an overwhelming and exciting challenge to start with people…How do we carry out their training and formation through their time here? (Interview C02b)

We’re working really hard to get that Franciscan spirit in the faculty and staff…so that it is carried with them. We’re trying hard to build that up in the new people that are coming in and looking at ways to strengthen that formation. (Interview C02a)

But if a new VP came in, it would be so easy for that person just not do [employee formation] because they were so busy and then they would fall right through the cracks. And then you know how many cycles of new employees would it take before that just got lost? (Interview B10)

The work of the mission offices at these institutions was also mentioned frequently, specifically how important their work was in maintaining the mission and ensuring that the sisters’ work continue. Members at all three institutions commented on the work of the mission offices, although University B members were most explicit in the deep impact of their senior mission leader.
Part of their role is bringing relationship to everyone. There were some tough times before they came because people were aging out. But they brought a spirit back. A joy. A Franciscan joy is what they brought. You could see there were sparks flying again. (Interview B01b)

I would say that since they’ve been here, they’ve significantly enhanced and enriched the Franciscan tradition. (Interview B09a)

People would say “You can’t possibly be respecting and showing compassion.” But I know [chief mission officer] is sitting at the table where most of these decisions were being made. And I know they were constantly going to be asking “How are we respecting people, how are we showing compassion?” (Interview B10)

These themes represent a significant point of change for all three institutions in the withdrawal of their founding orders. All three institutions grappled with this in different ways, but members at Universities B and C were more explicit and uniform in their comments. Members actively contemplated the loss of the founders, what it meant for the mission of the organization, and their fears in having to take on that responsibility without the explicit presence and guidance of the religious order.
Data: Values Dialogue

Participants were not asked directly about values in the initial set of questions. In most cases the institutions’ values sets emerged through conversations about change. Follow-up questions on values sought elaboration, and explicit questions were used to gather more information if members did not comment on the values. Rarely during the interviews did the members not use the values either intentionally or as part of the common parlance of the institution. Similar themes emerged across all three institutions involving the deeply embedded values cultures, values actions orchestrated by the institution, and individual values actions initiated by members of the universities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Fishbowl</th>
<th>Espoused Values</th>
<th>Culture of Values/Intimate Culture</th>
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<tr>
<td>Orchestration of Values Actions</td>
<td>Orchestration of Values Actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Intentional Curriculum</td>
<td>• Intentional Curriculum (In pockets)</td>
<td>• Intentional Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Annual Values</td>
<td>• Values Decision Guides</td>
<td>• Lay Formation</td>
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<td>• Orientation</td>
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<td>• Orientation</td>
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<td>• Mission Officer</td>
<td>• Transitions from Sisters</td>
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<td>• Performance Reviews</td>
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<tr>
<th>Individual Values Actions</th>
<th>Individual Values Actions</th>
<th>Individual Values Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Role-based actions</td>
<td>• Serving Students</td>
<td>• Personal Relationships</td>
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<td>• Faculty Values Carriers</td>
<td>• Mission Engagement</td>
<td>• Transition from Sisters</td>
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<td>• Personal Values</td>
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<td>• Serving Students</td>
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<td>• Values Challenge</td>
<td>• Call to Serve</td>
<td>• Values Dialogue</td>
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Values Culture
Across the three institutions, while they articulated it differently, respondents discussed how the values were embedded in the culture of the university. Whether it was “family friendly and welcoming” or using the specific institutional values, individuals talked about the values as part of the fabric of organizational life, including the symbols, rituals, and espoused statements. A member at University A referred to the Franciscan culture at the “water in which we are swimming,” and this metaphor bore out in the comments across institutions.

We claim our values as Franciscan because it’s the tradition that we come from. And we frame them in ways that are true to who the sisters are. None of the things I’m saying are new ideas for the sisters, but I will tell you we weren't saying them for a really long time. Weren't explicit about those things, partly because the sisters just--how are you conscious of the water you're in? When you're a fish you are born in water, you know? And so we have to be explicit about things. (Interview A15)

Often members seemed unaware of the uniqueness of their setting until asked to reflect on the institution and its cultural elements. At Universities A and C, the values had been explicitly named for longer than University B; the values were a settled part of cultural life for over 20 years. At University B, they were espoused more recently and were less grounded in Franciscan heritage than the other two institutions. This fact led to some discussion of the deeper meanings of the values themselves; but the culture was described as Franciscan, family and person oriented, and a deeply felt
part of the institution. Overall, comments about the values culture were spontaneous and sincerely expressed.

A notable set of commentary involved the values culture as proscribing how business is done at the institutions studied. Members used the cultural values to describe how they were distinctive from other environments. They also used them to support actions and practices of how they uniquely executed a practice that may not be unique in and of itself.
Table 9: Distinctive Values Culture

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<tr>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>University C</th>
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<td>&quot;I have conversations with peers who have been elsewhere. And over and</td>
<td>&quot;Well, they really do stress respect. It’s one of those things, like I said, through the transitioning, a real element of respect, compassion. You know one of those things that are the backbone of the university.&quot; Interview B03</td>
<td>&quot;Something that has helped the change from more seasoned faculty and staff into this present time is that one constant has been our Franciscan sponsorship values. Because those, whether in days past, present, I mean those are talked about virtually every day...I mean they are just a part of our way of being here.” Interview C02b</td>
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<td>over and over and over I hear about how well we work together and how the</td>
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<td>Franciscan values are the foundation...They are a part of our lives. And</td>
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<td>you just see it in all interactions.” Interview A13</td>
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<td>&quot;I've had at least five people say to me your students are very unusual,</td>
<td>&quot;[The president] brought up some of the values and kind of when he was like we know we need to show compassion. Even so my supervisor will say well, we need to do these things and list the values. I do think that they are here in the minds of the leaders of the institution.” Interview B10</td>
<td>&quot;[The values] are really why I came. I saw them in action mainly through the sisters and educators. And so I think that those things have the goods, and they can go beyond super facilities and computers. They can be human.” Interview C08</td>
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<td>they're so service oriented. I said well that's her Franciscan spirit,</td>
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<td>you serve wherever you can serve. Students are filling up her sheet to</td>
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<td>serve, and she isn't paying them. She has a list of young people who want</td>
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<td>to help. I said, that's who we are.” Interview A16</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I feel like I cannot believe how lucky I am to work with the people I</td>
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<td>work with because they truly live those values...But it’s like people on</td>
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<td>their sleeve own that making peace, reverencing creation, social justice,</td>
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<td>they live by that. And you feel that in meetings that would potentially</td>
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<td>lead to a lot of negativity...it feels like we're all in this together,</td>
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<td>not we're going to throw people under the bus. That is a big one that</td>
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<td>stands out to me.” Interview A19</td>
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</table>
Many of the descriptions of the values culture emphasized the highly relational nature of organizational life. A close-knit, family-oriented, or caring community was assumed to be part of being at the institution. While not everyone felt that the culture lived up to the expectations, a significant number did.

There was something posted about the university to Facebook. And this one woman said that the best things about it is you can walk down the hall and anybody will talk to you or will smile and greet you and just say hello. And she said it just makes me feel so much better knowing that my daughter is here in a place where they pay attention and take care of each other. And I’m so glad that’s out there, that we come across that way. (Interview A12)

So you know maybe it’s the size that’s attractive. I hope it’s the values, I hope it’s the friendliness. There’s something sweet about these students. I’m over seventy years old. They walk down the corridor and they say hello. There’s something, I don’t know, it’s a safe place. It’s caring. Faculty and staff members want to be there for [students.] (Interview A03)

I feel like this Franciscan identity to people really means we are looking out for and…look out for that underdog. We have to reach out, you know, we’re not just to be here servicing he rich and really smart, they aren’t the ones that really need a lot of help…I feel that people with that Franciscan nature really need to help. (Interview B16)
What makes it this way is the personal aspect [of the values]. Students comment on that with faculty relationships, you know their faculty know their names. Care about them as persons. Sometimes can ask about families or situations that are going on in their lives. (Interview C10)

[University C] has always been a place that emphasized relationships and I’m really sympathetic to that. If you’re not willing to walk with a person as they struggle to grow, then you shouldn’t be teaching at all. I’ve come more and more to see this like Francis’ letter to Anthony….something like it’s okay with me if you instruct the brothers, so long as they do not lose heart. And I think that’s the value, something extremely Franciscan. (Interview C15)

Members discussed how the values culture also created a shared language, whether it was through the espoused values or through similar concepts. The espoused values themselves were used most frequently, often utilized in conversation within the first fifteen minutes of conversation. Individuals also discussed bringing that shared understanding to others from different traditions.

