

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPLICATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF DIVERSITY  
OFFICER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

QIANA N. WOODARD

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy Studies  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

Doctoral Committee:

Professor William T. Trent, Chair  
Professor Norman K. Denzin  
Associate Professor Menah Pratt-Clarke  
Associate Professor Christopher Span

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) in higher education by examining how the role is influenced by organizational structure and organizational culture at select higher education institutions. Eight chief diversity officers discussed their roles and the organizational contexts which influenced their work. Eight campus informants also contributed to our understanding of the CDO role at their respective institutions. This study's findings highlight the variance between institution-level organizational culture and unit-level organizational culture, and the salience of the CDO's placement within the institution-level organizational structure.

**TITLE:**  
Understanding the Implications of Organizational Culture and Organizational Structure  
for the Role of the Chief Diversity Officer in Higher Education

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Educational Benefits of Diversity .....	3
Problem Statement .....	5
Purpose of the Study .....	6
Research Question .....	7
Significance of the Study .....	7
Outline of Remaining Chapters .....	8
 <b>CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....</b>	 <b>9</b>
Diversity.....	9
Diversity in Higher Education .....	13
The Chief Diversity Officer in Higher Education .....	24
Organizational Culture in Higher Education .....	30
Organizational Structure and Governance in Higher Education .....	34
Theoretical Framework .....	38
Conceptual Framework: Tying It All Together .....	46
 <b>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	 <b>47</b>
Introduction.....	47
Philosophical Underpinnings .....	47
Qualitative Inquiry .....	48
The Methodological Approach: Case Study .....	50
Data Collection Procedures.....	55
Data Analysis Procedures .....	65
Role of the Researcher .....	67
Limitations of the Study.....	70
 <b>CHAPTER 4: CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICERS, THE SPACE AND THE WORK .....</b>	 <b>73</b>
Introduction.....	73
CDO Profiles.....	74
Introduction of Informants.....	81
Institution Profiles.....	84
Archival Documents .....	88
Diversity Definitions.....	90
CDO Roles and Responsibilities.....	97
Salience and Pervasiveness of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion .....	109
Major Sources of Resistance to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion .....	112
Chapter Summary .....	118

<b>CHAPTER 5: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>120</b>
Introduction.....	120
Organizational Structure Defined and Described .....	121
Implications of Organizational Structure - Institution Level (ILOS) .....	127
Implications of Organizational Structure - Unit Level (ULOS) .....	141
Summary of Organizational Structure .....	147
 <b>CHAPTER 6: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE .....</b>	 <b>151</b>
Introduction.....	151
Organizational Culture Defined and Described .....	152
Implications of Organizational Culture - Institution Level (ILOC).....	159
Implications of Organizational Culture - Unit Level (ULOC) .....	171
Summary of Organizational Culture.....	175
 Ancillary Themes from the Study.....	 178
 <b>CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	 <b>180</b>
Introduction.....	180
Discussion .....	181
Implications for Theory/Recommendations .....	198
Implications for Practice/Recommendations .....	202
Future Research .....	207
 <b>REFERENCES.....</b>	 <b>209</b>
 <b>APPENDICES .....</b>	 <b>220</b>
Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for CDOs .....	220
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for Informants.....	224
Appendix C: List of Archival Documents .....	227
Appendix D: Sampling Procedures Process Map .....	228
Appendix E: CDO Roles and Responsibilities Checklist .....	229

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Demographic shifts, expanding and diversified consumer bases, new workforce demands, a transforming global economy and other changes to the American landscape (Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008) have influenced various sectors, institutions and organizations to acknowledge the essentiality of diversity (Dexter, 2010) and to take action in consideration of this societal change. One intervention strategy employed by organizations seeking to improve their position in this budding cultural environment is the appointment of an executive-level overseer of diversity, commonly referred to as a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). The CDO has quickly become a prominent fixture in American organizations, emerging across multiple sectors, from corporate (e.g. IBM) to education (e.g. Harvard University) to non-profit (e.g. American Cancer Society) to government (e.g. the Democratic Party) to professional sports (e.g. Major League Baseball) (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

In higher education, the rise of the CDO is a result of: (1) the present-day legal and political environment, (2) shifting demographics of the American population, (3) the new knowledge economy, and (4) persistent societal inequities that manifest in the form of racial, ethnic, and social class biases and impede access to quality post-secondary education (Williams & Clowney, 2007). To address these challenges, over 100 U.S. colleges and universities have embraced the CDO nomenclature and role as necessary for institutional diversity advancement.

The higher education CDO appointment is frequently held by a singular, focal, executive-level leader who is charged with overseeing the school's diversity efforts. This individual is committed to issues of equity, access and inclusion; seeks to forge new, deeper and more

sustainable diversity practices across campus; and, aims to integrate and institutionalize diversity into the core and fabric of the university. The post-secondary CDO is a relatively new designation that carries with it a substantial degree of complexity and obscurity as the individual in this position is required to work in tandem with multiple institution leaders (some who may not support the CDO's objectives) and across multiple units, accurately assess the school's culture and tradition (June, 2011), and all the while being heralded as the "diversity messiah" of campus-wide diversity initiatives (Williams and Wade-Golden, 2008). Ambiguity reigns for the CDO, who must promote centrality (of their cause) in a decentralized yet bureaucratic and highly-politicized environment such as higher education, and juxtapose executive-level power against limited ability to affect change as one individual (Cohen & March, 1986).

The complexity of the CDO role in higher education is undoubtedly linked to the complexity of the institution itself. Higher education is a slow-moving system predicated on order and content with the status quo, traditional lenses, and antiquated formal and informal structures. Newman, Couturier, and Scurry (2004) state that "American higher education, feeling successful and satisfied with itself, will fail to understand the speed and significance of the changes underway and drift into new and unexamined structures that undercut higher education's traditional purposes (p. xi). The postsecondary arena can address some of these challenges by examining the status quo in terms of organizational structure and organizational culture, and embracing change through the vision and empowerment of the CDO.

Although the CDO nomenclature is in its nascent stages in higher education, diversity work in these organizations pre-dates the CDO post with the traditional efforts of affirmative action, multicultural affairs, equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy and compliance, transition/bridge programs, ethnic studies, cultural centers, etc. (Williams & Wade-Golden,

2013). However, as the station matures the body of knowledge pertaining to higher education CDOs – conceptual, theoretical and empirical – continues to expand (see Gose, 2006; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2008; Villalpando, Harvey, Moses, Barcelo, & Williams, 2009; Dexter, 2010; Leon, 2010; Arnold & Kowalski-Braun, 2011; Pittard, 2010;; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

### **Educational Benefits of Diversity**

The appointment of a CDO in higher education likely demonstrates a school's commitment to maximizing the education benefits of diversity despite ubiquitous backlash, criticism and challenges from diversity's naysayers. In 2011, the Obama administration released guidelines on affirmative action in higher education with the perspective that diversity is beneficial and therefore something that colleges and universities should strive to achieve (Schmidt, 2011). According to Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor during the 2003 University of Michigan litigations: "In order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity" (Caperton, 2004, p. 15). Alongside O'Connor, several scholars, educational leaders, government figures and social activists acknowledge that there are advantages to diversification at America's colleges and universities. Bowen, Kurzweil, and Tobin (2005) state that "there are widely understood educational benefits associated with enrolling a student body that is both highly talented and diverse" (p. 4); benefits which include a more educated citizenship, greater societal equity, more developed critical thinking skills, and multicultural awareness. As such, diversity, which can embody various forms (e.g. gender, ability/disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion, geography, socioeconomic status), has the potential to yield robust learning experiences both inside and outside of the classroom

(Kaufmann, 2007) for students – as well as faculty, administrators and staff – who encounter diversified education environments (Tierney, 1997; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999; Duderstadt, 2000; Milem & Hakuta, 2000; Terenzini, Cabrera, Colbeck, Bjorklund, & Parente, 2001).

Milem (2010) synthesizes the many educational benefits to diverse college and university campuses, as adapted in Table 1.1 below.

<b>Table 1.1: Summary of the Educational Benefits of Diverse College and University Campuses</b>		
<b>Type of Benefit</b>		
<b>Individual</b>	<b>Institutional</b>	<b>Societal</b>
Improved racial and cultural awareness	<b>Benefits to Private Enterprise</b>	More research on the effects of affirmative action in the workplace
Enhanced openness to diversity and challenge	Cultivation of workforce with greater levels of cross-cultural competence	Higher levels of service to community / civic organizations
Greater commitment to increasing racial understanding	Attraction of best available talent pool	Medical service by physicians of color to underserved communities
More occupational and residential desegregation later in life	Enhanced marketing efforts	Greater equity in society
Enhanced critical thinking ability	Higher levels of creativity and innovation	A more educated citizenry
Greater satisfaction with the college experience	Better problem-solving abilities	
Perceptions of a more supportive campus racial climate	Greater organization flexibility	
Increased wages for men who graduate from higher “Quality Institutions”	<b>Benefits to Higher Education of Faculty Diversity</b>	
	More student-centered approaches to teaching and learning	
	More diverse curricular offerings	
	More research focused on issues of race/ethnicity and gender	
	More women and faculty of color involved in community/volunteer service	

*(Adapted from Milem, 2010; Reprinted with permission.)*



## Problem Statement

Despite the acknowledged educational benefits to diversity and growth of the CDO appointment in higher education, colleges and universities often fall short in terms of institutionalizing diversity, as few institutions are truly experiencing and reaping the benefits of diversity or achieving their diversity objectives (Chun & Evans, 2008). Over a decade after the landmark University of Michigan cases – which allowed for select diversity practices at post-secondary institutions to continue – many college and university leaders still perceive a need for their schools to have an institution-wide commitment to diversity (Caperton, 2004) yet continue to grapple with the challenge of leveraging that diversity on their campuses (Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005). *Gratz v. Bollinger*, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* and other legal cases that have challenged diversity in higher education in recent years make clear the challenges of achieving diversity on college campuses; and, thus the complexity of the CDO role in realizing diversity amidst the highly-publicized, highly-politicized, and highly-polarized backdrop that is today's American society.

Although the CDO is tasked and purposed with the administrative practice of diversity management, the very nature of the position creates a degree of ambiguity that significantly impacts goal attainment (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013). Complicating the CDO experience is the lack of consensus and uniformity amongst colleges and universities as to the CDO's (a) qualifications and selection, (b) priorities, goals, and key objectives, (c) roles and responsibilities, (d) assessment, evaluation and indicators of success, (e) placement or alignment in the organization's formal hierarchical structure, (f) support structure and support networks, (g) budget and resources, (h) primary, secondary and tertiary partners and stakeholders, (i) background and experiences, and (j) sphere of influence (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

These variances can lead to or heighten internal and external conflicts, and can be magnified depending on the various organizational contexts (e.g. historical, institutional, cultural, and environmental) surrounding the CDO's efforts.

Amidst this variance and ambiguity lies opportunity. The motivation and rationale for this study is to examine the higher education CDO role through two particular contexts that could have significant implications for the CDO's role: organizational structure and organizational culture.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer in higher education by examining how the role is influenced by organizational structure and organizational culture at select higher education institutions. Although various recent studies have explored some aspect of the leadership experiences of CDOs in higher education, no qualitative study has examined the CDO role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture on the role. By examining the CDO role within these organizational contexts, this study has the potential to unveil commonalities and idiosyncrasies that enact and further the mission of diversity at select higher education institutions.

This study will rely upon qualitative inquiry to examine the CDO role within the selected contexts of organizational structure and organizational culture. Smith (2012) states that "in many studies of leadership, leadership is still studied without regard to the diversity of the leaders, the institutional context, and the dynamics between the two" (p. 232). Thus, the goals of this study are to: (1) contribute to the emerging body of knowledge pertaining to higher education CDOs,

(2) contribute to scholarship by intersecting leadership, diversity, and select organizational contexts, and (3) inform research, theory and practice of diversity in higher education.

### **Research Question**

In an effort to examine the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture on diversity in higher education with regard to diversity executives, this study will be guided by the following research question:

*What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?*

### **Significance of the Study**

The chief diversity officer in higher education is a relatively new designation and one of the more recent entrants to the post-secondary senior executive ranks. Despite its newness, the CDO role is a key post on campus in terms of diversity growth, change management, and the university's fulfillment of its strategic diversity platform. The CDOs salience stems from diversity's importance to the U.S. higher education agenda, as schools continue to recognize the gravity and necessity of diversity efforts for addressing educational inequalities and meeting the demands of a shifting demography.

Research surrounding the CDO nomenclature is emerging yet limited, thus further examination would be beneficial to the field. This qualitative study has the potential to shed light on the influence of organizational context in higher education for the chief diversity officer role, and augment the emerging body of literature surrounding the chief diversity officer in higher education.

## **Outline of Remaining Chapters**

Chapter Two of this study offers a review and synthesis of the literature pertaining to diversity in higher education, chief diversity officers in higher education, organizational structure in higher education and organizational culture in higher education. Chapter Two also includes the theoretical frameworks that will guide this study. Chapter Three details the research design, methodological approach, data collection and data analysis procedures for the study. Chapter Four begins the presentation of the study's findings and my interpretations of the data with a focus on the CDOs, the work they perform, and the space in which that work is performed. Chapter Five presents the findings of organizational structure and its implications for the CDO role. Chapter Six presents the findings of organizational culture and its implications for the CDP role. And finally, Chapter Seven offers conclusions, implications, limitations and recommendations for future research. A list of cited references and the appendices follow the concluding chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Diversity

##### Defining Diversity

From the Oxford English Dictionary (1989), the word *diversity* originates from *differentia* or the “attribute[s] by which a species is distinguished from all other species of the same genus; a distinguishing mark or characteristic”. The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) recognizes the term *diversity* as broadly referring to “characteristics that differentiate individuals such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, generational differences, and religious beliefs” (2009, p. 3). Still, a more specialized definition within the institution of higher education suggests that *diversity* reflects “a concern for inclusiveness and social justice or ‘the differences that differences make’” (Owen, 2008, p. 187). Ultimately, diversity acknowledges or brings attention to differences.

According to Gurin (1999), scholars acknowledge three types of diversity, all of which are interdependent: *structural*, *interactional/cross-racial* and *classroom*. Structural diversity encompasses the numerical representation (of students of color) within an institution (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999). Interactional / cross-racial incorporates the quality and degree of engagement with individuals of different backgrounds (e.g. racial, ethnic) (Chang, 1996). And lastly, classroom diversity “encompasses formal exposure to diverse people and perspectives through curricular and co-curricular offerings” (Jayakumar, 2008, p. 618).

“[T]he study of diversity sketches narratives about society and its individuals” (Baez, 2004, p. 299); thus, the research surrounding this phenomenon typically aims to highlight these

individuals and these institutions. Moreover, diversity maintains that significant social differences exist between groups, that these differences influence people's social experiences, and that institutions should recognize and take action to support the differences (Berrey, 2011). However and for whatever purposes diversity is examined, discussed or acted upon, it should not be disassociated from its multiple influential contexts, which include: *institutional* (e.g. academy, scientific community), *cultural* (e.g. biological characteristics, significance of race), *political* (e.g. affirmative action debate, the multitude of legal challenges), and *historical* (e.g. a university's social role, again the significance of race) (Baez, 2004).

### The History of Diversity

The evolution of the construct of diversity traces as far back as the ancient Greeks (Aristotle), and forward to John Stuart Mill's *marketplace of ideas* and John Dewey's *pluralism* (Moses & Chang, 2006). Aristotle's perceived diversity to be useful in the political sense, meaning that in the midst of inevitable conflict a variety of perspectives would ultimately strengthen the democracy; and, thus the state of plurality (made of many) was greater than that of unity (made of one) (Frank, 2005).

Like Aristotle, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) championed diverse perspectives. As an early proponent of diversity, Mill's concept of the "marketplace of ideas" – which was designed primarily in support of free speech – also underscored the necessity of opposing ideas and views in political and social matters (Mill, 1974). Mill warned against "the tyranny of the majority" (p. 62) and the detrimental impact of assimilation and uniformity (Mill, 1974).

Additionally, Dewey supported diversity as an educational tool, and brought a dialogue of diversity and pluralism into the field of education by stating: "[T]he intermingling in the

school of youth of different races, different religions, and unlike customs creates for all a new and broader environment” (Dewey, 1916, p. 21).

### The Challenges of Diversity

For addressing racial discrimination and the civil rights of traditionally-marginalized groups, the term ‘diversity’ now dominates modern-day discourse. The hegemonic discourse that reiterates difference as deficit, divisive, and illegitimate (Swartz, 2009; Sleeter & Delgado-Bernal, 2004) contributes to this current model of diversity as ‘otherness’ (Swartz, 2009). Thus, several scholars call for a more critical examination of this phenomenon and its effectiveness; and, see diversity as detracting from the mission. Bell (2003) states that “the concept of diversity, far from a viable means of ensuring affirmative action in the admissions policies of colleges and graduate schools, is a serious distraction in the ongoing efforts to achieve racial justice” (p. 1622). Additionally, Swartz (2009) states: “This hegemonic form of inclusion [diversity] fosters further divisions by separating intragroup identities (e.g., gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, age, language) into an ever-widening array of different groups. It is not surprising that the longer the list of groups, the more layered and steep the hierarchy becomes. Such constructions of diversity pit groups against each other for positions on the rungs of a hierarchal ladder, leaving White supremacy untouched” (p. 1057). Moreover, the collective use of the term “diversity” to represent a “laundry list of ‘differences’ that need to be managed” (Hu-DeHart, 2000, p. 42) renders invisible the ways in which systems of domination (e.g., sexism, racism, and classism) converge to construct unique experiences of oppression for individuals “at the intersection” of identity (West & Fenstermaker, 1995, p. 13). From this perspective, diversity appears to present more as a problem than a solution toward unifying.

More to the perspective of diversity as a potential ruse, Myers (1997) added that “diversity—useful on its face—may be no more than an ingenious device for dismantling affirmative action” (p. 26). Here, the recognition is that diversity – entangled in the courts and creating fear and apprehension among colleges and universities – does more harm than good by attacking and undoing President Kennedy’s purpose and agenda for affirmative action. Iverson (2012) calls for the “need to resist and contest dominant conceptions of diversity” (p. 168); and, diversity critics have charged that it is nothing more than an invented idea that is intellectually rootless (Schuck, 2003; Wood, 2003). As Yanow (2003) noted: “We are genetically far more alike one another than we are different” so the use of labels and categories creates “artificial boundaries” that may serve more as a “proxy for economic and behavioral problems . . . [and] continue to perpetuate inequality” (p. 211).

### Diversity and Education

Albeit the early foundations of diversity and appreciation for a diversity in perspective, several scholars date the origin of diversity initiatives back to the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, at a time when some educators were making an effort to include groups who were nonexistent or disregarded in school knowledge (Swartz, 2009).

Scholarly research directly connects the existence of inequalities and oppression with contemporary educational and institutional contexts (Ropers-Huilman, 2008; Feagin, 2006; Bell, 1997). Therefore, diversity – with its multiple influential contexts – is uniquely situated to consider and address issues of educational inequality, by: (1) reframing the lens from which we come to understand our world, such as who provides knowledge, who determines (the validity of) knowledge, and for whom knowledge is created, (2) helping to create a level playing field for students in the classroom in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and interpersonal experiences (e.g.



student-teacher, student-to-student), (3) drawing attention to and consideration for an educated society that is truly reflective of current demographic trends, (4) celebrating institutional preferences for campuses with multiple voices, backgrounds and experiences, (5) confronting the perceptions of higher education institutions among underrepresented communities (e.g. access, persistence, degree attainment) (6) contributing variety to the global economy and workforce via educated citizens from multiple backgrounds, and (7) subjugating or subduing the legacies of institutional racism and discrimination.

Although diversity has the potential to influence and impact systemic and systematic change in terms of educational inequality, it is critical to recognize that diversity does not and cannot stand alone in this endeavor. Chang (2005) states: “[T]here is a tendency to treat diversity as an end in itself, rather than as an educational process that, when properly implemented, has the potential to enhance many important educational outcomes” (p. 10). Ultimately, diversity must be viewed as an *action*, not simply a concept (Grillo, 2005; Chang, 2005); or, as a *means* to an end, not simply an end (Chubin, 2009; Park, 2009).

### Diversity in Higher Education

#### *Brown* and Before

The response of American colleges and universities to matters of diversity dates back to the early-to-mid 1900s as African Americans attempted to enroll in white institutions of higher education. The pursuit of equality in higher education, particularly for African Americans, took shape in the 1930s via desegregation efforts. The 1933 case *Hocutt v. Wilson*, in which an African American student is denied admission to a college on the basis of race, was the first of its kind: an organized attack by the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP), which sought an end to state-enforced segregation in school settings (Teddle &

Freeman, 2002). Several race-based higher education cases would follow *Hocutt* for the next fifteen years, highlighting the difficulty of the task. Those cases include:

1. *Pearson v. Murray* (1936)
2. *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938)
3. *Sipuel v. Board of Regents University of Oklahoma* (1948)
4. *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950)
5. *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* (1950)

Liu (1998) posits that the U.S. Supreme Court recognized the educational value of racial diversity almost 50 years prior to the landmark *Bakke* case of 1978 via *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950). In *Sweatt*, the Court ruled that the University of Texas Law School had to admit Blacks because of significant disparities between that school and the law school designated for Blacks. Similarly, in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* (1950), the high court nullified the University of Oklahoma's policy of restricting Black graduate students from using the cafeteria, library, and classrooms; and, the court favored "the intellectual commingling of students" and the opportunity for Black students to discuss and exchange ideas and views with others (Liu, 1998, p. 387, quoting Chief Justice Vinson).

Four years later, *Brown v. Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* (1954) forced the Supreme Court to consider if racial segregation in public schools was indeed unconstitutional. Because of the Fourteenth Amendment, which calls for equality, Chief Justice Earl Warren overruled *Plessy* and "declared the separate-but-equal doctrine unconstitutional" (Teddle & Freeman, 2002, p. 80), removing a significant barrier in the journey towards educational

equality. It took two years for the *Brown* verdict to reach post-secondary education via *Florida, ex rel. Hawkins v. Board of Control* (1956).

### The Higher Education Act

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy's Executive Order 10925 birthed the term "affirmative action" to ensure that government contractors considered all applicants without regard to "race, creed, color, or national origin" (Executive Order 10925, 1961). A few years later Lyndon B. Johnson's *Great Society* social reform agenda proved once again that American leadership was primed to move the country past discrimination and segregation; and, forward socially and economically through legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-329). With executive-legislative collaboration, the federal government sought to evolve from the Jim Crow era and the ails of a separate-but-equal society and schooling.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) – which aimed to make postsecondary education in America more affordable and attainable for the economically disadvantaged through the allocation of research grants to institutions and need-based aid to students – proposed economic opportunity and social equity; and, led to the creation of grants, loans and other programs that enabled students to obtain education beyond high school. With the backing of the federal government, American colleges and universities began to take initiatives towards greater racial diversification of their student populations in an effort to overcome past precedents and to expand access to higher learning. As a result of the HEA, the percentage of black postsecondary students increased from 6% in 1965 to 14% in 2000, and the percentage of Hispanic enrollment increased from less than 1% in 1975 to more than 9% in 2000 (Kuenzi, 2005). Moreover, from

1964-1974 black student enrollment increased from 6 percent to 8.4 percent, (U.S. Department of Education, 1976); or, from 300,000 students to 900,000 students (Teddle & Freeman, 2002).

The Higher Education Act of 1965 consisted of seven titles, as highlighted in Table 2.1 below (Cervantes, Creusere, McMillion, McQueen, Short, Steiner, & Webster, 2005):

<b>Table 2.1: The Higher Education Act of 1965</b>	
<b>HEA Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Title I: Community Service and Continuing Education Programs</b>	Provides state grant funding for the strengthening of community service, extension, and continuing education programs.
<b>Title II: College Library Assistance and Library Training and Research</b>	Allocates funds to increase library collections (books and materials) and training grants to increase the supply of qualified librarians.
<b>Title III: Strengthening Developing Institutions</b>	Focuses on strengthening “developing institutions” (mainly African American schools) that have not yet met minimum standards for accreditation
<b>Title IV: Student Assistance</b>	Assists students by supplying federal aid to support undergraduate scholarships (or grants), loans with reduced interest rates; and, relocates the federal work-study program to the Department of Education
<b>Title V: Teacher Programs</b>	Focuses on improving the quality of teaching through the Teacher Corps and fellowships for graduate study
<b>Title VI: Financial Assistance for the Improvement of Undergraduate Instruction</b>	Provides grants to institutions for the improvement of undergraduate instruction by means of technology enhancements
<b>Title VII: Higher Education Facilities</b>	Amends 1963 Higher Education Facilities Act; provides funding for construction of educational facilities

*Source: [http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/hea\\_history.pdf](http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/hea_history.pdf)*

Of the many components of the Higher Education Act of 1965, both Title III and Title IV were considered by President Johnson and others during the 1960s to be most vital towards the elimination of poverty and discrimination in America (Keppel, 1987) because these two titles allowed for the expansion of *access* to postsecondary learning.

The manner in which America's colleges and universities responded to the legislation of the 1960s corresponds with the government-led efforts to expanded opportunity for all of its citizens. U.S. higher education enacted policies in line with those that President Kennedy and President Johnson envisioned and spearheaded for American workers to protect the civil rights and right to opportunity for those minority citizens (Heller, 2002). In other words, American colleges and universities eventually embraced *affirmative action* policies as the means by which they would influence change. Despite dissenting opinions by leaders both inside and outside of the education sphere, affirmative action in higher education became commonplace as a result of 1960s legislation (Grodsky & Kalogrides, 2008).

### *Bakke and Hopwood*

Since the 1960s much has been challenged by way of higher education institutions' diversity efforts. Chang (2005) asserts: "No court decision has had more widespread influence on higher education admissions policies than the U.S. Supreme Court's 1978 ruling on *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, widely regarded as the cornerstone of the affirmative action debate" (p. 8). The landmark 1978 Supreme Court case – in which twice-denied University applicant Allan Bakke sued the school on the grounds of reverse discrimination – saw the Court address the issue of *diversity* towards a compelling state interest for the first time. This case shifts the conversation and emphasis from race and racial discrimination (e.g. pre-1970s) to more diverse student populations and the benefits of a more diverse learning environment. There

was not a clear-cut majority in this matter; and, three opinions arose from *Bakke*: (1) race could be used as a factor to remedy underrepresentation, (2) quota programs that exclude on the basis of race are a violation of Title VII (of the Civil Rights statute), and (3) race could be used as a factor in admissions but not as the sole basis for excluding an applicant. Ultimately, the Court found that although the school had a compelling interest in a diversified student population (and thus could consider race as a “plus” factor in its admissions policies) it could not reserve seats for students of a particular race at the exclusion of students from another race (who would be excluded for no other reason than race). In other words, the Supreme Court found admissions quotas based on race unconstitutional (Anderson, 2005). This lawsuit gave rise to terms such as reverse discrimination, color-blind policies, etc. However, the emphasis on how White students could benefit from integration in education was duly noted in Justice Powell’s opinion in this case (Moses & Chang, 2006).

Like *Bakke*, *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996) resulted in the court striking down affirmative action plans that favored African American and Mexican American students by holding that “diversity” was not a legally sufficient justification for affirmative action practices in college student admissions (Simpson, 1998). Both *Bakke* and *Hopwood* are unambiguous examples of the plethora of challenges to U.S. college and university diversity initiatives.

### *Michigan*

As critical to the landscape as *Bakke* and *Hopwood* are the 2003 University of Michigan cases, *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*. In the undergraduate lawsuit *Gratz*, a federal judge ruled that race as a factor in admissions is constitutional and serves a compelling interest by providing the benefits associated with a diverse student body; however, “predetermined point allocations” for under-represented minorities (Table 2.2) was deemed unconstitutional (*Gratz v.*

Bollinger, 2000). In the law school case *Grutter*, the court originally found that “intellectual diversity bears no obvious or necessary relationship to racial diversity” and ruled against affirmative action policies (*Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2002). However later, the court upheld the University of Michigan Law School’s affirmative action admissions policies as a means of ensuring a “critical mass” of students from underrepresented groups (*Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2002). In response to the matter of critical mass, University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman stated: “Having a critical mass means having enough of any group to represent a spectrum of opinions. If you are the only minority student in the classroom, you bear the burden of representing your entire race” (Goral, 2003, p. 33). The reversal used *Bakke* as precedent for the “compelling state interest” of a diversified student body (*Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2002).

**Table 2.2: Undergraduate Admissions Requirements for the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science and the Arts (LSA)**

<p><b>Geography</b></p> <p>10 points - Michigan resident 6 points - Underrepresented Michigan county 2 points - Underrepresented state</p>	<p><b>Leadership and Service</b></p> <p>1 point – State 3 points – Regional 5 points - National</p>
<p><b>Alumni</b></p> <p>4 points - "Legacy" (parents, step-parents) 1 point - Other (grandparent, sibling, spouse)</p>	<p><b>Essay</b></p> <p>1 point - Outstanding (since 1999, essay 3 points)</p>
<p><b>Personal Achievement</b></p> <p>1 point – State 3 points – Regional 5 points - National</p>	<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <p>20 points - Socioeconomic disadvantage 20 points - Underrepresented racial-ethnic minority identification or education 5 points - Men in nursing 20 points - Scholarship athlete 20 points - Provost's discretion</p>

Source: Center for Individual Rights, <http://www.cir-usa.org/images/michjindex.gif>.

According to legal authorities, the University of Michigan's success in these two crucial cases stemmed from "the soundness of its underlying educational rationale and the evidence gathered to support that rationale" (Caperton, 2004, p. 15). The University of Michigan commissioned multiple leading researchers to empirically verify the salience of racial diversity (Baez, 2004). Experts stressed that Michigan prevailed because it had conducted "substantial research to support the claim of the educational benefits of diversity" and diversity's connection to the institution's specific mission (Caperton, 2004, p. 15). Thus, Michigan laid a foundation and set a precedent for other higher education institutions to follow in terms of establishing and securing campus diversity through admissions practices. However, the April 2014 Supreme Court decision which upheld the voter referendum in the state of Michigan that banned affirmative action for publicly-funded institutions (Proposal 2) will likely have significant implications for college admissions at schools like the University of Michigan.

#### The University of Texas: *Fisher*

In the 2012 court case *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, petitioner Abigail Fisher challenged the university's use of race in undergraduate admissions because the state of Texas's percent plan already ensured a diverse student body (*Fisher*). The Supreme Court did not strike down the University of Texas's plan, and held firm the core of *Grutter*; however, it did send the case back to the lower courts for review of narrow tailoring (*Fisher*). Thus, theoretically keeping the educational benefits of diversity still relevant and diversity in higher education still alive.

#### Current Landscape of Diversity in Higher Education

The current landscape for diversity in higher education is highly-charged and polarizing. The University of Michigan, the University of Texas, and other colleges and universities across the nation continue to encounter backlash via opponents, referendums, etc. aimed at derailing



their diversity efforts. Nonetheless, the majority of America's postsecondary institutions continue their pursuit of diverse campus environments (Goral, 2003). Chang (2005) states: "The expansive set of diversity-related interests and activities at colleges and universities suggests that diversity now touches nearly every aspect of campus life" (p. 1). In an effort to reach "critical masses" of diverse persons, colleges and universities continue to push for diversity that goes beyond the highly-publicized and litigated admissions process towards diversity agendas that include outreach, recruiting, financial aid/scholarships, retention, faculty, curriculum, advising, student services, housing, the bursar's office, public affairs, campus security, the institution's budget, alumni, and so forth (Caperton, 2004). Colleges and universities are engaged in diversity work through the implementation of chief diversity officers, formal diversity agendas/platforms, diversity councils and committees, upper management guidelines, revised admissions and financial aid practices, programming, curriculum updates and course offerings, training and education, campus climate assessment and awareness, diverse faculty recruitment and retention, PK-12/PK-14 outreach, and various other strategies.

### Diversity Models in Higher Education

Building upon the scholarly work of diversity paradigms in the corporate context are three models operationalized in higher education (Williams & Clowney, 2007): Affirmative Action and Equity Model; Multicultural and Inclusion Diversity Model; and Learning, Diversity, and Research Diversity. Each model demonstrates the variation in strategy, rationale, focus, and definition that influenced diversity initiatives for a particular era. Table 2.3 depicts the impetus and evolution of higher education's investment in diversity via these models:

<b>Table 2.3: Three Models of Organizational Diversity Capabilities in Higher Education</b>			
<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Affirmative Action and Equity Model</b>	<b>Multicultural and Inclusion Diversity Model</b>	<b>Academic Diversity</b>
<b>Launching Point</b>	1950s, 1960s, 1970s	1960s and 1970s	Late 1990s and 2000s
<b>Locus</b>	Civil rights movement	Black Power and other empowerment movements	Diversity movement
<b>Drivers of Change</b>	Civil rights movement; shifting laws, policy, social movements	Social justice; campus social protests, shifting legal policies	Diversity movement; changing demographics, workforce needs, persistent inequalities, legal and political dynamics, global economy
<b>Definition</b>	Focused institutional effort designed to enhance the compositional diversity of the university's faculty, staff, and students; and to eliminate discriminatory practices	Institutional diversity efforts designed to nurture and promote ethnically and racially diverse groups	Focused agenda centered on infusing diversity into the institution's curriculum and research priorities
<b>Target of Efforts</b>	Federally protected groups	Minorities, women, LGBT, etc.	All students, faculty, administrators, staff
<b>Primary Organizational Capability</b>	Affirmative action offices, programs, and statements; Race-conscious admissions; equal opportunity programs (e.g. TRIO)	Multicultural affairs units, cultural Centers, diverse student organizations	Centralized diversity requirements; gender studies; international studies; study abroad; service learning initiatives

*(Adapted from Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013; Stylus Publishing LLC)*

As eloquently as these three models demonstrate the progression of diversity in higher education from a singular focus to an emphasis on diversity for all, yet another framework is gaining momentum within U.S. higher education in recent years. Williams, Berger, and McClendon (2005) offer the Inclusive Excellence (IE) Model as a comprehensive framework for

today's higher education leaders undertaking the diversity change process. For this paradigm, "inclusive excellence" is defined as: (1) a focus on student development, both intellectually and socially, (2) the responsibility of the organization to provide an environment rich in resources that enhance the educational experience of students, (3) consideration for cultural differences and how those differences augment the enterprise, and (4) a welcoming atmosphere that fully engages its diversity (Williams, Berger, and McClendon, 2005). The tenets of the IE Model are adapted in Table 2.4 that follows.

<b>Table 2.4: Inclusive Excellence Organizational Change Framework</b>		
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Components</b>
<b>External Environment</b>	Environmental forces that drive and constrain implementation of inclusive excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifting Demographics</li> <li>• Societal Inequities</li> <li>• Workforce Needs</li> <li>• Political and Legal Dynamics</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational Behavior Dimensions</b>	Multiple vantage points that must be used to shift the informal and formal environmental dynamics toward inclusive excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systemic</li> <li>• Bureaucratic</li> <li>• Symbolic</li> <li>• Collegial</li> <li>• Political</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational Culture</b>	Dynamics that define higher education and that must be navigated to achieve inclusive excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Values</li> <li>• Traditions</li> <li>• Norms</li> </ul>
<b>IE Scorecard</b>	Comprehensive framework for understanding inclusive excellence that extends and adapts work on diversity scorecards and dimensions of the campus climate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and Equity</li> <li>• Diversity in the Formal and Informal Curriculum</li> <li>• Campus Climate</li> <li>• Student Learning</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive Excellence Change Strategy</b>	Fluid institutional strategy to make inclusive excellence a core capability of the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Leadership</li> <li>• Vision and Buy-In</li> <li>• Capacity Building</li> <li>• Leveraging Resources</li> </ul>

*(Adapted from Williams, Berger, and McClendon, 2005; Reprinted with permission.)*

The tenets that comprise this framework situate the IE Model with the emergence of the CDO in higher education today, as this senior level executive considers or incorporates in their role the external environment (e.g. shifting demographics, societal inequities); frames of organizational behavior (e.g. political, collegial); organizational culture (e.g. norms, values); comprehensive review of inclusive excellence via curriculum, climate, access, and student learning; and, a change process aimed at sustainability via buy-in, vision, and leveraging of resources.

### The Chief Diversity Officer in Higher Education

Several colleges and universities have embraced the idea of a central, executive-level leader for diversity; one who will (a) spearhead and address the growing discourse around diversity on college campuses; (b) serve as a ‘change agent’ for new initiatives and ideas and the planning and implementation for those efforts; (c) bring about a campus-wide awareness for diversity and its value to the many stakeholders and constituents; and (d) centralize efforts in the decentralized structure of higher education (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). The role of the CDO emerged as a result of changing demographics, a focus on the educational benefits of diversity, the global economy, the University of Michigan 2003 decisions, and persistent social inequities (Arnold & Kowalski-Braun, 2011; Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005; Williams & Clowney, 2007; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). However, according to Fliegler (2006) a number of institutions are adding or have added chief diversity officers to their ranks in recent years. With a CDO in place, schools can better align and coordinate their diversity efforts under one umbrella and identify that one individual who has “ready access to the president” (Stuart, 2012).

## Defining the CDO

Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) offer both a general definition and a grounded definition of the CDO role. The general definition identifies the CDO as the “highest-ranking diversity administrator regardless of seniority and positional mission” (p. 32), while the grounded definition conveys the CDO as

A boundary-spanning senior administrative role that prioritizes diversity-themed organizational change as a shared priority at the highest levels of leadership and governance. Reporting to the president, provost, or both, the CDO is an institution’s highest-ranking diversity administrator. The CDO is an integrative role that coordinates, leads, enhances, and in some instances supervises formal diversity capabilities of the institution in an effort to create an environment that is inclusive and excellent for all. Within this context, diversity is not merely a demographic goal, but a strategic priority that is fundamental to creating a dynamic educational and work environment that fulfills the teaching, learning, research, and service mission of postsecondary institutions (p. 32).

*(For the purposes of this study the grounded definition of the CDO will be used to ensure a pure sample of executive-level administrators are examined.)*

## Origins of the CDO

Despite dubious perspectives and labels such as “symbolic figurehead” or “diversity messiah” (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2008), the role of one charged with unifying campuses towards embracement of differences is not a new directive, as several American higher education institutions were forced to look at campus diversity during the peak of the civil rights movement and desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s. The origins of the chief diversity officer role can be tied to these decades and various affirmative action mandates; a point in history in which predominantly white colleges and universities in specific began to address (racial) diversity matters such as increased enrollment of African Americans at these institutions (Banerji, 2005). However, given the heightened consciousness surrounding desegregation and discrimination during this era, diversity officials likely engaged in reactive measures (e.g. responding to campus

incidents or public concerns) as opposed to proactive measures (e.g. developing visionary and innovation schema) towards campus diversity.

Although governing campus diversity is not an entirely new concept, the appointment of a singular, focal executive-level leader who oversees the institution's overall diversity agenda *is* fairly new. Historically assuming the role of affirmative action officer, minority student affairs director, equal employment opportunity (EEO) representative, etc., today's diversity chiefs vary significantly in comparison to their predecessors in that the present-day officers are hierarchically situated at the executive level of higher education institutions, often with direct access to the university president, chancellor, or provost; and in command of their own budgets and administrative support staffs (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007).

Like the affirmative action officer et al., another role that was influential to the emergence of today's higher education chief diversity officer is the corporate chief diversity officer, a role which saw significant growth and popularity in the 1990s (Gose, 2006) during the early manifestation of the global economy. In the corporate sector, the chief diversity officer is often charged with realizing cost efficiencies and talent management so that businesses might reap the benefits of difference and distinction (Robinson & Dechant, 1997). Perhaps slightly different in its directives and objectives yet similar in regards to role implementation, higher education institutions soon followed.

### What Makes a Chief Diversity Officer?

Simply avowed, a chief diversity officer represents a focal leadership figure in the realm of institutional diversity. Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) found that seven key competencies will be illustrated in the most successful chief diversity officers, as expressed in Table 2.5.

<b>Table 2.5: Key Competencies for Chief Diversity Officers</b>	
Technical Mastery of Diversity Issues	Command of all aspects of diversity in higher education
Political Acumen	Ability to navigate the political landscape of an institution
Ability to Cultivate a Common Vision	Ability to connect with institutional constituents and build vision
In-Depth Perspective on Organizational Change	Command of organizational change and change management
Sophisticated Relational Abilities	Exude emotional intelligence, charisma, adaptability, and superior communication abilities
Understanding of the Culture of Higher Education	Experience and knowledge with the culture of the academy
An Orientation Towards Results	Results-oriented and able to link diversity to institutional mission

*(Adapted from Williams and Wade-Golden, 2013; Stylus Publishing LLC)*

Notwithstanding insight regarding the characteristics and attributes of the chief diversity officer, Williams and Wade-Golden (2007) reiterate that no amount of preparedness and experience can guarantee that a chief diversity officer will delivery institutional diversity reform. However, proper alignment of institution and individual along with apposite qualifications can contribute to a chief diversity officer's success.

In addition to identifying the key competencies for the CDO role, Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) propose three campus-based archetypes for diversity chiefs (Table 2.6): Collaborative Officer Model, Unit-Based Model, and Portfolio Divisional Model. These archetypes of structure help frame and define the CDO's vertical capabilities, key characteristics, strengths and weaknesses; and, lessen the likelihood for confusion on campuses with a chief diversity officer (Williams and Wade-Golden, 2013).

**Table 2.6: Archetypes of CDO Vertical Structure**

	<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Collaborative Officer Model</b>	<p>Small support staff or limited human resources;</p> <p>Strong leadership, negotiation, and high-ranking title are critical</p>	<p>A dedicated diversity adviser</p> <p>Low cost</p> <p>Maintains current campus organizational structure</p> <p>Flexible to change or redefine the role</p> <p>Symbolic expression of commitment</p>	<p>More symbolic than material</p> <p>Thought leader but limited ability to implement</p> <p>Does not create economies of scale</p> <p>Limited ability to collaborate with others</p>
<b>Unit-Based Model</b>	<p>Same leadership as Collaborative Officer Model, but with the presence of a central staff of administrative support</p>	<p>A dedicated diversity adviser</p> <p>Moderately integrated into campus organizational structure</p> <p>Capable of creating new diversity deliverables and collaborating with others</p> <p>Symbolic expression of commitment</p> <p>More structured and professional; diversity engaged as a strategic priority</p>	<p>Possible conflict with diversity teams or general campus units not in the CDO's group</p> <p>More costly model due to a central unit and staff</p>
<b>Portfolio Divisional Model</b>	<p>Encompasses both the Collaborative Officer Model and Unit-Based Model; however distinct in its possession of multiple reporting units and a dedicated divisional infrastructure</p>	<p>A dedicated diversity adviser</p> <p>Capable of creating new diversity deliverables and collaborating with others</p> <p>Current diversity infrastructure leveraging capabilities and economies of scale</p> <p>Powerful symbolic message</p> <p>Resembles infrastructure of comparable roles</p> <p>Most structured and professional; diversity engaged as a strategic priority</p>	<p>May generate organizational conflict on campus due to integration into traditional campus organizational structure</p> <p>Organization dissonance with teams outside the CDO's span</p> <p>Most costly model, requiring more resources</p> <p>Alignment of units could be viewed as "ghettoizing diversity"</p>

*(Adapted from Williams and Wade-Golden, 2013; Stylus Publishing LLC)*



In a recent study, Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) found that 40 percent of those in the CDO role embodied the Collaborative Officer Model, while 31 percent identified with the Unit-Based Model, and 28 percent encompassed the Portfolio Divisional Model.

### Challenges of the CDO

Despite the emergence of the CDO in higher education, several potential challenges and roadblocks exist for those in the role. For example, without institutional support and buy-in from the university president and other senior leaders – as well as faculty, staff, students, and alumni (June, 2011) – it will be difficult for the CDO to impact change. Another potential challenge is the necessary cross-functional collaboration, as the CDO role is “inherently integrative” (Williams and Wade-Golden, 2008). This cooperation must take place in order for diversity to truly become a significant part of the school’s landscape; however, if collaboration and network-building are absent and cooperation by other departments to support the planning and execution of diversity initiatives is void, then the CDO will likely be deemed ineffective in this strategic leadership role. Another roadblock is the lack of resources afforded the position, as those in the post are often asked to make substantial gains and move agendas forward with limited resources Williams and Wade-Golden (2013). Chubin (2009) summarizes the CDO’s hardships by stating: “A reality today is that institutions prefer the symbolism of a position (e.g. chief diversity officer) that relieves the responsibility for diversifying the campus from the leaders - president, provost, deans, faculty - and heaps it on a single position without the resources or the moral authority to make change. This is visible, not enacted, diversity.” (p. 28).

Although the chief diversity officer is a relative newcomer to the executive ranks in higher education, the position appears to be experiencing early amalgamation as those appointed to the role often carry concurrent titles (e.g. associate provost, vice president, vice chancellor)

and responsibilities (e.g. student affairs, faculty development) (Williams and Wade-Golden, 2007). In an effort to unify various institution divisions under the leadership of one executive, this hybrid approach seems justified; however, higher education decision makers must be cognizant of potential drawbacks to the approach, such as the possibility of burnout or lower prioritization for the diversity agenda compared to the other responsibilities.

### Recent CDO Studies

Although the CDO role in higher education is relatively new, literature and scholarship for the nomenclature is emerging. Nixon (2013) examined women of color CDOs with consideration for social identity, gender, race and agency; Gichuru (2010) explored the experiences of CDOs and their role in improving admissions of underrepresented students in the post-affirmative action era; Pittard (2010) examined CDOs' profiles, career reflections, and "organizational realities" (roles, reporting structure, staffing, funding, partners, initiatives, etc.); and, Leon (2010) employed the three campus-based archetypes (collaborative, unit-based, portfolio-divisional) developed by Williams and Wade-Golden to gain insight as to how each configuration shaped institutional strategy, policy and goals. This qualitative study builds upon the existing literature through an examination of the CDO role with particular consideration for the contexts of organizational structure and organizational culture; and through theoretical frames of Critical Race Theory and Applied Critical Leadership.

### Organizational Culture in Higher Education

*Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun.  
I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an  
experimental science in search of law, but an interpretive one in search of meaning"*  
(Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

Organizational culture surfaced as a central topic within the corporate sector in the 1980s (Tierney, 2008). Much like diversity a decade later, the private sector interest in organizational culture stemmed from the desire for organizational success (Deal & Kennedy, 2000), and insight into the manner in which this construct influenced managerial behavior (Pascale & Athos, 1981) and the organizational experiences of employees. The years that followed saw a noteworthy upsurge in research and action surrounding the concept of organizational culture.

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines culture as: (a) the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time; (b) a particular society that has its own beliefs, ways of life, art, etc.; or (c) a way of thinking, behaving, or working that exists in a place or organization, such as a business. Although organizational culture research emerged nearly a generation ago, an appropriate, universal definition for the construct remains elusive for higher education (Tierney, 2008). In substantial fashion, however, several scholars recognize organizational culture as some combination of the shared values, beliefs, norms, dogma, assumptions, habits, practices, symbols and metaphors held by members of an organization (Craig, 2004; Dill, 1982; Keup, Walker, Astin, & Lindholm, 2001; Schein, 1992). Pettigrew (1979) expresses organizational culture as the “amalgam of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth (p. 572). Pascale and Athos (1981) describe organizational culture as a philosophy for guiding organizational policy; and, Gayle, Bhoendradatt, and White (2003) recognize organizational culture as the “personality” of an organization (p. 41). Schein (2010) delineates organizational culture as:

“a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (p. 18).

Regardless of the definition employed, organizational culture possesses significant sway in today's organizations.

Further, organizational culture includes the social and historical foundations of institutions; and, provides insight into how institutions function, make decisions, reward individuals, and understand change (Smith, 2012). Culture is tied to context, thus rendering each organization's culture unique (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Literature examining organizational culture acknowledges the existence of elements beyond formal structure (e.g. hierarchy, specialization, rationality) (Tosi, 1975; Masland, 1985) in organizations; and, the ability of organizational culture to prompt commitment, order, and cohesion through those individuals within it (Masland, 1985). Organizational culture is fairly secure, yet influenced to change by evolving ideas, patterns, interactions, and environments (internal and external) (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Martin (2002) offers three conceptual perspectives of organizational culture: integration, differentiation, and fragmentation. The integration framework seeks understanding of the principles (e.g. values, beliefs) that bind individuals together in an organization (Martin, 2002). The differentiation framework acknowledges variations in interpretation and perspective based on backgrounds, subcultures, position within an organization, etc. (Martin, 2002). And, the fragmentation framework centers on ambiguity and the evanescence of cohesion and consensus (Martin, 2002). In higher education, much of the research emphasizes the integration framework (Tierney, 2008) via scholars Kuh and Whitt (1988), Masland, (1985), Dill (1982), and Clark (1980). However, Bolman and Deal (2008) and Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) embrace the differentiation perspective via their consideration of politics and power in higher education. And, Cohen and March (1986)'s view of higher education as an "organized anarchy" situates within the fragmentation lens.

Schein (2010) offers three levels of analysis for organizational culture: artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Artifacts include those visible elements and observed behaviors such as climate; espoused beliefs and values incorporate ideologies, goals, values, and aspirations as influenced by the group leader; and basic underlying assumptions refers to the unconscious practices that are often non-debatable and quite difficult to change (Schein, 2010).

Significant shifts in the organizational culture of U.S. higher education occurred during the 1960s and the civil rights era, and again during the latter part of the twentieth century as a result of considerable demographic changes within the populace (“Diversity,” 2006). Although the normative perspective holds that diversity is fundamentally *good* (“Diversity,” 2006) – and therefore transformation of organizational culture necessary to adjust to an increasingly diverse society – challenges and resistance in adaptation and realignment should be expected in the transformation process (Keup et al., 2001). Nonetheless, understanding organizational culture is essential for impacting change in an organization (Tierney, 2008), and contrastably for sustaining an organization in ebbing times. Masland (1985) states: “Institutional culture relieves some of the pressures and strains that decline puts on the social fabric of an organization. It does this because culture is a force that provides stability and a sense of continuity to an ongoing social system such as a college or university” (p. 167).

Masland (1985) recognizes the value of examining organizational culture as a means to gain insight into colleges and universities (e.g. potentially providing an explanation as to how an organization reached its present condition), yet acknowledges the difficulty for a researcher seeking to examine organizational culture. Because culture is often implicit, discovering the visible, overt, and explicit manifestations (Schein, 1981) of organizational culture is often a more

pragmatic approach. Further, Clark (1980) acknowledges the challenges of increased size and autonomy for the organizational culture of higher education institutions, which shifts the focus from a cohesive culture to “many cultures of the conglomeration” (p. 25).

Geertz (1973) and Tierney (2008) emphasize the interpretive and subjective nature of organizational culture, and thus the manner in which the paradigm is influenced by the actors’ experiences, interpretations, and assumptions. Organizational culture provides contextual clues and offers insight into the frame of reference for the actor (Hall, 1976). Therefore, the lens in which one experiences an organization is the lens by which that organization’s culture will be define; and, that perspective has value for understanding the culture of an organization.

### Organizational Structure and Governance in Higher Education

Every organization is comprised of both formal structures and informal structures. According to Hendrickson, Lane, Harris and Dorman (2013), the formal structure constitutes the official hierarchy and the organizational charts, job descriptions, rules, regulations, and reporting lines that guide the organization’s work. While informal structures refer to culture, networks, social circles, etc. (Hendrickson et al., 2013). According to Thompson (2003), the structure of an organization refers to the “internal differentiation and patterning of relationships” that leads to segmentation, departmentalization, and connections between units (p. 51). The structure denotes how people and the work they perform are organized into relevant units; thus, the manner in which individuals in higher education are structured and grouped has significant implications for their formal power and authority (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

The institution of higher education constitutes an assemblage of units that operate vertically, somewhat ambiguously, and typically through organized anarchy (Cohen & March 1986; Weick 1976; Mintzberg 1979; Birnbaum, 1988). Systems theory is one of the most

relevant organizational theories for understanding higher education as it examines the various units and how that assemblage of units functions together (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Further, Weick's (1976) work on loosely-coupled systems (which originated from Glassman, 1973, and March and Olsen, 1975) recognizes higher education as an institution with units that may share activities, but are also impermanent and capable of dissipation. Additionally, these units can lack tidiness, efficiency, and coordination (Weick, 1976).

Despite organizational structure's reliance on interdependence by way of several homogeneous groupings accumulated into a hierarchy (Thompson, 2003), the decentralized and siloed culture within higher education segregates departments and divisions so that each unit is internally-focused and seeking to pull the organization in a different direction (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Mintzberg (1979) acknowledged this division of units and identified five core components of higher education organizations – the strategic apex (e.g. presidents), middle line (e.g. deans, directors, department chairs), technostructure (e.g. human relations office, institutional research office), support staff (e.g. facilities, dining), and operating core – with faculty representing the operating core due to their role as providers of the organization's core services (Hendrickson et al., 2013).

Notwithstanding the vertical and decentralized nature of colleges and universities, there are select forces that can lead to centralization, such as accreditation, financial management, student affairs, and select policies such as diversity (Keeling, Underhile, & Wall, 2007). However, for the chief diversity officer it is the challenges associated with vertical structure that often prove to be barriers rather than enablers of the leading they must do (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

## Governance Models

Postsecondary governance has traditionally been viewed and influenced by four major distinct yet complementary models: bureaucratic (or formal-rational), collegial (or professional-bureaucratic), political (Hearn & McLendon, 2012) and anarchical (Birnbaum, 1989). Weber (1947) described organizations in terms of their hierarchical control in his seminal book on bureaucratic theory; however, the 1960s and 1970s brought the rise of the bureaucratic model, which supports formal divisions of labor, regulations, predictability, roles, hierarchy, efficiency, standardization, technical competency, rationality, and clear structural dynamics and relationships (Birnbaum, 1988; Berger & Milem, 2000; Hearn & McLendon, 2012).

Millett (1962) proposed the thesis of colleges and universities as communities aiming to avoid absolute authority as emphasized by the bureaucratic model (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Thus, the collegial model arose in the 1970s in response to the supposed failings of the bureaucratic model, and in an effort to emphasize the symbolic nature of higher education (Hearn & McLendon, 2012). This model supports professional autonomy (Kuh, 2003) while highlighting consensus, broad participation, mutual respect, shared power, flattened hierarchies, collegiality, and egalitarianism (Birnbaum, 1988; Hearn & McLendon, 2012).

Higher education began embracing key concepts from the political arena in the 1960s and 1970s as well, which led to the political model (Hearn & McLendon, 2012). Baldrige (1971) proposed the political model to reflect an academic organization as a set of groups with competing interests engaged in fluid decision-making (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Conflict, scarce resources, coalitions, political bargaining, external influences, and compromise drive the political model (Birnbaum, 1988; Hearn & McLendon, 2012). The likelihood of actors counterbalancing each other and therefore canceling each other out in terms of influence in the greater network



expresses one of the ways in which the political model works in higher education (Hearn & McLendon, 2012).

In the mid-1970s, Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972) proposed a model centered on contingency and ambiguity. The organized anarchy model demonstrates fluid participation, problematic goals and preferences, and unclear technology (Birnbaum, 1988; Hearn & McLendon, 2012). Problems looking for situations, solutions looking for problems, and actors looking for status describes the anarchical model (Hearn & McLendon, 2012); while a flexibility-for-adaptability approach leads to an inexplicable ebb-and-flow of events and exchanges. Recognizing that no one model fully-encompasses the spectrum of a postsecondary organization, several studies acknowledge the value of a multidimensional, multimodal approach to systemic change (Birnbaum, 1992) in a complex system such as higher education.

### Leadership in Higher Education

The examination of leadership in higher education has groundings in theoretical and methodological orientations that consider climate and culture challenges for learning organizations (Diversity, Leadership, and Organizational Culture in Higher Education, 2006). Tierney (1992) recognizes leadership in higher education as an intricate, multifaceted phenomenon with various domains, dimensions and purviews. One current dimension of emphasis is the demographic shift and its implications for higher education access, organizational culture and climate (Carchidi & Peterson, 2000). Higher education leadership must incorporate sustainable diversity into the fabric of the organization in order to address changing societal dynamics and needs.

Further, leadership in higher education is action that shapes and progresses the school, seemingly for the better (Trow, 1985). Key to understanding leadership in higher education is

awareness of the various groups that constitute the academy (e.g. faculty, staff, administrators, students); and, how subjective perspectives influence constituent views *and* the experiences of those in positions of leadership (Minor & Tierney, 2005; Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Thompson (2003) acknowledges the “variable human” component of organizations:

The human actor is a multidimensional phenomenon subject to the influences of a great many variables.... Our ability to understand or ‘account for’ human action is governed largely by our choice of accounting scheme or conceptual framework....Our basic formulation is that human action emerges from the interaction of (1) the individual, who brings *aspirations, standards, and knowledge or beliefs about causation*; and (2) the situation, which presents *opportunities and constraints* (p. 101-102).

### Theoretical Framework

Higher education is a complex and ambiguous institution. Within that setting, the chief diversity officer is a complex and ambiguous role. These senior-level executives are tasked with the implementation of strategic resolutions such as the integration and institutionalization of diversity into the fabric of the university, notwithstanding their organization’s structure or culture. As leaders situated in an environment saturated by tradition, norms, and standard protocols, this study seeks to examine these contexts from the perspectives of *Critical Race Theory* and *Applied Critical Leadership*.

#### Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) was initiated in U.S. legal studies in the 1980s by scholar Derrick Bell, who critiqued legal systems and practices for their promotion of racism. In the mid-1990s, CRT emerged in the education field with seminal works by Ladson-Billings, whose contributions of CRT to the field of education addressed pedagogy, educational research, and issues of race (Ladson-Billings 2005, 2001, 2000, 1997). Specifically, Ladson-Billings (2009)

identified critical race theory (CRT) as “a set of legal scholarship theories about racial inequality and how race functions in the society” (p. 87).

CRT challenges the traditional and social processes of education institutions (Powers, 2007), and the conventional notions of educational leadership (Alemán, 2009). Although CRT originated in legal studies, scholars also recognize the value of CRT for education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT is widely recognized for its use as a method in which to analyze the experiences of individuals of color in education, within their specific setting (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). The evidence of CRT in educational leadership settings is minimal, thus revealing a void in the literature of the perspectives, experiences, and stories of these individuals as it relates to their organizational context (Alemán, 2009; Lopez, 2003).

While no single consensus definition exists for critical race theory (CRT), most scholars agree on the centrality of seven tenets (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009):

1. Racism is a normal part of American life, often lacking the ability to be distinctively recognized, and thus is difficult to eliminate or address. However, a CRT lens unveils the various forms in which racism continually manifests itself, despite espoused institutional values regarding equity and social justice (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
2. CRT rejects the notion of a “colorblind” society. Colorblindness leads to misconceptions concerning racial fairness in institutions (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
3. CRT gives voice to the unique perspectives and lived experiences of people of color. According to Solórzano (1998), “CRT recognizes that the experiential knowledge of women and men of color is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination in the field of education.” In acknowledging the validity of these lived experiences among persons of color, CRT

scholars can place racism in a realistic context and actively work to eliminate it. CRT uses counternarratives as a way to highlight discrimination, offer racially different interpretations of policy, and challenge the universality of assumptions made about people of color (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).

4. CRT recognizes interest-convergence, the process whereby the white power structure “will tolerate or encourage racial advances for Blacks only when they also promote white self-interests” (Delgado, 1995; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
5. Revisionist history, which suggests that American history be closely scrutinized and reinterpreted as opposed to being accepted at face value and truth. It requires a more nuanced understanding as well as taking a critical perspective toward examining historical events (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
6. CRT also relies on *Racial Realists*, or individuals who not only recognize race as a social construct, but also realize that “racism is a means by which society allocates privilege and status” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Racial Realists recognize the hierarchy that determines who receives benefits and the context in which those benefits are accrued. In addition, they point to slavery as the inception of prejudice and discrimination. In essence, there is a coming to terms with the reality that racism is a permanent fixture in society, including on college and university campuses (Harper & Patton, 2007). Bell (2005) contends that racial realism is a mindset that requires individuals to understand the permanency of racism while still working to create a set of strategic approaches for improving the plight of historically excluded groups (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
7. CRT continuously critiques claims of meritocracy that sustain white supremacy (Bergerson, 2003). Valdes, McCristal Culp, and Harris (2002), explain three central

beliefs of mainstream culture that must consistently be challenged: (a) blindness to race will eliminate racism; (b) racism is a matter of individuals, not systems; and (c) one can fight racism without paying attention to sexism, homophobia, economic exploitation, and other forms of oppression or injustice. When such beliefs are maintained in society through legal, educational, and sociopolitical channels, students of color, low-income persons, and other disenfranchised populations are silenced (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).

### CRT for Higher Education

Despite the plethora of anti-discrimination and affirmative action legislation that exists in the United States, marginalized and minority constituents in higher education continue to experience challenges in their efforts towards equity and equality. And, some issues appear to be further engrained and surreptitious (e.g. micro-aggressions) than blatant racism and discrimination. In U.S. higher education, university practices, structures and discourses continuously and systemically contribute to race and racism (Parker & Villalpando, 2007; Taylor, 1999). Organizational doctrine steers procedures that promote and condone discriminatory practices; and, often times little is done – or can be done – to supersede those policies and politics.

In lieu of revealing and denouncing imbued discriminatory practices, “higher education institutions continue to undertake a range of initiatives to combat inequities and build diverse, inclusive campuses” (Parker & Villalpando, 2007). One such initiative is the appointment of a chief diversity officer. These executives initiate and incorporate diversity agendas and action plans because doing so represents “a primary means by which U.S. postsecondary institutions articulate their professed commitment to an inclusive and equitable climate for all members of

the university and advance strategies to meet the challenges of an increasingly diverse society ” (2007).

#### CRT for This Study

Scholars have long posited that racism is deeply rooted in American society; and, therefore suggest that any discussion of diversity in higher education consider the context of racism’s promulgation in this nation (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009). Given this recommendation, critical race theory represents a sound theoretical framework in which to explore the CDO role in higher education. This race-centered epistemology offers a lens through which to explore and challenge the “manner and methods in which race, white supremacy, supposed meritocracy and racist ideologies have shaped and undermined policy efforts” (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009, p. 390) in postsecondary settings. Thus, in considering the experiences of chief diversity officers and how their role is situated within organizational contexts, a CRT-framed lens may provide the perspective needed to examine this role in the given environment.

Additionally, Powers (2007) acknowledges CRT’s ability to challenge traditional education encounters and the social dynamics that occur in this space. Based on this, CRT can be utilized in this study to: 1) explore traditional paradigms in select post-secondary institutions – particularly those that led to the decision to appoint a chief diversity officer at the institution, and 2) communicate the counterstories, experiences and challenges encountered by the chief diversity officer in their particular organizational context and along their quest for institutional growth and transformation.

Furthermore, according to Jayakumar et al. (2009), CRT “provides an interpretive framework for theorizing about race and its intersectionality with other forms of subordination and domination (e.g. gender, social class, nativity)”, “challenges the dominant ideologies that

call for objectivity and neutrality in educational research”, and “enables scholars to ask the important question of what racism has to do with inequities in education in unique ways” (p. 545). In this manner, CRT acknowledges the social construction of race and inferiority, as well as dominant ideology’s ease with oblivion and stagnation with regards to race relations in higher education. However, as an interpretive viewpoint CRT can seek to overcome the marginalization of racial minorities (Trevino, Harris, & Wallace, 2008) at various levels (e.g. student to administrator) and despite various organizational contexts (e.g. structure or culture) because it represents a “valuable lens with which to analyze and interpret administrative policies and procedures in educational institutions” (Parker & Villalpando, 2007, p. 519). Meaning, chief diversity officers can employ several principles of CRT to examine current university standards and strategies; and, incorporate learnings towards their conceptual, strategic, and substantive goals at these institutions.

CRT represents a valuable lens in which to approach this study. In adopting this theoretical slant, this study seeks understanding of the CDO role while giving credence to organizational culture and organizational structure.

### Applied Critical Leadership

Applied Critical Leadership (ACL) is the practice of addressing issues in education using a critical race perspective (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). This framework represents a “strengths-based model of leadership practice where educational leaders consider the social context of their educational communities and empower individual members of these communities based on the educational leaders’ identities (i.e. subjectivity, biases, assumptions, race, class, gender, and traditions) as perceived through a CRT lens” (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012, p. 5). Leading from an ACL stance requires a depth of knowledge and understanding in

subordination, oppression, and the traditionally-marginalized groups affected. For this reason, “leading for social justice, educational equity, and change is time-consuming and oftentimes difficult work” (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012, p. 149). ACL through CRT manifests through leaders who (1) experience marginalization as a member of a historically-oppressed group, or (2) assume the CRT lens in order to more effectively lead towards equity and social justice (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). When these two groups unite in their efforts, the result is a “discourse of liberation” and authentic change (Parker & Lynn, 2002, p. 7).

Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) posit that applied critical leaders lead differently than their mainstream peers:

They do not conform to mainstream leadership practice; this is one of the most salient features of their practice. We find their practices to be parallel to those prevalent in mainstream practices, but applied critical leadership is qualitatively different (p.141).

What distinguishes an applied critical leader from their mainstream counterpart is the variance when defining and identifying gaps, needs and the greater good (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012).

Further, Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) recognized the following characteristics of ACL in action: (a) willingness to initiate and engage in critical conversations, (b) the choice to assume a CRT lens (for those critical leaders not from traditionally-marginalized groups), (c) leadership by example, (d) servant leadership or serving for the greater good, (e) building trust with mainstream partners or constituents, particularly those not aligned with diversity efforts, (f) honor and inclusion for all members of traditionally-marginalized groups, (g) awareness of “stereotype threat” or the fulfillment of negative stereotypes, (h) consensus building as the desired strategy for decision making, and (i) making authentic, research-based, and empirical contributions to the discourse.



Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) acknowledge the interconnectedness of CRT and ACL and align ACL with the tenets of CRT (Solórzano, 1998) and influential CRT contributions of Ladson-Billings (2009). This comparison is summarized in Table 2.7 below.

<b>Table 2.7: CRT-ACL Comparison</b>	
<b>Critical Race Theory</b> (Solórzano, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2009)	<b>Applied Critical Leadership</b> (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012)
Emphasis on legitimacy and essentiality of experiential knowledge of individuals of color towards understanding racial subservience; inclusion of storytelling as a medium for examining race and racism.	Storytelling that includes culturally relevant details and serves as a counter-story. The production of knowledge that validates one's own experiences and the experiences of others with similarities. Educating the mainstream as to the counter-story.
Challenging dominant ideologies with liberalism critiqued.	Practicing leadership non-traditionally, or "outside the box."
Centralizing race, racism, and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination and oppression; resulting in a devotion to social justice.	Identifying with all forms of the struggle and possessing a complete awareness of the multiple forms of subordination; and working both in the background and forefront towards equity and social justice at one's institution.
Acknowledgement of the importance of interdisciplinary approaches.	Supporting interdisciplinary efforts and uniting constituents across the institution to highlight needs and improve educational experiences for students of color.

*(Adapted from Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012; Reprinted with permission.)*

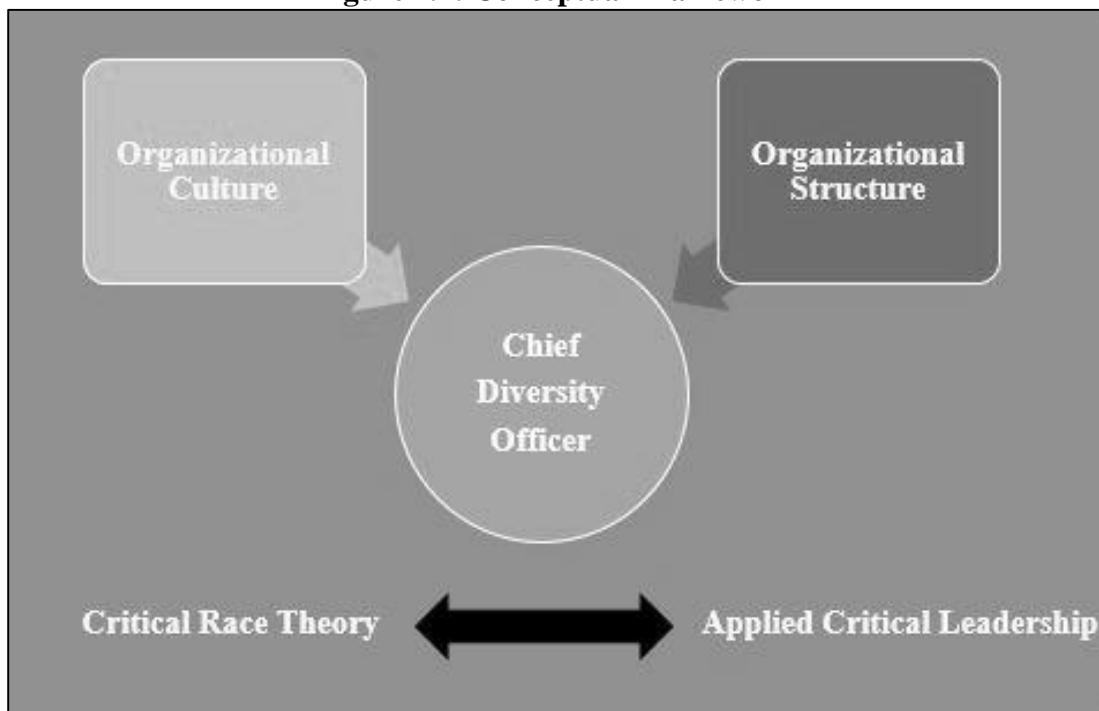
For this study, ACL encourages the chief diversity officer to: (a) critically interpret their role and how that role functions as it is situated within and influenced by the contexts of organizational culture and organization structure, (b) unite campus constituents to address issues that challenge equity and social justice; and towards improving the educational experiences of

students of color, (c), identify and have awareness for the struggle across the many forms of subordination and oppression (e.g. racism, sexism, classism), (d) engage in work and change management that occurs both in the background and the forefront, (e) embrace non-traditional leadership practices or practices that are distinct from their peers, and (f) offer a counter-story that produces knowledge and educates the mainstream.

### Conceptual Framework: Tying It All Together

The conceptual framework that guides this study (depicted in Figure 2.1) serves to situate the phenomenon and demonstrate the relationship of the key elements of the study. The researcher will use the investigative process to understand the CDO role as it is contextualized and influenced by organizational culture and organizational structure at select higher education institutions. The complementary theoretical frameworks for this study are CRT and ACL. These frameworks help the researcher structure the issue and inquiry process.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

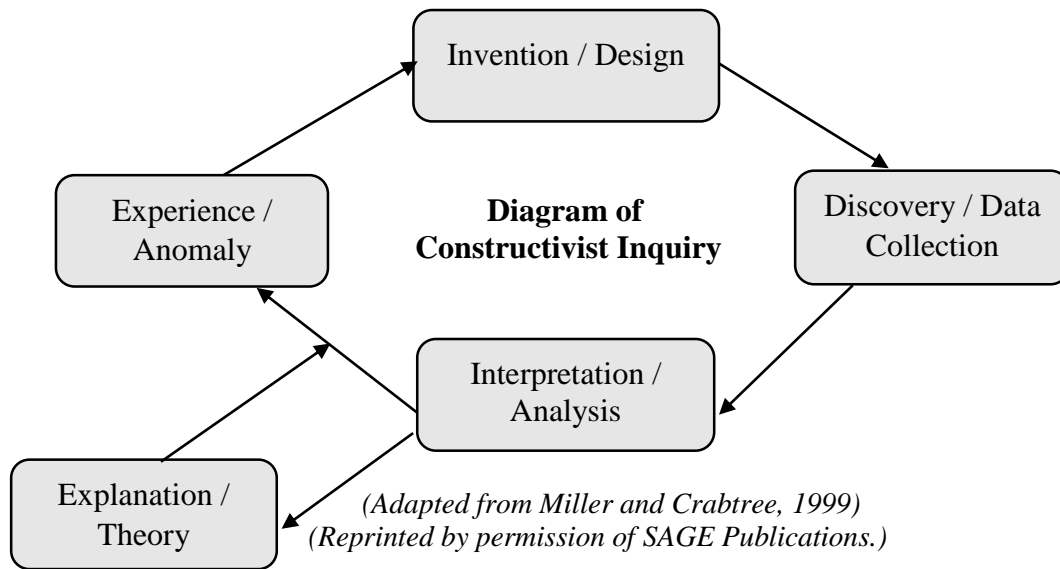
This chapter outlines the approach employed to carry out this study. The first section provides the foundational orientation and encompasses the philosophical underpinnings, methodological approach, and rationale for the chosen methodology. The next section examines the research design employed for this study and offers an overview of the data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the researcher's role and the limitations of the study's methodological approach.

#### **Philosophical Underpinnings**

An underlying impetus for this study lies in the researcher's constructivist worldview of truth as relative and dependent upon how one perceives it (relative ontology); and the constructivist design model (Zhu, 2007) as demonstrated in Figure 3.1. As a constructivist, the researcher embraces the interpretive tradition of social interaction giving meaning to human descriptions and actions (Bassey, 1999), the authenticity of lived experience, the relevance of context, the interconnectedness of participant and researcher towards the creation of understanding and meaning (or subjectivist epistemology), and the constructivist paradigm that emphasizes "the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning" (Miller & Crabtree, 1999, p. 10). In appreciation of this stance, this study allowed for the interpretation, voice and perspective of the chief diversity officers (CDOs) as it pertained to their role and work in the field of diversity in higher education; and for focus on the participant lens and experience for addressing the research question. Additionally, the philosophical underpinnings allowed for the researcher as a "potential variable in the enquiry" (Bassey, 1999, p. 43); and, encouraged an

interdependence or reciprocity between researcher and participant, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

**Figure 3.1: Diagram of Constructivist Inquiry**



### Qualitative Inquiry

Embracing the inductive nature of qualitative inquiry in which meaning germinated from the data collected (Creswell, 2013), this study aimed not to generalize its findings (although the findings may contribute to the constructs and phenomena presented) but rather to examine the chief diversity officer role within the contexts of organizational culture and organizational structure, and to recognize themes from the collection of experiences being explored. Crabtree and Miller (1999) stated: “Qualitative description, using qualitative methods, explores the meaning, variations, and perceptual experiences of phenomena and will often seek to capture their holistic or interconnected nature” (p. 6).

Krathwohl (1998) recognized that qualitative inquiry was advantageous in its attempt to understand a complex phenomenon with minimal existing knowledge, such as the chief diversity officer role in higher education. As such, qualitative inquiry was the data collection approach for

this study because of its ability to explore phenomena of which little is yet known (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), such as the roles and experiences of chief diversity officers at select higher education institutions.

Because of qualitative inquiry's emergent nature, the researcher anticipated the study being able to reveal threads pertinent to participant experiences, and "patterns of unanticipated as well as expected relationships" (Stake, 1995, p. 41). The emergent spirit of qualitative inquiry might also contribute to the development of: (a) the chief diversity officer role in higher education, (b) campus diversity, equity and inclusion endeavors at higher education institutions, (c) traditionally-marginalized individuals as institutional thought leaders and change agents, and (d) contextual leadership.

#### Rationale for Use of Qualitative Inquiry

Creswell (2013) acknowledged qualitative research as appropriate for examining and understanding the meaning ascribed to a social phenomenon by individuals or groups. In that sense, the rationale for the use of qualitative inquiry in this exploratory study was to (a) gain insight into the chief diversity officer role in higher education, and (b) explore the role as a result of the prescribed organizational contexts of organizational structure and organizational culture.

Qualitative inquiry was also employed for this study because it facilitated examination of a phenomenon within a real-world context and through the use of multiple sources of information. This multiplicity ensured that the phenomenon was treated by various perspectives. Further, the use of qualitative methods, or field research, allowed for the engagement of an interpretive lens in the natural setting of activity "with the goal of generating holistic and realistic descriptions and/or explanations" (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 5). By employing qualitative methods, the researcher sought *interpretive explanation-generation*, or the use of field

research and archival documents to arrive at patterns and relationships derived from the experiences of the phenomena (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

And finally, qualitative inquiry was appropriate and employed for this study because of its value-add for research that (a) examined real versus listed/declared organizational goals, (b) unveiled nebulous or informal processes in organizations, (c) examined marginalized populations, (d) explored new phenomena, (e) prompted biased, personal interpretations and tacit knowledge, and (f) elicited various constructed realities that were then studied universally (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Marshall, 1987; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall, 1985).

#### The Methodological Approach: Case Study

Yin (2009) offered a technical definition for case study as an “empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g. a “case”) set within its real-world context – especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18). Yin (1994) also stated that case study relied on manifold streams of evidence for the purpose of triangulation; and this methodological approach benefited from theoretical propositions for the purposes of guiding data collection and analysis. The case study assumed the salience of context to the study (Yin, 2011) and the pertinence of contextual conditions to the study’s phenomenon (Yin & Davis, 2007).

This study supported and reinforced the technical definition and supplemental descriptions provided by Yin through its examination of the CDO role (the ‘phenomenon’) in a real-world context – or devoid of surveys and experimental settings; and, through its examination of a space in which the phenomenon (the CDO role) became so immersed in the context (the higher education institution, and the organizational structure and organizational culture within the higher education institution) so that the two – phenomenon and context – often appeared

borderless or ambiguous. The salience of context and contextual conditions was germane and foundational to the study; and these ideas are further discussed in subsequent chapters.

Additionally, the study employed multiple sources of data via chief diversity officer interviews, additional informant interviews, and archival documents to achieve triangulation; and, employed the theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory and Applied Critical Leadership to help guide the data collection and analysis stages.

In addition to Yin, others have defined the case study and offered relevant perspective to this study. Stake (1995) described the case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). Merriam (1988) stated: “A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 21). Miles and Huberman (1994) viewed the case study as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 25), which in this case study was represented by the CDO role as the phenomenon and the bounded contexts of organizational structure, organizational culture, higher education institutions, institutional history as it pertains to diversity matters, participants with multiple years of experience in the work, etc. Wilson (1979) defined case study as a process in which one tries to “describe and analyze some entity in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms” (p. 448). According to Bromley (1986), the case study method sought to arrive at an in-depth understanding of one or a small number of cases in their natural setting; and, Thomas (2011) suggested that the case study offered a “rich picture with many kinds of insights coming from different angles, from different kinds of information” (p. 21). Ultimately, the “case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case [or phenomenon, or CDO role] and close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contexts” (Stake, 2005, p. 445).

## The Educational Case Study

Bassey (1999) offered a conceptual reconstruction of the educational case study, which also served as a guide to this study. According to Bassey, educational research goes beyond informing understanding of the phenomena, and is aimed at informing decisions and improving actions. Bassey's conceptual reconstruction of the educational case study as improvement-oriented or action-provoking situated well with the CDO role as change agent, practitioner or scholar-practitioner. The discussion chapter of this study (Chapter 7) aims to align this research and its findings with Bassey's goals for the educational case study.

Bassey (1999, p. 58) defined the educational case study as an empirical enquiry:

- conducted within a localized boundary of space and time
- into interesting aspects of an educational activity, program, system, or institution
- mainly in its natural context
- in order to inform the decisions of policy-makers and practitioners
- or theoreticians who are working to these ends
- in such a way that sufficient data are collected that enables the researcher to
  - explore significant features of the case,
  - create plausible interpretations of what is found,
  - test for trustworthiness of these interpretations,
  - construct a worthwhile argument or story,
  - relate the argument or story to any relevant research in the literature,
  - convey convincingly to an audience the argument or story,
  - provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings, or construct alternative arguments.



As framed, this study met the six defining characteristics for Bassey’s educational case study:

<b>Table 3.1: The Educational Case Study</b>	
<b>Bassey’s Defining Characteristic...</b>	<b>...Applied to This Study</b>
Conducted within a localized boundary of space and time	Bounded within the space of eight U.S. higher education institutions and the <12 months allotted for this research project
Into interesting aspects of an educational activity, program, system, or institution	With a specific focus on the chief diversity officer role and activity in that space
Mainly in its natural context	Studied with consideration for the real-world contextual conditions of the CDO role
In order to inform the decisions of policy-makers and practitioners	Towards informing higher education leadership in matters related to diversity, CDOs, organizational structure, organizational culture, etc.
Or theoreticians who are working to these ends	Or towards informing those contributing to the scholarship in the field of diversity in higher education
<p>In such a way that sufficient data are collected that enables the researcher to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) explore significant features of the case,</li> <li>(b) create plausible interpretations of what is found,</li> <li>(c) test for trustworthiness of these interpretations,</li> <li>(d) construct a worthwhile argument or story,</li> <li>(e) relate the argument or story to any relevant research in the literature,</li> <li>(f) convey convincingly to an audience the argument or story,</li> <li>(g) provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings, or construct alternative arguments.</li> </ul>	<p>A robust yet manageable (under the given time constraints) collection of data was obtained from sixteen participants and the archival documents of eight institutions that allowed for examination, interpretation and testing for trustworthiness and validity. Next, an argument was constructed that unveiled the implications of organizational structure and organizational culture for the CDO role. Then, research findings were related to or inserted into the growing body of literature on the CDO in higher education, CRT, and ACL; followed by a discussion, propositions, and recommendations for action. Finally, the study was documented via this document and process to allow for validation, challenges and alternative arguments.</p>

*(Adapted from Bassey, 1999; Reprinted with permission.)*

## Case Study Type: Exploratory, Multiple-Case

Further, the case study types employed for this study were *exploratory* and *multi-case*. One of three types of case studies as categorized by Yin (1993), the exploratory case focuses predominantly on “what” questions, with the aim of defining a hypothesis or research question, then developing hypotheses and propositions for future inquiry (Yin, 2004). The research question for this study – *What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?* – met the requirements for an exploratory case study because central to its purpose was the understanding of the implications of defined contexts; and based on the understanding of those implications, the derivation of propositions for the nascent yet salient role of the CDO in higher education.

Additionally, the multiple-case studies approach was used for this study. Yin (2003) acknowledged that analysis within and among settings through the use of multiple sites allowed for case studies that were capable of predicting “similar results (a literal replication)”, or “contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication)” (p. 47). Merriam (1998) stated that “the more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be” (p. 40). Additionally, the use of multiple cases enhanced the external validity of the study’s findings (Merriam, 1998).

The use of multiple cases was imperative to this study as it sought to understand the implications of organizational structure and organizational culture on the CDO role across various types of higher education institutions, and to unveil the commonalities and distinctions of those constructs across multiple universities. Thus, to achieve cross-case analysis, manifold sites were necessary. And, this approach contributed to the diversity of both institutions and participants. Ultimately, the multi-site approach allowed the researcher to: (1) examine the

phenomenon (the CDO) within the contexts of organizational culture and organizational structure from multiple institutions, (2) explore the CDO role in-depth from different individual perspectives, (3) gain insight into the particularity and complexity of the phenomenon's activities within the contextual circumstances, and (4) obtain a rich picture and thick description of the cases being examined.

### Data Collection Procedures

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) at the researcher's home institution prior to beginning research. After permission was obtained, the data collection process commenced. The data collection process included collecting information via interviewing and archival document analysis, establishing a protocol for recording information, and setting boundaries for the study (Creswell, 2013). These steps will be examined next.

### Sampling

This study encompassed eight four-year colleges and universities of various types and defining characteristics in order to ensure a diverse assortment for examination. Four-year colleges and universities were sought because of the significant role of four-year institutions towards access, retention, and completion among underrepresented populations; and because of the concentration of CDOs at four-year institutions.

Further, Flick (2007) acknowledged: "A major component of any research design is the intended comparison" (p. 39); and the level of comparison "has implications for the step of sampling..." (p. 41). In an endeavor to ascertain similarities, or "minimal contrasts", and differences, or "maximal contrasts" (Flick, 2007, p. 41), this study sought a varied sample of four-year higher education institutions. The salience of variety in institution type and defining

characteristics cannot be overstated as it was essential to exploring the idiosyncrasies and highlighting the commonalities among the various organizational structures and organizational cultures present in U.S. higher education; and the manner in which these contexts influenced diversity through the CDO role.

*Step One: Identify institutions with a CDO*

The initial process for identifying potential institutions and thus CDO participants included four activities: (1) review of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) website, (2) an internet search using keywords and phrases “chief diversity officers in higher education”, (3) review of recent CDO in higher education literature, and (4) personal conversations with key informants, experts in the field, and current and previous CDOs. This preliminary step yielded over 100 institutions as possibilities for the study.