People underestimate the power of people using a shared language. And so people do around here [talk] about what our values are and all that kind of stuff….But like the four Franciscan values…people are fluent in those, students
are fluent in those. And in their mind it's basic, but it's really important. Not every institution has that. (Interview A15)

I think the values of the sisters are more of a family level because you are a congregation and they are all the same. With our Franciscan values we have to reach out to different people, different religions, different background and different countries. Probably those values are probably new to them. That’s the biggest difference in what we are trying to do. (Interview B04)

[The president] is a really a storyteller and a story learner. They came and really studied the old books, talked to people, and came to know the place…That has translated into how [the president] has begun to tell a story both internally and externally. During the information gathering phase they told the story to the internal community, and I think for me that was very helpful because they began to say to us, this is not just the sister’s story. And heretofore it really has been the sister’s story. (Interview C03)

Others reflected on the importance of utilizing the shared language and questioning if individual and institutional actions matched the culture.

I find sometimes they are convenient to roll out when necessary. And in practice it’s not actually always happening the way we want it to... So I would like to see that more present instead of just being lip service. (Interview C16)
Overall, the values culture was something embedded but still somewhat of a mystery to individuals in the organization. Respondents were confident that it was an important part of organizational life but were sometimes at a loss of how to propagate it intentionally.

And I can tell you that right now we still have whatever that magic sauce of Franciscan values is, and everything we do is still heavily influenced by that. We still treat each other you know in accordance with those values. What I worry about a little bit is I don’t know that we know why you have that magic sauce. So, [mission staff] are spending time trying to make sure that it stays alive. We don’t have any reason to think that those efforts are the reason we have it. So it feels a little magical in the sense that we know we have it now, but we don’t know we’ll have it in five years. And I don’t have an answer to that, but we know it’s very, very important to us. (Interview C04)

**Orchestrated Values Actions**

The first type of values actions that emerged through the research was actions based in the values foundation that were explicitly orchestrated by the institution. Examples include mission orientation, annual dialogue around one specific value, and values incorporated into institutional tools such as performance reviews and decision guides. Generally, these orchestrated values themes fell into three primary categories:
Curriculum
All three institutions took some kind of orchestrated action to embed the values into the curriculum. While this may seem like an obvious action, the broad latitude faculty have in designing their own courses makes this kind of orchestration a significant task. The extent to which it was orchestrated depended on the university situation. In University A, the faculty carried the values in their teaching and work with students, and the values were heavily embedded into the curricula of all four divisions. This work was led by the deans and faculty of the institution but not necessarily by senior leadership. Some faculty stated feeling isolated in their work or just keeping their nose to the grindstone despite the upheaval in leadership. University C had a broad orchestration of values across curricula, and senior leadership was very invested in both encouraging and enabling this. A major grant received 15 years prior to this writing was designed to deeply embed both the Catholic character and values formation into the institutional fabric for students, staff, and faculty. The results of that grant and the strategic actions the university took to continue activities after the funding period are evident in the way the faculty, departments, and divisions incorporate the values into their curricula. University B struggled with this orchestration the most, partially because of the later articulation of their values and to the looser connection between the espoused values and the Franciscan tradition. Still,
specific departments were heavily invested in the values, especially those whose faculty and leadership had participated in intensive formation such as a pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy. The general education program was also wrestling with how to meaningfully include the values, and the mission officer was keenly aware that this was one of the next frontiers in their work.

Formation/Orientation
Orientation and intentional formation were another major orchestrated values action. In all cases, the mandatory orientations consisted of sessions about the history of the institution, its values, and especially the founding order. Universities A and C sponsored trips to the motherhouses of the orders, which were not contiguous to campus. University B had taken over major properties in the city that the religious order had sponsored, including the motherhouse, so there was less of a retreat location to hold the orientation. Regardless, all three spent significant time onboarding new employees into the history and values of the institution.

Members of all three institutions, especially those in mission-oriented positions, talked about efforts to orchestrate ongoing formation as well. Leadership formation was a particular concern, discussed above in the leadership section, but many extended that to empowering employees to live out the mission of the organization. Each institution approached this formation in different ways. University C, with the aforementioned grant, had operationalized this in the most organized and institution-wide fashion. The mission office at University A had recently been reinstated as a
cabinet level position, and staff were concerned with the lack of formation over the time period in which the office had been demoted. University B had expanded their orientation series recently to include more intentional sessions over a longer period of time.
### Table 10: Orchestrated Values Actions Themes

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<th>University A</th>
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<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
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<td>&quot;I mean during this weird time our [liberal arts division] has made a concerted effort to say hey, everybody is in our courses. We're the sisters. We have to make sure the Franciscan values are embedded in everything we do because our core courses are what make the difference for graduates.&quot; Interview A01</td>
<td>&quot;In the last 15 years or so we’ve really incorporated the values into the curriculum. So what does it mean to be a Franciscan professional, not only as values, but reaching out to the marginalized, life of simplicity, so you know, using the Franciscan lens.” Interview B09b</td>
<td>&quot;So people are being exposed to this and we worked really hard to get people to work at bringing the Franciscan values in some way to their curricula, and some departments do better than others…But psychology, nursing, sociology, you know working form those values, are just woven in. They’re trying to get people to be conscious of the curriculum.” Interview C05</td>
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<td>&quot;They're starting pretty early and we have built out these scenarios with the mental health components but also weave in these Franciscan values so that it’s not just when they walk into a room that they see the IV pole and the leads and the alarms beeping and whatnot. They actually see the person first.” Interview A05</td>
<td>“Then I think from a business standpoint, from a religious perspective, from a Franciscan perspective of operating from a standpoint of integrity…Our business program adds to that, you know, it’s not about you. Well, it’s important to make money, but you got to do it from a standpoint of integrity. And you got to do it the right way. You still have to care for the human spirit, the human body, the human person.” Interview B11</td>
<td>“They began to put it in their curriculum, they began to put it in their handbooks. Even when we orient the board we talk about it with them and explain how we want people to integrate [the Catholic Franciscan tradition]…And they say they really want to live the spirit.” Interview C05</td>
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<td><strong>Formation/Orientation</strong></td>
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<td>&quot;Our orientation for new staff is really robust and very purposeful. I guess you could say very intentional….We also have an orientation with our sisters, a three part workshop. And so that's infused right in the beginning as well.” Interview A05</td>
<td>“What has evolved is we now have orientation, a three phase orientation where all new employees go through the history of the sisters and the information about what it means to be Catholic and what it means to be Franciscan. That is huge. Now it’s transcending to the students. We’re doing an online orientation. So those to me it’s more of infusing it in the culture.” B01b</td>
<td>&quot;We’re working really hard to get that Franciscan spirit in the faculty and staff…so that it is carried with them. We’re trying hard to build that up in the new people that are coming in and looking at ways to strengthen that formation.” Interview C02a</td>
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<td>&quot;Part of new faculty orientation is to meet with the sisters who started the foundation and there</td>
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<td>“We received a grant through an endowment…and out of that program one of the</td>
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<td>Structures and Strategy: Annual Values Dialogue</td>
<td>“This year, for our year of pace bene, we try to integrate. We try and look at it culturally, and so in a culture you’re looking at language, rituals, traditions, experiences. We tried to hit all those different elements. Trying to integrate the Franciscan, to make us more into a Franciscan culture. All those pieces reinforce each other.” Interview B09b</td>
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<td>were three sessions that you met. And one was in the library looking at the history of the school, and how the Franciscans started as an education. And then we met again at the mother house. Oh, what an emotional experience that was and the sisters talked about how they came to the order and what's happening with the order now. It was very enlightening.” Interview A15</td>
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<td>“A staff member from the mission office convened a group. All were welcome to bring the Franciscan value creating a caring community to life. You know, what does that mean? So that there was practice behind it instead of you know word of the day. And then it turned into preparing for next year showing compassion.” Interview A04</td>
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<td>“I would say that you know, each of our four core values, I like with the campus ministry team does. They focus on each one each year. The talk at the beginning of the year with the convocation, that’s the message that hopefully you know the students as well as the staff and faculty and everybody else will emphasize you know not to take away from the other three, but that point of emphasis sheds even more light on the picture for students especially as well as employees.” Interview B11</td>
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<td>“Since we've had the values in place, which is really recent in the grand scheme of things, I think first we had to kind of grow into them. And now that we've grown into them and I think by in large all employees buy into at least one or the other. We take a value every year and emphasize in doing that some kind of activity, sometimes it's a study group, sometimes it's kind of an activity.” Interview A11</td>
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<td>“The value for this year is reconciliation, so every other week we have a newsletter in it with something someone has done to support that.” Interview C02a</td>
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<td>“So we’ve had a value that’s been the focus of each year. So it’s been kind of nice to have one…because you can kind of focus on that one thing and try to make it happen more.” Interview C07</td>
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<td>“She started a thing where each year would have a different value. And we would try to focus on programming on different efforts on that value. And I think we’ve done as much as we can, I think it’s a great thing. And since there’s only four values it would coincide, so every undergraduate student if they’re a traditional four year student would see one of those values come to life on campus every four years.” Interview C09</td>
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**Structures and Strategy: Tools and Structures**