*Step Two: Categorize the institutions*

The next step in the selection process was to categorize the 100+ institutions by type(s) or defining characteristic(s), loosely referencing the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education™ system as a guide (see Table 3.2 below). The goal for the categorization stage was heterogeneity, or to derive a diverse assortment of schools for the study. Category overlap was expected, and had meaningful impact towards obtaining a heterogeneous sample given the multiple categories provided.

<b>Table 3.2: Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education™ Potential Categories for Institution Selection</b>
Small, Medium, Large
Public, Private
Special-Focus Institutions
Selective, Inclusive
Very-High, High Research Activity, Research University, Master’s Colleges & Universities
Enrollment Profile

### *Step Three: CDO selection*

After the 100+ institutions were categorized using the Carnegie Classification system and other descriptors, the researcher moved to a phase focused on purposive sampling and homogeneity to narrow the sample pool. Purposive, criterion sampling was used to ensure information-rich data collection and an in-depth understanding of the selected individuals (Patton, 1990). A purposive sample of eight higher education CDOs provided this case study with an assortment of participants with a diverse set of experiences, interpretations, and duties as a result on their respective institution's organizational structure and organizational culture. This phase began with reviewing the institution websites for current CDO names, contact information, and tenure as a diversity chief at that respective institution in order to satisfy the first two criteria for participation: (a) being a current CDO or CDO-equivalent, and (b) having fulfilled CDO or CDO-equivalent responsibilities for at least three full years while having held the current post for at least one year.

In recognition of the multiple variations in the titles and responsibilities of individuals designated to oversee diversity efforts for U.S. colleges and universities, this study's participants were required to carry the title or influence of a *Chief Diversity Officer* (or a similar senior administrator designation). With an executive-level designation in place, the study rendered a pure sample of senior-level diversity executives who could "best help the researcher understand the problem and research question" (Creswell, 2013, p. 189); and contributed to further understanding of this specific, executive-level role. Additionally, by limiting the study to individuals who have fulfilled CDO or CDO-equivalent responsibilities for at least three full years and held the current post for at least one year contributed to the trustworthiness of the data in that the participants possessed multiple years of professional and lived experience in the role,

and therefore were in a position to interpret and reflect upon organizational structure, organizational culture, and the influence of these contexts.

Additional criteria for selection included: (a) extensive knowledge of or access to the background and impetus for the CDO role's implementation (e.g. process, mission, duties) at their respective institution; and the agendas, frameworks, contexts, etc. that have defined or influenced the role within the last three-to-five years, (b) accessibility, or willingness to be interviewed and audio-recorded, and (c) provision of another campus-level informant (see section entitled *Informant selection*) familiar with the CDO role, who would enrich the study via a supplemental interview and additional perspective.

In addition to data collected during the interview process, the researcher gather administrative and demographic information for each participant. Table 3.3 below reflects the administrative and demographic data collected.

<b>Table 3.3: Administrative &amp; Demographic Information for CDOs</b>			
<b>Background:</b>	<b>Experience:</b>	<b>Demographics:</b>	<b>Administrative:</b>
Academic	Years in the Field	Gender	Length of Interview
Professional	Years as a CDO	Race/Ethnicity	Team Members or Direct Reports
	Years in Current Post		Title

The final sample size of participating higher education CDOs,  $n=8$ , represented those who met all of the homogeneous and purposive criteria while also allowing for a diverse mix of institutions of various types and defining characteristics. The eight CDOs were given the option of a face-to-face, phone, or Skype interview with the researcher. Ultimately, all eight diversity chiefs opted for a phone interview, and the interviews were conducted during the months of

January, February, and March 2014. The CDO interviews ranged from 63-96 minutes with an average of 74 minutes. The semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview protocol that consisted of 25 questions for the CDO participants. The interview protocol was organized into four sections: (1) general, introductory questions such as professional and academic background, definition of diversity, and status of diversity, (2) current role and responsibilities, (3) organizational structure at the institution and unit levels, and (4) organizational culture at the institution and unit levels.

In addition to the audio recordings for the interview process, the researcher took notes both during and after the interview sessions using a personal log. By maintaining this individual record the researcher was able to capture personal reflections and serve as a “potential variable in the enquiry” (Bassey, 1999, p. 43).

#### *Step Four: Informant selection*

The additional campus informant at each institution was recommended by the CDO. The researcher requested that each CDO make the selection for the additional informant. By allowing the CDO to select their informant, the researcher sought to refrain from presuming the best informant candidate and instead empowered each CDO to identify someone whom they thought would be able to make a significant contribution to the study. The criteria for informant selection included an organization member who was familiar with the CDO role and possessed at least two years of experience in that particular higher education environment. The selections made by the CDOs – and the challenges some CDOs encountered in their efforts to identify and recruit a suitable informant – will be discussed in the next chapter.

The eight informants were given the option of a face-to-face, phone, or Skype interview with the researcher. Ultimately, all eight informants opted for a phone interview, and the

interviews were conducted during the months of February and March 2014. The informant interviews ranged from 44-70 minutes with an average of 56 minutes. The semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview protocol which consisted of 15 questions for the informant participants. The interview protocol was organized into four sections: (1) general, introductory questions such as professional and academic background, definition of diversity, and status of diversity, (2) current role and responsibilities, (3) organizational structure at the institution and unit levels, and (4) organizational culture at the institution and unit levels. In addition to the audio recordings for the interview process, the researcher took notes both during and after the interview sessions using a personal log. By maintaining this individual record the researcher was able to capture personal reflections and serve as a “potential variable in the enquiry” (Bassey, 1999, p. 43).

## Interviewing

A naturalistic, semi-structured, and in-depth interview style was employed for this study. Viewed as a direction conversation (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, 1995), the in-depth interview process encouraged exploration of the topic and interpretive inquiry with participants who had the direct and relevant experiences (Charmaz, 2006). Gorden (1975) identified interviews as the most effective way to gather information pertaining to attitudes, beliefs and values. Specifically, a semi-structured interview protocol was used to collect data and field notes for this study, to keep the interviewing process comprehensive and focused, and to ensure that relatively the same data was collected from each participant. Valuable for their flexibility (Gilman, 2000) semi-structured interviews offered rich data collection; and, through this flexibility encouraged additional questions and explorations during the interview process (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2005). The semi-structured nature for interviewing allowed for a loose frame and the possibility



for alternative or unanticipated insights to emerge. The interview protocols offered open-ended questions centered on the research question. Creswell (2013) stated: “The more open-ended the questioning, the better” (p. 8); and Marshall and Rossman (2011) offered: “Elites often respond well to inquiries about broad areas of content and to open-ended questions that allow them the freedom to use their knowledge and imagination” (p. 156). Thus, open-ended questions were employed for deeper probing and for encouraging the participant to communicate their lived experiences.

The interviewing of ‘organizational elites’ (Delaney, 2007), or those “considered to be influential, prominent, and/or well-informed in an organization or community” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 155), such as chief diversity officers in higher education, was paramount to this study. Selected for the valuable and relevant information they possessed, the CDOs (and informants) in this study were able to discuss and provide insight into their respective organization’s “policies, histories, and plans” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 155) regarding diversity efforts and initiatives, organizational structure, and organizational culture albeit from their own constructed perspective. It was their positionality (or status as it pertained to the topic) within the organization that gave them their credibility as participants.

Each CDO interview lasted approximately 63-96 minutes and each informant interview lasted approximately 44-70 minutes. All interviews were conducted solely by the primary researcher; and all interviews were confidential and voluntary. The interviews were digitally audio recorded – Patton suggested that a recorder was “indispensable” (1990) – then transcribed into Microsoft® Word documents immediately after each interview session while the researcher’s recollection of the discussions was still vivid. During and after each interview, jottings (field notes and the researcher’s personal log) were also made and reviewed in order to

document critical or relevant insights from the interview. All of this information was stored and secured in a password-protected computer database and/or combination-locked briefcase.

Gaining access to the participants was not as difficult as anticipated given their status as organizational elites. The researcher was able to secure participants, schedule interview dates, and conduct all interviews within an 8-week timeframe. The interviews were conducted in the location and/or format of the participants' choosing. Although the researcher was inclined to the participants' natural setting (the office or work space at their respective institutions), the researcher maintained flexibility in this matter given that these senior executives and their additional informants might have found it challenging to schedule a one-hour interview with the researcher, particularly in person. Flexibility proved essential to accomplishing the study, as all participants chose to be interviewed by phone. Some participants requested that the researcher call them at their office, others requested the researcher to contact them on their cell phone and away from their office, and still other participants opted to be the one to contact the researcher on their respective interview day and time. The flexibility in terms of setting and format was necessary to ensure that the participants felt comfortable engaging with the researcher.

### Archival Documents

Documents were utilized in this study for their unobtrusive nature and convenience; and to ensure validity via triangulation with the interview process. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) acknowledged that documents can be viable data sources; and Merriam (1998) recognized the ability of these data sources to provide additional insights that otherwise would not be obtained through other methods (e.g. interviews). By including archival documents into the discovery process, the researcher sought to fill any gaps left by the interview process and incorporate materials that were not subject to selective recollection or reinterpretation (Murphy, 1980). The

document types that were analyzed for this study include: strategic diversity plans or agendas; annual reports or statistical data; organizational charts; public relations notices from the CDO or diversity office; institutional or departmental websites and mission statements; diversity committee documents and charges; official publications and correspondence (e.g. press releases); brochures; journal articles; campus newspapers; meeting minutes; calendars; and other relevant reports. These documents provided additional information, content, and context to the case study and the phenomenon being examined. The request for relevant documents or access to relevant documents was made during initial contact (recruitment email or phone call) with the participants. The number of documents explored per institution depended upon their accessibility and availability; however, the two primary methods for retrieval of this information included (a) institutional or departmental websites, and (b) verbal requests to the chief diversity officer or additional informant. To protect the institutions, all documents retrieved or received were coded immediately upon receipt.

#### Trustworthiness of the Data: Triangulation & Validity

Through the use of multiple data sources and methods – a valuable strategy towards investigation – the researcher aimed to gain an even greater understanding of the subject and phenomenon than would be obtained through just one data source or method (Creswell, 1998) and fulfill triangulation (Denzin, 1970). This *triangulation* served to establish *content validity*, or measuring that reflects the intended domain (Carmines & Zeller, 1979); *construct validity*, or consonance between theory and procedure (Carmines & Zeller, 1979); and *authenticity*, or credibility and originality (Mantecon & Huete, 2009) by verifying that the data was being engaged properly; albeit recognizing the challenges social science research presents in regards to proving validity due to its concentration on depth and deep meaning (Golafshani, 2003) as

opposed to replication and generalizability. Interviews and document analysis all had the potential to unveil in-depth and critical information relevant to the objectives of this study; generalizability to the total population was not the aim for qualitative research (Schram, 2003) or this study.

### Personal Log

A handwritten researcher's log was maintained throughout the investigation (though, particularly during the data collection and data analysis phases) to record the researcher's personal reflections and learning experiences from the study. This personal log was valuable to the researcher and served to capture insights such as: (a) the observed tone, energy, and points of inflection and modulation demonstrated by the study participants when they discussed certain protocol questions or topics, (b) points of comparison or distinction between the participant's comments and theory, or points of comparison or distinction between the participant's comments and the comments of other participants (e.g. thus the researcher was performing data analysis prior to the actual data analysis stage and demonstrating the fluidity and non-linear nature of qualitative inquiry), (c) a summation of the interview experience with each participant, and (d) key ideas that would be beneficial for the researcher to examine further as an emerging scholar and professional. This register also assisted with managing and organizing the considerable data that was collected; and, expectantly assisted in the identification and emergence of themes and meaning making.

## Data Analysis Procedures

The intended outcome for this case study was a textual description of what was experienced by the CDOs in and as a result of their role, with particular consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture on their roles. In order to accomplish this, the researcher employed inductive data analysis; meaning, the critical themes and meanings emerged out of the data, not prior to data collection. In recognition of the often non-linear nature of qualitative inquiry, data analysis occurred simultaneously with the data collection process (and perhaps at other points in the study as well), not solely upon conclusion of data collection (Merriam, 1997). Because the data that results from qualitative inquiry can be dense, the researcher employed the prerogative to “winnow” the data (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012), and focus on select data while disregarding other information in an effort to arrive at a manageable list of themes (Creswell, 2013). However, it is critical to note that data that did not match an established category, pattern, or theme was not discarded because this data was still relevant in understanding the phenomenon (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

The researcher utilized the qualitative computer data analysis program *QSR NVivo* to assist in the data analysis process for field notes and documents. The *QSR NVivo* software was an essential asset in organizing the data and extrapolating the data. Further, the data analysis process occurred in two stages: (a) analysis of the raw data, and (b) analysis of the data in the context of the qualitative design employed (which in this instance was the exploratory, multi-case study) (Creswell, 2013). This two-step process was broken down into the following stages:

1. *Open Coding*: The researcher read the data to identify key chunks, themes, points, and issues in the text. According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997), coding invokes discipline and rigor into qualitative data analysis and synthesis; and, Krathwohl (1998)

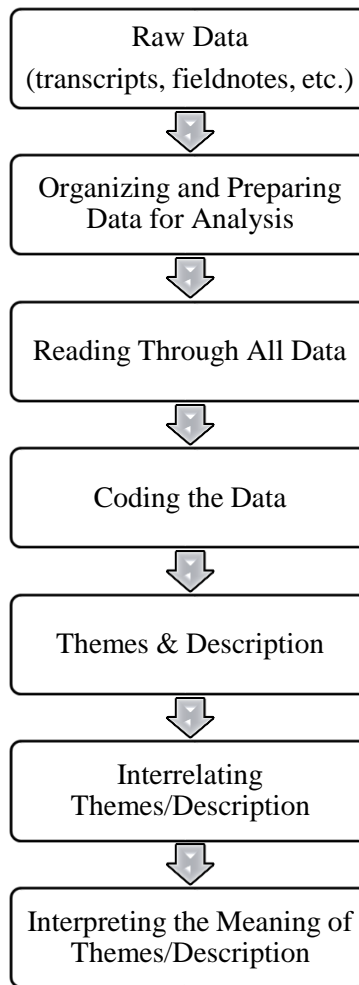
acknowledges coding as interpreting and decision making regarding the data sets towards development of conceptual themes.

2. *Mind-Mapping*: The researcher created a “mind-map” to organize and aggregate the key points. This represented a visual tool to aid the researcher.
3. *Listing & Interrogating*: The researcher listed the key points, then interrogated the text based on the list.
4. *Axial Coding*: The researcher structured and summarized themes relative to what was being revealed in the data/categories. Once open coding had produced chunking, axial coding rendered conceptual themes that were both dependable and divergent (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) and position a selected category/categories within a theoretical model (Creswell, 2013).
5. *Selective Coding*: The researcher explicated a story from the interconnection of the determined categories (Creswell, 2013).
6. *Delivering & Communicating*: The researcher determined what would be told or shared with others (based on the data’s collective contribution to the overall study), then translated that information into a “tightly woven account that closely approximates the reality it represents” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

#### Data Analysis in Qualitative Research

Adapted from Creswell (2013), Figure 3.2 offers another manner in which the researcher engaged in the data analysis process. As stated, although qualitative inquiry does not require a linear approach to analyzing data, for the sake of organization and because of the vast amount of textual data obtained in this study, the researcher attempted to follow a structure comparable to the one in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2 Data Analysis for Qualitative Inquiry**



*(Adapted from Creswell, 2013. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications.)*

### Storage

All information collected was stored either in a combination-lock briefcase or a password-protected software program. It was communicated to all study participants that all information from this study would be destroyed seven years after the study was completed.

### Role of the Researcher

According to Colaizzi (1978), to elicit rich and descriptive data it is important when conducting a study to “bracket”, or set aside one’s beliefs, feelings, and perceptions so as to be

more open to the phenomenon being explored. However, Moustakas (1994) contends that the researcher is “intimately connected” with the phenomenon as the researcher’s memory and history may play an important role in the discoveries of the study; thus, making it difficult for qualitative researchers to bracket their experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln emphasized: “All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (p. 22). Additionally, Creswell (2013) states that “researchers recognize that their own backgrounds shape their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their personal, cultural, and historical experiences” (p. 8). Qualitative researcher Fred Hess summarized that validity in qualitative research was not the result of indifference, but of integrity (Maxwell, 2013 p. 124).

As a constructivist, I have subscribed to the inclusion of my biases, history and background towards shaping my interpretations of a phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state: “Every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community that configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the research act” (p. 21). I did not bracket or remove myself from this study and its inquiry process because of my personal, professional, and sociological interest in the topic; but instead embraced my status as an ever-reflective biographically-situated researcher, and my biases as an element of my researcher role. I enjoyed candid conversations with several of the study’s participants about my background as a career-changer seeking to become a thought leader and change agent in education as a result of my passion for diversity, access, equity, and inclusion in education settings. Because of this transparency, most of the interviews felt like a dialogue between peers or colleagues – one interviewee actually referred to me as a ‘peer in the field’ – rather than a stringent, formal



interview session. While conducting this study, I felt as though I was a part of the field, a part of the process, and a part of the discovery.

This feeling of inclusion towards the study stemmed from a recent experience in which I had the opportunity to speak about the importance of higher education to a group of nearly 200 underserved and underrepresented students at a local high school. During my presentation, I stressed to the students the importance of obtaining a high school diploma, pursuing higher education, and making every moment in high school count towards their future aspirations. I even took the time to share with them annual earnings potential by educational attainment level as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. During the question-and-answer session that immediately followed my presentation, one of the students commented: “It’s going to be really hard for us to get into college.” When I asked the student to explain her declaration, she shared examples of a school struggling to provide adequate resources for its students; and, revealed a paramount concern that exists for many students, educators, administrators and advocates: the challenges of inequity in the American educational system. Her awareness not only impressed me, but at that very moment reminded me of why I left corporate America and returned to school to pursue a doctorate degree in education policy.

During my elementary and secondary educational experiences, I was afforded a plethora of opportunities (e.g. monthly field trips to museums, performance arts theaters, and political events) and resources (e.g. after-school study groups, free ACT preparation sessions) because of my scholastic capabilities and participation in the school district’s program for gifted students. However, my participation in this program did little to alter the reality before me: some of my dearest and closest friends did not and could not receive the benefits that I was receiving. I often found myself having to defend or explain my advantages to them, even though I knew in my

heart that there was something drastically unfair about my fortunes. At the age of sixteen, discussing the injustices and inequities of the American educational system proved a hefty burden for me in high school.

Today, however, I welcome that conversation, or any conversation concerning equity and social justice issues in education. All students have the right to a quality education, to attend college, and to receive supports that ensure they complete college with the degree(s) of their choosing. My beliefs about diversity, access, equity, and inclusion in higher education paired with my constructivist worldview significantly influenced my desire to engage in in-depth dialogues with CDOs and their informants; and to make meaning of their experiences in the role. I anticipated and received a high level of satisfaction and insight interacting with these individuals.

### Limitations of the Study

Despite best efforts to deliver a rigorous qualitative study, as with most investigations this project was not without constraints. The limitations of this study included: time, interviewing format, context, and methodological approach.

#### Time

This study was limited by the time spent from conception of the research question to writing and formulation of the final report. Each stage of the process was scheduled for completion within a distinct timeframe (although some stages required greater flexibility). If more time were feasible or a longitudinal study employed, an even deeper perspective of the phenomenon would likely result.

#### Interviewing Format

Another limitation of this study was the lack of in-person interviewing. Although all sixteen participants were given the optional formats of in-person, voice-over/instant messaging service (e.g. Skype™), or telephone interviewing, each participant chose to be interviewed by phone. The researcher allowed participants to determine the format most suitable for them; and, it was likely because the participants were organizational elites and busy higher education administrators that (a) the participants chose the phone format, and (b) the researcher made the decision not to incline the participants towards other formats. Marshall and Rossman (2011) stated: “Because thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptions are involved, the researcher needs to understand the deeper perspectives that can be captured through face-to-face interaction and observation in the natural setting” (p. 91). The fact that all of the interviewees chose to be interviewed by phone rather than in-person minimized the potential for reactivity threat, but represented a genuine limitation to the study and prohibited the researcher’s ability to examine and probe non-verbal communications. The use of in-person interviews – or even shadowing and observation – would have afforded the researcher an alternative perspective and the opportunity to witness the CDOs more intimately and in action in their roles.

## Context

Due to the context-specific nature of this study – critical examination of the chief diversity officer role with consideration for organizational culture and organizational structure – the project was bounded by these controls, thereby minimizing, overlooking or excluding matters outside of these parameters (e.g. environmental factors) that could have surfaced in the study but were potentially winnowed.

## Methodological Approach

By employing the case study methodology – and specifically the exploratory, multiple-case study – this project was limited to the protocols of this approach and thus overlooked the value or influence of a different case study type (e.g. explanatory, instrumental,) or method of qualitative inquiry (e.g. ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory). In addition, this study supported and reinforced the technical definition and supplemental descriptions provided by Yin (Yin 1994, 2009, 2011) through its examination of the phenomenon, which therefore limited the use of other definitions and descriptions such as those provided by Stake (1995), Merriam (1988), and others.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICERS, THE SPACE AND THE WORK**

#### **Introduction**

This study sought to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer in higher education by examining the role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture. Prior to examining organizational structure, organizational culture and the implications of both constructs for the role, the researcher sought an in-depth understanding of the CDO role (the work), the institutional context in which the work was enacted (the space), and the individuals charged with enacting diversity in higher education (the chief diversity officer). To establish identity and persona for the participants, individual CDO and informant profiles were created using pseudonyms. Further, to examine and understand the conditions and space in which diversity work was being performed, this study investigated the CDOs' duties, how they defined diversity and discerned their work and its essentiality, their perception of diversity's prevalence at their respective institution or in higher education as a whole, and the origins of opposition and cynicism to their work.

Lofland (1974) acknowledges the multiple formats in how qualitative findings are reported. For organizational ease and to give just treatment to each area examined, the findings of this study are divided into three chapters: Chapters 4, 5, and 6. This chapter provides the foundation for the study's findings by examining the chief diversity officers, the space, and the work; and is comprised of the following eight sections: (1) CDO Profiles, (2) Introduction of Informants, (3) Institution Profiles, (4) Archival Documents, (5) Diversity Definitions, (6) CDO Roles and Responsibilities, (7) Salience and Pervasiveness of Diversity, and (8) Major Sources of Resistance to Diversity. Chapter 5 discusses the university's organizational structure and the

implications of organizational structure for the CDO role. And, Chapter 6 examines organizational culture and the implications of organizational culture for the CDO role.

## CDO Profiles

### Overview

The eight CDOs who participated in this study were able to contribute to the research by meeting a small but pertinent set of criteria. The key criteria for CDO participants included: (1) being a current CDO or CDO-equivalent, (2) having fulfilled CDO or CDO-equivalent responsibilities for at least three full years and having held the current post for at least one year, (3) extensive knowledge of or access to the background and impetus for the CDO role's implementation (e.g. process, mission, duties) at their respective institution; and the agendas, frameworks, contexts, etc. that have defined or influenced the role for the past three-to-five years, (4) willingness to be interviewed and audio-recorded, and (5) provision of an additional campus-level informant familiar with the CDO role who served to enrich the study via a supplemental interview and additional perspective.

The eight diversity chief participants for this study were all from racial/ethnic minority groups with a gender breakout of four males and four females. Their academic backgrounds included music, science, business, criminology, law, medicine, communications, and library information science. The CDOs had worked in the field of diversity in higher education for a range of 8-29 years (average 16.3 years), and had held CDO roles or responsibilities for a range of 3-9 years (average 5.3 years). Additionally, the CDO participants averaged 3.75 years in the current CDO or CDO-equivalent role. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the CDO profiles.

<b>Table 4.1: Summary of CDO Profiles</b>					
<b>CDO (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Years of Experience: Diversity in Higher Education</b>	<b>Years of Experience: CDO Role or Responsibilities</b>	<b>Years in Current CDO Post</b>	<b>Interview Length</b>	<b>Team Members (or Direct Reports*)</b>
<b>#1 Danielle</b>	27	9	5	67 minutes	9
<b>#2 Gary</b>	8	5	3	63 minutes	6
<b>#3 Ilene</b>	9	3	3	67 minutes	6
<b>#4 Keith</b>	15	7	7	73 minutes	5*
<b>#5 Nicole</b>	8	3	3	67 minutes	9
<b>#6 Quentin</b>	21	8	5	96 minutes	1.5
<b>#7 Samuel</b>	14	5	1	93 minutes	1.5
<b>#8 Tammi</b>	29	3	3	63 minutes	5

During the discovery process the researcher was able to capture information pertaining to the CDOs' entry into diversity in higher education, the space and conditions in which their work was enacted, and some of their areas of greatest concern in the field. Those reflections are provided next via the individual CDO profiles.

#### Individual CDO Profiles

##### *CDO 1: Danielle and the Demographic Shift*

Danielle has been engaged in diversity work in higher education for over 27 years, which began with a graduate assistantship in Student Affairs. She has worked in a CDO capacity for nine years and in her current post for five years. She was drawn to the profession as a result of her interest in “what happens to students in this window of four to four-plus years when they’re

an undergraduate.” Danielle expressed concern about the pipeline from K-12 to the labor force, access for people of color, and the implications of shifting demographics for higher education:

I just heard this report the other day that by 2024 more than half of the people in the United States will be minorities. The population shift is going to happen that quickly. That's 10 years from now! And we all know that by 2050 more than 50% of the students that are of college-going age will be students of color. That to me has huge implications for the work that we do. Not just from the work that we do with respect to working in higher education, but about how we help fuel the national economy. There's a consequence to uneducated groups.

In addition, Danielle discussed the sizable baby-boomer generation as “a burden on the system” and on ensuing generations, the matter of undocumented individuals, changes in marriage trends, and the widening inequality between “the haves and the have-nots”, and shared:

If you think about the grand challenges that face our nation, they're going to be impacted by demography....That demography piece, I think it runs the day. And I think [most] people don't think it does.

### *CDO 2: Gary and Aeonian Optimism*

The foundation of Gary’s work in the field centered on cultural competency, a subject he has taught for many years. The synergy between this academic work and his administrative interests in diversity prompted a “natural transition” for Gary into the CDO realm. He noted that the “mutual interests” between him and his predecessor aided in his transition to the field. Gary began engaging in CDO work five years ago and then assumed his present role three years ago.

In regards to diversity efforts in higher education, he noted:

There is skepticism still throughout education in terms of the value of a leader related to diversity and the institutional approach to it. I think in some cases it's about lip service and less about the actual service and inclusion. But I do feel that the role of the chief diversity officer is here to stay.



Despite any cynicism, Gary demonstrated the aeonian optimism characteristic of those in his role when he expressed hopes that one day diversity might become “part of the day-to-day fabric” of higher education and diversity offices become less necessary.

### *CDO 3: Ilene and the Invisible Groups*

Ilene began working on diversity in higher education issues with an offer from a university president to assist that institution with its retention of minority students. Her work in the field of diversity in higher education began eight years ago, and she has held her current post for roughly three years. In reference to a ripened passion for the work, she stated: “It started with an offer [from the university president], now it's become more of a drive.” She began in the work by addressing “retention and persistence of minority students...particularly black male and female students” but had recently shifted to a focus on “increasing the number of professionals and staff, and retaining administration and staff minorities.”

Ilene’s work involved a great deal of numeration, yet she expressed concern at what was being counted. In reference to an overemphasis on race and gender, and oversight of sexual orientation, religion, thought, and other areas of diversity, she declared: “We’re counting the wrong thing. And we’re not counting the things that we should be celebrating. We’re not counting the things that really matter. We have invisible groups.”

### *CDO 4: Keith and the Gaps*

As far back as elementary school, Keith had always been made aware of his “difference” as the only racial/ethnic minority in his classes; and this continued for him in higher education in his pursuit of the STEM fields. Having “always been aware of the fact that things were not

reflective of the population” urged Keith to “do my own part in the effort to get full participation in higher education”, and thus provided the foundation for his work in the field.

Keith has been engaged in diversity work in higher education for 15 years, and in his current post for seven years. Although Keith “didn't have any particular ambitions to be in higher education administration”, his familiarity with the work, the issues, and the barriers faced by underrepresented and underserved students made him an “attractive candidate” for the CDO role at his institution. While engaged in the work, Keith acknowledged various “gaps” that underscore the essentiality of this work:

If you look at who's here, the faculty is really not particularly diverse but that of course reflects history: 40 years ago there were very few faculty members who weren't white and male and so we are shifting out of that but it takes a long time because the typical faculty member can be here for 30 or 40 years.... The staff and faculty don't really reflect the student composition....but then on the other hand the student composition doesn't really reflect the state ...and so there are all these gaps that make us think we should be working on this.

#### *CDO 5: Nicole, Glass Ceilings and Globalization*

Nicole began engaging in the field eight years ago and then assumed her present role three years ago. Her graduate school studies centered around diversity, and her interest grew after being the first female to lead a male-dominated division along her professional path:

I was the first female senior manager in [the division] in the history of the University. It had never had a female to lead that part of the organization...I was always concerned about the glass ceiling for women in non-traditional roles, and how to break those barriers...The whole diversity piece came as a result of me working in a field that was not typically for women.

Nicole's professional experiences, goals and pursuits proved and contributed to the relevance and essentiality of the CDO role. However, her appreciation for diversity in higher education as a result of her experiences was met with resistance by some campus constituents. Specifically,

Nicole encountered opposition from constituents who feared losing ground as a result of her efforts to globalize the school. She shared:

There's beauty in diversity. When our students are exposed to different cultures and different people it opens their eyes to what the real world will look like when they begin to seek employment and work in a variety of arenas... We are going to have to have a different perspective. We're going to have to have a global perspective... The world is changing; [we've] got to think outside the box and become more global in our mission."

*CDO 6: Quentin and the Trend of Losers Over Winners*

Quentin has been engaged in diversity work and initiatives for over 21 years, in a CDO-capacity for eight years, and in his current role for five years. Like other CDOs in this study, his entrance into diversity in higher education as a profession was basically "accidental." His fortuitous journey began with some teaching, and then morphed into committee appointments and administrative duties. Quentin expressed a concern regarding the "pockets" of success for diversity in higher education, but an overall shortfall in terms of "large-scale success" and systemic improvements. He shared:

If we think of it in terms of winners and losers, winners being people who are really doing diversity work well and achieving success, and then losers as people who either are disinterested in diversity in their colleges and universities or as an issue in higher education, and in some cases even hostile towards it, or those folks who are doing superficial things... I would say that there are a heck of a lot more losers than there are winners. I think we find wonderful examples of institutions around the country that are doing diversity work well in their colleges and universities, and because we can find those wonderful examples they seem to be the exceptions that actually prove the rule that we're not necessarily doing as well as we might.

*CDO 7: Samuel and the Change Agent Challenge*

Samuel made a "natural" transition from social justice-related work to diversity in higher education; however he admitted: "I didn't do it because I was interested in doing diversity work as much as it was I was tired of doing some of the work I had been doing for the prior 15 or 16

years.” Driven by civil rights and grassroots efforts, he identified a connection between those and diversity in higher education, and thus pursued the field that piqued his interests. He has been engaged in the field for 14 years, worked in a CDO capacity for five years, and held his current post for just over one year. Samuel vocalized his concern in regards to a key aspect of the CDO role: change agent. He shared the following account of that challenge:

One of the things about the role of the diversity officer that’s still different from others [administrators] is that most chief diversity officers don’t have the authority or the power to do what needs to get done. Our positions tend to be positions where we have to convince others to do things, we have to advocate for things, we have to be persuasive and persuade deans and other folks to do whatever it is that needs to get done... So it’s kind of an interesting dynamic because I look at the other high administrative officers and they have a certain degree of authority to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’, or this will not move forward, or I will not give you the funding. I think that part of the problem is universities are afraid to give us that authority either because they’re unsure what will happen or sometimes it’s because they really don’t believe in it or haven’t been convinced that it is valuable enough to cause waves. So that’s one of the things in the role that needs to evolve. It needs to change. They need to trust us and allow us to make some of those calls. And a chief diversity officer is always in a very delicate situation where their primary task is to create change. They are supposed to be change agents; that’s in most of the job descriptions. But institutions are very traditional and don’t like change; and if you change too fast or too hard you’re seen as a troublemaker or you’re seen as not being loyal to the institution... and that can cause conflict and can cause the president to say ‘well you know you’re not towing the line of the administration, and you’re causing too many problems, perhaps we need somebody else’. So that is one of the conflicts. One of the biggest problems that the chief diversity officer has in the role is being a change agent.

#### *CDO 8: Tammi and the Curse of Complacency*

Tammi has engaged in diversity work in higher education for nearly 30 years and served in her current role for three years. She has pursued diversity efforts in both small-scale and large-scale higher education environments, and acknowledged the differences and similarities between varying institution types. In regards to the transition from her previous institution to the current one, she described the impetus behind the move:

I really needed to settle on my own. I needed to know if I was as good as I thought I was, and I'm not saying that in an arrogant way. It's just that I learned so much, I experienced so much, that I felt that I needed to test that away from the people who had taught me, who had trained me. I decided that I was going to leave; but if I was going to leave that I had to go to a really stellar place. It had to be a wonderful opportunity.... I thought [the current institution] would be a perfect place – a very complex place but a perfect place – to test my skills, and it definitely has not let me down.

Amidst the peaks and valleys of enacting diversity work in her present higher education environment, Tammi expressed concern towards the recurring attitude of complacency demonstrated by her university constituents. She shared: “Every time someone gets comfortable [here], thinking we are where we need to be, something bad happens. Every time people say ‘we have arrived’, something bad happens.”

#### Summary of CDO Profiles

The eight diversity chief participants contributed their unique backgrounds and experiences to the study, shared their manner of entry into diversity in higher education, and discussed some of their areas of greatest concern in the field in general or within their particular institutional context. In addition to the perspective of these diversity leaders, insight was also obtained from supplemental interviewees, or informants, for each institution. An introduction of these key participants now follows.

#### Introduction of Informants

##### Overview

The informants nominated by the respective CDOs from each institution were also required to meet certain criteria in order to participate in the study. The criteria for the nominated informants included: (1) familiarity with the CDO role, and (2) at least two years of experience in the current higher education environment. Being nominated by the CDO was the primary

means of assurance as to the informants' suitability for the study. However, meeting these criteria suggested that each informant possessed some knowledge of the CDO role and the organizational context about which they would be questioned.

By allowing the CDO to select their informant, the researcher sought to refrain from presuming the best informant candidate and instead empower each CDO to identify someone whom they thought would be able to make a significant contribution to the study. Some CDOs struggled with this selection, meaning, they experienced challenges identifying an informant, recruiting an informant, or getting an informant to respond to multiple interview requests from the researcher. To that end, the researcher had greater difficulty scheduling interviews with informants than with CDOs.

The professional roles of the additional informants was as follows: five Directors in the areas of Development, Community Relations, Student Health, International Affairs, Training and Educational Programs; one Dean; one Chief-of-Staff; and one Vice Chancellor. Of the eight informants, seven were female, three worked and reported outside of the CDO's immediate unit, and only one informant held a position of higher rank than their respective CDO. The informants were critical to this study for their candor in conversations about their respective universities and willingness to openly discuss the CDO. At times when the diversity chiefs appeared humble about their work or hesitant in their examination of their institutions, the informants often delivered the more-detailed or elaborated commentary.

### Individual Informant Profiles

Informant #1, Ellen, worked in the diversity in higher education field, and was the sole informant who held a position of higher rank than their respective CDO, thereby adding a richness and depth to the institutional context and the work. Informant #2, Yolanda, held a

directorship with duties that focused on specific areas within the diversity unit, but communicated great knowledge and understanding of the field of diversity in higher education as a whole. Informant #3, Esmeralda, was not a direct report to the CDO and thus provided a unique perspective to the study as someone from outside of the immediate realm and day-to-day activities of the diversity office. Informant #4, Theresa, was a staff chief who demonstrated a vast access to knowledge and mastery of the many facets and characteristics of diversity in higher education at the unit, institution, and national levels. Informant #5, Eric, was the sole male informant whose professional background had significant implications for how he viewed diversity in higher education. Informant #6, Nanette, held a directorship and shared various thought-provoking insights as one trying to navigate the space and interpret the external forces that influenced that institution's diversity efforts. Informant #7, Lola, was a dean with a robust background in the diversity in higher education field, and a heightened awareness for the challenges of the CDO. And Informant #8, Iris, held a directorship within her diversity unit, which allowed her to demonstrate and communicate a rare consciousness for diversity matters in higher education.

### Summary of Informant Profiles

The additional informants for this study were sought out and selected by their respective CDOs, whom the researcher relied upon to make the most suitable selection. The informants were a diverse group in terms of academic and professional experiences, which included clinical counseling, political science, administration, divinity, law, literature, women's studies, engineering, economics, public policy, religious studies, anthropology, education, ethnic studies, and communications. This diversity of backgrounds and experiences often reflected in their responses. These participants were critical to the study for their alternative perspective, candor,

and willingness to elaborate particularly in regards to their respective institution and the influence of institutional context on diversity efforts. Acknowledging the salience of institutional context and its influence on the CDO role, a review of the eight institutions now follows.

### Institution Profiles

This study employed a multi-institution approach and sought to obtain a heterogeneous sample of higher education organizations. Diversity among the institutions represented was critical to the study in terms of allowing the researcher to examine the CDO role from multiple institutional contexts. As far as type, four-year colleges and universities were sought and preferred over two-year colleges and universities because of the greater concentration of CDOs at four-year institutions, and because of the significance of four-year institutions towards achieving access, persistence, and graduation rates among underrepresented populations. In total, eight 4-year colleges and universities were represented in the study.

The participating higher education institutions included: (a) six public and two private universities, (b) four large and four small-to-medium sized universities, (c) four high or very-high research activity universities, (d) four institutions with the outreach-and-community engagement classification, (e) two inclusive and six selective-to-more selective universities, (f) three urban, two suburban, and three rural/small town campus locations, (g) two land-grant institutions, (h) two universities with high community college transfer-in rates, (i) two racial/ethnic minority-serving institutions, and (j) one faith-related institution. The geographic breakdown for the eight participating institutions included: three Midwest, two South, one East, and two West schools. And, the total student populations across the eight schools ranged from 6,000 to 40,000.



Most of the institutions (7 of 8) in this study fell into the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education™ classification for doctorate-granting universities: *very-high research activity*, *high research activity*, or *doctoral/research university*. Additionally, half of the institutions in this study were recognized with the Carnegie Classification system's community engagement elective classification. The Carnegie Classification system defined the classification as follows:

Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.

The community engagement classification required extensive data collection and evidence-based documentation from each individual institution. This elective classification was highlighted in this summary of institutions based on (a) the above definition employed by the Carnegie Classification system – which aligns with the goals and initiatives of select CDOs and schools in this study and will be discussed in subsequent chapters – and (b) the inclusion of half of this study schools being recognized by the Carnegie Classification system with the community engagement classification. An overview of each participating institution now follows.

Institution 1 was a large, Midwest-region, public, 4-year school with a high undergraduate enrollment, very-high research activity, and community engagement classification. Institution 2 was a large, South-region, public, 4-year school with a majority undergraduate enrollment and very-high research activity. Institution 3 was a small/medium, Midwest-region, public, 4-year school with a high undergraduate enrollment and community

engagement classification. Institution 4 was a large, West-region, public, 4-year school with a majority undergraduate enrollment and very-high research activity. Institution 5 was a small/medium, South-region, public, 4-year school with a high undergraduate enrollment and community engagement classification. Institution 6 was a large, Midwest-region, private, 4-year school with a high undergraduate enrollment. Institution 7 was a small/medium, West-region, public, 4-year school with a master's college and university classification, a very-high undergraduate enrollment, and community engagement classification. Institution 8 was a small/medium, East-region, private, 4-year school with a majority undergraduate enrollment and very-high research activity. Table 4.2 below summarizes the Carnegie Classification characteristics of each institution represented in the study.

<b>Table 4.2: Carnegie Classifications of Participating Institutions</b>						
	<b>Size</b>	<b>Region, Campus Location</b>	<b>Control</b>	<b>Under- graduate Enrollment</b>	<b>Basic Classification</b>	<b>Elective Classification</b>
<b>Institution 1</b>	Large	Midwest, Small City/Town	Public	High (76% or More)	Very High Research Activity	Community Engagement
<b>Institution 2</b>	Large	South, Suburban	Public	Majority (51% or More)	Very High Research Activity	n/a
<b>Institution 3</b>	Small / Medium	Midwest, Small City/Town	Public	High (76% or More)	Research University	Community Engagement
<b>Institution 4</b>	Large	West, Small City/Town	Public	Majority (51% or More)	Very High Research Activity	n/a
<b>Institution 5</b>	Small / Medium	South, Urban	Public	High (76% or More)	Research University	Community Engagement

<b>Table 4.2 (cont.)</b>						
<b>Institution</b> <b>6</b>	Large	Midwest, Urban	Private	High (76% or More)	Research University	n/a
<b>Institution</b> <b>7</b>	Small / Medium	West, Suburban	Public	Very High (91% or More)	Master's College and University	Community Engagement
<b>Institution</b> <b>8</b>	Small / Medium	East, Rural	Private	Majority (51% or More)	Very High Research Activity	n/a

Each of the participating institutions had a CDO or CDO-equivalent in place, however the timeframe and rationales for CDO role implementation varied by school. The leading motivation for the implementation of the CDO role across the eight participating institutions was recommendation by committee, council, task force, or accrediting body. Other justifications for the role included: an institution's strategic planning process which called for the role's implementation, the institution's leader (e.g. president) who saw a need and called for the role directly, campus climate concerns, and hate-related incidents on campus. In regards to timing, the year of implementation of the CDO role in its current form at each institution ranged from 2005-2011.