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<th>“This year we’re rolling out strengths-based management…and we designed a metrics for decision making document…I think it’s a really valuable tool. Plus it asks questions that focus on how are we looking at the decision, are we thinking about our students, is it really something that the university needs versus wants, so we did do some Franciscan tools actually that were institutionalized.” Interview B01a</th>
<th>“I really think we do a good job of tying things to mission and values or they don’t happen…You know, it’s part of our performance evaluations. So each year we write about how we’ve [supported the values].” Interview C06</th>
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<td>“In preparation for the search committee for ,the president], I was impressed by how focused on that mission, in conversations during interviews, in written material we were given. Kind of all those pieces. It was just the end of my first year, it taught me a lot of what it meant from the lens of those prior presidents, and other VPS, and the board and some of those people were able to speak on it in a way that was educational to me.” Interview B10</td>
<td>“So 15 years ago we received a grant promoting church leadership…So that was really a huge reclaiming of the Franciscan spirit with that grant. Because it had presidential support, support of the sisters. There were things that immediately more things that connected to the values and the sisters…[the president] really believed this thing that we were going to change. And it’s one of those places that if leadership believes it, and there’s a commitment to it, it’s not just a few people on the side…I think it was an attempt to draw many people into it in different ways.” Interview C15</td>
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Structures and Strategy
The universities orchestrated other values actions through a variety of structural and strategic activities. The most prevalent and visible across all three institutions was a specifically designed annual values dialogue. Each institution chose to focus on one of the espoused values each year and have intentional programming, communication, and events around that value. Institutions used it to focus activities such as service days, curriculum components, and lectures. Members at all three institutions noted what the value of the year was, and in some cases how they had incorporated it into their work or teaching. University C was the most intentional in this orchestration, with regular formal communications as well as department or unit meetings to discuss how the value of the year could be incorporated. Members in operational offices at University C were just as engaged in incorporating the value of the year as faculty in service of students. Universities A and B had strong annual values dialogue as well, but the depth of their adoption was less complete.

Another example of orchestrated values actions was tools or institutional structures that supported the use of the values in more formal ways. These were prevalent at Universities B and C but not explicitly present in University A. Tools used at Universities B and C included decision-making guides based on the values, intentionally using a strengths- and values-based performance management system, and explicitly using the values in financial and performance justifications. Individuals
driving these activities expressed the importance of making the values an explicit part of organizational dialogue and action.

Intentionally orchestrated values actions were widely reported across all three universities. Members utilized the values language easily and readily when discussing these university-sponsored activities. The efforts were warmly accepted by some and accepted with skepticism by others but had a clear impact on members within the organization.

**Individual Values Actions**

Individuals also described values-based actions to support the continuance of the mission and culture of their organization. Members reported these actions as coming from a sense of calling or personal connection to the values or in how they felt they should enact their role in the culture. There were also emergent themes around the values-based dialogue individuals engaged in as they described their own work and that of others, as well as comments regarding a personal drive to take on the mission of the founding congregation. Table 11 summarizes these themes with member quotes.
Personal Calling
Members at Universities A and B specifically and frequently discussed how they felt called to work at their institutions. Often it was a congruence between personal and professional lives that drew them to come to or stay at the institution. While some mentioned that their personal faith was something they felt they could enact in their role, more individuals made reference to the values representing how they wanted to live their lives. This sense of personal values aligning with professional enactment was clearly expressed, with many individuals stating that they had found a sense of purpose and belonging. While members of University C did not make particular reference to call, there were similar discussions of how the values represented how one should live their life and how the sisters’ use of the values drew them.

Role-Based Actions
Many individuals articulated actions they used in the enactment of their role. This is where specific reference to the institutional value set was prevalent. Most individuals throughout the organization and at all levels expressed some way in which they took action with the values as the impetus for how or whether that action was taken. Significant is the fact that these are not generally actions that would stretch the boundaries of someone’s given role. While some individuals went above and beyond in specific circumstances, such as the coaching team who drove a student with DACA status across the country to participate in a conference game, others discussed how they enacted their role in the ordinary course of business. Individuals described their actions through the values lens, such as reverencing the individual by treating routine
interactions as if it was the first time a student concern had been raised. These descriptions pointed to how the culture of the institutions were intentionally enacted by respondents.

**Values Dialogue: Support and Challenge**

Two kinds of values dialogue emerged through conversations with participants. The first is dialogue that utilizes and supports the values foundation of the institutions. Responses in this theme intentionally use the stated values to frame conversations or discussed how they used the values to influence organizational life. This is related to the theme of role enactment but goes beyond by specifically referencing actions using the espoused values frame. Many individuals used the value of the year in their reflections, but this was not exclusive. For example, University A was emphasizing the value of peacemaking during data collection, and individuals referenced making peace in interactions with colleagues and students. However, others discussed how they used values dialogue to further colleague and student understandings of the values themselves and to create shared language. Individuals at all the organizations talked about dialogue as an active tool for sensemaking, supporting the culture, and enacting their view of their role.

A companion type of values dialogue that emerged involved discussions from and among members when the values are not perceived as being upheld. Individuals commented on the convenience of stating the values and feeling that actions fell short
of the espoused words at times. Member comments in this theme responded to whether values were being practiced intentionally, were properly grounded in the agreed-upon or referenced meanings of the values, or were treated as lip service. Some of these comments represented individuals experiences with the institution not living up to its values foundation. More individuals made these comments in the spirit of challenging the institution to improve or to fix a perceived gap between the institutions espoused words and visible actions.

Mission Mantle
A final area of values actions involved respondents explicit referencing of actions taken to carry on the mission of the organization for the departing or departed founding congregation. These comments reflect motivations that support the previous kinds of values dialogue. Individuals expressed a similar theme to personal calling in taking on responsibility for the identity, mission, and culture of the organization. Commentary ranged from empowering students to take the values out of the institution at graduation to explicitly acknowledging that members have responsibility for the mission itself instead of completely investing it in the presence of the sisters. All of the organizational structures, values culture, and individual actions played into these comments, and individuals expressed their feeling of empowerment when taking on ownership of the mission.
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<th>University A</th>
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<td><strong>Personal Calling</strong></td>
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<td>“I think it's commitment to call. There are an awful lot of faculty who are here because they believe in the Franciscan identity. If they were sitting in here most of them would say ‘I believe in the mission and I can do the mission. I can love up my kids and I don't really need a president to help me figure out how I find energy around mission.’ They're doing it on their own and with the children.” Interview A02</td>
<td>“I’m very faith-based and Christian, so I was interested to be able to interview here to see how somebody had aligned not only my personal self, but my professional as well.” Interview B12</td>
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<td>“I think what makes the difference is the common values that are shared and practiced. And I think that what's interesting is it's a sense that's carried on through the people who are here. Obviously not all of whom are sisters...Working here has absolutely enriched my personal faith, and it's exactly one of the reasons I wanted to come here.” Interview A04</td>
<td>“For me it intersects so well with my personal values and the values I associate with being a [professional]. For me personally, my profession prioritizes service and compassion, and things like that.” Interview B05</td>
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<td>“And what I found in the business community is that you can make like some really nice money. But the collegiality and sharing of information the caring community just wasn't there and I felt myself being pulled back.” Interview A17</td>
<td>“Eventually, not in the early years, eventually as we focused more on more on the Franciscan piece that I began to realize that that is me, those are my values. That’s the way I try to live my life. And that’s probably one of the things that has been so exciting for me that’s more and more we developed that the more I’ve been able to sort of validate myself and say yes, that is the way it should be, that is the way you should live. It’s sort of like it grew up around me and it fits really well.” Interview B09a</td>
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| Role-based Actions | | |
| | | |
"And so I think peacemaking is when you try to resolve conflicts whether it’s a scheduling classes or rooms or bookstore stuff. It's always good to have that finesse and that approach and that polish is really key in administration because you can burn a lot of bridges and you can definitely not win over a lot of people. You need to really take the time and build relationships, community.” Interview A05

"The majority in our department are pretty good at developing a sense of community in the classroom. On day one I say 'If we’re going to be successful in this class, we're going to do it with collaboration not competition. And so I spent the whole class period on how to study and how we're going to get along with each other. And by the end I consider it a successful first day if every student has found some other student in the classroom and they've exchanged contact information.” Interview A19

“I remember when I was a student here, the very first couple of class I want to, the instructors gave us their phone numbers…So that’s what we kind of pride ourselves on is that we are so small we can develop those individual relationships with students. I think that’s why kids come here.” Interview B06

“Our girls qualified for nationals this year, and one was a freshman, and she’s a DACA student and didn’t have a license or anything. We ended up driving her to nationals in Washington. We drove her there because of what potentially could have happened at the airport…A member of my staff put those values based stuff together, the integrity, the responsibility, the servant leadership and the commitment to the students that once they’re here, they’re an important person to our university.” Interview B11.

“It’s the gist of what the university does…So if they see a need, they act on it. They don’t feel they have to get permission or anything formal. We just step up and do it. And I will. I like the spontaneity, I like the freedom to be able to do that. And you don’t feel like it’s expected and you don’t feel pressured. You’re doing it because you genuinely want to. I think that speaks to the culture here for sure.” Interview B03

“What has really amazed me as part of reconciliation, is that in past years people wanted to side-step it and it was the hardest thing. High conflict resolution. This time it has really taken hold…a freshman business class works together in teams and you’d get a grade according to the team. And one student last semester wasn’t doing his job, and four were talking about putting him off the team…but then the faculty said well, this is the year of reconciliation, do you think we want to try something before we kick him off?” Interview C05

“One of my goals is to connect that talk about the values and using the term. So when they talk about the student achievement team and the whole student affairs thing, they will use reconciliation…I said don’t just do it, but use the words so they make the connection.” Interview C02a

“With supporting the individual, I understand that students come and they think their situation may be just only them and a lot of times, we’ve probably heard that same scenario a hundred times. But to them it’s the only situation. It’s only like no one else is going through what they’re going through at this point. …It’s nothing new [to us], but making sure they realize or they feel at least that this is important and I understand what you’re going through and
work through what options are going to be. So that’s the mindset I always have that this matters very much to the student, and to them this is just them going through it. And how can you help them.” Interview C07

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<th>Values Dialogue: Support</th>
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<td>“It happens when I sense that there's some conflict going on between staff and we really talk about peacemaking and showing compassion and really getting to the core of what the issue is and not brushing it off and keeping it surface...How do you get those two employees in a room to work things out and then broaden the circle if you are not able to work through it. That is the value system, that’s the peace making piece that I know. If we're not rowing in the same direction in this institution that’s a ripple effect that ripples into other actions.” Interview A08</td>
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<td>“Yeah, I mean like we have a student group who has a stipended leadership position, and so when they were trying to decide how to hold each other accountable they were feeling kind of anxious. I was like, well, let’s talk about respect. Let’s talk about how we’ll respect each other.” Interview B10</td>
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<td>“I remember right after the election we had what was called a post-election reflection...It was just a way for people to kind of get together and just to dialogue about a really big event in our world. So how can we have a discussion, how do remain committed to the work we have to do as employees for our students...How can we still engage in a very positive discussion so we can be of value to our students.” Interview B12</td>
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<td>“I think reconciliation is expected. You can’t just cloister yourself provisionally along with someone, that’s not the culture here. [University C] has done a good job of not allowing silos to exist just because there’s been some rift in the past or those colleges never got along...We’re thrown into a single bucket.” Interview C13</td>
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<td>“I don’t think its overstating it to say that we talk almost daily about it in some ways here. And its really, I mean that all sounds fake, but as I reflect on it, my staff regularly talks to me about how they can repair a conversation they didn’t think go so well with a colleague, or how they might re-approach a student or a parent who things didn’t go well in a conversation. I mean that’s common here now.” Interview C03</td>
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<td>“The biggest way I use [the values] is in conversations about students around conduct. Reconciliation is always why you have to do your community service. And so I find them very useful to bring them up in talking to students and about their conduct and stewardship too, and sharing spaces with other students.” Interview C09</td>
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Those not familiar with the Franciscan life, I have innumerable conversations with. Faculty, staff, kids, who have no idea. And those conversations are very important. It's the dialogical process of opening up some of those things that people don't know.” Interview A16

“People underestimate the power of people using a shared language. And so people do around here [talk] about what our values are and all that kind of stuff....But like the four Franciscan values...people are fluent in those,**

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| Students are fluent in those. And in their mind it's basic, but it's really important. Not every institution has that.” Interview A15 |
| “There have been times when the faculty are upset with administration, they frequently return to the values. You know this that you’re coming out with doesn’t fit with the values in some way. Sometimes it’s not so much the decision being made or they didn’t like the way the decision was being made, this isn’t the way we do it. And of course students will frequently do this when they’re upset with the faculty. I mean you can use them for the wrong ways, but I have seen faculty and staff really try to look sometimes to see if we are living this.” Interview C05 |

| Values Dialogue: Challenge |
| “Truthfully I've never felt this to be a place that was values based. I think there's two institutions where the student experience is very different from the experience of myself as a staff member and that could be, again, particular to me or the role of administration.” Interview A09 |
| “Unfortunately as you work together the Franciscan values become assumed...they assume that you're doing them, and then people can become harsh with each other, less compassionate, less respectful...They tend to assume they're doing the practice and pretty soon if you're not watching it you're not really practicing Franciscan values internally but you're portraying an image. And the students |
| “Nobody really had a definition of what Franciscan was and people would just throw it out and use it any way they wanted to ‘Oh, that’s Franciscan, that’s not Franciscan’ without any intellectual or theological basis for it.” Interview B09a |
| “In our small and intimate community probably, in my view, I call it almost the bastardization of the Franciscan values where the values were used pretty regularly to support both good and bad behavior.” Interview C03 |
| “The biggest difference for me is that…I guess it was more of a family values and trust as a family. Now it’s more of a business. And you if you think as a business, then you have to run as a business.” Interview B04 |
| “I find sometimes they are convenient to roll out when necessary. And in practice it’s not actually always happening the way we want it to... So I would like to see that more present instead of just being lip service.” Interview C16 |
aren't affected but the workplace can become toxic." Interview A10

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"And by infusing the Franciscan values my hope is that the students that graduate from here are more complete people and acknowledged and able to connect with other human beings. In the end it's all relationships. I think students get that here, and they don't get it from other places." Interview A19

"So I tell them we are tackling big issues here. But I tell them, you guys are my hope. They are like 'what?' I go well, yeah, you're going to be the ones in the future making decisions on health or health care is going to be adjusted to take care of people who are retiring. So you're my hope. So I need to teach you as much as I can about this. And once they figure out that hey, I'm somebody's hope then they don't feel so worthless and then they feel motivated, I gotta learn this, take responsibility now. You're basically taking a sword and tapping their shoulder. I knight thee hope and the students respond to that." Interview A10

"It’s what keeps me here. It’s inspiring, that’s what I love about my job…To me those are the long lasting things…[students] get all the skills and knowledge, and will touch the core of that Franciscan piece. Helping them find out who they really are, why they are here. All those existential connections, what they can contribute. And that’s important, how we are all connected.” Interview B09b

“So we are a welcoming community of leaders, a campus of doers, most of our majors, again have that Franciscan piece. Do it, don’t just theorize it like the Dominicans might or whatever. Our majors…do work to serve others, so we’ve tried to take that Franciscan language and put into, I think we are intentional about being around because we have a purpose.” Interview B01b

“I would say without question that the institution has a very strong charism…I would argue that when you look at people who are looking at their career here at the university versus just the job, that people have really tried to embrace this as a career. Meaning they’re trying with their heart to do the best for the institution, to do the best for the future of its

“As [the sisters] get older I always think about you know as they aren’t here to leave their legacy, it’s up to us to continue that. And so I just know in my mind I always think about you know we’ve got to be able to bring these values home for our students and carry that on. Someone’s got to carry that legacy and show what [University C] is all about.” Interview C07

“I gave them the definition that we had come up with and said now I'll come back in two weeks so let me know do you think these values are really being carried on. I came back in two weeks and I got their answers and I looked at them really quickly…and I said you all failed. And they looked at me. I said I didn't ask you what the sisters did, I asked what do you. I gave it back to them and then they began to say well we were already doing it. So when I came back the next week I said...You're already doing it right. What we really want you to do is start living it.” Interview C05

“I’ll tell you what, our board members…they are people that I sense in my interactions buy into the values. And I think you have faculty that buy in, and you have administrators that buy in. And I think that if you are looking at a critical mass of people that buy into the values
| students. That’s where you really feel the values coming to fruition the most.” Interview B08 | whether they buy into them from a Catholic perspective or simply because that is the way people should treat each other, I think you have a critical mass of people that will maintain those values.” Interview C12 |
These values themes represent the various ways in which values impact the lives and work of organizational members. A combination of cultural, structural, and individual agentic action contributes to how members experience values in organizational life. Taken together, these interwoven themes show dialogic and action-oriented ways in which values manifest in and support the universities.

**Summary**
This chapter presented data collected from members at three Franciscan institutions of higher education to answer the questions of how values are used through change to maintain institutions, what values practices are undertaken by employees and how they impact institutions, and whether there are themes in the ways values emerge in organizational conversations. Clearly, values practices were evident, whether orchestrated through institutional mechanisms or driving personal actions. The values culture provided a strong reference point for members to make sense of the changes their institution was undertaking.