The above description of the participating institutions demonstrated the heterogeneity of the sample, which was a key objective for the study and allowed the researcher to examine the CDO role from various institutional contexts. This summary of institutions also served to highlight the potential influences of context and characteristics for the study. Having a framework or description for each institution aided the researcher in the discovery process and in framing the work and role of the CDO, particularly as to how the post was influenced by a

respective institution's geographic location (e.g. how the Midwest-region CDOs' roles were influenced by that locale), size (e.g. how institution size influenced the CDO's positionality within the organization), control (e.g. how control type influenced the CDO's directives, roles and responsibilities), undergraduate population (e.g. the influence of the undergraduate population's size on the CDO's work, goals, and objectives), level of research activity (e.g. the influence of an institution's research activity and research-based priorities on the CDO role), and expressed commitment to community engagement (e.g. the prioritization or influence of community partnership on the CDO role). In addition to the framing provided via the institutional profiles was the insight provided through a review of archival documents for each institution, which now follows.

#### Archival Documents

In addition to the interviews, a review of archival documents was employed as an additional data source and to strengthen validity via triangulation with the interview process. A minimum of seven documents or source types per institution were collected and analyzed for the study. These included: (1) university mission statement, (2) diversity unit mission statement, (3) institution and unit organization charts, (4) priorities, goals, charges, or plans for the diversity unit, (5) statistics and reports relevant to the diversity unit, (6) councils, committees, and departments associated with the diversity unit, (7) resources, initiatives, and programs germane to the diversity unit, and (8) diversity unit-specific calendars and events. Additional documents such as newspaper articles, brochures, presentations, and job descriptions were available from select institutions and analyzed for the study. The findings of the archival documents are interwoven into this chapter. A summary of the archival documents reviewed for each institution is provided in Table 4.3.

<b>Table 4.3: Summary of Archival Documents</b>									
	<b>University Mission Statement</b>	<b>Diversity Statement</b>	<b>Organization Charts</b>	<b>Goals, &amp; Charges, &amp; Plans</b>	<b>Statistics &amp; Reports</b>	<b>Resources &amp; Initiatives</b>	<b>Councils, Committees, &amp; Departments</b>	<b>Calendar of Events</b>	<b>Other Documents</b>
<b>1</b>	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>2</b>	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓
<b>3</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>4</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓
<b>5</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a
<b>7</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a
<b>8</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓

The review of multiple archival documents was helpful to the study by providing an alternative, unobtrusive perspective in which to examine the institutions, their diversity efforts, and the CDO role. The textual data captured here was carefully examined and juxtaposed with the

interview pairings of each institution to develop a richer understanding of the institutional contexts and their implications for the CDO role.

Thus far in this chapter the CDOs and informants have been introduced, the institutions described, and the archival documents summarized. The next objective for this chapter is to delve further into the CDO's work, specifically through examination of their roles and responsibilities, major sources of resistance to their diversity efforts, and their perspective as to the salience and pervasiveness of diversity at their respective institution. However, in order to appropriately understand the frame for their responses, the researcher first inquired as to how they each defined the term *diversity*. That discussion follows.

### Diversity Definitions

To add depth to the identities of the participating CDOs and informants, to preface the ensuing conversations about diversity, and to frame the findings of this chapter, the researcher asked each participant for their definition of diversity in their own words. The researcher did not offer guidance for the question unless solicited, in an effort to gain the most authentic and original response from the participants. The researcher sought to understand and perceive how each participant framed the term 'diversity' and the interconnectedness of that framing for the work that they perform and the context in which they must perform it. The participants' responses follow. (Where necessary the responses were abridged/censored to preserve confidentiality of individual or institution.)

#### CDO 1: Danielle

I define it in the context of two communications of thought. Diversity is the what, or the how many, it's the counting of difference as compared to something else. So that could be women compared to men...so there are many dimensions of diversity. What my focus is, is in part diversity but the bigger issue for the work that I do is around inclusion. Once different groups come together, how do they come together? And what is the benefit of their interacting? Or, do they take advantage of the differences that they bring? Who has

the power, who has access, who's involved, who's engaged? So there's 1,000 different definitions around diversity, but it really is about a demographic something that distinguishes one group from the other. My focus of the work really is around inclusion.

Informant 1: Ellen

I really don't like to define diversity because I find that we always exclude. But when I think of diversity I think of traditionally or historically marginalized groups, which would include ethnic minorities, gender, sexual orientation, religious diversity, disability/ability, age, etc....and ensuring that all of those marginalized people have voice, and place, and respect.

CDO 2: Gary

I don't define diversity in terms of enumerating all of the human attributes. But in essence I think everyone brings something to the table, and every human is important, and diversity is the inclusion of what all aspects of human life can bring to the table. I think that's one of the toughest things for anyone to define because you ask 100 people you'd get 100 different answers; and, again I pretty much stand on the principal that diversity is inclusion of the full spectrum of human attributes. It's not only just the human physical traits but its perspectives, the various disciplines that we bring to the table, it's the diversity of ideas and the exchange of ideas; which again would afford every member an opportunity to be heard, to be respected, to contribute and to be valued.

Informant 2: Yolanda

To me diversity is the most broad and inclusive concept inclusive of race, ethnicity, religious preference, sexual preference, etc... it's just including everybody in all of our wonderful differences, and making the institution more welcoming.

CDO 3: Ilene

Diversity to me is appreciating differences amongst others, appreciating how we differ, how we stand out, celebrating those differences, recognizing them and trying to really understand how we differ; and, it's not only based on race, it's not only based on culture, it's not only based on sexual orientation or identity, it's the total or the totality of a person and how we differ.

Informant 3: Esmeralda

Diversity is the inclusion of people from all walks of life in the decision-making process...so it's more than just race or ethnicity or gender, it takes into account the unique characteristics that make us both similar and unique unto each other.

CDO 4: Keith

We thought long and hard about that...we took about the first year and a half to go out to the campus and get a lot of input...we talk about diversity itself as a factual matter, so 'who's there' is kind of factual. The issue that we're working on is not just to see who was there, but rather to have equity and inclusion.

Informant 4: Theresa

Diversity is a fact: either it exists or doesn't exist. Meaning it really is a set of demographic representations of an organization, a country, a school, a college and so forth. It tells us who's there by common demographics such as race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, status, etc...who are the students, who are the staff, who are the faculty, what their backgrounds are, how many came from low-income backgrounds, how many came from parents without any college experience, how many came from other countries, and so forth. So to me diversity tells us who's here and who's not...We use diversity as a descriptor but not as a vision or as something that guides our policy because what we really are trying to do is make our campus more inclusive; that means welcoming, accepting of all the different kinds of people who cross the paths at [our institution]; and equitable, meaning that everyone has not the same opportunity but a fair chance to come here, to enroll here, and to strive here. And so it's about educational equity meaning giving folks an equitable opportunity.

CDO 5: Nicole

...There's not one cookie-cutter approach to diversity and I don't think that there's one definition for diversity. I think it depends on the arena that you're in and the outcomes that you're looking for with the program that you may be implementing. But, diversity is just all about differences...So I don't think that there is one ideal definition for diversity, but the concept of diversity centers around differences.

Informant 5: Eric

I define diversity as inclusion because over time the physical kind of representation part of diversity doesn't exactly work for me, in the spirit of diversity. My spirit of diversity is about inclusion when whatever the goal and the outcomes...if an individual feels that they are included, then we have diversity. If the individual or group believes that they cannot participate - they're not included - then we don't have diversity. So a simple definition for diversity to me is who's included, or to determine who's excluded.

CDO 6: Quentin

There are two ways I am going to answer that question. The first is there are two levels of diversity: [1] one is that kind of surface-level [diversity] which is all about demographic diversity, and that is thinking about diversity in terms of the spectrum, the characteristics that people bring in a given situation. So when we look at diversity in higher education we're looking at students or employee populations, were looking at the range of things by



race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, linguistic diversity, all those different characteristics; [2] but then you go to that deeper level of diversity where we're actually looking not just at the demographics but we're looking at the behaviors, the ideas, the experiences that people have, perhaps things to do with your own socioeconomic background that shape who you are...and so there's two levels of diversity. And then I relate that to the second part of it, which would be diversity as who we are at any given moment; and you can put that on a scale of being. We could be very monocultural, [or] we could be very multicultural. So I consider diversity to be the state of who you are in a given organization. I'm not looking at diversity as a strategy but more as a condition of where you are: you're maybe less diverse, more diverse, somewhere in the middle...But it's really the two levels of diversity: demographic and then the ideas and behaviors and things. And then the other part of it is the breadth in terms of whether or not a given organization is monocultural or multicultural.

Informant 6: Nanette

...My definition is really informed by my experience. Part of how I define diversity is that it's an actual institutional office. So I define it partly as a formal part of higher education. I think aspirationally, diversity is the ability to engage with people from multiple backgrounds – not only social backgrounds but also political backgrounds and viewpoints – in a way that respects their humanity, and that always moves forward mutual flourishing rather than asking people to narrow who they are when they enter an institution or when they inhabit an institution. Diversity aspirationally is something that enables people to expand who they are...and really concretely what that means is that diversity has to do the work of creating social justice because the only way that can happen is if we're working within institutions that are just...Diversity work is the work of reshaping institutions... I can't give you a single definition but those are some of the ways that I think about it.

CDO 7: Samuel

...When people ask that question I think what they mean mostly is what categories of diversity are we looking at...In terms of categories, I don't go for just race and gender because that's too limiting; and, I don't agree with the other extreme which is it's every way human beings are different because that waters it down to the point where diversity becomes meaningless. And it also doesn't draw attention to those types of diversity that really have an impact on your life opportunities or to a great degree define who you are. So when I do presentations on diversity...you have things like race, gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation, etc., and they also tend to be the categories that are protected by discrimination law. And the reason they're protected by discrimination law is because they tend to be immutable characteristics, or they are usually things you are born into. And from a sociologist point of view these are the things that tend to have the greatest impact in your life and its opportunities, because it's going to impact how you see yourself, how people see you, and it also impacts how you think other people see you. So in terms of the categories, that's what I talk about...When you look at diversity and educational institutions there are four dimensions that you have to pay attention to, the

first one is compositional...the second domain is what I call substantive diversity and by substantive diversity I mean what do we learn in our curriculum, what do we learned in our co-curriculum to develop our intercultural competencies; the third domain is environmental diversity which most people call campus climate, and again it's really focused on things like accessibility, safety, how welcoming you feel, whether you feel valued in the environment...and the fourth is what I call institutional diversity - and I realize other people call it or mean something different by institutional diversity - but what I mean by institutional diversity is how the institution embeds diversity in its mission statement, objectives, and its values, and its strategic plan and its running objectives; and how do the policies and procedures of the University support diversity in the first three domains, which is compositional, substantive, and campus climate. So when I talk about diversity I think the point that you have to have, to pay attention to all of these domains otherwise you are not going to have an effective diversity program. They are all interrelated and dependent upon each other...And then I talk about how [the four domains] impacts identity, and then how identity impacts other things...So, that's how I approach defining diversity. The other thing that I should probably mention is when I define diversity - because often most people when they talk about diversity they're just talking about compositional diversity or they are just talking about the very limited types of diversity - to me diversity is the umbrella that everything else falls into. So inclusion is part of what we do with diversity because that's part of campus climate; theoretical frameworks fall under diversity; multiculturalism falls under diversity...so all of those things fall into diversity...When I say diversity it's a huge umbrella, pretty much anything that would help lead to the development of intercultural competencies.

Informant 7: Lola

...The value and appreciation of difference in people...people that are different than myself, different thoughts, different religion, the Big 7 [gender, race, class, sexual orientations, disability, age and religion]...diversity represents the difference in all of us.

CDO 8: Tammi

...It's very broad, but in the end diversity is the genuine appreciation of what all cultures, all people bring to the table. And it's not a tolerance of, it's an appreciation of what everyone brings. The way to test your beliefs of diversity is when all of those cultures converge, how many voices do you hear? If you're still hearing one, maybe your diversity is not working... [If] you're still hearing the same voices over and over again...you decorated the place, you didn't diversify it.

Informant 8: Iris

...The older I've gotten and the more work I've done, I have to say my definition has gotten simpler and simpler and simpler. And right now my tagline is diversity is any difference that makes a difference. And that's just what my experience has been...It is much more of an action word, it is a verb for me, than it is more of a passive noun.

## Summary of Diversity Definitions

. The diversity definitions as communicated by the 16 study participants revealed commonalities as well as idiosyncrasies in how the term was approached. The factors that most influenced the way in which the term was defined and framed by the participants were: institution (e.g. school type, history of the university, institutional vernacular), unit mission (e.g. prescribed goals and objectives of the diversity office), and personal experience and background (e.g. childhood anecdotes, categorical/compositional diversity of the participant). It was also conspicuous that some CDOs took exception to the term ‘diversity’ or felt restricted by it; whereas none of the informants provided overt pushback to the expression. The CDOs who challenged the term typically shifted the conversation toward equity, inclusion or both.

Six major themes emerged from the participants’ diversity definitions: (a) diversity as voice and respect for all, (b) diversity as inclusion, (c) diversity as separate from inclusion, (d) diversity as difference, (e) diversity as an account of experiences, behaviors, perspectives, or ideas, and (f) diversity as formal, institutional, or embedded.

Four participants recognized the value of engagement and interaction with people from various and unique backgrounds and affirmed diversity as voice and respect for all of humanity. The impetus here was the need to provide voice to the voiceless (e.g. traditionally marginalized groups) and mutual respect to those who have historically struggled to be respected in certain spaces like higher education.

The second and third themes that arose from the diversity definitions were in direct contrast to one another: *diversity as inclusion* versus *diversity as separate from inclusion*. Six participants expressed diversity as an inclusive concept that centered on establishing a welcoming environment and appreciating what everyone brought to the process. Of the

participants who subscribed to diversity as inclusion, it was not evident that they disregarded diversity as a matter of facts and figures, but rather that they saw diversity as the numerical data *and* the inclusion piece. In contrast, those who subscribed to diversity as separate from inclusion specified diversity as “demographic representations” and “factual”; and, viewed this type of data and the counting of “how many?” and “who is there?” as different from the work inclusion. The implications of these two distinctions for the CDO’s work will be further examined in the CDO roles and responsibilities discussion in the next section.

Diversity as difference was another major theme, as expressed by study participants. The most-succinctly conveyed response (summarized by participants in two sentences, on average), viewing diversity as difference was communicated as the appreciation of the uniqueness of all individuals. Diversity as difference, therefore, covered a wide spectrum of considerations for the term; and neither included any specific concepts nor excluded any specific concepts for the definition.

The final two themes that emerged from the diversity definitions as provided by the study participants were diversity as an account of experiences, behaviors, perspectives, or ideas; and diversity as formal, institutional, or embedded. Two CDOs acknowledged diversity as beyond demographics and toward the inclusion of one’s experiences and ideas. This theme is comparable to the first theme of voice and respect for all, but moves beyond access or obtaining voice and respect to the deeper level of the intangibles (e.g. prior experiences) that shape an exchange where voice and respect are exercised. And two participants recognized diversity as a formal characteristic that was now embedded in the institution of higher education as evidenced by the language of mission statements, objectives, strategic plans, etc. across multiple colleges and universities.

The different definitions of diversity provided by the CDOs and informants demonstrated the unique experiences of the study participants and how that lens contributed to their definition. The variations for the term also demonstrated institutional influence on the definitions (e.g. some CDO-Informant pairs provided responses that were more closely-aligned than other CDO-Informant pairs – see responses from Keith and Theresa – suggesting that an institution-wide definition has been adopted). Regardless of the influencing factors and the fact that the researcher was able to draw out themes from 16 unique responses, the reality of such diversity for one term reiterates the significance of context albeit personal, professional, or institutional.

With a firm understanding of how each participant defined the term diversity and keeping that definition in mind for its potential influence on the CDO's work (e.g. was the CDO's definition influenced or changed as a result of the work they performed at the institution, or was the institution's definition aligned with the CDO's definition prior to the CDO arriving on campus or assuming the role) – the next step was to identify the roles, responsibilities, and duties of each CDO; and then to ascertain commonalities and idiosyncrasies amongst the work of the eight diversity chiefs.

## CDO Roles and Responsibilities

### Introduction to CDO Roles and Responsibilities

Pertinent to addressing the research question – *What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?* – was understanding the roles and responsibilities of the chief diversity officer in higher education. The eight CDOs who participated in this study provided a diverse representation of the role, from actual titles to personal demographics to academic and professional backgrounds to central missions and foci. And, these characteristics had

implications for the duties of each diversity chief. Additionally, the roles and responsibilities of the CDOs were also influenced by the institutional profiles of their respective schools.

### Campus-Based Archetypes

The duties of the CDO as illustrated in this study demonstrated the breadth of responsibilities across the field. As Ilene stated: “Every diversity officer will have a certain niche based on their skill set...there is no one cookie-cutter diversity officer.” In consideration of the three campus-based archetypes for the CDO role (see Table 2.6) as postulated by Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) – Collaborative, Unit-Based, and Portfolio Divisional – this study utilized the gathered data (interviews and archival documents) to propose the following categorizations for the eight participating CDOs:

- Four Collaborative Officers
- Three Unit-Based Officers
- One Portfolio Divisional Officer

The collaborative officers possessed a high-ranking title but a limited staff and a low cost structure. They also maintained the campus’s current organizational structure, were more symbolic than material, and were considered thought leaders but with limited ability to implement. The unit-based officers possessed a high-ranking title along with a central support staff, which led to a more expensive cost structure than the collaborative officer model.

Additionally, they were more structured, engaged with diversity as a strategic priority, capable of greater collaboration, and able to develop diversity deliverables across campus. And lastly, the portfolio-divisional officer possessed multiple units within a dedicated diversity infrastructure thereby representing the most-costly model. The model encompassed all of the capabilities of the unit-based model, but was also capable of economies of scale and greater organizational conflict

due to its integration into the campus's organizational structure (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013).

### Roles and Responsibilities Checklist

In order to ascertain their work, a compiled checklist of 75 potential roles and responsibilities was provided to each CDO (see Appendix E). The list was created based on the (a) review of archival documents, and (b) original interview responses by the 16 participants to the question: "Describe the roles and responsibilities of your post (or the CDO post)?" In an effort to obtain clarity and uniformity for the CDO's roles and responsibilities, the researcher sent a follow-up email to the diversity chiefs after all interviews were conducted and requested that they complete the compiled checklist by indicating which duties fell under their immediate ownership and responsibility; and, to write-in any additional duties that were not listed in the checklist at the bottom of the form.

This section proceeds with a roles-and-responsibilities synopsis per CDO, followed by a discussion of the major themes and distinctions identified for the work of the CDO in higher education. [A point of note: Just as Chief Diversity Officers (CDOs) is the generic term used to define the higher education administrators who engage in this work, the phrase *diversity, equity and inclusion* (DEI) will be used henceforth to summarize the vast landscape of professional foci for the participants in this study, and to lessen the likelihood of the CDOs' institutional vernacular materializing in the findings.]

### CDO Synopses

#### *CDO 1: Danielle's Duties*

Danielle was charged with leading in the areas of: (1) recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and students, (2) cultural competency for campus constituents, and (3)

creating and establishing a more welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Danielle emphasized the inclusion aspect of DEI; with the primary focus on examining how groups connect, the benefit of their connection, and whether participants take advantage of these interactions. Uniting campus constituents to think about and debate the issues and take action was also a critical part of Danielle's charge. These charges translate into oversight of diversity and cultural centers as well as underrepresented constituent programs. She also played a critical role in writing grants and pursuing funding opportunities to support the recruitment or retention of underrepresented campus constituents. Danielle had oversight of nine direct reports who were all professional staff members with titles such as director, manager, coordinator, or assistant.

#### *CDO 2: Gary's Duties*

Gary was responsible for university-wide and community matters related to DEI. This included authority to assist and monitor campus units in recruitment and retention efforts; authority to create, chair and guide diversity, equity and inclusion committees and councils; and, authority to develop community-based programming and events. Gary played a critical or lead role in obtaining underrepresented student and faculty grants as a principal investigator. He advised the university president/chancellor on matters related to DEI; and also presented information and issues at quarterly governing body meetings. Gary had oversight of a diversity unit of 6 team members which included four professional staff members and two assistants.

#### *CDO 3: Ilene's Duties*

Ilene was recently charged with recruitment, retention and engagement of underrepresented faculty, staff and administrators. A prior focus for Ilene was to assist in the retention of underrepresented students; but that has since morphed to include underrepresented faculty, staff and administrators. She chaired the university's diversity assembly, founded DEI-



related entities (e.g. a minority faculty and staff support group), and participated in various other on-campus and off-campus councils and groups. Participation on multiple campus search committees was also a part of her responsibilities. Ilene was also responsible for: (1) providing opportunities for dialogue and cultural experiences for campus constituents, (2) website updates, (3) online training modules, (4) department-level training and interventions, (5) workshops, (6) assisting campus units with area-specific diversity plans, (7) annual diversity reports for presentation to the governing body, (8) a diversity symposium, (9) sponsorship of student organizations for DEI-related initiatives, and (10) creation of the university-wide diversity plan. Ilene had oversight of a diversity unit of 6 team members, which consisted of five student workers and one administrative assistant.

#### *CDO 4: Keith's Duties*

Keith promoted and reiterated the campus-wide responsibility and accountability for DEI that goes beyond the university's diversity office. He was charged with oversight of DEI-related pre-college outreach programs, undergraduate programs, graduate programs, cultural centers, select underrepresented population programs, and staff-specific DEI programs. Keith held fiduciary (budgetary authority) and human resources responsibilities for all of the aforementioned programs. He was also tasked with: (1) fundraising and grant support, (2) strategic planning and implementation, (3) policy analysis and implementation, (4) presentations to the executive cabinet, (5) communications as the external representative for DEI matters, (6) campus climate issues and assessment, (7) enhancing numerical diversity, (8) creating a welcoming atmosphere for campus constituents, (9) advising the president/chancellor on DEI matters, and (10) taking necessary action to move the institution's diversity initiative forward.

Keith had oversight of five direct reports (director-level team members), who in turn had additional team members.

*CDO 5: Nicole's Duties*

Nicole was expected to create an arena for awareness, cultural competence, education, and relationship-building at University 5. Nicole's duties included: (a) identifying opportunities to engage the entire campus in DEI initiatives and education, (b) recruiting diverse students, faculty and staff, (c) partnering with diversity organizations and other higher education institutions (d) hosting a DEI symposium, (e) administering DEI scholarships and sit on the scholarship committee, (f) overseeing the cohort of scholarship recipients, (g) participating in various on-campus and off-campus DEI assemblies, (h) partnering with human resources, (i) verifying strategic alignment of diversity unit goals and activities, and (j) conducting program analysis of diversity unit initiatives. Nicole had oversight of a diversity unit of 9 team members, which included two directors and seven student workers.

*CDO 6: Quentin's Duties*

Quentin was charged with building a more inclusive campus in terms of recruitment and retention of employees and students, scholarship, and curriculum. As the campus thought leader on DEI matters, he had oversight of the campus DEI boards and partnered with individual faculty and deans to advance DEI through various programs and initiatives. He provided funding for faculty DEI pursuits in curriculum or scholarship, and hosted or promoted DEI scholars on campus. Operationally, Quentin is limited to the academic wing of the institution and thus had established partnerships primarily with academic constituents (e.g. faculty, deans, department chairs). Quentin had oversight of a diversity unit of 1.5 team members.

#### *CDO 7: Samuel's Duties*

Samuel identified the implementation of the institution's strategic DEI plan as the current and primary charge. Samuel has begun the process of assessing the DEI initiatives across University 7, and also recently revamped the hiring procedures for faculty and administrators. Additionally, he was tasked with: (1) advising the president/chancellor on DEI matters, (2) advising other senior administrators on DEI matters, (3) providing leadership and advocacy across campus for DEI matters, (4) addressing shortfalls in underrepresented faculty, (5) review of human resources activities and actions for top administrative staff, (6) partial oversight of DEI assemblies and associations, search committees and cultural centers, and (7) partnerships with equal employment opportunity (EEO) and other campus DEI advocates. Samuel had oversight of a diversity unit of 1.5 team members.

#### *CDO 8: Tammi's Duties*

Tammi was charged with compliance and educating campus constituents as to federal policies and laws. Additionally, she fulfilled roles and responsibilities by: (1) engaging in outreach with the local community, (2) serving on various on-campus and off-campus boards, (3) partnering with search committees, (4) liaising between diversity advocates and adversaries in an effort to persuade and recruit new DEI advocates, (5) presenting DEI awards and recognitions, (6) rendering keynote addresses at DEI events, (7) collaborating with senior leadership at the institution, (8) developing policy, and (9) addressing grievances of discrimination. Tammi had oversight of a diversity unit of 5 team members, which included three professional staff members and two assistants.

## Major Themes and Commonalities in the Work

In terms of the CDOs' work, the presence of themes demonstrated a consistency in purpose, interest, or effort for the role across the higher education arena. Of the 75 possible duties on the CDO checklist, 40 items – which were categorized into nine major themes – were identified as iterative and fell under the charge of five or more CDOs. The nine major themes for those 40 common items included: (a) recruitment and retention, (b) outreach and community engagement, (c) external partnerships, (d) internal partnerships, (e) planning, education and policy, (f) unit and committee oversight, (g) communicating results and communications, (h) advising, and (i) climate and inclusion. Table 4.4 below lists the nine major themes and the checklist items which correspond with that respective theme.

<b>Table 4.4: MAJOR THEMES IN THE WORK: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 5 OR MORE CDOs</b>	
<b><i>Major Theme 1: Recruitment and Retention</i></b>	<b><i>Major Theme 2: External Partnerships</i></b>
1a) Recruitment of Faculty and/or Staff *	2a) Partner with Relevant External Organizations
1b) Retention of Faculty and/or Staff	2b) Partner with Peer Institutions
1c) Retention of Students	2c) Partner with Other CDOs
<b><i>Major Theme 3: Outreach and Community Engagement</i></b>	<b><i>Major Theme 4: Internal Partnerships</i></b>
3a) K-12, K-14, or Pre-College Outreach	4a) Partnering with Student Affairs
3b) Community Outreach and Programming	4b) Collaborative Partnerships with Deans, Faculty, Senates, Etc.*
<b><i>Major Theme 5: Planning, Education &amp; Policy</i></b>	4c) Partner/Provide Recommendations to Provost
5a) Cultural Competency Initiatives	4d) Partner with EEO Office
5b) Policy Development and/or Implementation	4e) Sponsor Faculty Diversity Initiatives
5c) Create a University-Wide Diversity Plan*	4f) Serve on Search Committees
5d) Assist with Unit-Specific Diversity Plans	4g) Maintain a Presence with On-Campus Boards
5e) Implement Recurring Diversity Forums	<b><i>Major Theme 6: Unit and Committee Oversight</i></b>
5f) Develop or Promote Diversity Education*	6a) Oversee Underrepresented-Population Groups

<b>Table 4.4 (cont.)</b>	
5g) Increase Analytical Capacity of University to Address and Remedy Barriers to Equity	6b) Chair the Primary University Diversity Council
5h) Develop Training Modules and Workshops	6c) Create Committees and Councils, As Needed
5i) Implement University-Wide Diversity Plan*	<b><i>Major Theme 8: Advising</i></b>
5j) Disseminate Diversity Research	8a) Advise the President/Chancellor*
<b><i>Major Theme 7: Communicating Results &amp; Communications</i></b>	8b) Advise Executive Cabinet Members*
7a) Create Annual Diversity Reports	<b><i>Major Theme 9: Climate and Inclusion</i></b>
7b) Present to the Governing Body	9a) Campus Climate Assessment
7c) Present to the Executive Cabinet*	9b) Address Bias Incidents on Campus
7d) Speaking Engagements and Keynotes	9c) Establish a Welcoming Environment
7e) Diversity Website Updates*	9d) Host Diversity Scholar Events on Campus
	9e) Administering Campus Diversity Awards and Recognitions

These 40 common duties were the most identified in regards to the work of the chief diversity officer. Within this grouping, there were nine items that were identified by *all* of the participating CDOs (denoted by an asterisk in the table) as an immediate role or responsibility they possessed. These nine items included:

**Item 1a:** Recruitment of Faculty and/or Staff

**Items 5c and 5i:** Creation and Implementation of the University-Wide Diversity Plan

**Item 5f:** Development or Promotion of Diversity Education

**Items 8a and 8b:** Advising the President/Chancellor, Advising the Executive Cabinet

**Item 7c:** Presenting to the Executive Cabinet

**Item 4b:** Collaborative Partnerships with Key Constituents (e.g. faculty, deans, senates)

**Item 7e:** Diversity Website Updates

The diversity of this list of nine unanimous duties suggested that the CDO must be multifaceted, while the universality of this lists suggested that these responsibilities represented higher education's priorities for diversity and the CDO role right now. From this list one might ascertain higher education's focus on: (a) recruiting diverse faculty and staff (and not just students), (b) establishing a singular diversity agenda and plan in which to guide and align the entire campus, (c) educating campus constituents about diversity and encouraging its infusion into curriculum and scholarship, (d) having a go-to person or expert on campus to counsel senior administration in regards to DEI matters, (e) having a high-ranking individual lead or encourage collaboration across the oft-decentralized structure of higher education, and (f) having a unit with communication savvy that can reach the multitudes quickly by embracing technology and staying current with its posted information.

#### Additional Commonalities in the Work

Further commonalities in the roles and responsibilities emerged but among fewer CDOs. 30 duties were identified as immediate roles and responsibilities of 2-4 diversity chiefs (as compared to the 40 duties that were identified for five or more CDOs and the nine duties that were unanimous in the major themes section above). These 30 duties typically demonstrated a shift into more university-, state- or system-sensitive needs and expectations, and are highlighted in Table 4.5 below. The 30 checklist items are disaggregated by the number of CDOs (2, 3 or 4) who indicated the task as being a part of their immediate responsibility.

<b>Table 4.5: ADDITIONAL COMMONALITIES IN THE WORK: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2-4 CDOs</b>	
<b>Duties of 4 CDOs</b>	
Strategic Planning	Grants and Fundraising
Create and/or Implement Diversity Scorecard	Hire Staff to Implement Diversity Initiatives and Trainings
Host an Annual Diversity Conference	Establish a Community Network
Sponsor Student Organization Diversity Initiatives	Increase Graduate Students, Postdocs, and Faculty Focus on Diversity Topics
Oversee Campus Cultural Centers	Partner with Human Resources
Achieve Numerical Diversity	Fund a Faculty Diversity Fellowship
Review or Improve Hiring Procedures for Faculty and/or Staff	Establish More Formal Relationship Structures with Key Units (social justice, cultural centers)
<b>Duties of 3 CDOs</b>	
Establish a Diversity Awareness Month	Recruitment of Students
Partner with Athletic Department	Oversee Scholarship Recipients
Develop/Implement a Dialogue Series	Maintain a Presence with Off-Campus Boards
Initiate Unit-Level Assessments and Strategic Planning	Consistent Review of Services for Disabled Constituents
<b>Duties of 2 CDOs</b>	
Review and Improve Hiring Procedures for Top Administrators	Partner with Faculty to Infuse Diversity into Curriculum
Administer Scholarships	Oversee Grievances or Ombudsman Services
Conduct Unit Evaluation and Analysis	Title IX Responsibilities
Budget Oversight for Underrepresented Population Groups	Serve as External Communications Liaison

### Summary of Commonalities in the Work

This study identified 40 duties that fell into nine major themes for the roles and responsibilities of the eight participating CDOs, and 30 additional duties with some commonality for the CDO's work. This study reaffirmed the necessity for a multifaceted individual in the CDO role. The CDO needed to possess a firm command of select duties and mutual aims of the role as communicated via the nine major themes and the nine universal duties that were common amongst all eight diversity chiefs. Command of the major themes appeared salient to the CDOs' ability to enact the work. Equally, CDOs needed to demonstrate his/her ability to meet

institution-, system-, or state-specific expectations in the role as communicated by the additional commonalities and duties distinct to their space.

### Distinctions in the Work

Institution-specific or space-specific duties also surfaced through distinctions in the work. Institution-level influence (e.g. top university leadership mandates and expectations) and the specialized nature of the chief diversity officer role at each participating institution led to a few noteworthy distinctions (or duties unique to a single CDO); and demonstrated the presence and necessity for variances in skills, abilities and preferred styles of engagement. Again, guided by the compiled checklist of 75 items and the option to write-in any responsibilities that were missing from the checklist, seven items were identified as distinct because they were communicated as the role or responsibility of only one of the eight CDO participants. (The fact that only seven duties fell outside of the groupings for major themes or additional commonalities suggests that the compiled checklist of 75 items was fairly comprehensive.) Table 4.6 summarizes the distinctions in the work.

The seven noteworthy distinctions in the work included: (a) Oversee the Affirmative Action Office and/or Plans, (b) Host International Visitors, (c) Serve as Principal Investigator for Diversity-Related Grants, (d) Human Resources Oversight of Underrepresented Populations Specialized Groups, (e) Provide Financial Resources for Public Engagement Scholarship, (f) EEO and/or Compliance Responsibilities, (g) Encourage Faculty Scholarship and Publications on Diversity Topics. In reviewing the seven items and the corresponding CDO for each item, the researcher determined that these seven distinctions in the work were unique to their respective institution and CDO because of the institution's needs and/or the CDO's background and skill set (as revealed through the study and discovery process).



<b>Table 4.6: DISTINCTIONS IN THE WORK: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNIQUE TO A SINGLE CDO</b>
Oversee the Affirmative Action Office and/or Plans
Host International Visitors
Serve as Principal Investigator for Diversity-Related Grants
Human Resources Oversight of Underrepresented Populations Specialized Groups
Provide Financial Resources for Public Engagement Scholarship
EEO and/or Compliance Responsibilities
Encourage Faculty Scholarship and Publications on Diversity Topics

### Salience and Pervasiveness of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Beneficial to our understanding of the implications of organizational structure and organizational culture for the CDO role in higher education is an examination of the value and status afforded diversity, equity and inclusion by the institution's in this study. Significantly influenced by institutional type, leadership and culture, the salience and pervasiveness of DEI was seemingly conveyed through the duties and responsibilities of the CDO at each school; meaning, the eight diversity officers in this study – through whom DEI efforts were and should typically be funneled at each institution – seamlessly situated their work and priorities within their university's DEI goals and objectives. However, this interconnectedness did not necessarily translate to prominence and prevalence of DEI efforts throughout the institutions.

All CDOs communicated the value or status placed on DEI at their respective institution, and that significance ranged from minimal and superficial to sufficient to substantial. Additionally, all CDOs acknowledged that insight into the salience and pervasiveness of DEI at their respective institution depended on who was being asked (the subjectivity of the “variable human” actor; Thompson, 2003); which indicated that DEI was still a matter of individual perspective or personal commitment, and thus lacked prominence, prevalence or both.

At University 1, Danielle spoke of the challenge of DEI discourse and moving intransigent campus constituents forward. She shared that there are those who “think that diversity work is about taking care of the students of color” and that “everybody is not ready for the discourse, and you’ve got to meet people where you find them and try to bring them forward.”

At University 2, Gary acknowledged the steady skepticism regarding DEI’s value and the institutional approach to it. He spoke holistically about his institution and others: “I would say there is skepticism still throughout education in terms of the value of a leader related to [DEI] and the institutional approach to it. I think in some cases it’s about lip service and less about the actual service and inclusion.”

Ilene asserted institutional shortfall occurred due to magnification of numerical targets and fundamentally pursuing diversity in the narrowest sense at University 3. She shared: “Most University strategic plans are usually based on numbers. How many do you have of this? How many do you have of that? [University 3] has the highest number of [racial/ethnic minority group] students in [the state] based on school size. That’s nothing to be proud of because we also have one of the lowest retention rates of [racial/ethnic minority group] students in [the state] too.” Ilene summarized: “We’re counting the wrong thing.”

Keith acknowledged the various “gaps” between state population and university population that necessitated DEI work for University 4: “We have something like 40% [racial/ethnic minority group A] students, and that’s way more than the population of the state. We have about half the percentage of [racial/ethnic minority group B] you would expect....And so now the high school population [in the state] is half [racial/ethnic minority group C], and the [university] population is only 15%.”

Plagued by stakeholders and campus constituents who do not perceive the essentiality of DEI for University 5, Nicole was challenged to prove the worth of DEI. She shared: “Certain [constituents] are somewhat resistant to diversity. We’ve heard things in the past like ‘they’re [the DEI unit] just trying to [change] the University...’”

At University 6, Quentin recognized his university’s inability to sustain diversity efforts that peaked decades ago. He stated: “I am at an institution that had a burst of energy around diversity about 40 years ago, especially around student diversity, but has not been able to formulate a really cohesive (*sic*), has not been able to sustain that initial energy or formulate a cohesive plan to becoming more diverse.”

According to Samuel, the newness of a central diversity leader and the hesitancy to disrupt current processes and practices have negatively influenced the prominence and prevalence of DEI at University 7: “I think sometimes it's because they really don't believe in it [DEI] or haven't been convinced that it's valuable enough to cause waves.”

Tammi attested to yearly fluctuations and inconsistencies in terms of University 8’s commitment to DEI matters. She stated: “From year to year we’re always wondering what will be the level of support and how will it impact our ability to work at the high level of excellence that we demand of ourselves here. I never settle in and assume from one year to the next that it will always look the way it looked last year.”

Each CDO was stark in communicating the lack of significance and pervasiveness to DEI efforts at their institution as it stands today. However, their optimism in this conversation was also palpable. The circumstances that drive the lack of prominence and/or prevalence at each institution are discussed next.

## Major Sources of Resistance to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The shortfalls in regards to DEI's prominence and prevalence across the eight institutions of this study were attributed to significant areas or sources of resistance within each individual institution; and in some instances to notable challenges external to the institution. All eight CDOs acknowledged one or more primary bases that impeded diversity accomplishments and made their diversity efforts that much harder to enact or institutionalize. In addition, the supplemental interviewees (or informants) from each school also contributed to the findings around major sources of resistance to greater diversity accomplishments at their respective institution.

### CDO and Informant Depictions of Resistance to DEI

#### *CDO 1: Danielle*

Danielle acknowledged both internal and external sources of resistance to greater diversity accomplishments. Internally, Danielle recognized resistance by way of institutional politics or political maneuvering and stated that “politics are always at play” in regards to DEI matters because the very essence of DEI brought to the forefront concerns about the redistribution of resources and redistribution of power at University 1. In that sense, DEI efforts were framed as competition for scarce, limited institutional resources. Externally, Danielle indicated the surrounding community (e.g. culture, norms, demographic composition) and geographic location limitations on DEI efforts and accomplishments.

#### *Informant 1: Ellen*

Ellen shared that the incessant lack of effort by university search committees, recruiters, and admissions officers was a major source of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments at

University 1. Additionally, this informant acknowledged the perception by some university constituents that select students and student groups were not qualified to attend the university simply based on test scores, thereby invoking the meritocracy stance.

*CDO 2: Gary*

Gary identified: (1) funding challenges and assistance for students, (2) faculty search committees and individual departments' recruitment practices and processes, (3) academician pipeline deficits, (4) misplaced priorities and shallow commitments to DEI by top university administrators, (5) limited authority of the CDO, and (6) lack of appreciation and knowledge regarding the value of DEI on the part of the governing board (the entity that ultimately controls resources at University 2) as major sources of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments at his institution.

*Informant 2: Yolanda*

Traditions, habits and perceptions by long-standing members of the university community were identified as a source of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments by Yolanda at her institution. Yolanda also spoke of pending funding changes that will have a direct, negative impact on DEI efforts. Additionally, Yolanda recognized the role of University 2's geographic location in the South on DEI efforts; and cited "historical racist attitudes" as another external source of resistance.

*CDO 3: Ilene*

Ilene stated simply that the greatest sources of resistance to more substantial DEI accomplishments was the lack of institutional commitment and collaboration. Like Danielle, Ilene was burdened by political, "backdoor" maneuvering from campus constituents and

colleagues. With such paramount emphasis on collaboration for the CDO role, Ilene chose to label those individuals as “anti-collaborators.”

*Informant 3: Esmeralda*

Esmeralda identified the conservative local community and geographic location in the Midwest as the major sources of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments. Specifically, Esmeralda drew attention to the limited diversity among the local populace as a result of the geographic location of University 3; and this limited diversity consistently yielded homogenous staff-level and lower-level management being hired within the institution. Esmeralda also acknowledged the prevalence of overt racism in the community, and the negative impact of these attitudes on DEI efforts.

*CDO 4: Keith*

Unfamiliarity or fear of change was identified by Keith as the major source of resistance to DEI accomplishments at University 4. Campus constituents at this institution resisted cultural change, particularly if they were not a part of the entity leading the change effort. Externally, Keith attributed state legislation and budgetary constraints via an underfunded K-12 system as the primary issues that impacted DEI efforts at University 4 by way of underserved K-12 students who were then ill-prepared to pursue higher education.

*Informant 4: Theresa*

According to Theresa, the meritocracy stance was the greatest source of resistance to more significant DEI accomplishments at University 4. Specifically, Theresa indicated the tendency to evoke the meritocracy argument in undergraduate admissions and faculty hiring

decisions, in an effort to shield or insulate the institution from the common perception that achieving greater diversity comes as the cost of lowering standards.

*CDO 5: Nicole*

Nicole identified the major source of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments to be the alumni constituency. Certain segments of the alumni population at University 5 were “afraid that they're going to lose what they feel they've fought so hard for, which was ... to have something they can call their own.”

*Informant 5: Eric*

Eric indicated that the resistance to change by faculty and staff was the greatest source of resistance to grander DEI accomplishments at University 5, due largely in part to the historical and traditional nature of the institution.

*CDO 6: Quentin*

Quentin reasoned the major sources of resistance internal to the institution to be the lack of desire or will to reinforce DEI, an unwillingness to speak and act with appropriate resources for DEI initiatives, and the matter of DEI's necessity and pertinence at the institution in the first place. According to Quentin, institutional leaders at University 6 appeared to struggle with “the nitty-gritty of diversity...that is, getting into on a practical level what it really means to stand up against racism and to want to promote a kind of environment that brings folks who are underrepresented in higher education into the world of higher education.” External to the institution and applicable to the broader higher education landscape, Quentin acknowledged the worry of legal ramifications and the sway of those fears on decision making toward greater accomplishments.

*Informant 6: Nanette*

According to Nanette, this institution's major source of resistance was internal and had to do with the university's inward-facing definitions and protocols for DEI. Here, DEI was redefined or reimagined to better suit what the institution felt were acceptable targets or discourse, regardless of the general approaches considered by higher education or the larger world. Additionally, the orientation toward political conservatism yielded a "culture of passive resistance" at University 6 that hampered greater DEI efforts.