Leadership, changes in culture, and the interaction with the mission and sisters also impacted how individuals experienced change. These major events made a significant impression on individuals and affected how members experienced the organization. While the research questions focus on values as an active practice to further organizational life, leadership, founders, and culture are also intimately involved in how organizations survive and thrive in their institutional fields.
The following chapter will discuss how these themes of leadership, mission and culture interaction, and values actions impact organizations. Connections to theories of institutional work and dialogic organization development as well as practical findings for mission-based organizations will be discussed.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The preceding chapter described the experiences of individuals at three Franciscan institutions of higher education. Prior to discussing the thematic and theoretical findings of this work, it is worthwhile to revisit a methodological component of this study. This study explicitly compares three case studies in the spirit of Yin’s replication logic and case synthesis (2015) and Eisenhart’s (1989) theory-building approach to cases through within-case and cross-case pattern analysis. The comparison of three constructed cases as the level of analysis for this work was intentional. It provides space for the uniqueness of each case but does not over-emphasize what happened at any one institution. Further, it counteracts common case challenges including going native, relying on particularly intense or elite responses, and minimizing negative cases in developing theoretical conclusions (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles et al., 2014). This approach also supports transferable understandings by repeating the study in three settings to test the theoretical and practical research questions more broadly. While some depth is lost in not examining each case individually in this work, the desired and transferrable outcome is that of understanding a phenomenon and how it occurs in multiple environments.

The following discussion sheds further light on the major cross-case themes of leadership; the intersection of mission, founders, and organizational culture; and values actions. Explicit connections are made to the theories of institutional work and
dialogic organization development. Practical findings for mission-based organizations also are discussed.

Major Case Themes
Three primary themes arose out of the case comparison and exploration of the research questions: culture, mission, and founders interaction, values actions, and leadership.

Leadership
While the first two themes were reasonably expected given the study design and foundational literature, the findings on leadership were somewhat surprising. Because of a significant number of leader-focused studies in organization development, this study was explicitly designed to reduce reliance on elite actors and seek themes from individuals in all levels of the organization. Despite this, leadership was a major theme when discussing change and values at the three research sites.

Leadership actions and enactment loomed large in conversations. There were responses from individuals who primarily kept their head down and did their work regardless, or in spite of, leadership actions, but most expressed the importance of leadership as they discussed change. While commentary on leadership covered a variety of areas, a notable theme focused on leadership transitions. Whether it was a current set of transitions, ones in the recent past, or anticipated future transitions, a majority of respondents reflected on how those transitions impacted the organization.
Leadership transitions opened up dialogic spaces for respondents, providing opportunities to actively discuss the current state of the institution, creating pathways for approaching new possibilities, and offering forums to address organizational challenges. Respondents discussed how more options were on the table during transition or that the organization was at a point of readiness for change. Trepidation about future transitions led to discussion of the qualities of current leadership and their role enactment. But the critical organizational moment of leadership transition, whether past, current, or future, provided opportunities to engage in cross-institutional dialogue.

Leader role enactment also surfaced repeatedly. A clear theme was the importance of communication, dialogue, and action that worked in congruence with each other and the institutional mission. Leaders who communicated clearly, frequently, and strategically, who encouraged dialogue with and among university members, and who also took actions that supported or corresponded with those statements were praised and supported by respondents. Leaders who did not were subject to mistrust and intense scrutiny by members, especially relating to espoused statements matching actions. If leaders enacted their roles in perceived congruence with the institutional values and mission foundation, then members expressed more confidence in their own role enactment with their view of that foundation.
Beyond the concerns with congruence with communication, dialogue, and action, leadership was entwined in conversations about the values. When asked to discuss change, individuals at every level used leaders and leadership teams as a mirror to reflect on organizational life and how the values were used in practice. In each major change theme at the universities (e.g., the new president, reduction in force, and organizational growth), the way in which leaders managed those efforts was a primary dialogic sensemaking tool for members to describe the change itself and if the change matched the members’ views of sanctioned values-based conduct. For example, in the reduction in force (RIF), how leaders acted and responded through the RIF was held up as non-Franciscan to some and upholding the institution to others, which was then leveraged into member reflections on the efficacy of the RIF itself. Past leaders were also scrutinized in their values enactment and how that impacted university life, whether reinforcing or undermining the unique character of the institution. The “historic heroic story” narrative of a leader building up the values and rescuing the institution was particularly compelling in one case, to the point that a member with a long tenure took pains to inform me of what happened in the past so I was aware of the multiple individuals involved in the transformation effort. Overall, leaders and leadership actions had a significant impact on individuals when managing change, especially in dialogic sensemaking of the direction of the institution.
Culture, Mission, and Founders Interaction
Themes regarding institutional culture, the mission focus of the institution, and grappling with founding order withdrawal intersected in this research. In most cases, individuals discussed the intangible nature of what it was like to work at their institutions through their observations, values, and actions. Themes emerged about the operational culture, the values culture, and how the mandate of carrying on the mission of the founding congregation without the founders’ presence weighed on many institutional members.

At all institutions, contending with the culture of the university was a prominent theme with or without the values. All respondents knew there was a desired cultural state and compared that with their perceived reality. Across the three institutions, while they articulated it differently, respondents talked about how the culture was embedded in the organization through statements and actions, whether personal or ritualized. What was notable about this finding was that members in several conversations referenced the need to be more explicit about the meaning of cultural elements. For example, it was not good enough to state that the institution is Franciscan as a blanket term; individuals instead had, or desired to have, explicit conversations with leadership and between members on what that meant. Several members also used the values themselves in dialogic processes to understand the culture and norm: what it meant to be Franciscan or to serve the mission of their institution. This dialogue ranged from how individuals described routine business to defining distinctive practices that differentiated them from other institutions. This
points to values as an important internal narrative that allows for leveraging powerful cultural forces toward change or differentiating organizational efforts. The values explicitly formed a shared language for individuals in the culture to use as sensemaking and maintaining activities.

Members also wrestled with the presence and withdrawal of the founders within their organization. This research presented an opportunity to witness the impacts of founder withdrawal and understand how organizations experience this transition. While some members were more explicit than others, general comments regarding the founders related to how they were living representations of the traditions and history of the organization. There was a general drive among respondents to take actions to preserve the mission and faith character of the university after the sisters’ eventual departure, or in the case of one institution where the sisters had departed, how individuals felt explicitly drawn to continue that mission. In almost all cases, the sisters had moved “lived human” to “symbolic” state, representing the historic values tradition more than their individual gifts and challenges as individuals. There was evidence of the values acting as an example of how founders’ beliefs were woven into the fabric of the culture, especially in the spirit of Pettigrew’s (1979) assertion of founders’ impact on purpose and commitment. The commitment that individuals expressed to the sisters and the importance of carrying on their tradition were deeply embedded in the cultures and mindsets of the institutions studied. In addition, some
individuals discussed organizational decisions and referenced what the sisters’ answer or focus would have been in that situation.

Members also referenced founders’ insights to encourage organizational persistence (Schein, 1989), largely through by the members taking on ownership of the institutions values and the mission. If institutions actively provided dialogic scaffolds for individuals to understand their role in the founders’ missions, and/or if individuals themselves found role-based purpose in furthering founders’ goals, there was less anxiety about founder withdrawal as they grappled with the emotional nature of the transition. University C was the most strategic and intentional in this work, but it was present across all three sites to some extent. Individuals and institutions in this study who took more explicit actions regarding enacting the values showed evidence of a stronger connection to purpose and mission of the founding congregations, compared with those who simply expressed concerns about founder withdrawal but did not take action. This leads to a discussion of how values actions surfaced during this research.

**Values Actions**
Generally speaking, the values played a role in nearly every conversation about change. A notable minority of respondents needed to be prompted to discuss the organization’s stated values, but after being asked most were readily conversant in them. Only a handful were not motivated in some ways by the mission or values of the institution. Most respondents used values language spontaneously in their
responses to questions. At two institutions, individuals explicitly stated a personal connection to the values as a draw for coming to or staying at the institution. In other cases, explicit groups of staff felt particular ownership of the values tradition, such as faculty in their teaching or employees in service of students. Of note is the fact that those institutions with the deepest integration had a highly placed mission and identity executive, generally a member of the sponsoring congregation or closely tied to it.

The evidence clearly showed that values were driving actions or being explicitly linked to actions at the organizational and individual level. Dialogue was purposeful in the organizations regarding values understandings and was firmly embedded in the cultural milieu. Founder values were formed through the sisters’ actions and what they promoted, and individuals readily discussed their observations or understandings of the stories of the sisters’ actions. The responses were far more emotional and action oriented than cognitive, and values were repeatedly referenced in individuals’ understandings of the situation the university was facing. With dialogic understandings of organizational life and values as personal cognitive and collective social structures, values in the institutions studied clearly had an action orientation in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral realms. This finding is in line with previous research on values having emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements that support communities (Malle & Dickert, 2007; Rokeach, 1973). This finding also supports the dialogic nature of change and institutional work and the actions and practices taken to
reinforce institutional environments (Bushe & Marshak, 2014; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Two key types of emergent values-based actions were orchestrated values actions and individual values actions. Orchestrated values actions are actions the institution initiated around the values, such as activities encouraging focused reflection on one value each year, structured orientations, decision making guides, and values incorporated into performance evaluation and assessment. Individual actions involve individuals taking personal actions in their work to reinforce or enact the values, without prompting from an institutional structure. These findings showed how multiple actions sustained the culture of an institution, instead of its being centered in one office or effort.

Orchestrated values actions were institutionally driven frameworks that created shared language and structures for enacting the stated values in particular ways. Some encouraged language for guided reflection; for example, the annual values dialogue encouraged members to focus their reflection and understanding on one of the foundational values, thereby encouraging discussion, sensemaking, and collective understandings of the institutionally sanctioned view of the value set. Tools such as guides for decision-making, budgeting, and performance tied the values to the operational, everyday actions of individuals, helping connect that meaning to their individual work that may otherwise feel disconnected from the organizational mission.
and purpose. Using the values infused meaning into these tasks and made values actions part of the everyday language of doing business at the institutions. Orchestrated values in the curriculum behaved similarly to the structural components but extended that shared language into the lives and practices of students. Curriculum was intentionally orchestrated at the institutions but also relied on the individual values actions of faculty, because of the nature of academic freedom and faculty control over their classroom environment. Members discussed these institutionally sanctioned frameworks generally as essential tools to support the culture and character of the universities. Some gravitated toward one tool more than another, such as not thinking much of the annual values dialogue but willingly utilizing values-based performance language. A small minority used these tools grudgingly or without interest beyond satisfying institutional requirements, but this response was rare.

By contrast, individual values actions were motivated not by institutional structures but by individual connections to the values themselves. It was clear from members’ responses that individual values actions were deeply connected to both personal/organizational values congruence and role enactment in concert with those values. Most members were drawn to some aspect of the values set of the institution, whether driven by personal faith or by conviction that the values were guides to live by. The way in which individuals personally enacted their roles spoke to the actions they took to reinforce the values as part of their everyday work lives and related to
how the values culture made the institution distinct. These in particular stand out as directly related to the theories of institutional maintenance, since they are emotional and action-oriented steps taken to support the institution (Gilmore & Sillince, 2014; Moisander et al., 2016). There was also a clear dialogic bent to how individuals used the values, most prominently with students but also with colleagues in the institution. Individuals gave examples of how they used values dialogue and actions to make sense of the organization, guide decisions in their work life, or challenge institutional decisions. Clearly, many individuals used values actions to enact the mission of the organization. And although a small number of individuals did not state this connection or even did not see the values enacted within the organization, these individuals still commented on distinct actions of others that seemed values motivated.

**Research Questions**

These themes address the research questions and shed light on values, change, and organizational maintenance. The first question asked how values are used through change in organizations to maintain institutions. The findings suggest that values were used as dialogic sensemaking frameworks to understand, discuss, and validate the appropriateness of change, such as grappling with a RIF or discussing how the values foundation would evolve through rapid institutional growth. Values provided shared language and meaning-laden cultural touchstones, consistently and constantly refined in conversation or in reflection on organizational events. They were also used in change as emotional reference points, personal motivators, as well as drivers for
action. Through orchestrated values actions, they were used to frame and reframe institutional priorities, and through individual values actions they were used to discuss actions by leadership and other parts of the organization. They created a frame by which to understand an evolving organization in order to ensure it was staying true to its mission and foundation.

Values also supported organizational maintenance as onboarding tools, especially with values stories being a strong surrogate for viewing values-based actions, supporting Martin's assertion (2016). Notably, members with shorter tenures were just as versed in values language as those with longer ones, speaking to the strength of the values language in the institutions as well as the effectiveness of onboarding. An important part of maintenance is the continuation of the values foundation and mission, and values dialogue reinforced this. Dialogic interpretation and reinterpretation of values as ways to manage change were evident in the populations studied.

The next research question involves how values practices undertaken by employees have an impact on maintenance and change. Values practices have a clear impact on the institution at all levels, primarily through individual values actions. There were multiple accounts of individuals enacting their roles in ways that were congruent with the stated values. These actions created a series of microevents that continued the culture for those they interacted with. There were also stories at all sites about how
those who have left the organization comment on something missing, be it collegiality, a shared language to ground expectations, or a clear guiding purpose beyond their own duties. In many ways, values actions can knit a whole organization of disparate groups together under one orchestrated organization. This was particularly successful at University C, where individual values actions were deeply embedded into business practices, teaching, and administration. Similarly, in University A, the nursing school deeply embedded the values through individual action and orchestration of curriculum; and in University B individual values actions intimately and thoroughly supported students across divisions. Individual values actions themselves ranged from role enactment using values frameworks to using the values to take actions above and beyond what an employee would ordinarily expect to do in their role. Numerous individuals reflected on values actions as the way in which culture was maintained despite changing circumstances and sought to navigate organizational changes through values dialogue and actions.

The third research question seeks understanding regarding themes in how individuals use values and how they permeate organizational conversations. As shown above through both orchestrated values actions and individual values actions, values were part of the common parlance at the institutions studied. They were an embedded way of organizational life for a significant number of respondents. Even for those who did not connect to the values or did not find the values to be present, they still referred to their dissatisfaction of the institution not living up to its espoused values, compared to
eschewing values dialogue all together. Only in few conversations did the values not emerge spontaneously, partially because of the mission-oriented nature of the institutions, but also because of the specific actions the institution took. Hiring for mission, seeking individuals who relate to the values, and encouraging values actions through organizational scaffolds supported an environment in which individual values conversations and actions could occur. As Emery and Trist (1965) noted, values are evident as tools for making sense of unstable and uncertain environments and for guiding decision making. But in these settings, the combination of dialogic sensemaking (Weick, 1996), individual congruence between espoused values and values-in-use (Argyris, 1964), and intentional organizational structures led to more values dialogue and related values-based actions.

Values, culture, founders, mission, and role enactment featured strongly in the themes found in this research. The research questions show a clear connection between articulated and orchestrated values and how they are used in maintaining the cultures of the organizations studied. These findings are supported by the literature review in Chapter 2, but they also make contributions to theories of institutional maintenance work and dialogic organization development.

**Theoretical Contributions**
The theoretical contributions of these findings support institutional theory and dialogic organization development, especially in the social construction of
organizational life. Overall, the findings about values actions reinforce Zucker's (1987) view that institutional elements arise from small group and organization level processes. Values actions and related values and culture dialogue address the challenge of removing observations of founders’ actions as they withdraw organizational life. In finding evidence of multiple and continuous dialogues and actions as active examples of values in understanding organizational life, this research reinforces the findings of Peng, Pandy, and Pandy (2015), where stories of values were just as effective in transmitting culture as was direct observation.

**Institutional Work**
This study also supports research both of values in action (Malle & Dickert, 2007; Rokeach, 1973) and emotional, individual, and dialectic approaches to institutional work (Dacin et al., 2010; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Individuals’ use of values language anchors their statements in the nomenclature and in-group beliefs of the institution. However, those individuals also symbolically tie themselves to institutional authority when they contextualize their actions using the values. That values-laden context then is reinforced with the listener, and the listener in turn adopts that language in future interactions. These recursive values actions shape and reshape the cultural foundations of the institution through microactions (Oliver, 1992) and are driven by personal and emotional motivations more often than cognitive ones.
This research makes explicit contributions to the tenets of institutional work and the concept of institutional maintenance. Findings provide evidence of values in action as a constant form of institutional maintenance. Returning to the definition of institutional work as “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, or disrupting institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), the terms purposive and action can be examined. The concept of purposive institutional work was supported throughout the findings, which show evidence of active engagement in the life of the organization, situated in the specific social context, and commentary about how to support that context through change. Individuals specifically used values language, as it had been set as a cultural norm in their organization. Individuals were active participants, especially in their area of the institution; but they also held a broad institutional mindset. Many individuals were drawn to the organizations in order to fulfill internally congruent purposes and took actions they felt supported the mission as they perceived it. In revisiting the concept of action in the definition, values actions are a clear component of institutional work. These personally congruent, intelligent actions worked to achieve an institutional outcome supporting the mission of the organization. In line with theory, members showed evidence of distributed agency responding to their institutional environment through dialogic and emotional responses.