*CDO 7: Samuel*

The local, surrounding community – known for its wealth and conservatism – was identified by Samuel as an external source of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments for University 7. Community members with significant political sway expressed fear or insecurity to university officials about expanded minority populations in the area; which prompted the university to reach out and collaborate with the local community. Internally, Samuel acknowledged the resistance of two constituency groups: faculty and top administrators, primarily because of their balance of power. Samuel stated that the resistance from these two groups was not based on philosophical opposition or blatant attempts to block DEI initiatives, but evident lack of effort to move the DEI agenda forward.

*Informant 7: Lola*

Lola indicated that internal resistance surfaced in the form of hesitancy, fear, or the institution "not wanting to ruffle any feathers." Another internal source of resistance as shared by this informant was the tendency for "people of color to draw lines between people of color." Meaning, the divisive behaviors of campus constituents from underrepresented populations was counterproductive to greater DEI efforts. The external factor that restricted DEI efforts was the



surrounding community. According to Lola, University 7 demonstrated a reluctance to cause discord with the conservative local community, which could easily be translated into a reluctance to cause discord with big donors. Additionally, Lola acknowledged the institution's lack of effort to engage with the largest minority group in the community.

*CDO 8: Tammi*

Tammi determined that “outside political voices” were the greatest source of resistance to grander DEI accomplishments at University 8; and, those voices could range from politicians to family members. The politically right-leaning voice of others possessed significantly influence on the DEI work at this institution.

*Informant 8: Iris*

Iris identified numerous sources of resistance: (1) shortfalls in development of the academician pipeline, (2) a less-appealing geographic location, (3) lack of institutional effort, and (4) inadequate marketing of the university's advantages and benefits.

Summary of Major Sources of Resistance

Table 4.7 below recapitulates the findings of major sources of resistance across the eight participating institutions. In the commonalities section, the number of occurrences for each theme appears in parentheses. The distinctions in resistance were expressed by a sole participant, but possessed enough gravitas to be conveyed.

<b>Table 4.7: Commonalities in Major Sources of Resistance Among Two or More Institutions</b>	
Lack of Effort/Desire/Commitment (6)	Geographic Location Limitations (5)
Fear/Insecurity/Change Aversion (5)	Local Community Pushback (4)
Political Voices (3)	Recruitment/Hiring Practices (3)
Campus Constituents' Perceptions/Habits (3)	Budget/Funding Constraints (3)
Academician Pipeline Strategies (2)	Organizational Politics (2)
Traditions/History (2)	Persistent Racist Attitudes (2)
Legal/Legislation Concerns (2)	Meritocracy (2)
<b>Distinctions in Major Sources of Resistance Among Institutions</b>	
Alumni	Lack of Collaboration
Inadequate Marketing	Inward-Facing Diversity Standards
Divisive Behaviors of Campus Constituents from Underrepresented Groups	

### Chapter Summary

Obtaining an understanding of the CDO's work, space and institutional context was critical to examining the research question proposed for this study. This foundational information accomplished the tasks of: (a) introducing the CDOs, their entrance into the profession, and some of their major areas of concern in terms of diversity in higher education, (b) providing institutional context to their work with a summary of each institution represented in the study, (c) highlighting the additional informants who provided depth to the CDO perspective, (d) cataloging the archival documents reviewed for the study, (e) defining diversity from multiple viewpoints and discerning the essentiality and pervasiveness of the work, (f) revealing the major themes, additional commonalities, and distinctions in roles and responsibilities for the CDO role,

and (g) identifying the major sources of opposition to DEI efforts as perceived by each of the 16 participants. Now that a foundation has been established for the CDOs and their roles as diversity chiefs in higher education, the next two chapters encompass the study's examination and findings for organizational structure, organizational culture and the implications of both constructs for the CDO role.

## CHAPTER 5

### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### Introduction

This study sought to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer in higher education by examining the role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture. Guided by the following research question – *What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?* – the researcher sought to unveil commonalities and distinctions in organizational structure (institution and unit) and organizational culture (institution and unit); and, the implications of these contexts for the CDO role at select higher education institutions. Organizational structure and organizational culture were disaggregated by institution and unit to enhance our understanding of the CDO role as the diversity chief navigates the two spaces.

INSTITUTION STRUCTURE	INSTITUTION CULTURE
UNIT STRUCTURE	UNIT CULTURE

The previous chapter established a foundation for each diversity officer, the work they enact, and the status of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at their institution through an exploration and analysis of salience, pervasiveness and major sources of resistance to greater DEI accomplishments. An examination of organizational structure and the implications of the construct on the CDO role within the previous three to five years now follows.

## Organizational Structure Defined and Described

According to Hendrickson, Lane, Harris and Dorman (2013), the formal structure constitutes the official hierarchy and the organizational charts, job descriptions, rules, regulations, and reporting lines that guide the organization's work. Thompson (2003) stated that the structure of an organization refers to the "internal differentiation and patterning of relationships" that leads to segmentation, departmentalization, and connections between units (p. 51). Further, Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) offered that structure denotes how people and the work they perform are organized into relevant units. These three definitions framed the organizational structure discourse for this study.

All of the eight participating institutions were administratively structured or organized with a formal, hierarchical structure which included a governing body at the helm, followed by the president or chancellor, (executive) vice presidents and vice chancellors, provost, assistant/associate vice provosts/chancellors, deans, assistant/associate deans, and so on. Regardless of whether there were slight to significant variations in how the university employees were organized (any discovered variances only served to add depth to the study), the primary focus of the study was never to differentiate how the institutions were structured but rather the implications of their structure for the role and functioning of the CDO.

Each CDO and informant was asked to describe the organizational structure of their institution as well as their diversity office/unit. Using the Williams and Wade-Golden (2013) definition – and terminology from the Hendrickson et al. (2013) and Thompson (2003) definitions – the study participants were provided with a working definition for organizational structure (e.g. *"How the people and the work they performed were organized into relevant segments, departments, or units"*, *"formal hierarchy"*, *"how the employees were organized"*,

and “organizational charts”). Most participants responded in succinct terms (see keywords below) and then elaborated on their responses. The keywords that emerged from the data are highlighted below in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, followed by a more comprehensive review of the results per institution.

Six of the eight (75%) universities were described as having a decentralized or disconnected organizational structure (OS) at the institution level (IL), a typical designation for higher education environments given its historical context (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Hierarchical, bureaucratic, political, collegial and homogenous were also used multiple times to describe the institution-level organizational structure (ILOS).

<b>Table 5.1: Keywords for Organizational Structure at Institution Level (ILOS)</b>					
<b>University 1</b> Large, Midwest, Public	Decentralized	Political			
<b>University 2</b> Large, South, Public	Decentralized	Homogenous			
<b>University 3</b> Small/Medium, Midwest, Public	Disconnected	Homogenous	Bureaucratic		
<b>University 4</b> Large, West, Public	Decentralized	Complex	Collegial	Hierarchical	
<b>University 5</b> Small/Medium, South, Public	Decentralized				
<b>University 6</b> Large, Midwest, Private	Hierarchical	Homogenous	Siloed	Diffused	Unclear
<b>University 7</b> Small/Medium, West, Public	Decentralized	Collegial	Bureaucratic	Siloed	
<b>University 8</b> Small/Medium, East, Public	Hierarchical	Political			

At the unit level (UL), a diversity of responses was more prevalent. The rationale for this variance fell into three categories: (1) greater diversity chief influence or control over the unit's organizational structure, (2) mandates from top university administrators as to how the diversity unit should be structured, or (3) necessity based on size or functionality. All of the CDOs had immediate leadership over their respective DEI units, and this direct influence allowed some of them to establish or control the structure of their unit in the manner they deemed most suitable for the unit to function effectively. For those CDOs with top-down directives regarding the diversity office, the unit tended to be more structurally-aligned with the ILOS, likely for the purposes of organizational consistency. And finally, some DEI units were structured to accommodate their size (e.g. large units with multiple team members at various professional levels or spread out across multiple campus locations) or functions (e.g. diversity units that held additional responsibilities such as compliance, etc.).

<b>Table 5.2: Keywords for Organizational Structure at Unit Level (ULOS)</b>			
<b>University 1</b> Large, Midwest, Public	Forced	Disorganized	
<b>University 2</b> Large, South, Public	Decentralized	Hands-On	Flat
<b>University 3</b> Small/Medium, Midwest, Public	Intentional	Bureaucratic	Siloed
<b>University 4</b> Large, West, Public	Hierarchical	Streamlined	Autocratic
<b>University 5</b> Small/Medium, South, Public	Intentional	Aligned	
<b>University 6</b> Large, Midwest, Private	Lean	Weak	
<b>University 7</b> Small/Medium, West, Public	Small	Ambiguous	
<b>University 8</b> Small/Medium, East, Public	Streamlined	Narrow	Siloed

## University 1

The ILOS at University 1 was described as decentralized and political. “Every pot rested on its own bottom” was how Danielle described the structure of decentralization at University 1. Further, DEI’s station was viewed as a direct result of the function and purpose of the institutional leader of the time; and, therefore was subject to change when university leadership changed. Meaning, ULOS at University 1 was highly susceptible to ILOS, and capable of changing each time the school encountered new leadership.

In regards to ULOS, the haphazard planning and implementation of centralized DEI efforts at University 1 resulted in a ULOS described as forced and disorganized. Ellen acknowledged that “within [the diversity] division the structure makes absolutely no sense... because of the way diversity offices have been formed [here].” The haphazard manner in which the diversity unit was formed posed significant challenges to the CDO; however, the approach also proved “rewarding” because it allowed Danielle to “tweak things to suit.” Further, Ellen revealed that the lack of planning and preparation for the diversity chief role resulted in a DEI unit that was forced into existence “in response to a student protest” on campus.

## University 2

The ILOS at University 2 was described as decentralized and homogenous; and this homogeneity caused Yolanda to feel reluctant about attending the institution as a student. The distributed composition of University 2 allowed administrators to initiate projects without rigorous approval processes, but also increased the likelihood of duplication and redundancy. The homogeneity of the institution also allowed for substantial, unanticipated power for the governing body at the institution: a copious power that took the university community by



surprise in recent years and resulted in organizational structure and governance having to be revisited.

The ULOS at University 2 was described as flat, hands-on, and decentralized. Within the unit all employees were “on the same horizontal plane” and reported directly to the CDO, who celebrated the “advantage” of a smaller unit: “We can meet on a frequent basis, get work done, communicate well, and work well as a team.” Notwithstanding the separate physical locations for unit team members – which often rendered the team members disassociated – the CDO maintained direct contact with all staffers and was “intimately involved” with all team projects.

#### University 3

The ILOS at University 3 was described as disconnected, homogenous, and bureaucratic. Ilene was restricted from engaging with other executive-level administrators, and stated: “I have no contact with anyone other than my direct supervisor.”

The ULOS at University 3 was described as intentional, bureaucratic, and siloed. Ilene described the diversity unit structure as “top-down...unit-wise, office-wise, and division wise. And it’s not that it’s not effective, it’s just impersonal.” Further, each diversity team member had distinct duties that often created silos within the office; however, Ilene acknowledged that each team member was a purposive selection based on their abilities, attributes, and skills.

#### University 4

The ILOS at University 4 was described as decentralized and complex. According to Keith, the presence of “lots of players of different opinions” made for a complex institution; however the advantage was the absence of hierarchical behaviors and presence of collaborative, shared, and collegial ones. Contrarily, Theresa recognized a decentralized and “very hierarchical system” in terms of the organizational structure at the institution level.

The ULOS at University 4 was described as hierarchical, streamlined, and autocratic. Theresa shared that the diversity unit at University 4 clustered like programs in an effort to streamline the unit and increase synergies, but the unit also engaged in hierarchy and autocracy when needed to synthesize work and move efforts along.

#### University 5

The ILOS at University 5 was described as decentralized. Nicole simply stated: “We are a decentralized community of administrators, support staff and scholars.”

The ULOS at University 5 was described as intentional and aligned. Nicole shared that the diversity team was “handpicked” based on their previous roles and relationships with the diversity chief, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. And, Eric highlighted how the diversity unit was strategically aligned and situated with the academic affairs unit as a part of the student learning structure.

#### University 6

The ILOS at University 6 was described as hierarchical, homogenous, siloed, diffused, and unclear. According to Quentin, people did “not always work across the organizational chart” and the result was often silos. However, when non-scholarship collaboration was sought, it often required people to “have to go through their dean” to initiate working relationships, which highlighted the top-down, hierarchical nature of the institution. Nanette reiterated the hierarchical structure of the institution and its tendency to promote an unclear, diffused, and opaque work environment.

The ULOS at University 6 was described as lean and weak. Quentin acknowledged the diversity unit as “very lean” due to its small staff and the unit’s structure as “very weak...and not serving the University very well.”

## University 7

The ILOS at University 7 was described as decentralized, collegial, bureaucratic and siloed. Samuel acknowledged that “we’re probably not unusual in that a lot of people work in silos”; however, the diversity chief also acknowledged the willingness on the part of campus constituents to move from decentralization to collegiality.

The ULOS at University 7 was described as small and ambiguous. Samuel recognized the diminutive nature of the diversity unit’s structure; and, also addressed the ambiguity of the unit as a direct result of its newness (just under two years old).

## University 8

The ILOS at University 8 was described as hierarchical and political. According to Tammi, powerful “outside political voices” such as family, owners, politicians, etc. swayed the institution away from change and “could really interfere with things you should be doing.” Additionally, the hierarchical composition of University 8 was a long-standing format for the institution that incorporated and included all the impacted parties in the process and yielded a conglomerate of voices and perspectives up and down the hierarchy.

The ULOS at University 8 was described as streamlined, narrow, and siloed. Iris expressed that the institution had “taken a step back” after restructuring led to a consistently shrinking diversity unit and a diversity chief who lacked the necessary “depth of resources” comparable to other CDOs. Additionally, the separate work locations for team members created a physical silo in addition to the silo created by the work itself.

## Implications of Organizational Structure – Institution Level (ILOS)

Through thick description of organizational structure by study participants and review of archival documents, the researcher was provided with a solid foundation for understanding the

ILOS at each institution. This foundation enabled the researcher to extrapolate toward understanding the implications of ILOS on the CDO role. The determined implications of ILOS for the CDO role were aggregated into two categories: favorable and unfavorable. The favorable implications of ILOS for the CDO role included: relationship maximization (via advocacy, consultation, or persuasion), autonomy, and access to the top institutional leader (e.g. president or chancellor). The unfavorable implications of ILOS for the CDO role included: dysfunction, disparity, resource challenges or navigation of resource challenges, isolation, slow-moving change or progress, politicization, and limited responsibilities or sphere(s) of influence. The rationale for these implications now follows.

### Relationship Maximization

Relationship maximization – the ability to make the fullest use of key relationships – was also an implication of the ILOS for the CDO role. For all of the participating institutions – six of which were identified as decentralized and the other two as hierarchical – the ILOS called for some degree of advocacy, consultation, or persuasion. Relationship maximization was realized through identification and maintenance of campus partnerships (e.g. human resources, student organizations, faculty), stable and supportive relationships with institution leaders (e.g. President, Chancellor, Provost), and networking and collaboration with external partners (e.g. other/peer institutions, corporate or professional alliances, organizations such as NADOHE, and local communities).

At one of the participating institutions the Vice Chancellor for Finance funded select DEI efforts out of the finance budget (as opposed to the CDO doing so out of the DEI budget), which presented an example of collaboration and campus partnerships. Other examples of relationship maximization for the CDO role included: partnering with admissions, international affairs,

faculty, deans, staff, graduate programs, and so on. Tammi expressed the essentiality of campus partnerships: “I do a lot of liaison work, meaning trying to get people who are interested in diversity issues talking to people who aren’t really interested in those issues, so that if we can get more people on board who feel that this is something we should be dealing with in a serious way, we can get more things done; because if the only people I work with are my staff or the people who already believe in what we’re doing, we’re not going to get any place. Those numbers are too small.”

Danielle stated: “The commitment to issues related to [DEI] is a function of the leader at the time” and “the effectiveness of this role is greatly impacted by the leadership of the institution, because you have generally very little power to do things in and of yourself, because the work of diversity and inclusion has to be spread amongst the institution. And so it has to be a shared responsibility, but it has to be understood as a responsibility that you're marching out the orders of the President or the Provost, otherwise you're not going to get far.” Gary reiterated the value of a strong Presidential partner as a resource: “When there is a need for gaining institutional support and visibility I ask the president to send out a message on my behalf, or to send out a message that's endorsed by the President.” And Quentin stated simply: “It is all about the President...the President can change the course of the institution in any way that he [or she] wants to do, and everybody just falls in line with that.”

Examples of stable and supportive institutional leadership were prominent in the study. Keith shared that the President of University 4 “led from the top, and that's really important. If the leader’s not into it then it's much harder to make progress.” University 2’s President commissioned the CDO and DEI unit to develop a community-wide MLK celebration. And

Nicole shared that the President of University 5 acknowledged DEI as a focal point for that administration.

In regards to external partnerships, Ellen shared how a consortium of CDOs across various campuses communicated monthly and formed an organizational or dotted-line structure to top university leadership, while Yolanda discussed an external partnership with a neighboring state that included quarterly update meetings and conferences. Ilene spoke of an annual DEI symposium with peer institutions; and Nicole talked about the importance of corporate partners to accomplishing their diversity goals. Nanette shared that Quentin often hosted top scholars in the diversity field on campus; while Samuel shared an experience in which the local community mobilized against the university but strong organizational and political prowess resulted in a multi-party committee that resolved the matter. And, Iris expressed that institution's role in the local community: "...taking that leadership role as an institution to make sure that we are not only engaging and educating and supporting the people here on campus, but really looking at the breath and the impact of the larger community that we draw staff and faculty from. So that's really important here."

### Autonomy

The ILOS promoted autonomy for the CDO role and was manifested through a freedom to take necessary action, accountability for university-wide diversity efforts and achievements, and independence from micro-management. Tammi stated: "If the autonomy is a trust, I know my President is not over here because [the president] has been told that [CDO 8] can run the place...and in the end, I have to answer for our pros, our cons, our good and bad." Nicole shared: "I have the support that I need and my hands are not tied it all, and it's not that anybody has said

that you can't do that or you can't do this, it's like whatever she wants to do, just do it, just go for it, just make us proud. It's that type of attitude.”

#### Access to Top Institutional Leadership

The ILOS promoted access to top institutional leadership for the CDO role and was manifested through equality with other executives, a seat in the President's/Chancellor's cabinet, a direct and exclusive reporting relationship to the President/Chancellor (meaning no dual reporting relationships to the Provost and President, or a reporting line to the President by-way of another administrator), and/or executive privileges and access to the President/Chancellor. Table 5.3 highlights the presidential access of the study's participating CDOs.

<b>Table 5.3: Access to Top Institutional Leadership</b>		
	<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Reports Directly <u>and</u> Exclusively to President/Chancellor</b>
CDO 1: Danielle	✓	
CDO 2: Gary	✓	✓
CDO 3: Ilene		
CDO 4: Keith	✓	✓
CDO 5: Nicole		
CDO 6: Quentin		
CDO 7: Samuel		✓
CDO 8: Tammi	✓	

Gary acknowledged the salience of having a direct line and reporting relationship to the University President as “an important distinction” and “extremely important in maintaining the presence and having the receptivity and ongoing support and resources to do the work that is necessary.” This diversity chief concluded: “The most important thing that I can say about the position is that it should report directly to the President.” Samuel echoed this stance: “The person in this kind of position has to report to the President. They have to have the ear of the President, otherwise they are not going to be as effective as they would be otherwise.” Additionally,

Samuel drew attention to an indirect benefit of reporting to the President: “Reporting directly to the President gives me university-wide access because the President’s office has a right to know what every unit is doing. That’s definitely a plus.”

Additionally, Keith and Tammi emphasized the essentiality of having a seat equal to other senior executives (e.g. vice presidents); and the value of meeting with and collaborating with those peer administrators, and having a voice in that space.

## Dysfunction

Dysfunction and disorganization were expressed through consistent senior-level administrative changes (e.g. new or interim presidents, provosts, governing body), lack of interest or support from senior-level administrative leadership, structural ambiguity (e.g. lack of clarity in reporting structure), and board discord; and, these circumstances had significant implications for the CDO role.

### *Senior-level Administrative Changes*

Several CDOs and informants acknowledged that priorities often shifted with new leadership. What posed a great challenge to the CDOs in this study was the degree of senior-level administrative changes that occurred in higher education, and particularly at their respective institutions. Nicole stated: “We’ve gone through so many iterations of new presidents”, while Quentin shared: “[As a result of] an upheaval in our senior administration...we now have an interim president [and] an interim provost.”

At University 8, there appeared to be a revolving door to the president’s office. According to Iris: “In the past five years we’ve had three different presidents”; and, the constant transition had a real impact on the CDO role, particularly in regards to reporting structure. Tammi acknowledged that the institution was in an “ambivalent place” as of late, but was



“optimistic” about the relationship with senior-level administration once matters settled. Tammi summarized: “Some titles are moved around [or] shifted around based on what president was here.”

#### *Lack of Interest or Support*

Lack of interest or support in the work of the CDO from senior-level leadership was also a result of the dysfunction experienced by those in the CDO role. According to Yolanda: “It seemed apparent to me and I believe others on the team too that it became harder to get our work done. It seemed like we would encounter resistance...so it was in my mind a negative [for the CDO] to report to the provost. It's much better to report directly to the president, just to have that high level of access.” Further examples of lack of interest or support for the diversity chief role were expressed by Ilene whose supervisor demonstrated a genuine “lack of knowledge”, “lack of interest”, and “lack of understanding” on the subject matter. Ilene also shared: “So my direct supervisor has a very hands-off approach... as far supervision there is none other than ‘these are the complaints’ ... you don't get praise.”

Quentin detailed: “We had this two-year moment with this other president who was a total disaster...on a lot of fronts, but especially on diversity because he really didn't get it, really didn't understand it, and did not in any meaningful way promote it.” Iris reiterated the issue of lack of support: “There is a gap in leadership supporting the work and investing in the work”; and Tammi – who communicated a non-existent relationship with the direct supervisor – shared: “It’s a whole lot easier to do your job well, if you have a boss or a leader ... who is stable and supportive.”

#### *Structural Ambiguity*

Lack of a defined or clear organizational structure was another source of dysfunction for the CDO role. Multiple informants expressed the frustration or challenges associated with unclear structural lines or compositions. Theresa stated: “When it's a diversity student issue, is that a student affairs issue or is that a [DEI] issue? Well the answer is it depends...sometimes though, we stumble over ourselves around who is point on what issue.”

Samuel drew attention to the structural challenge with human resources:

One that is the greatest ambiguity is with human resources. And I don't know how much of this is just because of the particular folks that are there; but, with human resources, since there's a lot of overlap especially with search and hiring committees, they are very unclear as to what my role should be in the hiring process. And that really just has to be a clear statement from the President as to who's expected to do what. That's one of the things I need to approach the president on.

Eric reiterated the challenges of structural ambiguity with compliance:

Part of the challenges from a diversity standpoint is that we have an EEOC officer who from our perspective is more aligned to compliance; and we're more aligned to the learning and bringing the perspective. So students or faculty and staff, they don't come to us about compliance. I think in other universities that the chief diversity officer wears the same hat as the EEOC compliance officer. That's a little different for this University; and it may be a bit confusing to individuals that have been at other universities.... So we're diversity and while we will assist if a student has an issue, we've collaborated with the EEOC officer to say ‘from a reporting standpoint, those students, faculty and staff, they've got to come to you when it's compliance’. There sometimes is confusion of ‘well who do I reach out to’? Now there's not confusion between the EEOC office and our office...we worked it out.”

Lola spoke to the challenges that arose from reporting at a different level than the CDO:

“I actually report to the [AVP] of Student Affairs, who reports to the Vice President for Student Affairs, who reports to the President. [Samuel] reports directly to the President. So what we have to be careful of is if [Samuel] joins in the conversation, he has the responsibility to share it with the President, but I have a responsibility to share with [my direct supervisor]. There are two people removed. So one is just about timing, the notification. So oftentimes things are happening so fast, I need to let my folks know and get them in the loop because I would never want my Vice President to hear from the President's office [first] because of [Samuel]. And so that's tricky. That's tough sometimes.”

*Board Discord*

Chaos within the governing body (board), or as a result of the governing body was also witnessed and had implications for the CDO role. Gary stated: “We've had some issues in the last two years related to governance and reporting...where three individuals of the [governing body's] executive committee asked for the president's resignation. That didn't happen because of the culture of the institution, [which] placed a roadblock...meaning that faculty, students, staff and community protested, and the president was reinstated.”

Additionally, Esmeralda spoke to board discord:

There's always the challenge of having a [governing body] and the President, and while ours seem to work well together there's always going to be differences of opinion... it's how those differences of opinion are played out that ultimately impacts the students and the workers of the institution. But I think sometimes the challenge just becomes trying to figure out what we want to move forward from...what would forward look like? So will it look more like what the [governing body] envisions it to look like, or will it look like what the President wants it to look like, or will it look like a collaboration between both parties. So sometimes that's easier said than done.”

Disparity

The ILOS also led to disparities and inconsistencies for the CDO role. Particularly, the CDO role was influenced by variances between institutional structure and unit structure, the institution's stated position on DEI and actual DEI efforts, and perceived power and actual power. Esmeralda discussed the institution-level tendency toward homogenous structures, or structures that are “as like [the administrator] as possible, because it's for [the administrator].” This was in direct contrast to the approach taken by CDOs when building their units. Tammi summarized the challenge of navigating between the structure of the institution and the structure of the DEI unit: “I have to find out how can I line up so that I can get the things done that we need to get done within the structure of the institution, that is not the same as the structure of this office” and “sometimes my staff is really aggravated because...they're just in two different worlds.”

In terms of stated positions versus actual efforts, multiple CDOs acknowledged their institution's shortcomings. Quentin stated: "It's hard for us to practice the public rhetoric... it is very hard on a practical level to operationalize that, into the curriculum, into retaining and ensuring the success of students. We've got that stated thing, but it's hard to keep it going as a reality." Ilene shared: "I don't think [University 3] wants to invest the time. I don't think they want to really go for the gold, they don't want to put in that effort to really affect serious change. So when [University 3] starts to invest more in actually making changes, I think the culture will shift. Right now they haven't 100% invested in making changes." And Tammi summarized the implications of inconsistency: "There's a lot of people that don't want to take jobs in this area – diversity officers – because now they know in most places they're going to be dealing with that inconsistency."

Ilene expressed the reality for those in the CDO role with limited actual power to further progress: "The University has to see a value. If they don't see the value in having a diversity office [and] having a diversity officer, it won't be. It's as simple as that. They can always find someone to chair a diversity council..." Quentin also discussed limited power: "I don't have the resources to make independent decisions. I still have to go through the Provost to make a lot of decisions." And Samuel addressed the lack of authority in the role:

But the one thing that tends to be consistent, we aren't given the authority, for example, to send back applicant pools or to require that someone go back out and advertise more or to require that within every finalist pool there be at least one person of color, or require that the committee explain why there isn't a person of color in the finalists, and actually verify and show the efforts that they made and that they did everything possible to recruit and consider potential diverse candidates. So that's one of the things in the role that needs to evolve, it needs to change; they need to give us and trust us and allow us to make some of those calls.

Resource Challenges or Navigation of Resource Challenges

Resource challenges (or navigation of resource challenges) was also an implication of the ILOS for the CDO role. Institution-level organizational structure influenced challenges in terms of team members/personnel, funding/control of funding, budget crises, managing expectations, and centralization efforts. Esmeralda shared the implications of limited personnel options: “Campuses hire – particularly at the lower levels – based on what's available in the community. So you see a lot of people that are not of color holding offices in management. And there's also that true saying that we tend to reproduce ourselves, so...if you by the nature of who you are and where you come from...if you don't come from a place where diversity is recognized or acknowledged, then that's not a priority for you; and you're going to carry that priority with you into the workplace.” Further challenges for the CDO in terms of personnel were shared by Keith: “It’s much harder to get rid of people that I think it probably should be given the way things are shifting. It kind of made sense since the way the institution used to run, but it's really not sensible anymore.” In a hiring freeze and under-resourced, Nanette expressed in regards to the DEI unit at that institution: “I honestly don't know what appropriate staff resources would look like.”

In regards to funding matters, Tammi shared: “Sometimes we get money put back to [accomplish] certain small projects. Sometimes we lose it. So from year to year we’re always wondering what will be the level of support, and how will it impact our ability to work at the high level of excellence that we demand of ourselves here.” And Samuel stated: “The piece that is lacking in most places is the commitment to funding. Because they will create the position in most places...but it's not used to resources with the staffing and/or funds to do a good job...and also control over funds that that person has can make that person that much more effective.”

Danielle shared the challenge of time management and managing expectations: “I think many times constituent groups confuse the person holding the role with the institution. So they

become angry about what the institution hasn't done and suddenly it's your responsibility...I think managing expectations is the challenge in all of this.” Theresa also discussed the burden of unrealistic expectations for the CDO role: “The role of a CDO is a very interpersonal kind of thing, which is being able to say ‘I hear you. I’m listening. I’m going to do something about it. I’m going to fix this problem’. You actually may not be able to fix it, but you are going to try to fix it. And you convince people that you care.”

Keith discussed the influence of ILOS centralization efforts: “The administrative function is being more centralized. We said it was too decentralized and we were unable to move as an institution, and...everybody was doing their own thing. So there's been some move to centralize on the administrative side. That's true within the [DEI] division as well as the whole campus; and that was one of the edicts that the [President] made as part of a whole suite of changes that are aimed at making us more efficient. We need to be able to do the same with less. So we've been going through reorgs and things like that.”

### Isolation

ILOS also fostered isolation for the CDO role and was manifested through not being a member of the cabinet, not reporting directly to the President, and feeling disconnected or invisible in the role. Ilene discussed the weightlessness of reporting to someone other than the President (or even a Vice President) as well as the feelings of isolation: “I'm one of the islands that's off to the side. I'm really an island and not many people visit me. I have no contact with anyone other than my direct supervisor.” Tammi reiterated the experience of loneliness: “When I need someone to step in...to say this is what [Tammi] is saying we should do, I have no one. There is no backup when I need someone to be my backup.” And, Nanette shared bluntly: “I think we feel isolated.”

Nicole shared that communication with the President only takes place “when there's a problem... which seems reactive rather than proactive.” Further, Nicole and Samuel both expressed the void of not being a part of the executive cabinet.

### Slow-Moving Change or Progress

The ILOS also led to slow-moving change for the CDO role. Whether influenced by decentralization, silos, bureaucracy, politics, hierarchy or some other structural factor of the institution, the diversity change agent encountered persistent barriers to progress. Several informants spoke to the speed (or lack thereof) of change at their institutions. Yolanda attributed the slow progress to the decentralization of the institution; Nanette recognized the influence of ILOS to be an “elaborate dance that doesn't seem to lead much of anywhere”; and, Iris suggested that to “step back and take the macro view versus the micro view, things are very slow to change [at University 8].”

### Politicization

The ILOS promoted politicization for the CDO role and was manifested through competition for scarce resources, redistribution of power, and excessive ‘red tape’ or protocols. Tammi discussed how the CDO role came along during a “serious budget crisis”, and all campus units had to stand firm in terms of holding on to scarce resources. Danielle summarized the politicization experienced by the CDO role: “Politics are always at play on these issues. Because fundamentally diversity becomes at some level about redistribution of power. Inclusion becomes about redistribution of resources. And that's always political.” Samuel shared the challenges of redistribution of power away from two of the typical institution's most powerful constituents – faculty and upper administration – and stated: “...it's not necessarily that they are more apt to disagree with diversity, it's simply a product of the fact that they have the most power.”

In terms of excessive ‘red tape’ or protocols, Quentin highlighted that experience: “Most [people] likely feel that they have to go through their Dean to work with faculty in another area. This doesn’t affect their own scholarship (they work collaboratively that way), but in creating a diversity initiative they are most likely to go through the two deans to get to someone in another college to create that collaboration. So the structure just seems to...create silos. People aren’t necessarily responsive to one another in ways that work efficiently.” Samuel also discussed the excessive structural and political protocols: “We have protocols that...for example... I can’t go to certain community members without first checking in with the Vice President for Community Engagement, or I can’t go out and ask for a \$20 donation without checking in with Advancement.”

#### Limited Responsibilities or Sphere(s) of Influence

The ILOS led to limited responsibilities or sphere(s) of influence for the CDO role. Multiple informants shared that the actual mandate or charge of the CDO was unclear to the CDO (and so subsequently members of the DEI team), and this was greatly influenced by the ILOS. One informant shared that “...the mandate is not quite clear to [the CDO] or to me. What [the CDO] is authorized to do, what [the CDO] is directed to do, what initiative [the CDO] can take for projects that [the CDO] really thinks are critical. Those directions are not always clear. My perception is that [the CDO] really isn’t authorized yet to do major diversity work even though [the CDO] is charged with it. I don’t think [the CDO] is empowered to do it.” Another informant expressed concern for the direction of the institution on DEI matters and specifically for the charge of the CDO and the CDO role: “We were going above and beyond the compliance and that level of work, and now we’ve taken a step back.”



## Implications of Organizational Structure – Unit Level (ULOS)

ULOS was also determined through thick description by study participants and review of archival documents; and the result was a foundation in which to extrapolate toward understanding the implications of ULOS on the CDO role. The determined implications of ULOS for the CDO role were aggregated into two categories, favorable and unfavorable. The favorable implications of ULOS for the CDO role included relationship maximization; equality; empowerment, authority, or autonomy; community; and strategic or intentional alignment to a specific unit (e.g. president's office). The unfavorable implications of ULOS for the CDO role included resource challenges, siloed intra-office dynamics or relationships, and micromanagement. The rationale for these implications now follows.

### Relationship Maximization

Relationship maximization – the ability to make the fullest use of key relationships – was also an implication of the ULOS for the CDO role. For ULOS, relationship maximization was realized through establishing stable and supportive relationships with team members, separating DEI efforts from compliance work, acquiring or providing supplemental funds to support student-led DEI initiatives, and community engagement. In regards to stable relationships, Nicole shared: “I handpicked this group, so I knew what their strengths and weaknesses were, and I was able to capitalize on that.” And, Yolanda discussed how Gary liked to keep a “finger on the pulse” of what was happening within that DEI unit in order to establish strong and supportive relationships with the team.

Three universities were identified as having separate compliance/EEO offices; and the study participants from those institutions imparted the advantage of that separate structural composition. Theresa shared: “I'm really happy that we don't have compliance within our area

because I think if we did that is all we would be doing is compliance.” Eric also communicated how a separate compliance unit was beneficial for them: “One of the advantages is from the standpoint of when you separate the compliance, then students, faculty and staff tend to be excited about [DEI] opportunities.”

The work of supporting student-led DEI initiatives as a means of relationship maximization was discussed by Ilene and Yolanda. Yolanda also discussed how the DEI unit at University 2 was structured to engage with the community: “I represent our office at a community engagement network...I often talk about how to bridge the gap [between city and campus. There is] this perception from local citizens that the University is not accessible to them....” Further, Tammi also discussed the necessity of community engagement for that DEI unit and outreach as a means of connecting campus and city.

## Equality

ULOS fostered equality for the CDO role and was manifested through encouraging team members to speak up and voice their opinions, listening to team members’ perspectives, and establishing a staff of equals. In regards to the DEI unit at University 8, Tammi shared:

I don’t treat anyone in here as though they’re opinion about a matter or project is any less valuable than my own...any less valid...I’m supposed to protect the values that we stand for here in this office, but our voices need to be equal because if they aren’t, you’re going to get to the point [where] you’re going to stop speaking. You’re going to stop making your opinions heard, even if you know it’s the right one. And I think that’s what happens on an institutional level: because people feel as though their voices aren’t valued, they don’t speak. So they [institution-level individuals] miss all this rich information that we could have used...and here, we’re the office that says ‘tell me what you think, tell me where you think this is going to go, tell me what you think our next move should be’.”

Yolanda shared that unit morale had lifted under Gary, and that the CDO had a “handle on what staff members were accomplishing, was interested in staff members’ development, and was invested in staff members being content in their position and feeling fulfilled in their work.”

Yolanda also discussed the “horizontal plane” or “flattened organizational chart” of the DEI unit at University 2, and stated that by flattening the structure Gary “was able to be more in close communication with each of the staff members, be more familiar with their vocational interests, be able to support them in their development as employees, and be more acquainted with their level of contentment in their position.”

#### Empowerment, Authority, or Autonomy

Empowerment, authority, or autonomy was also an implication of the ULOS for the CDO role, by way of delegation to competent or trusted team members and encouragement for team members to set their own professional goals. In reference to the DEI unit, Ilene stated: “I’ve had some very able-bodied individuals to assist me.” Keith shared: “On a day-to-day basis I don’t try to run all my different programs...they all have competent people as [leaders]. We’re relatively decentralized and so if you get competent people in place doing what they need to do, then it takes a lot less attention and energy from the center to make things go well.” Tammi expressed the following about the DEI unit at University 8: “I think that people work harder if they feel they own the shop...if you feel you own it, you’re going to protect it, you’re going to always make it look good and you’re going to represent it well. So people come in... and I think ‘you are going to come and work for me...don’t tell me that. You’re going to come and work *with* me!’” And, Gary shared the empowerment philosophy that allowed team members to write their own professional goals: “The staff have an opportunity to write their goals at the beginning of an academic year, to discuss those goals with me, and to have several opportunities throughout the year to review progress.”

#### Community

The ULOS also led to community for the CDO role and was expressed through an established atmosphere of team and high-level of accessibility. Ellen shared the effort toward DEI unit-based community: “We always talk about collaborating across departments, but I really want us to understand that we have to collaborate within before we can even think about collaborating across.” Additionally, Esmeralda discussed the team dynamic of the DEI unit at that institution: “The teamwork between the [DEI] staff and the students is pretty close to seamless. Even when there is a mix-up or a misstep by one, there's another one right there to help make it right, and they do it with a smile on their faces. Their customer service, a lot of departments...could learn a lot from their customer service skills.” Yolanda talked about the accessibility of Gary: “He’s so intimately involved with each of the projects in which we’re responsible (that it makes sense for us to report directly to him rather than through somebody else). I think the communications would get diluted and we wouldn’t have as much access to each other; and the work would not be as efficient. I also feel like I can just pick up the phone and call him if I need to clarify something...there's a lot of accessibility. So I think that our structure works pretty well.” Additionally, Ilene discussed the open-door policy with the DEI team at University 3: “My door is open, I never close my door; and, if they have a question there's no way I'm not going to answer.”

#### Strategic or Intentional Alignment

The ULOS also led to strategic or intentional alignment to a specific unit or office for the CDO role. Esmeralda stated that “our [DEI] office falls under the Office of the President, which to me says a lot about the significance of that office and how important it is.” At University 2, the CDO and the select members of the DEI unit were in the same building and shared a close physical proximity to the President. The study participants acknowledged the advantage in that

location. And, Eric stated: “Our [DEI] office is aligned to Academic Affairs, so we are supporting our student learning, and that's pretty consistent in what we do: help the learning environment.”

### Resource Challenges

Resource challenges (or navigation of resource challenges) was also an implication of the ULOS for the CDO role. Unit-level organizational structure influenced resource challenges in terms of: (a) sharing team members with other units, (b) team members splitting work time between DEI responsibilities and other non-DEI responsibilities, (c) being under-resourced or under-staffed, (d) inappropriate team members (e.g. unqualified or disgruntled team members), (e) shifting from internal to external control (e.g. outsourcing select DEI efforts to external consultants), and (f) supervision issues (e.g. a CDO too-removed from team members to evaluate their performance).

Study participants from University 1, University 3, and University 7 all communicated that they shared a team with another campus department which resulted in a 50-50 split of that team member's ownership; while study participants from University 2 and University 5 discussed that select full-DEI team members split work time between DEI and non-DEI responsibilities. Most – but not all – DEI units were recognized as under-resourced or under-staffed. Samuel shared a specific deficiency: “One of the things that I think you'll find with most chief diversity officers is they don't have anyone to do the data analysis and data collection; and a lot of what we do – especially if we're going to be doing assessments – requires that.” And Keith shared perspective as to how DEI units possibly overcome their resource challenges: “It's an area that has been always under-resourced, and part of why that still works is that people

really are deeply involved in a personal, passionate way; and they'll do what they need to do to serve the students.”

Inappropriate team members posed a challenge for University 1 and University 4. Danielle shared the “need to have people with [appropriate] skill sets... Sometimes it has to do with diversity, sometimes it's about are you a good statistician. And so we're still in the process of building out the infrastructure to move the institution forward.” Ellen reiterated the resource challenges of inappropriate staff at University 1:

“Our next thing is to look at our organizational structure and look at what we really are supposed to be doing, and aligned those positions with that...with our vision and mission statements so that our structure does make sense. So we've got folks doing all kinds of things: we have our director position working on faculty and staff issues and some student issues. Our Associate Vice Chancellor is working on student issues and faculty issues, and that's not necessary. So we need to pull some things apart and put them where they belong. But when you respond quickly... and you don't really think it through, that's what you get.”

Theresa also shared the resource challenges of inappropriate staff at that institution: “So we put all the cohort programs together thinking [they are] basically doing the same kind of work, we're putting them together with one leader so that they would have this synergy and vision and programs...and that's not happening. People are not talking to each other.”

In regards to the unit structure shifting from internal to external control for the DEI team, Iris shared that there were “some outside consultants coming in because [we] still have quite a bit of budget left; so, there will be very visible diversity work happening here in terms of training and educational programs, but it won't be the [internal DEI team].” And, in regards to supervision issues within the DEI unit, two informants shared that their CDOs were not able to support them at the level they had hoped. One of those informants summarized: “[The CDO] doesn't get to see [my work] operationally. I think that's one of the challenges: supervision in this

work...because there are so many different components to diversity work, [the CDO] can't be the expert or be fully present for the entire team doing that work."

### Siloed Intra-Office Dynamics or Relationships

Siloed intra-office dynamics or relationships was also an implication of the ULOS for the CDO role. Ilene stated: "We have a top-down [structure] in my office...the support staff individuals feel downtrodden. So, it's very bureaucratic – unit wise, office wise, division-wise. And it's not that it's not effective, it's just impersonal...very impersonal. Further, Gary discussed the challenge of siloed office dynamics for that DEI unit: "Though it's a small office, our office is divided." Yolanda reiterated that sentiment: "We actually are somewhat decentralized because even though we're small...we have two separate locations." At University 8 the siloed office dynamics were present as well, and Iris stated: "[Tammi] and [Tammi's executive assistant] are down in one suite, and the rest of us are down in the other."

### Micromanagement

One informant discussed the possibility of micromanagement for the CDO role as a result of the ULOS:

I was working this process and...then in the middle of the crisis [the CDO] was asking me 500 questions, and I'm thinking I need to focus on the situation, not updating [the CDO] right now. I don't see [the CDO] as a doer; I see [the CDO] as a strategic planner. And [the CDO] is not a responder. And I didn't say it at that time. So that part sometimes adds confusion because it doesn't mean that they're responsible for all things related to [DEI] on campus. I'm all about the movement. I think we all need to work, there's a lot of work to do, but I'm also not trying to add another person in the mix...maybe we could set up a meeting and talk about this after we are through it, but not in the middle of it. So...that's tough.

### Summary of Organizational Structure

Descriptions and examinations of organizational structure, and the implications of the construct on the CDO role within the previous three to five years revealed that organizational

structure has significant implications for the CDO role; and that the ULOS at some institutions was more aligned or comparable to the ILOS than at other institutions. Also determined were the implications of ILOS for the CDO role, which included: (a) autonomy, (b) dysfunction, (c) access to the top institutional leader (e.g. president or chancellor), (d) relationship maximization (via advocacy, consultation, or persuasion), (e) disparity, (f) resource challenges or navigation of resource challenges, (g) isolation, (h) slow-moving change or progress, (i) politicization, and (j) limited responsibilities or sphere(s) of influence. Further, the implications of ULOS for the CDO role included: (a) equality, (b) empowerment, authority, or autonomy, (c) community, (d) resource challenges, (e) relationship maximization, (f) strategic or intentional alignment to a specific unit (e.g. president's office), (g) siloed intra-office dynamics or relationships, and (h) micromanagement.

Organizational structure (particularly ILOS), has significant implications for diversity chiefs in higher education. Although institutions are contextually unique and have varying needs, the placement of the CDO within the 'food chain', or institution-level organizational structure, is worthy of further consideration given the current inconsistency of placement across the landscape coupled with the severity and necessity of the CDO's tasks. Several colleges and universities with CDOs have studied and examined where the CDO post should fall within the ILOS (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013); and, the CDO participants in this study shared specific examples of the institution decision-making process around the topic. Interdisciplinary councils/committees, executive cabinets, presidential directives, emulation of peer institutions, etc. were all cited as means for arriving at the decision for the CDOs placement in ILOS.

The inconsistency in the CDO's formal organizational placement must be addressed, particularly as the CDO role in higher education begins to mature in existence. In today's



environment, reporting directly to the university president is most optimal because of the magnitude of the task of organizational change that CDOs must lead, and the necessity of having the support of the greatest and most powerful of all partners. But as revealed in this study, not all CDOs report directly to the university president. (And some do not even report directly to the provost, either.) As one CDO stated: "...if I can leave you with anything, the most important thing that I can say to you about the position is that it should report directly to the president." Five of the eight CDOs in this study did not report directly and exclusively to the university president. Three of those five were frustrated by their current reporting structure or dynamic.

Based on the findings in this study, higher education scholarship should consider: Can the CDO role survive and thrive without reporting directly to the university president? Can the CDO role survive without the complete backing of the university president? If change is slow to come: Is a variation in CDO reporting structures across higher education optimal or sustainable?

Further, what other cabinet member (or non-cabinet member) has this level of dependence, or in the past has had to rely on a strong President-CDO partnership as substantially as the CDO does today? Is there a model to follow by which the CDO can anticipate being emancipated from the president as progress or institutionalization occurs? Can the CDO role continue to have such an unprecedented reliance on the university president? What are the implications of a CDO who reports directly to the president but does not have a seat at the executive table (as a cabinet member) and therefore does not have access to key partners and the ability to maximize those relationships in that critical space? (The CDO could seek out cabinet members outside of the executive meeting space, but the genuine concern here is the message being sent by the CDO's absence from the table.) What does all of this mean for CDOs who report to administrators other than the university president? It will be interesting to

understanding the implications of the various CDO placement and reporting relationship decisions enacted in higher education as the post advances.

## CHAPTER 6

### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

#### Introduction

This study sought to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer in higher education by examining the role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture. Guided by the following research question – *What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?* – the researcher sought to unveil commonalities and distinctions in organizational structure (institution and unit) and organizational culture (institution and unit); and, the implications of these contexts for the CDO role at select higher education institutions. Organizational structure and organizational culture were disaggregated by institution and unit to enhance our understanding of the CDO role as the diversity chief navigates the two spaces.

INSTITUTION STRUCTURE	INSTITUTION CULTURE
UNIT STRUCTURE	UNIT CULTURE

The previous chapter examined organizational structure at the institution and unit levels and the implications of both for the CDO role. Now this chapter will examine organizational culture and the implications of the construct on the CDO role during the previous three to five year timeframe.

## Organizational Culture Defined and Described

Although a universal definition for organizational culture remains elusive for higher education (Tierney, 2008), several scholars recognize organizational culture as some combination of the shared values, beliefs, norms, dogma, assumptions, habits, practices, symbols and metaphors held by members of an organization (Craig, 2004; Dill, 1982; Keup, Walker, Astin, & Lindholm, 2001; Schein, 1992). It was this ‘combination’ that guided the discourse of organizational culture for this study.

Each CDO and informant was asked to describe the organizational culture of their institution as well as their diversity office/unit. The study participants were not intentionally provided with a working definition for organizational culture (although the researcher was prepared to offer a guiding definition if requested). No interviewees needed assistance with a definition for organizational culture; however a few informant participants needed additional time to consider the culture of their institution before providing a response. (No CDOs needed additional time to process the question regarding defining their organizational culture. It became quickly apparent that they had an operating definition of organizational culture and their responses contained the elements of organizational culture as defined by Schein and others). The keywords that emerged from the data are highlighted below in Tables 6.1 and 6.2, followed by a more comprehensive review of the results per participant. (All keywords are direct quotes from study participants with the exception of those followed by an asterisk, which were inferred by the researcher based on the data).

<b>Table 6.1: Keywords for Organizational Culture at Institution Level (ILOC)</b>			
<b>University</b>  <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservative</li> <li>• Stagnant*</li> <li>• Gender-Biased</li> <li>• Scarcity-Mentality</li> <li>• Data-Driven</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolated*</li> <li>• Compassionate</li> <li>• Decentralized</li> <li>• Lacking in Cultural Competence</li> <li>• Relationship-Embedded</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsteady*</li> <li>• Excellence-Minded</li> <li>• Decentralized</li> <li>• Politically-Influenced*</li> <li>• Tense*</li> <li>• Conflicted</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monocultural</li> <li>• Administratively-Influenced</li> <li>• Gender-Biased</li> <li>• Public Mission-Minded</li> <li>• Service-Oriented</li> <li>• Community Solidarity</li> <li>• Denying</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistant</li> <li>• Unsteady*</li> <li>• Data-Driven/ROI</li> <li>• Reactive</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assumes the Best in Others</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Transparent</li> <li>• Heterogeneous*</li> <li>• “C.Y.A.”: Cover Your [Rear End]</li> <li>• Casual</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis-Paralysis</li> <li>• Elite</li> <li>• Decentralized</li> <li>• Action/Activism</li> <li>• Public Mission Minded</li> <li>• Autocratic</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservative</li> <li>• Uncommitted*</li> <li>• Gender-Biased</li> <li>• Traditional*</li> <li>• Arrogant</li> <li>• Complacent</li> </ul>

Defining organizational culture often produced like-words between CDO and informant (intra-institutional); however the variance was more prominent inter-institutionally. Unlike organizational structure, the subjectivity of organizational culture produced a plethora of keywords and expressions for both the institution-level (ILOC) and the unit level (ULOC). However, the rare instance of a duplicated ILOC keyword was ‘gender-biased’; and this culture

definition was typically shared by members of one gender group. Additionally, discussions of ULOC often produced less descriptors than ILOC. There were a total of 30 ULOC descriptors versus 44 ILOC descriptors. This and other findings will be further examined in the next chapter.

<b>Table 6.2: Keywords for Organizational Culture at Unit Level (ULOC)</b>			
<b>University</b>  <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Assessing/Measuring</li> <li>• Hardworking</li> <li>• Supportive</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Leaders in Collaboration</li> <li>• Relationship-Building</li> <li>• Aggressive</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly-Functioning</li> <li>• Committed</li> <li>• Relationship-Building</li> <li>• Can-Do Attitudes</li> <li>• Progressive</li> <li>• Accessible</li> <li>• Autonomous</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Influential</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Autonomous</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth-Minded</li> <li>• Diverse</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive</li> </ul>
<b>University</b>  <b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Aggressive</li> <li>• Open</li> <li>• Autocratic</li> <li>• Process-Oriented</li> </ul>	<b>University</b>  <b>8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caretakers</li> </ul>

#### University 1

The ILOC at University 1 was described as conservative, stagnant, gender-biased, data-driven, and scarcity-mentality. The study participants from University 1 drew attention to the institution's: (a) emphasis on data and numerical/quantifiable accomplishments, (b) sluggishness or apathy towards change regardless of cultural and societal shifts, (c) tendency to exude male-

bias in professional/administrative settings, and (d) prominence for competition of scarce resources. According to Danielle, the conservative ILOC of University 1 made shifts to “expected behaviors and values” extremely difficult for the CDO role to encourage or impose; and, Ellen reiterated the shortcomings of an ILOC that failed to properly support change efforts: “It communicates volumes about what is really important.”

The ULOC at University 1 was described as collaborative, assessing/measuring, coaching, supportive, and hardworking. Ellen stated: “I have never worked at a place where the vice president for research would ever say the diversity person had something important to contribute. I almost fell off my chair.” Additionally, the study participants from University 1 acknowledged the significance of accountability and measuring their work in order to maintain credibility and sustain (financial) resources in an already under-resourced environment.

#### University 2

The ILOC at University 2 was described as unsteady, excellence-minded, decentralized, politically-influenced, tense, and conflicted. Excellence was a “pervasive term and attitude” (Yolanda) and a “cornerstone of the University culture” (Gary) that resonated throughout all university units. However, the institution was still grappling with historical implications and thus felt an air of tension and conflict at times as it attempted to shift its organizational culture.

The ULOC at University 2 was described as highly-functioning, committed, relationship building, ‘can-do’ attitudes, progressive, autonomous and accessible. The study participants reiterated relationships, “a lot of accessibility” (Yolanda) between team members and the diversity chief, “plenty of autonomy” (Yolanda), a respectful and progressive team “fully accepting of all spectrums of human attributes” (Gary) and commitment in their work.

#### University 3

The ILOC at University 3 was described as resistant, unsteady, data-driven/return-on-investment-driven, and reactive. Esmeralda expressed a culture that was “changing” and in a “state of flux”; and, Ilene recognized the institution’s culture to be at a “tipping point” and “gradually shifting” toward becoming “very welcoming to all who enter” but expressed hesitation based on the “reactive” nature and unprecedented lack of investment and impetus toward change on behalf of institutional leadership. Leadership had also caused a shift toward statistics as the norm, which thereby eliminated ambiguity and “gray zones”, and ensured that everyone knew exactly what was expected of them as far as numbers.

The ULOC at University 3 was described as growth-minded and diverse. The diversity chief acknowledged purposeful efforts towards “variety of thought in [the] office” and to foster an atmosphere of growth and progress.

#### University 4

The ILOC at University 4 was described as analysis-paralysis, elite, decentralized, activism, public mission-minded, and autocratic. Keith acknowledged that “maybe we’re a little full of ourselves” in regards to Institution 4’s accomplishments in higher education, and desire to cultivate a “highly competent” culture. Additionally, Theresa stated: “The culture of the institution is decentralized. The lot of authority and power is delegated to vice chancellors, deans, and chairs [in each division].” It was also noted by both study participants from University 4 that the institution was known for its activism, stance on social justice, and commitment to the public mission.

The ULOC at University 4 was described as collaborative, innovative, aggressive, open, autocratic, and process-oriented. The desire to be thought leaders, innovative thinkers, example setters, and aggressive in their pursuit of excellence and quality was how Keith communicated



the diversity unit's culture. Informant 4 expressed the complexity of the diversity unit's culture as "collaborative and innovative and open...but also hierarchical....and at times a little autocratic" due to the inherited culture of process-orientation, consensus building, and analysis paralysis.

#### University 5

The ILOC at University 5 was described as isolated, compassionate, decentralized, lacking in cultural competent, and relationship-embedded. Nicole acknowledged on four separate instances the challenge of getting the University 5 "faculty and staff to become more culturally competent." Additionally, the relational nature of campus constituents (meaning the prominence of relatives and kinships) was prevalent at University 5; and this relationship-embedded environment sometimes had a negative impact on culture and promoted a poor level of "customer service" (Nicole).

The ULOC at University 5 was described as collaborative, leading in collaboration, relationship building, and aggressive. According to Nicole, the diversity unit was an "aggressive, robust program...moving forward with full speed." The office was built with individuals who were identified as "relationship builders" and those who were "trying to lead" (Nicole).

#### University 6

The ILOC at University 6 was described as monocultural, administratively-influenced, gender-biased, public-mission minded, service-oriented, community solidarity, and denying. Nanette addressed the "overt sexism" as well as the microaggressions that produced sexism at University 6. Quentin acknowledged the strength of the administrative side of University 6: "I usually see the academic part of the institution as really the center of things, but the administrative side is a fairly strong operation that in many ways influences the academic side of

the institution.” Additionally, the institution’s (a) solidarity with community, (b) commitment to service work, (c) emphasis on social justice, and (d) prioritization of the public mission was reiterated by the study participants. However, University 6 was still plagued by a predominantly monocultural (student) composition that recycled a narrow view year after year at the institution. Or, as stated by Nanette: “There is a homogeneity to the institution that is very hard. Sort of an inertia.” Further, Quentin summarized: “I think there's kind of this denying culture here in which there is a belief that we just hire the best people, and it's almost like they actually believe that the world can be colorblind....”

The ULOC at University 6 was described as supportive, autonomous, influential, and collaborative. Quentin acknowledged the high level of support and autonomy afforded team members, as well as the substantial degree of support and influence imparted to campus constituents in an effort to drive the diversity unit’s goals and objectives.

#### University 7

The ILOC at University 7 was described as collaborative, assuming the best in others, casual, C.Y.A. (Cover Your [Rear End]), heterogeneous, and transparent. Samuel identified the culture of University 7 as casual, anti-elitist, or “the common person’s kind of college” where there was a diversity of voices, employees enjoyed coming to work, assumed the best in others, and possessed predominantly positive attitudes about working together. According to Lola, the intentionality of University 7 in regards to diversity led to “no hidden agendas” and a transparency in expectations, values and willingness to collaborate. However Lola also acknowledged the confusion related to timing and involvement of all the diversity players when diversity-related issues arose; and, thus acknowledged the prevalence of the C.Y.A. approach at University 7.

The ULOC at University 7 was described as positive. Samuel and the diversity team tended to focus on successes and those things which can be done. According to Samuel, the goal was to “create an environment that was fun, exciting, and that people wanted to join.”

#### University 8

The ILOC at University 8 was described as conservative, uncommitted, gender-biased, traditional, arrogant, and complacent. The institution rested heavily on its status, the status quo, and traditions, much to the detriment of progress. Tammi stated: “Our own arrogance...slows us down from focusing on the things we should be doing.” Additionally, part of that tradition and status quo – which pertained to gender preference – continued to present challenges for select campus constituents. Iris recognized the “harsh conservative environment” and “conservative perspective” of some at University 8.

The ULOC at University 8 was described as caretaking. Tammi recognized the diversity unit as “caretakers of a community” who were thoughtful, purposeful, and community-minded within an atmosphere (the institution) that was not the same as their own (the diversity unit).

#### Implications of Organizational Culture – Institution Level (ILOC)

Through thick description of organizational culture by study participants and review of archival documents, the researcher was provided with a solid foundation for understanding the ILOC at each institution. This foundation enabled the researcher to extrapolate toward understanding the implications of ILOC on the CDO role. The determined implications of ILOC for the CDO role were aggregated into three categories: favorable, unfavorable, and neutral. The favorable implications of ILOC for the CDO role included relationship maximization, community, and leading the campus in collaboration. The unfavorable implications of ILOC for the CDO role included maintenance of the status quo or institutional traditions, elitism,

contradiction or inconsistency, antagonism, and atypical higher education challenges. And the neutral implications of ILOC for the CDO role included state-, system-, or university-wide reinforcement and support via mandate and/or assessment; and pragmatism. The rationale for these implications now follows.

### Relationship Maximization

Relationship maximization – the ability to make the fullest use of key relationships – was also an implication of the ILOC for the CDO role. Relationship maximization was realized through identification and maintenance of campus partnerships (e.g. human resources, student organizations, faculty), stable and supportive relationships with institution leaders (e.g. President, Chancellor, Provost), and networking and collaboration with external partners (e.g. other/peer institutions, corporate or professional alliances, organizations such as NADOHE, and local communities).

Most CDOs discussed the work of their institution’s diversity councils (which they often chaired) as a key means for relationship maximization across campus. In regards to key campus partnerships, Keith shared: “You have to operate on the academic level – where it really counts – if you're really trying to change an academic institution’s culture”; and in regards to cross-campus partnerships, Keith stated: “We definitely say all the time this is everybody's responsibility and everybody's job.” Samuel discussed the search committee partnership with faculty:

The faculty [representative]...has been responsible and has worked the search committees in advance...and this is the first year that we implemented our new procedures that have a heavy focus on diversity in the hiring process, ensuring that job descriptions require or prefer certain diversity-related competencies and...all faculty and all top administrators have to be asked about their intercultural competence with proven and demonstrated behaviors in the past that show that they would be able to do diversity-related work here. Making sure that diversity is in the rubric...those are all things that are now required...In the past [the faculty representative] never really saw search committees

talking about a person, either their diversity or their diversity competencies, but now [search] committees forward or do not forward people because they do or do not have the intercultural competencies that we're looking for.

Samuel also imparted the influence of a stable and supportive relationship with institution leaders. After the release of a university employee, the President of University 7 sat down with a select group of campus constituents, and that conversation unveiled “the need for professional development for underrepresented groups. [The President] also identified funds to do a leadership conference for our faculty and staff of color. So...our president gets it.”

Eric shared how that unit was empowered to “go out and collaborate with organizations both internal and external”; and Nicole reiterated how the team was empowered to “work with corporate and other universities in their diversity initiatives.”

## Community

Community was also an implication of ILOC for the CDO role. Samuel shared that the casual demeanor and transparency of University 7 resulted in a “healthy place to work” and a place where “folks enjoyed coming to work.” Eric shared how the DEI unit at that institution was uniquely-situated to provide students with a global perspective; and actually challenged students to engage and take advantage of that opportunity for community. And Iris highlighted the shift in culture and the community that was being achieved as a result:

That's been our [DEI unit] goal: how do we get the average, white, middle-class, hard-working, shows-up-everyday person on this campus really excited to explore issues of diversity. The approach that we took...it really needs to be about you exploring and understanding your own culture and the impact of who you are and how you show up in a room on other people. And so that has been the exciting part of where I've seen the shifting culture here...is people are paying attention to their own stuff, who previously had the privilege of not having to.

## Leadership in Collaboration

The ILOC promoted leadership in collaboration, which had implications for the CDO role. Danielle shared that although the institution was conservative, stagnant, and decentralized: “I’ve been able to get people to come together and collaborate on some major pieces, but I would venture to say five years ago people were like ‘oh no, never!’, and now they take it as a point of pride. They’ve had positive contributions all because I was able to encourage them to work together on some things; and to stop thinking about things as me, my, and mine. And that’s been very beneficial.” Eric reinforced the CDO or DEI unit influence on campus collaboration: “I think our office has taken a leadership role in collaboration because as we go out and collaborate, we have a record of executing some really impactful events. So in that way I think we’re helping the university to migrate to become better collaborators and provide more impactful learning.” And, Samuel shared: “So getting people to tie-in for the better sense university-wide is something that I’ve been able to do...”

#### Maintenance of Status Quo or Institutional Traditions

The ILOC promoted maintenance of the status quo or institutional traditions which had implications for the CDO role. Danielle stated: “The history of the institution is that it’s a very, very conservative institution. I remember when I first got here this campus had not had anybody officially working on LGBTQ issues; and we just got our first center two years ago. That’s way behind the national curve.” Along those same lines, Quentin shared that ‘if you want to create a firestorm on this campus, just open up issues around sexuality.’”

Tammi disclosed: “Institutionally, this place is just a hot mess when it comes to diversity, and I think part of it has to do with some of the founding purposes of the institution as well as kind of the hard and fast traditions of this being a [specific gender-dominated] institution for a very long time.” Esmeralda discussed the maintenance of status quo and the desire for a

“challenge-free” or “stress-free” workspace, and how that desire limited select campus constituents: “[There are] those that don't want to relinquish power to anyone that isn't like them; and then there are also those for whom the way things have always been works just fine for them.” Samuel also shared the manner in which faculty sought to maintain traditions: “I think most of the faculty are wonderful. I think they’re very supportive of diversity. But you always have a pocket of those in certain disciplines who don't see diversity as something they have to cover or do, and feel like they're being imposed on and being required to do something that really belongs in the social sciences.”

Theresa shared: “A consultant came into the campus and looked at our culture said that we suffered from ‘analysis paralysis’, and we like to analyze and think about things and talk about things and then not do anything. So we’ve been trying to be much more action-oriented. We're sort of evolving...from one thing to something that we aspire to be, but I don't know if we're actually getting there.” Keith added to the challenge of institutional traditions and status quo at University 4: “A lot of people who aren't fully on board with this [DEI] agenda think that there is some trade-off between quality and diversity...we are a very quality-oriented institution but those of us in the work think of ourselves as very high-quality...we say ‘you know what, your definition of quality is lacking, you're missing some important points, and if you had a really high-quality definition of quality you’d already have included this stuff’.” Quentin also expressed the challenge of select campus constituents embracing DEI efforts: “When I look at this campus, its history is that it's been a little bit conflicted over the whole idea of a chief diversity officer, so the actual [DEI] office is a new thing. We don't have, for example, an equity office on this campus. We don't have a director of affirmative action. They've been very conflicted about having an affirmative action officer, [lest] they interfere in the hiring practices.”

Lola discussed the colorblind perspective often encountered by DEI team members: “One of the greatest dangers...is well-meaning white people that would say...‘I like all people. I don't see color. I look at you as an individual.’ That's not valuing and honoring diversity.” Quentin reiterated the colorblind perspective and how it influenced the maintenance of the status quo at that institution: “I think there's kind of this denying culture here in which there is a belief that we just hire the best people, and it's almost like they actually believe that the world can be colorblind....they latch on to that idea, that dream of a colorblind society. As such we have two really wonderful faculty...white females... that teach African-American literature and literature on race. We've had tremendous difficulty over the decades hiring an African-American to teach African-American history.”

Additionally, one informant contemplated the challenge of status quo maintenance between the university and city:

I also meant to mention in terms of things that create resistance to diversity work is being located in [this city]. It's a factor for us; and I think particularly [this university's] relationship to the larger systems of white supremacy that exist in [this city]...I'm still trying understand all the complexities of that relationship but it's really clear to me that it's not possible for an institution of this size to be located geographically where it is in the city and in this particular city...it's not possible for [some] things to happen without [this university] having a significant role in reinforcing them. Just sociologically, it would not be possible. So I think that our relationship to the larger structures in [the city] and the larger cultures in [the city] must be playing a part in a way that I haven't been able to put my finger on yet. So I just want to name that. But I think a lot of it may be our [university's] particular sociological context as well.

## Elitism

Elitism was also an implication of the ILOC for the CDO role by way of gender superiority, wealth and social clout traditions and influence, and embracement of superficial relationships as a means of staying connected to a central power source. One CDO discussed the makeup of that institution as being dominated by males, and the ways in which that balance led



to a sort of oligarchy: “If we were to argue that we want to be welcoming to women, and we know that most women have a responsibility for caretaking of their children, why would we call a meeting for 7:30 in the morning? They're probably trying to get their kids to school. Now some people would say that we do that because we've always done it that way. Well, if the goal has been to diversify the environment by bringing in more women, then because we've always done it that way our norms and values need to change to be acknowledging and supportive of everybody that's in the room.” This exclusive, privileged behavior reinforced gender superiority. Additionally, two more informants revealed gender superiority issues at their respective institutions.

One CDO also talked about the elitist attitudes of faculty and the influence of that mindset on the CDO role: “I don't mean to demean faculty, but there tends to be a sense that they are the experts and they don't need to be told to do anything.” And yet another CDO addressed the long-standing tradition of power by wealth, or plutocracy, at that institution: “It [the university] is very dominated by wealth...and when you have that kind of a long tradition... elitists are repelled by people of different needs and different beliefs.” This CDO also discussed the necessity of staying connected to the power source or the individuals with control over resources: “The true powers stay in the hand of a very few, and that hasn't changed...it's been that way forever. You have to make sure you stay in some way connected to the very few – whether superficially or through some genuine connection – anyone that you can find... the people who really don't value diversity, they don't care if I was the vice president and the provost together, if they have control over funds, we've got to beg somewhere. They can still stop you from doing what you want to do. ”

Contradiction/Inconsistency

The ILOC also led to disparities and inconsistencies for the CDO role. Particularly, the CDO role was influenced by: variances between institutional culture and unit culture, stated culture and actual culture, and institutional struggles between change/progression and honoring traditions/history.

Eric highlighted the variance between the DEI unit and the institution as a whole: “A bit of the difference between our particular office and the university is from our inception we were always in the world of ‘and’,” in reference to cultural mindset of University 5’s DEI unit and the multi-tasking personality of that unit. Further, Tammi urged campus constituents in search of elitism not to come and work in DEI; and suggested that that unit possessed a different culture than was typical of the institution as a whole.

One informant disclosed the experienced variance between stated culture and actual culture at that institution: “The reason that I chose this position out of the other positions that I interviewed with in a variety of cities is because of its mission around social justice. I thought that meant what it means to me, and I don't think it does. I think it could. I think there are institutions where it might; but it's not what it means here. So it really did have to do with what I understood the mission to be; and then I think I've experienced a real distance between that and what actually happens.” Another informant shared: “I think the challenge though is that people have gotten the language down wonderfully, but unfortunately are comfortable in this place of the language.” One CDO summarized the reality of stated versus actual culture: “We try to live within a ‘we are family’ kind of belief, but in the end we don’t act like family. We forget that.”

In regards to struggles between progression and honoring tradition, one informant discussed the institution’s history with slavery, geographic location, and historical context and summarized: “I think it's a long way to go in terms of [our university’s] alum, faculty, staff and

students understanding the diversity we still lack and our history with diversity.” Another informant also shared the challenges and inconsistencies of trying to move forward: “The culture that we inherited was one where there was a lot of discussion and process and this sort of democracy and consensus building...I think the campus as a whole has been trying to move towards [synthesis]...but we're not all there and I think that's a struggle. I think that's a tension between folks at the ground level saying ‘you didn't ask me what you wanted to do.’...So I think that's a struggle that we have culturally, as an organizational culture.” One CDO shared the challenge for progression at that institution: “People are like, why would [our institution] need a chief diversity officer? It's because we still don't get it. We never look at how important our veterans are to the university, we don't look at our disabled students, we don't look at our nontraditional students that may be out of work that need to come back to school; and that our professors need to take adult learning theory retooling to understand how to educate that adult learner.” And, Tammi summarized the struggle: “I think it’s always very complex because sometimes the institution is fighting itself, trying to move forward and then trying to stay where it’s been for over 200 years. And that can become very confusing to new people who are coming here but they don’t know why this is so, and no one can give them a real, logical reason.”

## Antagonism

Antagonism was also an implication of the ILOC for the CDO role. Personal-level (internally-focused) antagonism was demonstrated through disregard, abuse, volatility, hostility, and tokenism for the CDOs and their roles; while work-level (externally-focused) antagonism surfaced through dysfunction, inefficiencies, and being reactive versus proactive.

Keith revealed experiences of hostility from students: “I have some students who think I'm not nearly radical enough, and I don't get out there and occupy with them, and they think I'm

a sellout.” Danielle also shared experiences of disregard: “A lot of the work around [DEI] is about culture change, and the evidence of that may not be seen for years to come. And so for the work that I do and the work that my colleagues do...I think in many organizational settings there are people who...have a currency of exchange that does not get acknowledged by the institution. But if it weren't there, the institution would have greater log [and] greater negative impact around [DEI] than they ever imagined.” One informant shared the tendency towards tokenism for the CDO at that institution: “So much that happens here is really defined by tokenism. And so I think [the CDO] is often asked to step into that, and to sort of be the one black [person] in the room who is going to say something comfortable about diversity. I think that's part of how people here interpolate [the CDO].” One informant also revealed the disregard and abuse imposed upon the CDO at that institution: “I don't think a lot of people would tell you that [our CDO] is the chief diversity officer, even though technically that's true. A lot of people would say I don't know what [our CDO's] job is. I've heard people say that. A lot of people say that. When I first got here I had someone tell me to work around [the CDO].” Yet another informant discussed the tendency toward CDO abuse: “Some people go to that office because they know that it's an ear and a door to the President.” Additionally, in regards to antagonism Lola stated: “They [any CDO] may not be as radical or as much as an advocate and activist because they have to be mindful of the image of the President, and the messages of the President. So I'm sure [Samuel] is in a really tough spot.” Iris shared: “No one would ever consider to dismantle or to take away resources from the Dean of [this] or the Dean of [that], but it seems that [DEI] is expendable. And so...I think that [the CDO] role...can be somewhat volatile if the senior level management and leadership of the institution don't value and invest in it.”

Yolanda imparted the tendency toward inefficiencies for the CDO role: “[Ours is] a very decentralized culture, so at [University 2] you can have people working on similar projects but in different units or departments, and they may not even be aware that somebody else is working on something [similar].” Ilene discussed the university’s reactive nature: “[University 3] has been very reactive, and I would love for them to be more proactive...have things in place to combat issues that have been known to arise, versus being reactive.” Nicole disclosed the challenge of managing in dysfunctional space: “[It’s] hard for a new, forward-thinking manager to come in and manage those people.” And Tammi summarized how antagonism manifests for the diversity chief: “We don’t have the kind of power behind what we’re pushing to make it work a lot of times.”

#### Atypical Higher Education Challenges

The ILOC also led to atypical higher education circumstances and challenges for the CDO role. Nicole shared how the culture of compassion was such that the institution “would give someone an opportunity to work here that had just gotten out of prison. Should [they try to] go work somewhere else and a background check is ran or a drug test is given, they are out of a job. So we have historically given people opportunities that nobody else would just because we were compassionate...and that has come back to haunt us in a lot of ways.”

Quentin talked about the significant influence of the administrative side of the institution at University 6 as compared to the academic side, an atypical circumstance in higher education and for his role: “The administrative side – the whole group of vice presidents who do everything from public affairs to planning to athletics and all of that – it’s stronger than I’m used to seeing. I usually see the academic part of the institution as really at the center of things, but this

administrative side...is a fairly strong operation that in many ways influences the academic side of the institution more so than I'm used to.”

Finally, Danielle discussed the atypical circumstance and challenge of working at an institution that was predominantly male: “By and large most institutions of higher education have more women than men. We have the opposite.”

#### State, System, or University-Wide Reinforcement via Mandate or Assessment

The ILOC promoted state, system, or university-wide reinforcement (via mandate or assessment) for the CDO role. Multiple CDOs shared that their accrediting bodies, university systems, or states required some degree of DEI activity. One CDO also shared that “part of our assessment process is to evaluate all units on campus around what they're doing in the area of diversity. All units across campus – whether they're faculty or staff – are supposed to develop one outcome relative to [diversity]. Everybody knows that [DEI] is something that they have to report on; so, I get frequent phone calls from deans, department chairs, and faculty that want to know what they can do to accomplish their diversity goals.” One CDO stated: “The system level constantly preaches the importance of diversity, and it just permeates down through the institutions....” Another CDO revealed: “It is a part of our strategic planning, and it is being assessed. In fact, our accrediting body knows that it is a part of our strategic plan. It's not like we can just get rid of it now.”

#### Pragmatism

Pragmatism was also an implication of ILOC for the CDO role, and was manifested through primary emphasis on: (a) data-driven discourse and statistical results, and (b) compliance or EEO responsibilities. Danielle discussed the data-driven culture of University 1 and shared:

The way I talk up [to a supervisor, governing body member, etc.] is through data. That moves the world here. It rules the world here: data and metrics...I let it talk for me. I try to use data because this campus understands that. They love that. Here before that would not have been my primary mode of communication about an issue, but it's what works here. But, in an environment which works with numbers, which values quantifiable data, the challenge is how do you translate what is qualitative – or seen as anecdotal – into a quantitative framework? So that people can understand its value. Not that it isn't valuable, but I think when you're used to looking at numbers and indexes and trendlines, that's probably how you read things. And I'm saying, this doesn't even happen like that. I know how it happens, but how do I capture that in a way that helps people who only read [numbers, indexes, and trendlines] to understand it. [Nonetheless], you've got to be able to speak the talk of the people who hold resources.

Ilene discussed the data-driven culture at University 3 and its implications for the CDO role:

The norm is now statistical in nature, versus vague and uncertain. You know exactly what's expected of you as far as numbers. Everything is driven by numbers. I'm being very pragmatic, because the touchy-feely part of diversity, saying 'it's the right thing to do' is not where you go. It's all about return-on-investment. How can I prove that diversity is the best case, it's a business case, [or] it's the best thing for business? So I have to prove first the numbers from last year to this year: this is how many people attended the workshop or these training sessions or whatever; and the number of minority faculty members or the number of minority staff members increased...So that's what I have to start tracking. I have to prove that my program or whatever we want to call them, influenced the retention of black faculty and staff. That's what I have to do. If I don't do that, if I can't do that then they will place no value on this office. Point-blank.

In regards to the emphasis on compliance work, one CDO stated: "Some of the things we need to get done, we could easily get done because of compliance laws. No one gets stuck in your way of doing them, because it's illegal to do so." And one informant discussed a recent shift in job responsibilities to focus more on Title IX compliance instead of DEI work.

#### Implications of Organizational Culture – Unit Level (ULOC)

ULOC was also determined through thick description by study participants and review of archival documents; and the result was a foundation in which to extrapolate toward understanding the implications of ULOC on the CDO role. The determined implications of ULOC for the CDO role were aggregated into two categories: favorable and unfavorable. The favorable implications of ULOC for the CDO role included relationship maximization;

acceptance or respect; commitment or progression; camaraderie, collaboration, or sense-of-team; and leading, inspiring or liaising. The unfavorable implications of ULOC for the CDO role included stagnation and inefficacy. The rationale for these implications now follows.

### Relationship Maximization

Relationship maximization – the ability to make the fullest use of key relationships – was also an implication of the ULOC for the CDO role. Relationship maximization was realized through: (a) meetings to collaborate, address concerns, or bring awareness to DEI matters, and (b) leading team members toward synergy, efficiency, synthesis, or exposure.

Yolanda identified Gary as a “bridge builder” because of the passion for advocacy displayed by the diversity chief, and because of Gary’s willingness to “meet with stakeholders at [University 2] from all the different schools and departments on a regular basis. [Gary] convenes groups regularly, but [Gary] also holds individual meetings to build bridges. If [Gary] becomes aware of a resistant department or unit [Gary’s] likely response is to put down a coffee meeting first and then start to build a bridge [and] build a relationship. And [Gary] wins people over.”

Nicole declared that the diversity chief’s “job is to create an arena for awareness and education...and relationship building”, and Nicole elaborated on the approach toward relationship maximization:

When I look into the system and I see that there's been no work aligned with [DEI] goals, then I'll say 'hey, let's go to lunch or let's have a little meeting or let's meet at Starbucks and talk about some of the challenges that you may have with this whole diversity thing'; and I [often] hear the response 'I don't even know what diversity is; I don't even know what the university was saying when they did that.' Then that opens up the door for me to talk about more than just diversity...I ask them: How do people feel? What is the temperature in your area? How do people feel when they walk in? ... So it opens up the door, it provides opportunities for me to get them to think differently about the whole diversity conversation.



Danielle emphasized exposure for the DEI unit and stated: “I worked hard to get our team members as critical parts of other committees on the campus.” Theresa discussed the merger of six units into three units so that the DEI team at University 4 could realize synergy and efficiency. Samuel shared the energy and desired culture for that DEI unit as a means of maintaining strong collaborative relationships: “Creating an environment that's fun, that's exciting, that people want to join, or [one in which] people want to work on the initiatives: that's the type of climate that we're trying to create here.”

#### Acceptance or Respect

The ULOC promoted acceptance or respect, which had implications for the CDO role. Most CDOs acknowledged the value of diverse representation within the DEI unit; and several declared that their unit was indeed diverse compared to their parent institution. Ilene defined the DEI unit at University 3 as “...a United Nations as far as ethnicity, race and gender, thought, sexual identity and orientation. I intentionally tried to make it so.” And Gary discussed the acceptance and respect demonstrated within and from the DEI unit at University 2 as “fully accepting of all spectrums of human attributes at the institution.”

#### Commitment or Progression

The ULOC also led to commitment or progression for the CDO role. Danielle stated: “At the end of the day everyone is very dedicated to providing the support needed for those who may have been historically marginalized. It's something that they would have done anyhow, whether they were doing this work or not. And I'm blessed to have folks like that on my team.” Gary described the ULOC at University 2 as one of ‘can-do’ attitudes; and felt “very fortunate” to have the support and commitment of the [DEI] office. Keith shared of that DEI unit’s commitment: “The people who work at [University 4] are passionate about what they do.

They're there to make the world a better place. They put a lot of extra energy into it, and so that is very helpful...and especially I would say [that] in [our DEI unit].”

Additionally, Theresa revealed efforts to move the collaborative culture of the DEI unit at University 4 forward and towards progression:

We had our budget retreat and it was really interesting. We asked for each of our areas to submit their budget requests for the year and this is things over and above what they usually get. So...anything's on the table. Anything and everything is on the table. So one of our directors said this was really hard for his unit to do because they have been so used to scraping by on the minimum of funds, so used to not asking for money that they didn't know how to ask for money, or how much to ask for. And so he had to coach his folks and say 'hey, I want you to think out-of-the-box'. So that was interesting because then that person came back and asked for \$600,000. I think that was just sort of where we are with the culture...just changing and evolving.... Let's put everything on the table. Let's talk about this; and then make some priorities...where do we want to evolve as an organization and where do we want to put the resources? I think that is a big culture change for some folks.

#### Camaraderie

Camaraderie was also an implication of ULOC for the CDO role. Danielle shared that the DEI unit at University 1 was “beginning to see greater sharing [and] greater opportunities for collaboration.” Nicole discussed that DEI unit’s approach to gaining and maintaining camaraderie: “We are just relationship builders in our office, so our job is to try to as best as possible make sure that everybody's happy, or at least content.”

#### Leading, Inspiring, Liaising

The ULOC fostered leading, inspiring, and liaising for the CDO role. The CDO participants in this study shared that they were often charged with elevating the spirits of their sometimes-discouraged DEI unit team members, and providing a buffer when there were significant distinctions between unit culture and institutional culture. Tammi shared: “My job is to continuously try to permeate and bridge our connection between those two worlds.”

Esmeralda offered: “Look at the stakeholders and really see who's there and who needs your help first, and how best you can serve them...because there's no way, there's no telling who needs you and how you can best serve them.” Danielle imparted: “The relationships that I have with the people under me is lots of visioning and inspiring and challenging and leading folks to try to go forward.”

Tammi summarized: “The culture we have inside of my offices [is] don't worry about that you can't change. Work with what you can change.”

### Stagnation

Stagnation was also an implication of ULOC for the CDO role. One informant shared that the DEI unit at that institution, particularly the culture of that DEI unit, reflected stagnation by way of process, slow action and slow change.

### Inefficacy

Inefficacy was also an implication of ULOC for the CDO role. One CDO discussed the influence of inefficacy on the respective DEI units. The CDO shared: “There is very little that I can bring other than consultation and advice. If I could bring resources to support some of the things that [the DEI unit] comes up with, we would have more reasons to [engage as a unit] than we do right now.”

## Summary of Organizational Culture

Descriptions and examinations of organizational culture, and the implications of the construct on the CDO role within the previous three to five years revealed that ULOCs and ILOCs were defined quite differently by study participants from the eight institutions. Also determined were the implications of ILOC for the CDO role, which included (a) maintenance of

the status quo or institutional traditions, (b) elitism, (c) contradiction or inconsistency, (d) relationship maximization, (e), antagonism, (f) community, (g) state-, system-, or university-wide reinforcement and support via mandate and/or assessment, (h) atypical higher education challenges, (i), leading the campus in collaboration, and (j) pragmatism. Further, the implications of ULOC for the CDO role included: (a) relationship maximization, (b) acceptance or respect, (c) commitment or progression, (d) camaraderie, collaboration, sense-of-team, (e), leading, inspiring, liaising, (f) stagnation, and (g) inefficacy.

Organizational culture (particularly ULOC), has implications for the CDO role. Organizational culture at the institution level (ILOC) is secure and has been established over years of practice and cohesion (Masland, 1985; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). ILOC is ingrained as a result of repetition and acceptance by constituents, and is therefore quite difficult to change (Schein, 2010). The steadfastness of ILOC and its ability to prompt commitment, cohesion, and order by its constituents (Masland, 1985) will prove a challenge to a change agent such as the CDO, who is tasked with transformation within an institution known for hierarchy, rules, regulations, and formal structures (bureaucratic models) (Birnbaum, 1988; Berger & Milem, 2000; Hearn & McLendon, 2012), in addition to conflict, scarce resources, coalitions, political bargaining, external influences, and competing entities (political models) (Birnbaum, 1988; Hearn & McLendon, 2012; Hendrickson et al., 2013).