Several components of maintenance work are supported through this research. One supported component is enabling work that authorizes agents or diverts resources to
support institutions; another is embedding and routinizing normative foundations into the day-to-day routines and organizational practices (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In all cases, individuals were authorized to support their institutions through the orchestrated values actions, as well as encouraged by examples to use the values to shape understanding and discuss organizational life. Performance evaluations, orientations, annual values frameworks, and others all provided the scaffold and turned over the agency to individuals to act in that frame. Discursive frameworks were opened through orchestrated values actions and further supported by individual values actions.

Another maintenance component supported by the findings is valorizing and demonizing, examples of normative foundations of the institution, and mythologizing to preserve normative underpinnings of the institution (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Many examples of mythic stories were mentioned, whether of the founders, current leaders, or ordinary employees living the values in heroic ways. Individuals praised these examples as part of the distinctive character of the institution, lending credence to the concept of maintenance work as carried through organizational stories. The use of values language also reinforced the normative underpinnings of the institution through creating dialogic understanding of those pillars. Values actions inspired by that dialogue further supported the normative nature of organizational life. Individuals continually reviewed and referenced the history and normative
foundations through the values in order to maintain the institution through the changing field.

This research provides evidence that deterring institutional change is not necessarily an element of maintenance work. Individuals in the institutions studied wrestled with change and how to maintain aspects of the institution while responding effectively to the institutional field. Most recognized the need for change and were well aware of the competitive marketplace in which they were operating. The push/pull dynamic of strategic maintenance of institutional normative pillars through change is different from deterrence; many institutional members welcomed change and the process of engaging in it. Most held the perspective that if they were to engage in change, it should be mindful and always reference-checked with the values through acts of strategic maintenance. This perspective supports Zilber’s (2009) research on dialogic sensemaking to reproduce organizational meanings in an evolving context; it also supports Wright, Zammuto, and Liesch’s (2017) work on moral emotions reproducing values. Therefore, deterring change is less a factor of maintenance. Instead, maintenance in this case involves navigating change through strategic maintenance activities that utilize normative organizational foundations.

These findings on the nature of institutional maintenance work are also supported through literature on employee involvement during change. Raelin and Cataldo
(2011) discussed how intentional dialogic loops in organizations enact effective employee-focused change, using middle managers as translator. The key act of translating through the organization merges concepts of institutional maintenance and change. Intentional dialogic loops using values language and actions were evident in this research, as employees continually enacted their roles and used dialogue to engage in values-centered organizational maintenance during change. Rey, Golden-Biddle, and GermAnn (2006) supported institutional maintenance work and change further through their research on how employees embed change through dialogic micro-actions. High-quality involvement during changing institutional dynamics means a more effective change. When employees take microactions using powerful cultural and values touchpoints during the process, change is firmly framed in the organization’s culture and takes a stronger hold. These findings also support the centrality of dialogue through change and using employee voice, especially the combination of institutional structures such as orchestrated values actions and symbolic and political actions such as the individual values actions and dialogue (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Schein, 1993). Based on these findings and connections to change theory, participative and normative microactions support maintenance work as change occurs, instead of explicitly deterring change.

**Dialogic OD**
Given the discussion regarding change through dialogic loops, this research supports the foundations of dialogic organization development (OD). Dialogic OD focuses on
managing change through shifts in narrative experiences utilizing generative and compelling narratives to help individuals think and act differently in their organizations (Bushe & Marshak, 2014). Since values emerge more during uncertainty and change (Emery & Trist, 1965; Trice & Beyer, 1993), opportunities arise to use values as dialogic anchors with cultural ties. The way in which institutions supported change through orchestrated values actions explicitly used the values foundation to create these anchors as they managed change processes. The strategic growth at University C is one example, where values scaffolds were used to continually norm change efforts while encouraging generative and compelling narratives to emerge. University B engaged in this activity through dialogue following their RIF, and University A through understanding the changes brought on by their change in leadership.

Findings on values actions, both individual and orchestrated, provide insight into the powerful dialogic levers that mission-oriented organizations have to utilize in both managing change through evolving dialogic processes and the actions that support that dialogue. Values have a heavy influence on mission-oriented organizations (Lamm et al., 2010; Vivian & Hormann, 2013) and can be authentically and strategically used to support change in a dialogic frame. The combination of dialogic processes and visible actions to support evolving narratives is evident in these findings. Values actions and the dialogic discussion of such actions clearly supported
how the institutions in this study navigated change, giving an example of a dialogic OD approach outside of facilitated change processes.

This work also adds context to Bushe and Marshak’s (2014) propositions on dialogic OD. They proposed that a disruption in the accepted social construction of reality within an organization is utilized to lead to a more complex reorganization. In these settings, disruption occurred through allowing change to emerge within the organization through how the organization itself responded to its environment instead of necessarily being an officially announced organizational event. Using values in ongoing dialogic processes allows emergence and self-organization around change, but with a deeply motivating and strongly culturally referenced narrative-set. This allows for maintenance of particular cultural elements while shifting unhelpful narratives at the same time. This ongoing process of dialogic OD adds to some of the more common examples of disruption, such as large system interventions or leader-led processes.

A second proposition from Bushe and Marshak involves a change to one or more core narratives. This research provides evidence of reinterpretation or reshaping of core narratives utilizing collective sense-making around values. Efforts were made to provide universal understandings of the values through orchestrated values actions within the organizations while allowing for individual actions and sensemaking activities to flourish. One particular example from University C showed this in action:
the organization was the “best kept secret” in their area and was always considered a poor cousin to other institutions in the area. The president specifically began telling the compelling story of the Franciscan values and how University C was engaging in mission-oriented work, thus changing the core narrative. What is key in this example is that this dialogic effort to discuss the values was orchestrated in ever-widening circles within the organization: through grant activities, institutional performance review scaffolds, decision guides, and persistent values dialogue.

Bushe and Marshak’s final proposition in Dialogic OD involves the centrality of generative images to provide new and compelling alternatives for thinking and acting. In this research, values foundations were shown to be built-in generative images to motivate actions. Individuals were clearly driven by the values and utilized them as inspirational and generative images to drive or make sense of action. Values have been shown to be strong tools in organizational change (Michael et al., 2012) and can be specifically tapped into, surfaced, and made explicit through examples and frameworks for understanding change. The combination of orchestrated and individual values actions in the three institutions studied shows that values are powerful generative images that can positively contribute to dialogic change processes.

Aside from the support for foundational propositions of dialogic OD, this research extends an understanding of how dialogic OD can be embedded within organizations.
The dialogic approach is clearly effective in supporting change within these institutions. However, its success relies on the combination of visible leadership and organizational actions, scaffolds for individuals to frame actions (e.g., reflecting on values in performance reviews), and the empowerment of individuals to act in congruence with the values narrative in the organization. Without the actions based on these powerful cultural metaphors, change is less likely to persist and have meaning for organizational members. Values can be leveraged powerfully by using the principles of dialogic OD, but such action must be done so authentically and mindfully.

**Practical Findings**

Beyond these theoretical findings, there are practical findings for faith-based higher education and mission- and values-based organizations. One of the initial questions of this research was how to maintain normative foundations when founders withdraw from organizational life, in this case the founding congregations of sisters. In this study of Franciscan higher education, three factors emerged based on the findings that must be present for institutions to successfully carry on the values of their congregation during and after their withdrawal. First is the existence of strong leadership teams who both espouse and visibly enact the institutions values. This combination of espouse and enact creates trust in leadership actions. To support this, strong voices should be encouraged within the organization that will speak truth to power, which helps leaders sharpen their focus and understand how their values
enactment is perceived by the organization. The second factor is having frameworks that empower employees to put values into action in service of furthering the mission and goals of the institution. Empowering employees is a combination of utilizing scaffolds, tools, and dialogue to give them frameworks to act as well as hiring people motivated by mission elements. These two components together create an atmosphere where orchestrated values actions lead to individual values actions, which continually reinforce the values and culture in the organization. The third factor is building organizational trust through transparent leader-member communication and the fulfillment of promises. Transparent communication must be consistent and dialogic, but also focused to create understanding of a call to action. As organizational priorities shift or previous statements change, communicating openly is key for maintaining trust in environments where employees have significant emotional investment in the organization. Examples of abrogated and upheld trust were strongly evident in this research, and the strongest organizations and units were those who had a consistent, dialogic, and transparent communication between leaders, members, and within member groups.