In DEI units, the organizational cultures are newer and less embedded as a result of these offices and teams being relatively new across higher education, and as a result of what Clark (1980) identified as the “many cultures of the conglomeration” (p. 25) that often surface due to increases in organization size and autonomy. The difference in length of existence likely accounts for some of the variance between the organizational cultures at the institution and unit

levels. But, perhaps the difference also pertains to a CDO's applied critical leadership approach, multiple identities, background, persistence despite countless experiences of marginalization, etc.? Here, ULOCs are a derivative of the personality, experiences, and leadership style of the CDO; and it is within these units that the CDO builds cultures of caretaking, leading, coaching, innovation, support, and accessibility. CDOs who influence the culture within their own DEI unit might also have an opportunity to influence institution-level culture (ILOC) and organizational change as well.

This study has attributed the variance between ULOC and ILOC to the applied critical leadership perspective of the eight diversity chiefs. These CDOs demonstrated how they were: (a) willing to initiate and engage in critical conversations on their campuses to achieve their DEI objectives, (b) serving the greater good or doing the work for a higher purpose, (c) building trust throughout campus through countless collaborative and relationship-building efforts with multiple constituent groups, and (d) honoring DEI for all traditionally-marginalized groups and not just the groups in which they identified (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). It is worth further exploration to better understand what makes the DEI unit's organizational culture so distinct and unique from the greater institution-level organizational culture; and, whether that ULOC can sustain such variance amidst institutional parameters, pressures, roadblocks, and other challenges that will undoubtedly be encountered.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Ancillary Themes from the Study

In addition to unveiling the implications of ILOS, ULOS, ILOC, and ULOC for the CDO role, the data of this study also provided a secondary level of themes within the CDO sphere. Those themes included: (a) an emphasis on cultural competency via training for employees or demonstration by applicants, (b) a shift away from diversity and access to equity and inclusion as the central language, (c) stronger consideration for faculty and staff diversity, and a less-vocalized emphasis on student diversity, and (d) awareness of the campuses' surrounding community and efforts to develop stronger relationships with those local communities.

Multiple CDOs discussed the need for cultural competency training and initiatives, either for current campus constituents or for prospective ones. One CDO shared the following example:

A couple of years ago...one of the security guards at the booth - and she's such a delightful lady - she was at the booth doing her job, and a couple of Latino students were coming to visit me. And so she looked at them and said 'oh, we're so happy the cleaning people are here.'...These are our students! They were absolutely offended, and they came to tell me how offended they were. It made me reflect... But she [the security guard] didn't really think that that was offensive; but it was because those Latino students have worked hard to get here and a lot of them are first-generation students...So again that's just another example of the lack of cultural competence that exists on the campus.

In regards to the language shift from diversity and access to equity and inclusion, multiple CDOs emphasized that their work now focused on equity and inclusion rather than diversity; and, most CDOs carried titles that reflected that shift in focus. (Only two actually carried the title *CDO*, while three had the word *inclusion* and four had the word *equity* in their titles). One CDO revealed that that university's President changed the diversity unit's title to reflect the new emphasis on inclusion; while one CDO expressed the desire "to drop the whole word diversity period, and just talk about inclusion."

The study also revealed a stronger consideration for faculty and staff diversity, and less discussion on student diversity. (This could have been due to the possibility of student diversity

work being delegated to DEI unit team members rather than a direct responsibility of the CDO; and therefore the CDO discussed in more detail their immediate work on faculty and staff diversity.) One CDO stated: "...Now I'm really focusing on increasing the number of professionals and staff...administration and staff minorities at the university and retaining and getting them to become more involved in the university community." Another CDO shared: "Probably the hardest place to see progress is in the hiring of administrators and faculty because the numbers in most places have not increased. I had to revamp the entire hiring procedures here for both faculty and administrators. We created a huge emphasis on looking at issues of diversity and...we have more [faculty and administrators] who have diversity skills because we've put such a focus on it."

Additionally, the awareness of the campuses' surrounding community and efforts to develop stronger relationships with those local communities was a secondary theme derived from the study. Six of the eight CDOs spoke specifically about their charge or desire to engage the local community in an effort to: (1) provide education, training, outreach, fairs, informationals, etc., (2) connect with one of the university's primary hiring bases, particularly for staff roles, (3) enhance the sense of community or belonging for current university employees, particularly those who may not be from that city or region (4) manage relationships with powerful community groups, (5) build partnerships with corporations and other organizations, (6) maintain local advancement and funding contributions, (7) promote solidarity, (8) alleviate biases and build relationships with contrary or resistant community members, (9) participate in and offer community service opportunities to campus constituents, (10) maximize on the diversity that exists within the local community, (11) meet university expectations for being public mission-minded, and (12) satisfy local government needs for a diverse community.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

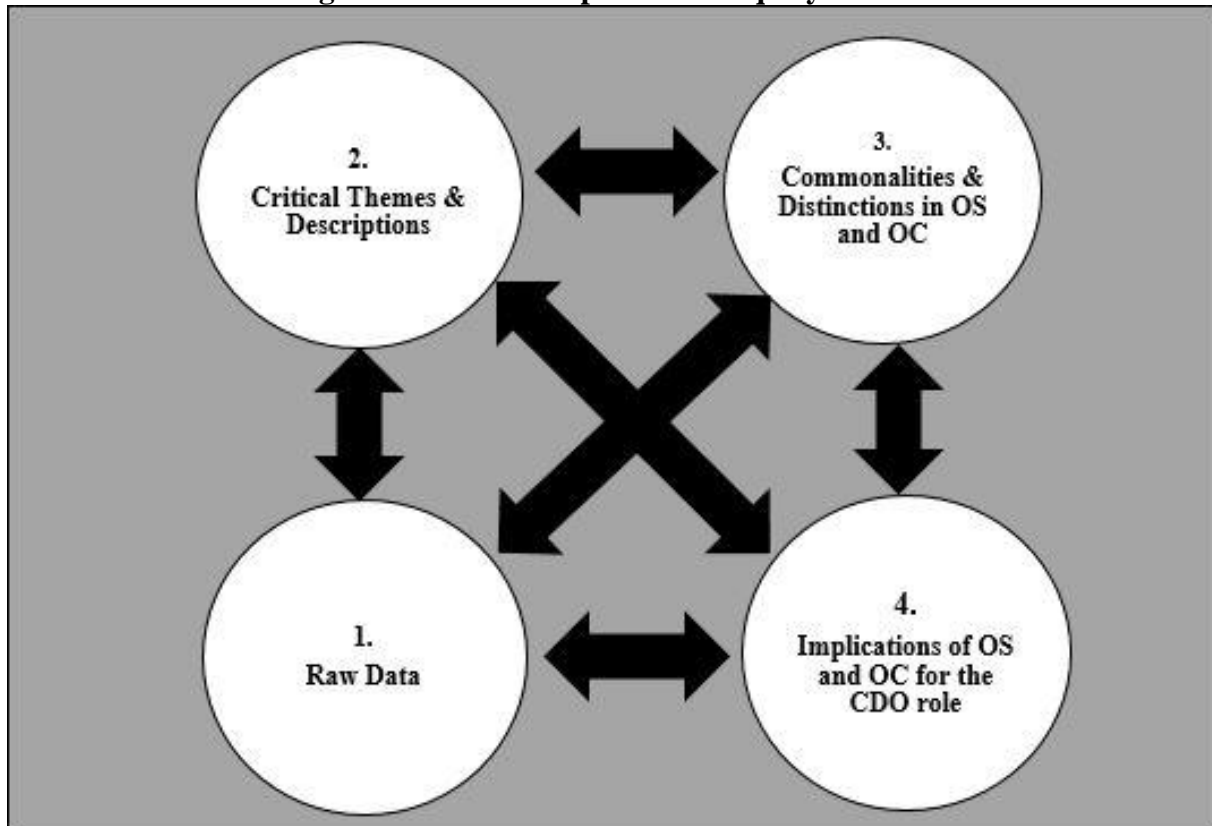
The purpose of this study was to add to our understanding of the Chief Diversity Officer in higher education by examining the role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture. Sixteen participants (eight CDOs and eight informants) were interviewed alongside an extensive review of archival documents from the eight institutions (see Table 4.3). This study addressed the research question: *What are the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education?* The researcher utilized a varied mix of higher education institutions and participants in order to obtain diverse environments, experiences, and perspectives for the study (see Table 4.1 for summary of CDO profiles).

Inductive data analysis led to the emergence and identification of critical themes and descriptions, commonalities and distinctions in organizational structure (institution- and unit-level) and organizational culture (institution- and unit-level), and implications of organizational structure and organizational culture for the CDO role at the selected higher education institutions. Figure 7.1 below visually demonstrates the grounded and non-linear nature of this study; and how the themes, commonalities, implications, and discussion are embedded and intersected in the inquiry process. Instead of following a linear flow from Step 1 to Step 2 to Step 3 and then Step 4, the study involved multiple instances in which the researcher moved from any given step to the next in order to understand and derive the themes, commonalities, implications, and discussion that comprised this study. The figure demonstrates how each step was directly



linked to all of the other steps in the process and reiterates the value of the researcher's personal log (see Chapter 3) for this study.

**Figure 7.1: Visual Depiction of Inquiry Process**



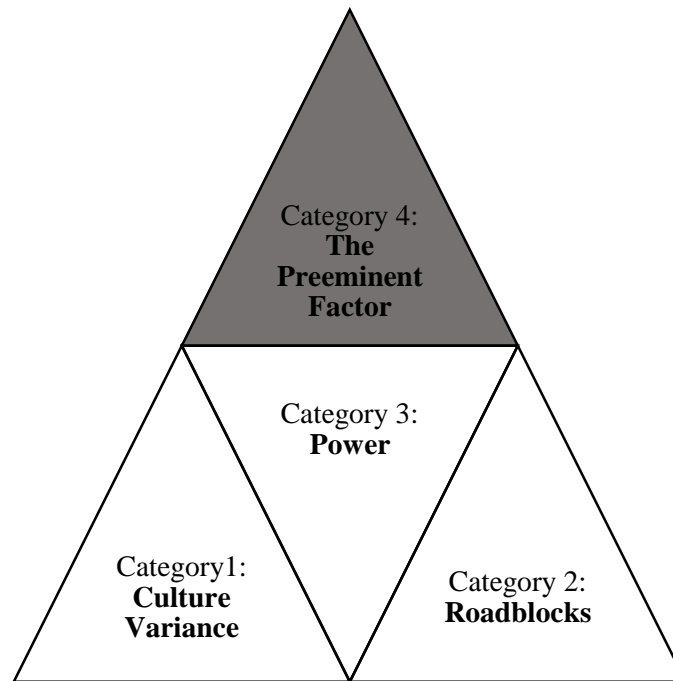
This chapter examines, interprets and discusses the study's findings as presented in the previous chapters, connects those findings to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided the study, and provides meaning-making of the results. In addition, this chapter offers implications for theory and practice, and recommendations for future research.

### Discussion

Inductive data analysis relies on the data to emanate and unveil the critical themes. This grounded approach ensures that the findings are rooted in the inquiry process. In this study, the

emergent themes were divided into four categories (as depicted in Figure 7.2): Culture Variance, Roadblocks, Power, and The Preeminent Factor.

**Figure 7.2: Critical Themes**



In the ‘Culture Variance’ category the emphasis was on organizational culture. In this category, the emergent theme was the variation between institution-level organizational culture (ILOC) and unit-level organizational culture (ULOC). The ‘Roadblocks’ category revealed themes related to barriers or potential problems for the CDO role, specifically multi-tiered disparity and resource challenges. In the ‘Power’ category the emergent themes were centered on clout and command within the higher education organizations: the leverage of institutional history and the salience of the university president. And the final category examined the preeminent factor and theme with implications for the CDO role: relationship maximization. Relationship maximization was the universally-expressed topic that was unveiled across both

levels, both constructs, and by all sixteen participants. A discussion of these critical themes follows.

#### Category 1: Culture Variance

##### *Variation between Institution Level and Unit Level*

When this study was in its nascent stages, the decision was made to disaggregate institution level from unit level. From prior professional, personal, and academic experiences with diversity in higher education the researcher envisaged a need to divorce institution level structures and cultures from those of a diversity unit or office. First-hand experience as an employee, student, and educator in higher education had revealed that certain idiosyncrasies could exist within a unit that were in contrast to the manner in which the greater organization or institution functioned. And, these idiosyncrasies often allowed the unit to function more effectively than if they were not in place. Based on the findings in this study, that decision was corroborated. Several of the study participants communicated a genuine distinction between institution-level *x*, and unit-level *x*. For example, unit-level resources seldom matched institution-level resources, autonomy or empowerment were more common within the diversity unit than outside of it, and when asked to describe the institution-level organizational structure (ILOS) and institution-level organizational culture (ILOC), the descriptor given by participants was often more critical or scrutinizing (e.g. disconnected, decentralized, homogenous, stagnant, resistant) than that used to describe unit-level organizational structure (ULOS) and unit-level organizational culture (ULOC) (e.g. intentional, aligned, flat, collaborative, supportive).

##### *Variation between ILOC and ULOC*

Each respondent in the study was asked to describe the institution-level organizational culture (ILOC) and the unit-level organizational culture (ULOC) as was done for organizational

structure. Of particular interest to the purpose of this study was the variation between ILOC and ULOC as described by the study participants. Whereas in ILOS and ULOS – in which the researcher identified similar definitions for organizational structure – ILOC and ULOC were significantly more difficult to draw comparisons from based on the data presented in Chapter 6. Universities 4 and 7 yielded the closest comparisons between ILOC and ULOC, as summarized in Table 7.1 below.

At University 4, the term “autocratic” was used to describe both spaces, which suggested that the institution and unit were in alignment in generating an atmosphere of autocracy. At University 7, the terms “positive” for ULOC and “assumes the best in others” for ILOC were similar enough to be compared, and suggested a unified approach towards an optimistic culture.

<b>Table 7.1: ILOC-ULOC Comparison for University 4 and University 7</b>			
	<b>ILOC Descriptors</b>	<b>ULOC Descriptors</b>	<b>Similarities</b>
<b>University 4</b>	Analysis-Paralysis Elite Decentralized Action/Activism Public Mission Minded Autocratic	Collaborative Innovative Aggressive Open Autocratic Process-Oriented	Autocratic
<b>University 7</b>	Assumes the Best in Others Collaborative Transparent Heterogeneous* C.Y.A. (Cover Your [Rear End]) Casual	Positive	Positive / Assumes the Best in Others

Beyond University 4 and University 7, the distinctions in ILOC and ULOC differed substantially among the remaining colleges and universities according to the respondents, which suggested that the ULOCs at the six remaining institutions were less influenced by institutional

parameters or expectations, and more likely driven by the CDOs of those units with minimal infiltration or sway from ILOC. Table 7.2 examines the ILOC-ULOC descriptors of the remaining six institutions.

<b>Table 7.2: ILOC-ULOC Comparison of Remaining 6 Institutions</b>					
	<b>ILOC</b>	<b>ULOC</b>		<b>ILOC</b>	<b>ULOC</b>
<b>University 1</b>	Conservative Stagnant* Gender-Biased Scarcity-Mentality Data-Driven	Collaborative Coaching Assessing/Measuring Hardworking Supportive	<b>University 5</b>	Isolated* Compassionate Decentralized Lacking in Cultural Competence Relationship-Embedded	Collaborative Leaders-in-Collaboration Relationship-Building Aggressive
<b>University 2</b>	Unsteady* Excellence-Minded Decentralized Politically-Influenced* Tense* Conflicted	Highly-Functioning Committed Relationship-Building Can-Do Attitudes Progressive Accessible Autonomous	<b>University 6</b>	Monocultural Administratively-Influenced Gender-Biased Public Mission-Minded Service-Oriented Community-Solidarity Denying	Supportive Influential Collaborative Autonomous
<b>University 3</b>	Resistant Unsteady* Data-Driven/ROI Reactive	Growth-Minded Diverse	<b>University 8</b>	Conservative Uncommitted* Gender-Biased Traditional* Arrogant Complacent	Caretakers

The ULOCs of most institutions appeared to be a direct reflection of the CDO and his/her leadership. For example, Gary described the diversity unit at University 2 as “accessible” and “progressive.” Yolanda reiterated that CDO 2 was both highly accessible and remarkable in advocacy. Additionally, Nicole described the diversity unit at University 5 as “leaders in collaboration.” Eric reiterated that Nicole had “made collaboration a strategy” and had “elevated

collaboration from a tactic to a strategy.” Ultimately, CDOs described their units how they saw themselves as leaders or how they saw the work being enacted.

Some CDOs chose a ULOC descriptor that communicated their willingness or necessity to ‘fit’ into the ILOC mold. For example, Danielle described the unit’s culture as “collaborative”, “coaching”, “assessing/measuring”, “hardworking”, and “supportive.” The descriptor “assessing/measuring” demonstrated a willingness or necessity to accommodate a “data-driven” ILOC. Another example of this willingness or necessity was Samuel’s ULOC descriptor of “positive” to accommodate an ILOC descriptor of “assumes the best in others.” In both instances, the ULOC descriptors flowed seamlessly into the respective ILOC descriptor.

## Category 2: Roadblocks

### *Multi-Tiered Disparity*

Another prominent theme unveiled in this study was the multi-tiered disparity encountered by those in the CDO role. Disparity was most directly revealed between institution and unit, between stated efforts and actual efforts, between stated culture and actual culture, and between perceived power and real power for the CDO role. The tendency for participants to state that one variable, level, or scenario was more or less disparate to another led to disparity and examples of contradiction that presented more at the institution levels (ILOS and ILOC) than at the unit levels (ULOS and ULOC). Thus, there was a stronger presentation of contradiction and variance for the dynamics of the institutional space than for the unit space. This may have been a result of having a predominance of study participants who were directly affiliated with the diversity unit being examined for ULOS and ULOC, and therefore for whatever reasons chose to focus on the disparity at the greater institutional level than at the unit level. Regardless of the

rationale of the study participants for focusing on institution level disparity, the data revealed that the issues of inconsistency and contradiction were in that space.

The presence of contradiction and disparity suggested that there remain gaps between various entities, units, individuals, etc. on campus in regards to DEI efforts. Select study participants revealed some of those gaps in partnerships, communications, and power in the previous chapters. For example, one informant shared: “I think the challenge though is that people have gotten the language down wonderfully, but unfortunately are comfortable in this place of the language.” This example demonstrates the disparity between talking about DEI efforts and actually moving towards action and change at this university.

This disparity revealed a bitter reality for the CDO role: relationship-building and bridge-building work remained. As change agents on campus, CDOs need to be empowered to shift not only the conversations but also the expectations. As multiple study participants shared, it was time to move beyond ‘lip service’ and bare minimums, and towards a mindset of cultural change. Then and only then might this disparity begin to dissipate.

### *Resource Challenges*

During tough economic times, resource challenges came as no surprise as a critical theme of the study, particularly for a post deemed by some as a luxury (Gose, 2009) to higher education administration. A derivative of organizational structure and structural matters (e.g. organizational charts, formal hierarchy, job descriptions), resource challenges surfaced predominantly in ILOS and ULOS findings compared to ILOC and ULOC findings. While all institutions grappled with shortfalls or challenges in personnel, funding, etc., the CDOs were more concerned with navigation of the foreseen circumstances of limited resources. CDO 5 stated: “Everybody needs money, everybody needs more people so that to me is not anything that would prohibit me from

doing a good job. You learn to work with the resources that you have and then you document whatever you can't get done, and show the reason why you can't. But you don't use the lack of resources all the time as a reason not to do your job. You just have to be creative.”

Despite the skill and ability of CDOs and their units to creatively navigate limited resources, the presence of such shortfalls indicated that the units remained underserved, under-prioritized, vulnerable to future crises, and figurative – but not literal – investments of the respective higher education institutions they served. This was echoed in the examples laid forth by study participants, who denoted diversity units that shrunk in size year after year, diversity unit members with withered responsibilities, diversity units being combined with or absorbed by other campus units, diversity units that were slow to grow to a size appropriate for their charge, diversity units that experienced a hiring freeze and subsequently resulted in CDOs or other team members taking on two or more job roles, and CDOs who carried a “chief” title but in actuality performed lower-level work.

Not all institutions experienced the same resource issues, as some study participants drew attention to funding, some drew attention to physical space, and still others drew attention to people, human resources and team dynamics. Organizational structure discourse for each of the eight institutions revealed some variation of a challenge with ‘people’ for the CDO role, whether it was the governing body, president, provost, direct supervisor, executive cabinet members, diversity unit team members, alumni, faculty, etc. In ILOSs often described as bureaucratic, hierarchical, political, and decentralized, it was anticipated that CDOs would encounter resistance and challenges with others; however, it was critical to observe that these ‘others’ often times appeared as an added layer of challenge not experienced by the CDOs’ peers. In the political turf wars of higher education CDOs will likely have to defend something, and for most



of the CDOs in this study that something was their very existence. Ultimately, the CDOs had to navigate resource challenges, but also had to navigate being a resource challenge.

### Category 3: Power

#### *Leverage of Institutional History*

The sway of the founding purposes or historical context of an institution also presented as a critical theme of the study. Williams (2013) states that diversity chiefs must know their institution's history, but also be "aware of the contemporary context, and how history and context shape perceptions of diversity's importance on campus" (p. 10). Most higher education institutions were founded with a specific mission, targeted objectives or an underlying premise (Hendrickson, Lane, Harris & Dorman, 2013); and, it was revealed that several of the institutions in this study were still grappling with their historical underpinnings, particularly those underpinnings that postured contrarily for DEI efforts and the CDO role. Specifically, study participants from six institutions shared examples of how the historical context of those institutions (e.g. being founded to serve a specific population, or being dominated by a specific group or organizational culture since inception) still appeared to have a grave impact on DEI efforts today. For example, Tammi disclosed: "Institutionally, this place is just a hot mess when it comes to diversity, and I think part of it has to do with some of the founding purposes of the institution as well as kind of the hard and fast traditions of this being a [specific gender-dominated] institution for a very long time."

A challenge for most higher education institutions today is the ability to change and progress while honoring tradition, history, etc. The issue becomes how far are institutions willing to go in their efforts towards embracing a new landscape; and at what cost does that change come? Does a disassociation with history or discontinuation of traditions in the name of DEI

address disenfranchised constituents and build a stronger institution going forward, or on the contrary does it lead to a disgruntled alumni base and a university with an identity crisis? The findings in this study suggested that most institutions were withholding, while the CDO as change agent was urging transformation. One example of this was Nicole at University 5, who encountered countless opposition from constituents who feared they were losing ground as a result of her efforts to globalize the university.

### *Salience of the President*

One of the key relationships, if not the most critical, identified for the CDO role was that of the university president or chancellor. Presidential backing was essential at both the institution and unit levels: at the institution level the president's support carried substantial power towards getting other campus constituents to cooperate, or at least comply; and at the unit level presidential assistance often equated to resources. Gary stated: "...if I can leave you with anything, the most important thing that I can say to you about the position is that it should report *directly* to the president." This CDO was the most direct in communicating the significance of a direct reporting relationship with the university's top leader, however several other CDOs and informants echoed the point. Of the five CDOs who did not report directly and exclusively to their university president or chancellor, three expressed some frustration at their current reporting structure or dynamic, while the other two communicated contentment with their present arrangement.

This study added to the understanding of the essentiality of the university president for the CDO role. In addition, the study demonstrated the vulnerability of the CDO role in an era of revolving university presidential appointments. Half of the universities in this study either had a new university president or were in the process of selecting a new university president. The

rotation in the presidential suite was communicated as a concern for multiple reasons. First, belief in the work and buy-in from the president was key to addressing and accomplishing the work. Additionally, changes in the presidency had the potential to lead to changes in resources, support, priorities, and roles and responsibilities for the CDO and/or diversity unit team members. Along those lines, a new president also posed a threat to job security for the CDO and/or diversity unit team members. One CDO shared thoughts on the inconsistency experienced by those in the field: “No two years are ever the same. There’s a lot of people that don’t want to take jobs in this area, diversity officers, because now they know in most places they’re going to be dealing with inconsistency.” And finally, changes in the presidency often meant another period of acclimation to a new president. Ultimately, CDOs were the rare example of an executive team member or cabinet member who had to “prove their worth” (Ilene) or sense of belonging each time a new president arrived on campus.

#### Category 4: The Preeminent Factor

##### *Relationship Maximization*

Relationship maximization – the ability to make the fullest use of key relationships – was a critical theme across both spaces and both constructs: ILOS, ULOS, ILOC, and ULOC. Inter-office (institution level) and intra-office (unit level) connections called for stable and supportive relationships, identification of various partners and maintenance of those partnerships, networking, collaboration, advocacy, consultation, engagement, liaising, and persuasion. Key to the CDO role was the ability to build relationships outside of the unit as well as foster relationship-building within the unit. Relationship maximization outside of the diversity units was essential because the CDO role in higher education registered as highly-reliant on support from top leadership (e.g. President, Chancellor, Governing Body), buy-in from peers and

colleagues, and institutional politics. Danielle stated that “the work of diversity and inclusion has to be spread amongst the institution...and it has to be a shared responsibility...” Tammi also expressed the essentiality of campus partnerships: “I do a lot of liaison work, meaning trying to get people who are interested in diversity issues talking to people who aren’t really interested in those issues, so that if we can get more people on board who feel that this is something we should be dealing with in a serious way, we can get more things done; because if the only people I work with are my staff or the people who already believe in what we’re doing, we’re not going to get any place. Those numbers are too small.”

Within the diversity units, relationship maximization was often the *modus operandi*; and, an indication of either the CDOs’ directive or collaborative style of leading. Yolanda shared that Gary had a “handle on what staff members were accomplishing, was interested in staff members’ development, and was invested in staff members being content in their position and feeling fulfilled in their work.” Yolanda also discussed the “horizontal plane” or “flattened organizational chart” of the DEI unit at University 2, and stated that by flattening the structure Gary “was able to be more in close communication with each of the staff members, be more familiar with their vocational interests, be able to support them in their development as employees, and be more acquainted with their level of contentment in their position.” Ultimately, unit-level teams (or individuals) that could work together for synergy typically did so; and for more siloed workloads or atmospheres there was still a sense of collaboration, synthesis, or unity towards a singular cause.

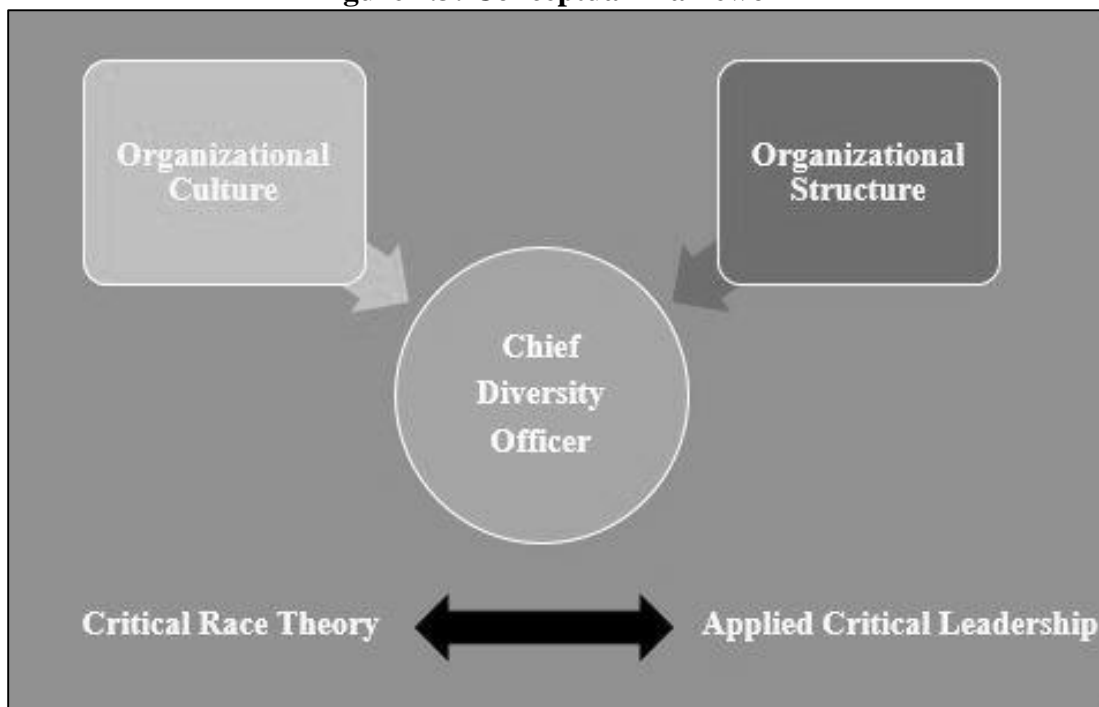
The essentiality of maximizing relationships for the CDO role could not be overstated. Perhaps more so than any other senior administrator or executive cabinet member, the CDO role was identified as highly reliant on others for accomplishing the work. The CDO role was also

deemed at times as being at the mercy of another individual's interest in the work; and thus the challenge arose of persuading that subjective and variable "human actor" (Thompson, 2003) of the salience of DEI efforts. The critical theme of relationship maximization reiterated the interconnectedness of the CDO role across an institution.

### Connecting Research to Theory

Figure 7.3 below revisits the conceptual framework from Chapter 2 that guided this study. The hypothesis was that both organizational culture and organizational structure influenced or had strong implications for the CDO role in higher education; and that the amalgamation of those two constructs and the diversity chief role could be situated within and supported by the congruent theoretical frames of Critical Race Theory and Applied Critical Leadership.

**Figure 7.3: Conceptual Framework**



The theoretical frameworks of Applied Critical Leadership (ACL) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) steered this study. ACL relied on the identities of educational leaders – identities

which are often rooted in experiences of marginalization – as a means of empowering and influencing communities towards social justice and educational equity (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). CRT offered a lens in which to examine traditional education dynamics (Powers, 2007) and paradigms through challenges to dominant group ideologies and stagnation (Jayakumar et al., 2009); and, provided a perspective in which to address race, racism, and the marginalization of racial minorities (Trevino, Harris, & Wallace, 2008), particularly in the administrative spaces of educational institutions (Parker & Villalpando, 2007). ACL and CRT were not expressed as mutually exclusive, and Santamaría and Santamaría described ACL as a practice of examining education issues from a critical race perspective (2012).

The findings of this study situated and supported the ACL or ACL/CRT-hybrid lenses. One of the aspects of this study that correlated with the applied critical leadership lens was the notion that all sixteen participants were motivated by social justice and educational equity towards serving a cause greater than themselves, greater than any one individual or institution, and for the greater good. Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) acknowledged this personal drive as the moral, spiritual, or ethical element of applied critical leadership. And, when asked what or who led them to their current profession, current institution, or to enacting diversity work – all sixteen study participants shared stories that revealed a higher purpose. Gary, for example, cited his altruistic professional background as the reason for his interest in DEI work. And Samuel made what he called a “natural transition” from his previous roles in social justice work to DEI in higher education.

Additionally, the following ACL/CRT-hybrid strategies – as identified by Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) – emerged in this study’s findings:

*Engaged community around issues related to social justice and equity.* Several CDOs and informants told stories of their work in community engagement and outreach. This emerged as an unexpected theme for the study; however the prominence of local community involvement and inclusion of community members as revealed through this study's findings brought to the forefront the value of a participative network, particularly around issues of educational equity and social justice.

*Strategized and was deliberate and mindful when working with other leaders who may not find issues of educational equity important.* All of the CDOs in this study shared examples of their deliberate, intentional, or strategic processes for engaging other leaders and fellow administrators, especially those individuals who struggled to find DEI imperative to the institution or mission. Because of the inevitability of one or more intransigent colleagues in the politicized, bureaucratic, and decentralized machine that is higher education, this discourse was essentially the CDOs describing what it was they did, and how they approached doing it. Recruiting new advocates was communicated by CDOs and informants alike as key to the work as few DEI units had sufficient human resources within the current team structure; and thus the participants saw substantial value in expanding the base of proponents through persuasion and framing of the work as everyone's responsibility or a shared issue.

*Created coalitions of individuals from interdisciplinary backgrounds to address issues of social justice on campus.* Multiple CDOs and informants expressed the diversity among DEI council members, current DEI unit team members, and informal networks and partnerships. The participants in this study acknowledged the value of interdisciplinary backgrounds for their work, which emphasized their understanding of the necessity for variety in experiences,

perspectives, etc. Little value can be attained from a homogenous coalition seeking to interpret and improve matters of inequity and injustice for various marginalized sectors of a population.

*Carved and created their own path of leadership development based on a composite of different qualities and behaviors* (Herrera, 1987, p. 21). A few CDOs (and informants as well), communicated their approach to leading and engaging in DEI work as a leader. By sharing the foundations and premises of their approaches, it was revealed that these CDOs incorporated multiple aspects into their stance, from leadership that was relational to situational to identity-centric to transformation. Santamaria and Santamaria (2012) acknowledged the necessity of adaptation and fluidity for critical leaders, who must adjust their approach to the situation, incorporate their multiple identities, build relationships for positive change, and relinquish authority when appropriate towards transformation. Findings throughout Chapter 4 demonstrated CDOs who engaged in ACL in this way.

*Increased campus awareness of [underserved groups] enrollment issues.* Through a review of the roles and responsibilities of their post, most CDOs revealed their duty to increase campus awareness (and involvement) around recruitment issues for underserved populations and groups, whether that was students, faculty, or staff.

*Created conditions to increase cultural competency for faculty [and staff] working with diverse student populations.* An unexpected theme in this study was the emphasis placed on cultural competency for campus constituents by multiple CDOs and informants. However, through the study participants' shared examples of incompetency, it was evident that conditions needed to be addressed; and, through the leadership of the CDO, the DEI unit was a solid place to initiate and enact this work.



*Fostered deep and meaningful friendships and mentorship to bring about educational change.* Depth of interactions was also compellingly communicated by the study participants. Whether at the unit level among team members, or outside of the unit at the institution level, meaningful mentorships and collaborations formed the basis for DEI work. The CDO and DEI team members acknowledged that theirs was not a unit could stand alone or even should stand alone; and that only by collaborating with others could they achieve their goals. For the most part, superficial and trivial relationships went against the objectives of the CDOs and DEI units. Instead, fostering authentic partnerships and collaborations was at the center of DEI efforts, as communicated by the preeminent factor and theme of *relationship maximization*.

*Immersed one's self in lives and experiences of underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized individuals with the intent to understand the experiences of individuals to advocate on their behalf.* A few CDOs shared examples of how they spent additional or extensive amounts of time around individuals of a certain constituent group in an effort to better understand the experiences of that group and to strengthen advocacy on that group's behalf. For these CDOs – who were less likely to assume the identity of their targeted immersion group (e.g. LGBTQ community members, felons, veterans, single mothers, non-Christians) – being engrossed in that community through deep interactions with constituents was an enjoyable and fulfilling experience.

*Constantly engaged in one-on-one conversations, meetings, or coaching sessions where race is essential to educational discussion.* The frequency of references to one-on-one conversations and meetings was an indicator that most of the CDOs in this study had to undertake their work on smaller stages as well as larger ones. It was revealed that some DEI opponents did not understand the institution's impetus for diversity work, and in large part

because they did not understand diversity, equity, or inclusion in general. One CDO shared that in a one-on-one meeting with a reluctant campus constituent, the constituent finally came forward and admitted to not understanding what diversity meant. Encounters such as that one were prime for engagement about race, racism, and educational equity.

Other CDOs shared examples of one-on-one dialogues, encounters and even coaching moments with peers in which they had candid conversations about select topics, such as race, that were unnerving or difficult in multiple-person or larger group settings. Although CDOs can be an excellent resource for intimate conversations about race, racism, educational equity, and social justice, Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) state that it is imperative that they not try to own the “minority issue” on campus; but instead present socially-constructed race and racism as shared issues.

*Asked himself/herself every day what could be done to improve the situation with regard to educational equity for those in his/her sphere of influence.* A few CDOs acknowledged their reflective practices. Specifically, they shared how their work and focus on a higher purpose for the greater good caused them to approach each day with optimism, critical thinking, and as inspiring leaders. One CDO shared that CDOs should “go to bed thinking about [DEI] and wake up thinking about [DEI]” in order to be effective in the role.

### Implications for Theory/Recommendations

This study contributes to the literature pertaining to the chief diversity officer role in higher education – a literature base that is young yet proliferating. Based on the findings in this study, burgeoning scholarship in the field should consider examination of:

### *The differences in organizational culture between institution-level and unit-level*

Organizational culture at the institution level is secure and has been established over years of practice and cohesion (Masland, 1985; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). ILOC is ingrained as a result of repetition and acceptance by constituents, and is therefore quite difficult to change (Schein, 2010). In DEI units, the organizational cultures are newer and less embedded as a result of these offices and teams being relatively new across higher education. Surely, the difference in length of existence accounts for some of the variance between the organizational cultures in the two spaces. Or does the difference pertain more to a CDO's applied critical leadership approach, multiple identities, background, persistence despite countless experiences of marginalization, etc.? Also, are there other units on campus that experience equally significant variance between institution- and unit-level organizational cultures? And if so, to what degree does that unit's organizational culture vary from the DEI unit on campus? It is worth exploration to better understand what makes the DEI unit's organizational culture so distinct and unique from the greater institution-level organizational culture; and, whether that ULOC can sustain such variance amidst institutional parameters, pressures, roadblocks, and other challenges that will be encountered.

### *The placement of the chief diversity officer within the institution-level organizational structure*

The placement of the CDO within the 'food chain', or institution-level organizational structure is worthy of further consideration in higher education. Several colleges and universities with CDOs have studied and examined where the CDO post should fall within the ILOS (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013); and, the CDO participants in this study shared specific examples of the institution decision-making process around the topic. Interdisciplinary

councils/committees, executive cabinets, presidential directives, emulation of peer institutions, etc. were all cited as means for arriving at the decision for the CDOs placement in ILOS.

Although institutions are unique and have varying needs, the inconsistency in the CDO placement could be an area for further examination in future scholarship, particularly as the CDO role in higher education begins to mature in existence. Based on the findings in this study, questions to consider include: Can the CDO role survive without the complete backing of the university president? Can the CDO role continue to have such an unprecedented reliance on the university president? What are the implications of a CDO who reports directly to the president but does not have a seat at the executive table (as a cabinet member) and therefore does not have access to key partners and the ability to maximize those relationships in that critical space? (The CDO could seek out cabinet members outside of the executive meeting space, but the genuine concern here is the message being sent by the CDO's absence from the table.) What does all of this mean for CDOs who report to administrators other than the university president?

In today's environment, reporting directly to the university president is most optimal because of the magnitude of the task of organizational change that CDOs must lead, and the necessity of having the support of the greatest and most powerful of all partners. However, is this sustainable? What other cabinet member has this level of dependence, or in the past has had to rely on a strong President-CDO partnership as substantially as the CDO does today? Is there a model to follow by which the CDO can anticipate being emancipated from the president as progress occurs? It will be interesting to understanding the implications of the various CDO placement and reporting relationship decisions enacted in higher education as the post advances.

*The degree of disparity and contradiction experienced by CDOs and DEI units*

The theme of disparity as revealed in this study suggests that there is still much to be studied and implemented in regards to the CDO role and their respective DEI units. This study shed light on the contradictions experienced by the CDO at the institution level, particularly between: ILOS and ULOS, ILOC and ULOC, stated efforts versus actual efforts, perceived power versus actual power, stated culture versus actual culture, and struggles between honoring history/traditions and progress.

Some variance is to be expected in this work as transitioning and change management often causes dissension and factions. The CDO as change agent is tasked with transformation within an institution known for hierarchy, rules, regulations, and formal structures (bureaucratic models) (Birnbaum, 1988; Berger & Milem, 2000; Hearn & McLendon, 2012), in addition to conflict, scarce resources, coalitions, political bargaining, external influences, and competing entities (political models) (Birnbaum, 1988; Hearn & McLendon, 2012; Hendrickson et al., 2013). The bureaucratic and political nature of higher education organizations will unquestionably lead to disparity and contradiction for the CDO. However, it would be interesting to label and then assess the disparities that the CDO role encounters via a longitudinal study. Based on the findings in this study, the degree of disparity and contradiction is high. Will that change? And if so, what will be the process?

Also, it is worth consideration to examine the influence of the recent court and legal decisions on the CDO role. The 2014 Supreme Court decision in the state of Michigan – which upheld the voter referendum in that state that banned affirmative action for publicly-funded institutions (Proposal 2) – will likely have significant implications for diversity officers in that state. Will the SCOTUS decision influence other states to enact referendums? And if so, what

will be the impact to the CDO role in U.S. higher education? Can the CDO role and DEI efforts be institutionalized – as many diversity scholars and practitioners desire – with such significant pushback?

### *The decline in priority experienced by CDOs and DEI units*

As new as the CDO role is to higher education, it was interesting to unveil the decline in priority to the role and the work at some institutions. This study shed light on several changes of course and changes in stature for the CDO and their respective DEI units. It seems early and premature to be adjusting the CDO's sway, especially downwards, however this was not an uncommon finding. From reductions in team members, to a shift in emphasis from DEI efforts to EEO compliance, to CDOs taking on work suitable for DEI unit team member (as a result of personnel changes or hiring freezes), it was evident that some institutions were scaling down their DEI efforts. Is the decline in priority due to an institution's perspective that they have achieved diversity, equity, or inclusion to the degree in which they set out to attain it? Is the decline in priority due to the political energy around higher education diversity abating for the time being? Or was the decision purely financial? In this difficult economic climate, higher education like many other sectors has had to manage with less; and in the higher education space DEI units are often viewed as dispensable ones (Gose, 2009; Marcy, 2004). However, what will be the implications tomorrow of a decline in DEI efforts today?

### **Implications for Practice/Recommendations**

The goal of this study was to increase our understanding of the CDO in higher education by examining the role with deliberate consideration for the influence of organizational structure and organizational culture. For consideration in practice are the multiple implications provided in

previous chapters; however alongside those implications the researcher now presents a few additional propositions for institutional heads to consider as they lead and navigate campuses with a CDO presence:

#### *ULOC and ACL: A Leadership Alternative*

This study unveiled similarities and differences between the institution space and the unit space for the CDO role. Based on the findings, Figure 7.4 postulates the degree of CDO influence between the two constructs and spaces.