These three factors are not exclusive to faith-based institutions and could be extended to other mission-oriented and values-based organizations. Intentional leadership, values frameworks, and organizational communication and trust are effective in many settings but have a particular impact where mission and calling are strong employee motivators.
In addition to the three factors identified above, this research also identified other practical advice for values-based organizations. Effective leaders in values-based organizations provide vision and frame strategy within the values and mission of the institution through transparency and strategic communication. Maintaining the values foundation requires ongoing dialogic work, and leaders must be mindful of this. Hiring employees that are mission sensitive or mission driven is critical. Given the need for the values foundation to continue through values actions, hiring employees who already have an affinity with the values means they are more likely to act in concert with them. In addition, employees not only should be empowered to enact the values through values orientation/formation and structural supports but also should be given the agency to frame how the values are embedded in their own work. Providing formal and informal opportunities for such framing dialogue is important throughout an employee’s lifecycle at an institution. Furthermore, the findings support participatory change efforts with both orchestrated scaffolds and ways for employees to engage in dialogic sensemaking about the state of the institution, the change effort, and their role in impacting the institution. This supports change through dialogic OD methods, but it also embeds the change within the work of organizational members, leading to lasting change that maintains the values foundations of an organization.
Summary
The findings from this research showed clear themes involving the impact of leadership on organizational life, the importance of strong cultural connections in values-based organizations, and how values-based actions through orchestration and individual motivation impacted organizational life. These themes reinforce elements of the theory of institutional work in how organizations are maintained through change and how dialogic OD is enacted in organizations. Practical applications of strong communication, espoused and enacted leader behavior, and employee empowerment are supported by the participative foundations of the field of organization development.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter discusses future research, contributions to the field, and conclusions on values actions in mission-oriented organizations.

Summary
Higher education is at a critical crossroads. An oversupply of university capacity, a diminishing number of students for a traditional undergraduate experience, disruptive innovations taking market share, and perceptions of the value of a college degree are all impacting core assumptions of how colleges and universities operate. Private higher education and Catholic higher education are impacted in a significant way by these changes, given their place-bound, enrollment-dependent, and generally local nature. The tight market for new students and traditional undergraduate focus of many of these universities puts them at greater risk of closure. As stated in Chapter 1, a key factor in surviving the commoditized higher education market is strategic differentiation, which Catholic higher education can find in founding traditions. Finding a way to continue distinctive founding traditions is critical in a marketplace where significant isomorphic and competitive factors are at play. With founders withdrawing from Catholic higher education in significant numbers, shifting from a dedicated community of faith to primarily lay leadership is a difficult undertaking with critical ramifications for institutional survival.
This research has shed light on how universities with a values foundation can take specific steps to continue their founding traditions and maintain a distinctive presence in the higher education marketplace. Through the discussion of orchestrated and individual values-based actions, we have an improved understanding on how values are embedded in the dialogic and structural processes of institutional life. Institutions can maintain foundational normative pillars through a combination of strong, transparent, and values-centered leadership; organizational scaffolds to support common values understanding; and empowerment of individual values actions to occur through existing and developed values congruence. While these findings were discovered in the context of three faith-based, private higher education institutions, they clearly apply to other values-based, mission-oriented organizations. If organizations can tap into their normative foundations and encourage employees to actively take on those foundations themselves, those traditions will flourish and remain more present than if simply espoused or dictated by leadership.

**Limitations**

Several limitations to these findings must be mentioned. The research setting was explicitly Catholic higher education with a strong history of being led by a founding order. This could be construed as a narrow organizational focus. The research sites were already mission oriented with an explicit set of values. One might therefore question how transferrable the findings are for organizations without a specific mission focus or an element of calling to the work. Still, the reinforcement of dialogic
methods of change applies across multiple settings, and there are clear connections from the data. The sample size was modest, given the size of the institutions, and the key contact technique could introduce bias into the results. If individuals selected were particularly connected to the mission of the organization, results could be skewed. Nevertheless, the snowballing technique at University A showed similar themes between those selected by the key contact and generated through snowballing, so the responses may be balanced enough to be transferable. In addition, there were a few negative cases at every institution, and most of these were negative in one aspect of the questions (e.g., expressing that the intuition was not really values based, but still taking values-based actions). This fact supports the strength of the sample but also leads to questions about whether more negative cases would have emerged if the sample had been broader. Overall, the research methods, triangulation, and cross-case comparison sought to minimize these limitations.

**Contributions to Organization Development**

This research contributes in several ways to the field of organization development. Through the intentional hierarchical pyramid study design drawing on responses from all levels of the organization, this research brings a balance to the leader-heavy narrative in organizational research. While leadership emerged as an important theme in the minds of organizational members, the leader perspective was not the only view presented. Perceptions were gathered directly from frontline and middle managers as well as senior leadership, bringing new insights into how members experience their
organizational culture and values systems. Information on ways to combine leader and member actions to positively impact organizational life is an important tool for OD practitioners as they navigate and shape change.

This research also extends understandings of how normative cultural foundations are maintained within organizations and how individual actions support institutional life. In particular, this work provides additional information on dialogic processes within organizations, supporting the basic propositions of dialogic OD. Generative dialogic processes were shown to be ongoing parts of organizational life, especially using existing values language, and did not have to depend on a new grand narrative. Having the option to shift an existing organizational narrative through individual actions gives another approach for OD practitioners, especially when a large-system intervention is impractical or would not be well received. Further, knowing more about how to encourage organizational members to act on these generative metaphors will help speed change efforts and encourage OD practitioners to create meaningful organizational scaffolds to empower those actions.

A final contribution is a grounded example of managing founder withdrawal from mission-oriented organizations. Through examining how these three organizations have handled or are handling the diminishment of their founding orders, OD practitioners can transfer lessons into other organizations. Intentional actions that organizations can take during founder withdrawal include explicitly sharing the
mantle of mission leadership with employees through dialogic sensemaking activities, acknowledging the symbolic nature of founders while tying maintaining the mission to concrete, actionable steps that are approachable by members, and either hiring employees motivated by the mission or engaging in ongoing mission formation with employees to encourage its continuance. Thus, the findings of this research can help OD practitioners guide mission-based organizations through changes in founders and/or charismatic leaders.

Future research could extend the findings of this study and contribute more to organization development. The research can be applied in other faith-based settings, such as healthcare or social services, in order to discover whether values actions are prevalent in other settings. With the framework of values actions, research could be conducted outside of mission-oriented organizations to see whether espoused and enacted values impact other kinds of organizational cultures. Moreover, additional work could be done to explicitly investigate the dialogic practices of existing generative metaphors, in order to broaden the applicability of dialogic OD methods.

**Conclusion**
This study sought to understand how institutions can be maintained through change, especially in the mission-oriented, values-laden context of Catholic higher education. Findings showed an intimate and reciprocal dialogic relationship between leader actions, organizational scaffolds, and member actions using shared understandings of
organizational values. This research showed the importance of addressing the underpinnings of the social construction of organizational life, and it highlighted the impact individual member actions have on maintaining institutions. Going back to the call of Pasmore and Woodman (2015) to improve responses to accelerating change, one of the primary goals of this research was to deepen understandings of how individuals affect institutions, instead of only how institutions affect individuals. As accelerating change impacts even the most traditional of institutional fields, these findings will assist organizations and OD practitioners in leveraging all members of the organization in responsive change efforts, especially where a foundational and meaningful values language is present.
Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interview Guide
Change in Franciscan Institutions of Higher Education
Researcher: Gretel Stock-Kupperman

This is a loose structure of the interview. Questions cover general topical areas, and may change slightly as the conversation unfolds. The goal is to have participants reflect on a recent organizational change and their role in it, as well as dialogue in the organization about the change efforts.

Introduction
1. You’ve read the informed consent prior to our meeting. I am affirming with you verbally that I am audio-recording this interview. I will keep all transcripts, recordings, and notes confidential, and your identity will be concealed. You may stop this interview and withdraw from this study at any time with no consequences. You may also refuse to answer any question. Do you have any questions?

2. Can you tell me about your role at [institution]?
   Probe: How long have you been here?

   Probe: what drew you to work here?

Change
3. Please think back to an important institutional change, something that had a potential major impact on operations, programs, or resources. Can you tell me about your experience with that change effort?
   Probe: “Tell me more about…” prompts as necessary to gain more detail about the change and their role in it.
   Probe: Seek understanding about depth of knowledge of the change effort.

4. Why was this change effort important?

5. Can you tell me about the kinds of discussions you had with colleagues or on campus about this change? How did you talk about it?
   Probe: Tell me more about formal/informal conversations about what was happening on campus.

6. Were there any specific actions you took, either as part of your role or as a member of the campus, to positively or negatively impact this change?
   Probe: Why was/was not this change supported?

7. What was the result of the change effort?
   Probe: How satisfied were you with the result?
Values (Ask only if participants have not utilized values language)
8. How did the values of the institution impact this change effort, if at all?
   Probe: Did you encounter individuals who used values to support or oppose the change?
9. Do you identify with the stated values of [institution]? Why or why not?

Higher ed marketplace, future of institution
10. Higher ed in an interesting place right now, where do you see the future of your institution?

Closing
11. Is there anything else you want to share with me?

12. Thank you for your time. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me, or contact the individuals on the informed consent form.
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