**Figure 7.4: Postulated Degree of CDO Influence**

<p>INSTITUTION STRUCTURE (ILOS) = <i>No CDO Influence</i></p>	<p>INSTITUTION CULTURE (ILOC) = <i>Limited CDO Influence</i></p>
<p>UNIT STRUCTURE (ULOS) = <i>Limited CDO Influence</i></p>	<p>UNIT CULTURE (ULOC) = <i>Greatest CDO Influence</i></p>

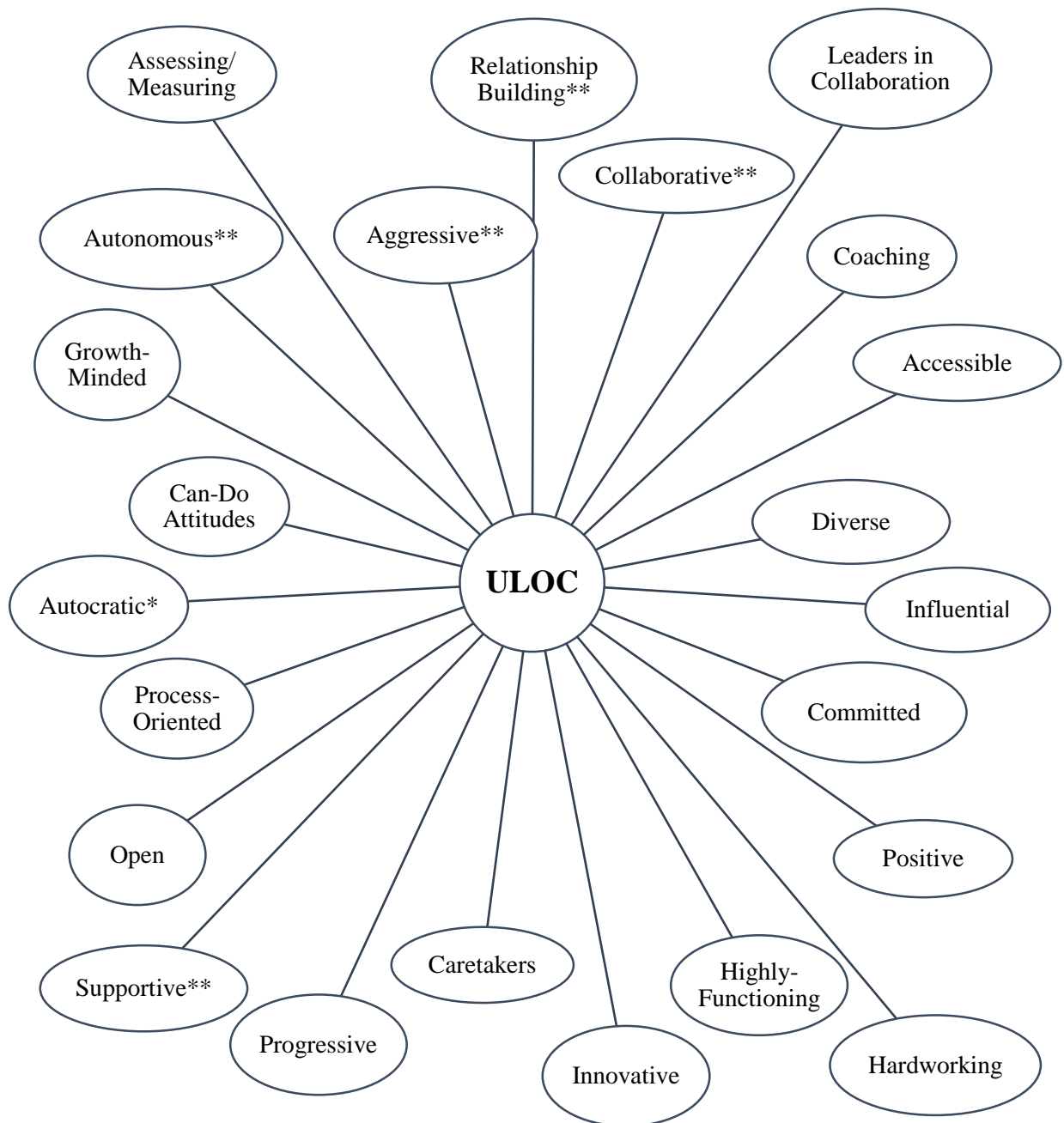
ILOS and ILOC were typically the result of decades if not centuries of tradition, history and standard operating procedures; but also were swayed by institution parameters and top leadership mandates and expectations. However, CDO influence on ILOC could be realized by way of DEI team members “infiltrating the culture throughout the institution”, as Gary expressed. ULOS revealed a limited CDO influence as it had the potential to succumb to institutional limitations (e.g. staff reduction directives, budget crises, and limited office space).

The space-construct combination of greatest influence for the CDO was ULOC. Santamaría and Santamaría (2012) stated: "... [Applied] critical leaders lead differently. They do not conform to mainstream leadership practice; this is one of the most salient features of their practice...applied critical leadership is qualitatively different" (p. 141). The CDOs as applied critical leaders led differently than their administrative peers, and the diversity chiefs employed the distinctive ACL approach to create unique spaces within their diversity unit that were reflective of their priorities, leadership style, and understandings of organizational culture. It is from these unique spaces and cultures that all higher education CDOs should seek to influence their respective higher education institutions. By disseminating these unit-level cultures, CDOs would be proposing an alternative leadership approach in higher education: an approach grounded in their "experiential background" as leaders from historically-marginalized groups (or individuals who chose to assume that lens), who desire to give back to a system that they somehow were able to make work for them (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012, p. 148).

Figure 7.5 below represents a summary of all ULOC descriptors from this study:



**Figure 7.5: ULOC Descriptors**



The limited number of drawbacks or shortcomings\* of the ULOCs in this study implied their potential efficacy, and is worthy of further examination for practice. (\* Refers to the sole ULOC

*descriptor communicated as a top-down, institution-level mandate. \*\* Refers to ULOC descriptors that were shared between two or more institutions.)*

### *Moving Away from Structural Ambiguity...*

This study revealed some structural ambiguity, particularly at the institution level, for the CDO role. Select participants in this study communicated confusion or constant uncertainty as to where they ‘belonged’ in the organizational structure, the appropriate line of communication, and fluctuations in reporting relationships. This type of ambiguity reads as counterproductive to the CDO role, particularly as the role is new and may not be entirely welcomed or supported. Practice must solidify the placement of the CDO before it can anneal the CDO’s authority.

### *...Toward Two-Fold Authority: Executive Cabinet and Presidential Direct Report*

The table below (Table 5.3 from Chapter 5) summarizes the access to top leadership for the study’s participating CDOs. The chart reveals that some CDOs report directly and exclusively to the university president or chancellor, while others do not. It also reveals that some CDOs have a seat at the president’s table as executive cabinet members, while others do not. And finally, Table 5.3 shows that only two CDOs in this study had both an executive cabinet post and a direct-and-exclusive reporting relationship with the university president or chancellor, while four CDOs in this study had neither an executive cabinet post nor a direct-and-exclusive reporting relationship with the university president or chancellor.

This study’s findings revealed the salience of a direct reporting relationship with the university president or chancellor for the CDO role. However, after conducting this study I would challenge that there is equally-significant value to having a seat at the president’s table as an executive cabinet member. Higher education CDOs should possess both, as doing so places them equivalent to the other positions of authority and decision making on campus. The

authority and empowerment pieces are logical next steps for the CDO role, but they cannot hold that sway or demand that respect without a proper seat at the table. The authority that CDOs need to enact their work is two-fold. It is not enough to have the president's ear, particularly for a position that is highly-reliant on relationships, and a plethora of them. Because, as powerful as the university president may be, he or she is still only one person. And CDOs need to engage with multiple people, constituents, and partners to achieve success.

	<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Reports Directly <u>and</u> Exclusively to President/Chancellor</b>
CDO 1: Danielle	✓	
CDO 2: Gary	✓	✓
CDO 3: Ilene		
CDO 4: Keith	✓	✓
CDO 5: Nicole		
CDO 6: Quentin		
CDO 7: Samuel		✓
CDO 8: Tammi	✓	

### Future Research

This study addresses the implications of organizational structure and organizational culture for the Chief Diversity Officer role in higher education. This study extends the work of other recent studies from Gichuru (2010), Leon (2010), Pittard (2010) and Nixon (2010), which also highlight the significance of organizational context for the change-agent chief diversity officer in higher education and call for: institutional structures to be changed (Gichuru, 2010), boundariless partnerships and collaboration (Gichuru, 2010; Leon, 2010; Nixon, 2013), institutional culture transformation (Leon, 2010), acknowledgment of institutional history and context for the work (Pittard, 2010; Leon, 2010; Nixon, 2013), support of top leadership (Nixon, 2013), appropriate authority for the CDO role (Pittard, 2010); and use of a critical frame by CDOs to enact the work (Nixon, 2013). However, through the frames of Critical Race Theory

and Applied Critical Leadership, this study is the first of its kind to disaggregate, situate and examine the implications of organizational structure and organizational culture for the CDO role in higher education through an ACL/CRT-hybrid lens. The knowledge ascertained from this study will inform theory and practice in higher education, diversity, and the CDO role.

This qualitative study will add to the emerging literature for the CDO nomenclature. However future research might consider: (a) a larger sampling of CDOs and/or informant pools for expanded perspectives surrounding organizational structure and organizational culture, (b) a longitudinal study of the CDO role in higher education to begin to capture the efficacy of long-term change initiatives, and (c) examination of CDO peers and their perspectives and advocacy efforts for diversity work.

## REFERENCES

- Alemán, E. (2009). Through the prism of critical race theory: Niceness and Latina/o leadership in the politics of education. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 8(4), 290-311.
- Anderson, T. (2005). The strange career of affirmative action. *South Central Review*, 22(2), 110-129.
- Arnold, J., & Kowalski-Braun, M. (2011). The journey to an inaugural chief diversity officer: Preparation, implementation and beyond. *Innovative Higher Education*, 37(1), 27-36.
- ASHE Higher Education Report. (2009). The changing landscape and the compelling need for diversity. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 35(1), 1-144.
- Baez, B. (2004). The Study of Diversity. *Journal of Higher Education*, 75(3), 285-306.
- Bakke v. Regents of the University of California, 18 Cal. 3d 34 (1976).
- Banerji, S. (2005). Diversity officers – Coming to a campus near you?. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 22(20), 38-40.
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings: Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Bell, D. (2003). Diversity's distractions. *Columbia Law Review*, 103, 1622–1633.
- Bell, L. A. (1997). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, and P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook* (pp. 3–15). New York: Routledge.
- Berger, J. B., & Milem, J. F. (2000). *Organizational behavior in higher education and student outcomes*. In *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research*, ed. J. C. Smart, Vol. XV: 268-338. New York: Agathon.
- Bergerson, A. A. (2003). Critical race theory and white racism: Is there room for white scholars in fighting racism in education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(1), 51–63.
- Berrey, E. C. (2011). Why diversity became orthodox in higher education, and how it changed the meaning of race on campus. *Critical Sociology (Sage Publications, Ltd.)*, 37(5), 573-596.
- Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work: the cybernetics of academic organization and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Birnbaum, R. (1989). The cybernetic institution: Toward an integration of governance theories. *Higher Education (Netherlands)*, 18(2).

- Birnbaum, R. (1992). *How academic leadership works: Understanding success and failure in the college presidency*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2008). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bowen, W. G., Kurzweil, M. A., & Tobin, E. M. (2005). *Equity and excellence in American higher education*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
- Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (Brown II), 349 U.S. 294 (1955).
- Caperton, G. (2004). Achieving diversity with Michigan in mind. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 50(34), B15.
- Carchidi, D.M. & Peterson, M.W. (2000). Emerging organizational structures. *Planning for Higher Education*, 28, 1-15.
- Cervantes, A., Creusere M., McMillion, R., McQueen, C., Short, M., Steiner, M., & Webster, J. (2005). *Opening the doors to higher education: Perspectives on the Higher Education Act 40 years later*. TG Research and Analytical Services.  
[http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/hea\\_history.pdf](http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/hea_history.pdf).
- Chang, M. J. (1996). *Racial diversity in higher education: Does a racially mixed student population affect educational outcomes?* (Doctoral dissertation). University of California, Los Angeles.
- Chang, M. J. (2005). Reconsidering the diversity rationale. (1), 6-13.
- Chubin, D. E. (2009). 'Visible' diversity and the university. *Diverse Issues In Higher Education*, 26(12), 28.
- Chun, E. B., & Evans, A. (2008). *Demythologizing diversity in higher education*, 25(2), 32.
- Clark, B. R. (1980). *Academic culture*. Working Paper. IHERG-42, Yale University, Higher Education Research Group.
- Cohen, M. D., & March, J. G. (1974). *Leadership and ambiguity: The American college president*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Cohen, M. D., & March, J. G. (1986). *Leadership in an organized anarchy*. In Brown, M.C. (Eds.). (2000). *Organization and Governance in Higher Education*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 16-35). Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing.

- Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1972). Garbage can model of organizational choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17, 1-25.
- Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999). *Doing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Craig, C. M. (2004). Higher education culture and organizational change in the 21st century. *The Community College Enterprise*, 10(1), 79-89.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Deal, T.E., & Kennedy, A. A. (2000). *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life*. New York: Perseus Books Publishing.
- Delaney, K. J. (2007). *Methodological dilemmas and opportunities in interviewing organizational elites*. *Sociology Compass*, 1(1), 208-221.
- Delgado, R. (1995). *Critical race theory: The cutting edge*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York: New York University Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dill, D. D. (1982). The management of academic culture: Notes on the management of meaning and social integration. *Higher Education*, 11, 303-320.
- Diversity and Organizational Leadership in Higher Education. (2006). *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 32(3), 47-69.
- Diversity, Leadership, and Organizational Culture in Higher Education. (2006). *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 32(3), 23-45.
- Duderstadt, J. (2000). *A university for the 21st century*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Executive Order 10925, 1961.
- Feagin, J. R. (2006). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. New York: Routledge.
- Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, No. 11-345 (argued October 10, 2012).

- Flick, U. (2007). *Designing qualitative research (The SAGE Qualitative Research Kit)*. London: Sage.
- Fliegler, C. M. (2006). *Leaders for all: Colleges and universities are naming chief diversity officers to help create lasting change*. University Business, February 2006.
- Frank, J. (2005). *A democracy of distinction: Aristotle and the work of politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gayle, D., Bhoendradatt, T., & White Jr., A. Q. (2003). ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report: *Governance in the twenty-first century university*, 30(1), 1-139.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of culture*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gichuru, M. (2010). *Post-affirmative action: A phenomenological study of admission initiatives by chief diversity officers to support diversity* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Databases. (3417884)
- Glassman, R. B. (1973). Persistence and loose coupling in living systems. *Behavioral Science*, 18, 83-98.
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967): *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Transaction Publishers.
- Goral, T. (2003). The battle for affirmative action. (Cover story). *University Business*, 6(5), 32.
- Gose, B. (2006). The rise of the chief diversity officer. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 3(9), B1-B5.
- Gose, B. (2009). Diversity takes a hit during tough times. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 56(8), B1-B4.
- Gratz v. Bollinger et al., 539 U.S. 244 (2003).
- Grillo, L. (2005). Diversity is an action verb. *Diverse Issues In Higher Education*, 22(21), 45.
- Grodsky, E., & Kalogrides, D. (2008). The declining significance of race in college admissions decisions. *American Journal of Education*, 115(1), 1-33.
- Grutter v. Bollinger et al., 539 U.S. 306 (2003).
- Gurin, P. (1999). Expert report of Patricia Gurin. In *The compelling need for diversity in higher education*, Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al. No. 97-75231 (E.D. Mich.) and Grutter et al. v. Bollinger et al. No. 97-75928 (E.D. Mich.) (pp. 99-234). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan.



- Gurin, P., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(3), 330-366.
- Hall, H. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books.
- Harper, S., Patton, L., & Wooden, O. (2009). Access and equity for African American students in higher education: A critical race historical analysis of policy efforts. *Journal of Higher Education*, 80(4), 389-414.
- Heller, D. E. (2002). *Condition of access: Higher education for lower income students*. Westport, CT: American Council on Education and Praeger Publishers.
- Hendrickson, R. M., Lane, J. E., Harris, J. T., & Dorman, R. H. (2013). *Academic leadership and governance of higher education: A guide for trustees, leaders, and aspiring leaders of two- and four-year institutions*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Hopwood v. State of Texas, 78 F.3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996).
- Hu-DeHart, E. (2000). The diversity project: Institutionalizing multiculturalism or managing differences? *Academe*, 86(5), 39-42.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1999). *Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving the climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education*. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University.
- Iverson, S. V. (2012). Constructing Outsiders: The Discursive Framing of Access in University Diversity Policies. *Review Of Higher Education*, 35(2), 149-177.
- Jayakumar, U. M. (2008). Can higher education meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and global society? Campus diversity and cross-cultural workforce competencies. *Harvard Educational Review*, 78(4), 615-651.
- Jayakumar, U. M., Howard, T. C., Allen, W. R., & Han, J. C. (2009). Racial privilege in the professoriate: An exploration of campus climate, retention, and satisfaction. *Journal Of Higher Education*, 80(5), 538-563.
- June, A. (2011). A pioneering diversity officer sees barriers that persist on campuses. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 58(6), B17-B19.
- Kaufmann, S. W. (2007). The history and impact of state initiatives to eliminate affirmative action. *New Directions For Teaching & Learning*, 11(1), 3-9.
- Keeling, R. P., Underhile, R., & Wall, A. F. (2007). Horizontal and vertical structures: The dynamics of organization in higher education. *Liberal Education*, 93(4), 22-31.

- Keppel, F. (1987). The higher education acts contrasted, 1965-1986: Has federal policy come of age?. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 49-67.
- Keup, J.R., Walker, A.A., Astin, H.S., & Lindholm, J.A. (2001). *Organizational culture and institutional transformation*: Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, ED464521.
- Kuenzi, J. (2005). *The postsecondary education student population*. Retrieved on May 11, 2012 from <http://congressionalresearch.com/RL31441/document.php?study=The+Postsecondary+Education+Student+Population>.
- Kuh, G. D., & Whitt, E. J. (1988). *The invisible tapestry: Culture in American colleges and universities*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1, Washington, D.C.
- Kuh, G.D. (1996). *Organizational theory*. In S. Komives and D. Woodard, Jr. (Eds.), *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kuh, G. D. (2003). *Organizational theory*. In *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (4th ed.), ed. S. R. Komives et al., 269-96. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). "Who you callin' nappy-headed?" A critical race theory look at the construction of Black women. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 12(1), 87-99.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009b). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of critical race theory in education* (pp. 17-36).
- Leon, R. A. (2010). *Strategies for institutional transformation: A multi-site case study of the chief diversity officer position* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Databases. (3424043)
- Lofland, J. (1974). Styles of reporting qualitative field research. *The American Sociologist*, 9, 101-111.
- Lopez, G. R. (2003). The (racially neutral) politics of education: A critical race theory perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 39, 68-94.
- Liu, G. (1998). Affirmative action in higher education: The diversity rationale and the compelling interest test. *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, 33, 381-442.
- March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1975). *Choice situations in loosely coupled worlds*. Unpublished Manuscript, Stanford University.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2011). *Designing qualitative research* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Martin, J. (2002). *Organizational culture: Mapping the terrain*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Masland, A. (1985). Organizational culture in the study of higher education. *Review of Higher Education*, 8, 157-168.
- Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 339 U.S. 637 (1950).
- Milem, J. F. (2010). The educational benefits of diversity: Evidence from multiple sectors. Retrieved on April 8, 2013 from [http://www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/www/policy/racial\\_dynamics/Compelling1.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/www/policy/racial_dynamics/Compelling1.pdf)
- Milem, J. F., & Hakuta, K. (2000). The benefits of racial and ethnic diversity in higher education. In D. Wilds (Ed.), *Minorities in higher education: Seventeenth annual status report* (pp. 39-67). Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education.
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. 2. ed. London.
- Mill, J. S. (1974). On liberty. London: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1859).
- Minor, J. T., & Tierney, W. G. (2005). The danger of deference: A case of polite governance. *Teachers College Record*, 107, 137–156.
- Mintzberg, H. (1979). *The structuring of organizations: A synthesis of the research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Moses, M. S., & Chang, M. J. (2006). Toward a deeper understanding of the diversity rationale. *Educational Researcher*, 35(1), 6-11.
- Myers, S. L., Jr. (1997). Why diversity is a smoke screen for affirmative action. *Change*, 29(4), 25–32.
- Newman, F., Couturier, L., & Scurry, J. (2004). *The future of higher education: Rhetoric, reality, and the risks of the market*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Nixon, M. L. (2013). *Women of color chief diversity officers: Their positionality and agency in higher education institutions* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Databases. (3588822)
- Owen, D. S. (2008). Privileged social identities and diversity leadership in higher education. *Review of Higher Education*, 32(2), 185–207.
- Park, J. J. (2009). Are we satisfied? A look at student satisfaction with diversity at traditionally white institutions. *The Review of Higher Education*, 32(3), 291-320.

- Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's race got to do with it? Critical race theory's conflict with and connections to qualitative research methodology and epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 7-22.
- Parker, L., & Villalpando, O. (2007). A race(cialized) perspective on education leadership: Critical race theory in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43(5), 519-524.
- Pascale, R. T., & Athos, A. G. (1981). *The art of Japanese management*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Patton, M. Q. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Peterson, M. W., & Spencer, M. G. (1990). Understanding academic culture and climate. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 68, 3-18.
- Pettigrew, A. M. (1979). On studying organizational cultures. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 570-581.
- Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The external control of organizations: A resource dependence perspective*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Pittard, L. (2010). *Select higher education chief diversity officers: Roles, realities, and reflections* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Databases. (3446403)
- Powers, J. (2007). The relevance of critical race theory to educational theory and practice. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 41(1), 151-166.
- Robinson, G., & Dechant, K. (1997). Building a business case for diversity. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 11, 21-31.
- Ropers-Huilman, B. (2008). Women faculty and the dance of identities: Constructing self and privilege within community. In J. Glazer-Raymo (Ed.), *Unfinished agendas: New and continuing gender challenges in higher education* (pp. 35-51). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Santamaría, L. J., & Santamaría, A. P. (2012). *Applied critical leadership in education: Choosing change*. New York: Routledge.
- Schein, E. H. (1981). Does Japanese management have a message for American managers? *Sloan Management Review*, 23(1), 55-68.
- Schein, E. H. (1992). The role of the CEO in the management of change. In T. A. Kochan & M. Useem (Eds.), *Transforming organizations* (pp. 80-96). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Schein, E H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schmidt, P. (2011). Obama administration gives colleges broad leeway on affirmative action. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved December 5, 2012 from <http://chronicle.com/article/Obama-Administration-Gives/130008/>
- Schuck, P. H. (2003). *Diversity in America: Keeping government at a safe distance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Simpson, M. D. (1998). Diversity fades on campus. *NEA Today*, 16(6), 25.
- Sleeter, C. E., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2004). Critical pedagogy, critical race theory, and antiracist education: Implications for multicultural education. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 240–258). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, D. G. (2009). *Diversity's promise for higher education: Making it work*. Baltimore, MD: John's Hopkins University Press.
- Smith, D.G. (2012). Diversity in organizing higher education: A bridge to the future?. In M. Bastedo (Ed.), *The organization of higher education: Managing colleges for a new era*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp 225-255.
- Solórzano, D. (1998). Critical race theory, racial and gender microaggressions, and the experiences of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11, 121–136.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Stevens, F. G., Plaut, V. C., & Sanchez-Burks, J. (2008). Unlocking the benefits of diversity: All-inclusive multiculturalism and positive organizational change. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 44(1), 116-133.
- Stuart, R. (2012). Diversity trailblazer: University of Maryland-College Park's Dr. Kumea Shorter-Gooden returns to familiar territory in a new role. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, February 2012.
- Swartz, E. (2009). Diversity: Gatekeeping knowledge and maintaining inequalities. *Review Of Educational Research*, 79(2), 1044-1083.
- Sweatt v. Painter, 339 U.S. 629 (1950).
- Taylor, E. (1999). Critical race theory and interest convergence in the desegregation of higher education. In L. Parker, D. Deyhle, & S. Villenas (Eds.), *Race is . . . race isn't: Critical race theory and qualitative studies in education* (pp. 181–204). Boulder, CO:

Westview Press.

- Teddlie, C., & Freeman, J. A. (2002). *Twentieth-century desegregation in U.S. higher education: A review of five distinct eras*. In William A. Smith, Phillip G. Altbach, & Kofi Lomotey (Eds.), *The racial crisis in American higher education: Continuing challenges for the twenty-first century*, (77-99). New York, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Terenzini, P. T., Cabrera, A. F., Colbeck, C. L., Bjorklund, S. A., & Parente, J. M. (2001). Racial and ethnic diversity in the classroom: Does it promote student learning? *Journal of Higher Education*, 72, 509-531.
- Thompson, J. D. (2003). *Organizations in action: Social science bases of administrative theory*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Tierney, W. (1992). Cultural leadership and the search for community. *Liberal Education*, 78, 16-21.
- Tierney, W. G. (1997). The parameters of affirmative action: Equity and excellence in the academy. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(2), 165-196.
- Tierney, W. G. (2008). *The impact of culture on organizational decision making: Theory and practice in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Tosi, H. C. (1975). *Theories of organization*. Chicago: St. Clair Press.
- Treviño, A., Harris, M., & Wallace, D. (2008). What's so critical about critical race theory?. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 11(1), 7-10.
- Trow, M. (1985). Comparative reflections on leadership in higher education. *European Journal of Education*, 20(2/3), 143-159.
- Valdes, F., McCristal Culp, J., & Harris, A. P. (2002). Battles waged, won and lost: Critical race theory at the turn of the millennium. In F. Valdes, J. McCristal Culp, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Crossroads, directions and new critical race theory* (pp. 1-6). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organization*. Translated by A. M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons. New York: The Free Press.
- West, C., & Fenstermaker, S. (1995). Doing difference. *Gender & Society*, 9(1), 8-37.
- Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(1), 1-19.
- Williams, D. A. (2006). Beyond diversity: Implementing a dynamic and evolving diversity change project. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 23(15), 50.

- Williams, D. A. (2013). *Strategic diversity leadership: Activating change and transformation in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Williams, D. A., Berger, J. B., & McClendon, S. A. (2005). *Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Williams D. A., & Clowney. C. (2007). Strategic planning for diversity and organizational change: A primer for higher-education leadership. *Effective Practices for Academic Leaders*, 2(3), 1-16.
- Williams, D. A., & Wade-Golden, K. C. (2007). The chief diversity officer. *CUPA-HR Journal*, 58(1), 38-48.
- Williams, D. A., & Wade-Golden, K. C. (2008). The complex mandate of a chief diversity officer. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(5), B44-B45.
- Williams, D. A., & Wade-Golden, K. C. (2013). *The chief diversity officer: Strategy, structure, and change management*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Wood, P. (2003). *Diversity: The invention of a concept*. San Francisco: Encounter Books.
- Yanow, D. (2003). *Constructing "Race" and "Ethnicity" in America: Category-making in public policy administration*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Yin, R. K. (1993). *Applications of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Yin, R. K. (2004). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Zhu, Z. (2007). *State schooling and ethnic identity: The politics of a Tibetan Neidi secondary school in China (Emerging perspectives on education in China)*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for CDOs

#### *Introduction*

Thank you again for participating in my study. I acknowledge the demands on your time and therefore will make every effort to conduct this interview today within the allotted time of 60 minutes. This study is for my dissertation and for fulfillment of the PhD at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The purpose of this study is to add to our understanding of the chief diversity officer role in higher education, with particular consideration for the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the role. The interview is divided into four sections: (1) general/introductory questions, (2) questions pertaining to the CDO role, (3) organizational structure inquiry, and finally (4) exploration of organizational culture.

The information I collect will remain strictly confidential throughout the research process. Pseudonyms (for all individuals and institutions) will be used during transcription, coding, analysis, and summary. All materials will be securely locked in a combination-lock briefcase. All information will be destroyed in 7 years. The information obtained will be used for the dissertation, and possibly for scholarly publications or presentations. As a reminder, you have agreed to have this interview audio recorded. You may withdraw consent of audio recording at any point; and you are free to discontinue the interview at any point as well. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

#### **A. Let's begin this interview with a few general and introductory questions.**

1. Tell me about your academic and professional background. (How long have you been in this specific position? How long have you done higher education diversity work?)



2. What led you to diversity in higher education (as a profession)? What or who led to you being in this role?
3. What led you to this particular institution (to enact or perform diversity work)?
4. How do you define “diversity”?
5. Tell me about the status (e.g. role, prominence) of diversity in higher education today.
6. Now talk about diversity’s role/salience at this institution.
7. What is your sense of the university’s commitment to their stated position on diversity? On what evidence is your conclusion based?
8. How pervasive or widespread is the university’s commitment to diversity?
9. Generally speaking, what would you identify as the major sources of resistance to greater diversity accomplishments at this university (and external to the university)?

**B. Now, I would like to turn our attention to the position/role you currently hold.**

1. State your exact title, then describe the roles and responsibilities of your post. What *exactly* is the work that you do to facilitate diversity at this institution? Please discuss in detail the specifics of your duties.
2. Are you the first person to hold this position at this institution?
3. Now talk about the background of the role at this institution:
  - a. How long has the institution had the position?
  - b. How did the position come into existence? What ideas, events, etc. led to the formation of the role here?
4. Expanding on the CDO role’s background at this institution, now discuss the:
  - a. Process for design/implementation of the role
  - b. Perception of the role (by campus constituents)

c. Significance of the role

5. Is this a position grounded in the mission or objectives of the institution, mandated from top leadership (e.g. the University president), or neither? Please elaborate on how this position came to exist, and specifically what fosters its sustainability?
6. Has there been any strategic-level change to the CDO role (or the CDO's office) since you have held the post? Please explain your response further.

**C. Now I would like to shift our conversation to organizational structure and organizational culture. I would like for you to consider organizational structure and organizational culture within the institution and within your office, and how these constructs have supported your role (particularly within the last 3-5 years).**

***C. (a) Organizational Structure***

1. How would you describe the organizational structure at this institution? Within this office? May I see an organizational chart for both? Please elaborate on the structure of your office and the institution (and particularly where your role fits in both). What is challenging about the current structure? What about the current structure is advantageous?
2. To whom do you specifically report? Do you report up to multiple individuals for the CDO role? Who are your direct reports? How large is your team/staff? Please elaborate on the dynamics of your reporting relationships.
3. Are there issues of clarity (or lack of clarity) about your reporting relationships? What is challenging about the current structure of your reporting relationships? What is advantageous about the current structure of your reporting relationships?

4. How does the current organizational structure assist the roles and responsibilities of the CDO? Does it in any way prohibit the CDO's work? Does the organizational structure adequately aid and facilitate the CDO's work? Please explain your response further.
5. Has the organizational structure changed or evolved since you have held this role (particularly within the last 3-5 years)? Please explain your response further.

***C. (b) Organizational Culture***

1. How would you describe the culture of this institution? How would you describe the culture within your office? Please elaborate on the culture of both spaces. What is challenging? What is advantageous?
2. What are the implications of this institution's culture for the CDO role? What are the implications of this office's culture for the CDO role?
3. How does the organizational culture assist in the CDO roles and responsibilities? Does it in any way prohibit the CDO's work? Does the organizational culture adequately aid and facilitate the CDO's work? Please explain your response further.
4. Although organizational culture is difficult to change, have you witnessed or experienced any change or evolution in organizational culture since you have held this role (particularly within the last 3-5 years)? Please explain your response further.
5. What have I not asked that you feel is important for me to know in order to understand how organizational culture and organization structure impact the role of the CDO at your institution?

## **Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for Informants**

### ***Introduction***

Thank you again for participating in my study. I want to acknowledge the demands on your time and therefore will make every effort to conduct this interview today within the allotted time of 60 minutes. This study is for my dissertation and for fulfillment of the PhD at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The purpose of this study is to add to our understanding of the chief diversity officer role in higher education, with particular consideration for the implications of organizational culture and organizational structure for the role. The interview is divided into four sections: (1) general/introductory questions, (2) questions pertaining to the CDO role, (3) organizational structure inquiry, and finally (4) exploration of organizational culture.

The information I collect will remain strictly confidential throughout the research process. Pseudonyms (for all individuals and institutions) will be used during transcription, coding, analysis, and summary. All materials will be securely locked in a combination-lock briefcase. All information will be destroyed in 7 years. The information obtained will be used for the dissertation, and possibly for scholarly publications or presentations. As a reminder, you have agreed to have this interview audio recorded. You may withdraw consent of audio recording at any point; and you are free to discontinue the interview at any point as well. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

### **A. Let's begin this interview with a few general and introductory questions.**

1. Tell me about your academic and professional background.
2. How do you define "diversity"?
3. Talk about diversity's role/salience at this institution.

4. Generally speaking, what would you identify as the major sources of resistance to greater diversity accomplishments at this university (and external to the university)?

**B. Now, I would like to turn our attention to the position you hold and the CDO role held by your colleague.**

1. State your exact title, then describe the roles and responsibilities of your post. What *exactly* is the work that you do (to facilitate diversity at this institution)? Please discuss in detail the specifics of your duties.
2. What led you to this particular institution (to enact/perform diversity work)?
3. Now describe for me the role of the CDO. What is his/her role at this institution?  
What are the specific duties attached to the position?

**C. Now I would like to shift our conversation to organizational structure and organizational culture. I would like for you to consider organizational structure and organizational culture within the institution and within the diversity office, and how these constructs have supported the CDO role (particularly within the last 3-5 years).**

***C. (a) Organizational Structure***

1. What is the organizational structure at this institution? Within the diversity office?  
Please elaborate on the structure of the diversity office and the institution (and particularly where the CDO role fits in both). What is challenging about the current structure? What about the current structure is advantageous?
2. Are there issues of clarity (or lack of clarity) about your reporting relationships?  
What is challenging about the current structure of your reporting relationships? What is advantageous about the current structure of your reporting relationships?
3. How does the current organizational structure assist the roles and responsibilities of the CDO? Does it in any way prohibit the CDO's work? Does the organizational

structure adequately aid and facilitate the CDO's work? Please explain your response further.

4. Has the organizational structure changed or evolved in your time here (particularly within the last 3-5 years)? How has that (change or lack thereof) impacted the CDO's role? Please explain your response further.

***C. (b) Organizational Culture***

1. How would you describe the culture of this institution? How would you describe the culture within the diversity office? Please elaborate on the culture of both spaces.

What is challenging? What is advantageous?

2. What are the implications of this institution's culture for the CDO role? What are the implications of the diversity office's culture for the CDO role?

3. How does the organizational culture assist in the CDO's roles and responsibilities? Does it in any way prohibit the CDO's work? Does the organizational culture adequately aid and facilitate the CDO's work? Please explain your response further.

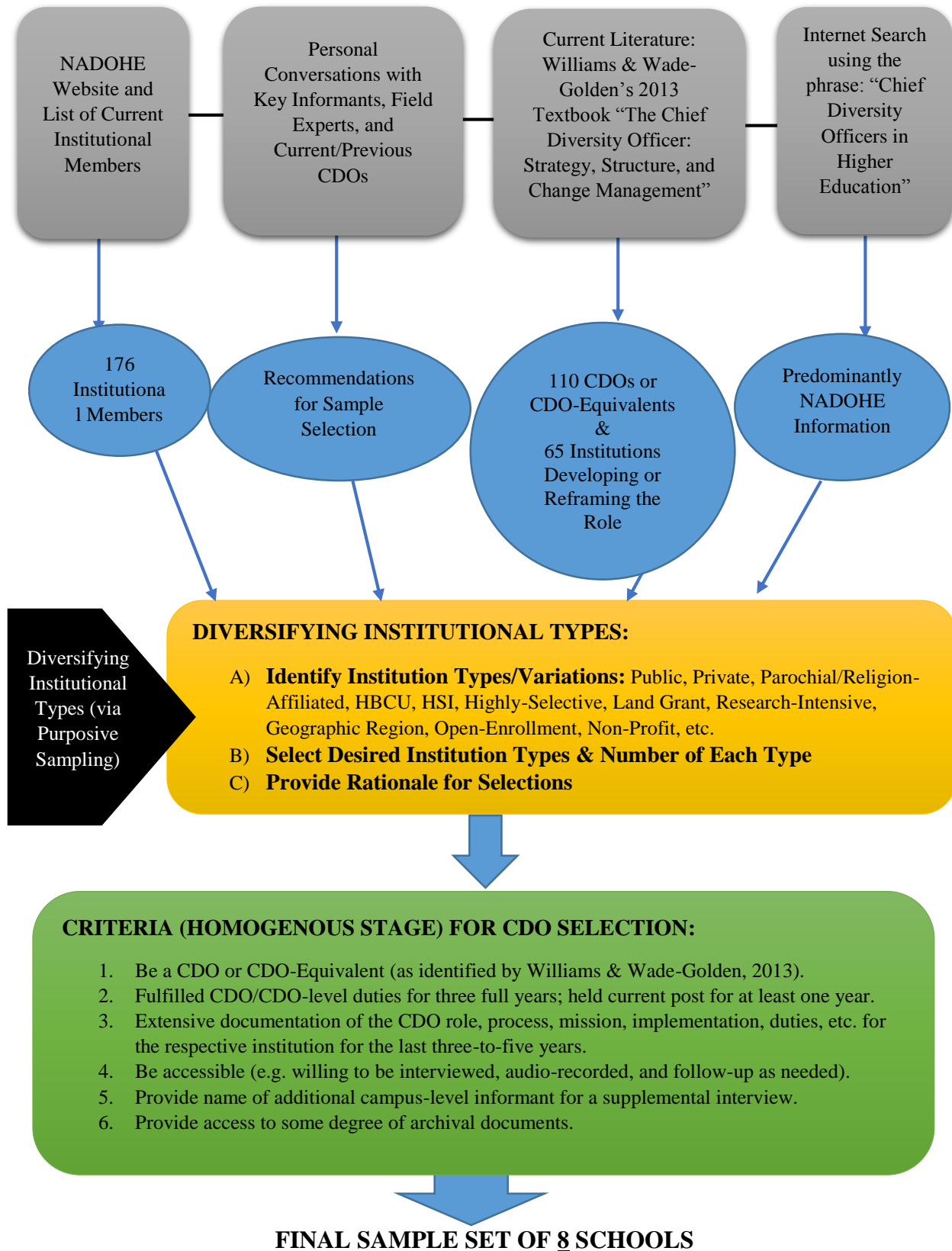
4. Although organizational culture is difficult to change, have you witnessed or experienced any change or evolution in organizational culture in your time here (particularly within the last 3-5 years)? How has that (change or lack thereof) impacted the CDO's role? Please explain your response further.

## **Appendix C: List of Archival Documents**

### ***Potential Archival Documents to Request/Research***

- ❖ University Website
- ❖ Diversity Office Website
- ❖ Chief Diversity Officer Job Description
- ❖ Strategic Diversity Agenda/Platform
- ❖ Mission Statement/Vision Statement (Institution and/or Diversity Office)
- ❖ Evaluations
- ❖ Annual Reports
- ❖ Publications
- ❖ Brochures, Flyers, Pamphlets, Calendar of Events

## Appendix D: Sampling Procedures Process Map





## Appendix E: CDO Roles and Responsibilities Checklist

<b>CDO Checklist 75 Items</b>	
Recruitment – Faculty & Staff	Advise the President/Chancellor
Recruitment – Students	Advise Executive Cabinet Members
Retention – Faculty & Staff	Collaborate with Deans, Faculty, Senates, Etc.
Retention – Students	Establishing a Welcoming Environment
Partner with Student Affairs	Partner/Offer Recommendations to the Provost
K-12/K-14/Pre-College Outreach	Grants/Fundraising
Community Outreach/Programming	Chair the Primary Diversity Council
Cultural Competency Initiatives	Create Committees/Councils
Host Annual Diversity Symposia/Conference	Present to the Governing Body
Policy – Development/Implementation	Present to the Executive Cabinet
Sit on On-Campus Boards	Sit on Off-Campus Boards
Sit on Search Committees	Speaking Engagements/Keynotes
Hire Staff to Implement Trainings & Initiatives	Develop/Implement a Dialogue Series
Create University-Wide Diversity Plan	Implement University-Wide Diversity Plan
Assist with Unit-Specific Diversity Plans	Diversity Website Revisions/Updates
Oversee Underrepresented-Population Groups	Develop Training Modules/Workshops
Create Annual Diversity Reports	Oversee Campus Cultural Centers
Create/Implement Diversity Scorecard	Sponsor Student Organization Diversity Initiatives
Increase Analytical Capacity of University to Address and Remedy Barriers to Equity	Partner with Athletics Department
Budget Oversight for Specialized / Underrepresented Populations	Disseminate Diversity Research
Human Resources Oversight of Specialized / Underrepresented Populations	Sponsor Faculty Diversity Initiatives (Curriculum, Scholarship)
Strategic Planning	Partner with Human Resources
Initiate Department-Level Assessments and Strategic Planning	Serve as External Communications Liaison
Review/Improve Hiring Procedures for Top Administrators	Establish a Community Network
Campus Climate Assessment	Review/Improve Hiring Procedures for Faculty/Staff
Implement Recurring Diversity Forums	Achieve Numerical Diversity
Partner with Relevant External Organizations	Network/Engage with other Diversity Officers
Administer Scholarships	Partner with Peer Institutions

<b>Appendix E (cont.)</b>	
Administer Campus Diversity Awards/Recognitions	Oversee Scholarship Recipient Cohorts
Conduct Program/Unit Evaluation & Analysis	Unite Campus Constituents/Deliver Campus-Wide Collaboration
Oversee Affirmative Action Office/Plans	Partner with EEO Office
Develop/Promote Diversity Education	Oversee Grievances or Ombudsman Services
Host Diversity Scholar Events	Title IX Responsibilities
Review Services for Disabled Students, Faculty, & Staff	EEO/Compliance Responsibilities
Increase Graduate Students, Postdocs, and Faculty Focused on Diversity	Fund a Faculty Diversity Fellowship
Address Bias Incidents on Campus	Provide Financial Resources for Engagement & Public Scholarship
Establish More Formal Relationship Structures with Relevant Units (e.g. Social Justice Center, Cultural Centers)	Establish a Diversity Awareness Month
Other:	Encourage an Increase in Papers by and Citations of Faculty on Diversity
Other:	Other: