Teacher as Servant Leader:

A Faculty Model for Effectiveness with Students

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A servant leader approach by faculty was investigated to see if it might lead to more effective learning for the students and satisfying teaching for faculty. A servant leader mindset enables teachers to redirect energy toward collaborative inquiry. This may help institutions compete in the new higher education economy because of the focus on teaching and learning in many postsecondary institutions. In a field study with traditional college age students, scores on behaviors that were borrowed from Laub's (1999) servant leadership criteria were significantly higher for professors perceived as most effective, versus those professors perceived as least effective. A Teacher as Servant Leader Model is constructed to help explain this relationship.

When college students described their most effective professors in informal conversations, they did not list an exciting lecture or even earning good grades. Instead, students frequently mentioned the behavior of the professor in motivating them to grow as a better person. This sounded a lot like the description of a servant leader. Robert K. Greenleaf suggested that the best test of servant leadership was to ask, "Do those served grow as persons?" (1970; 1992, p 24). The relationship of teacher behavior and servant leader behavior needed further investigation.

Adding fuel to this possible relationship is the changing environment in higher education, with strategies for restructuring by the administration and a search for new approaches to teaching by the faculty (Guskin, 1996). The customer service orientation by the administration and a new level of competition between universities is demanding a new faculty model, according to Buchen (2000). Such a model will include more focus on the learner, and connecting with students more intentionally than in previous decades. A learner-focused approach requires non-traditional instructional methods that could distinguish the school because they focus on teaching because students matter most (Katz, 1985).

This paper theorizes that faculty who exercise the characteristics of servant leadership will be more able to have a learning-focused classroom. Using these methods may provide the link between student learning, fulfillment as a faculty member, and better performance of the institution as it competes in the new higher education economy (Bass, 2000; Buchen, 1998). A field study compared student perceptions of their most effective professor versus their least effective professor. The instrument for students to rate their professors was based on an operational definition of servant leadership, but never mentioned that term. A Teacher as Servant Leader Model is constructed to help explain this relationship.

Presenting the Need for a New Faculty Model

College and universities are increasingly paying attention to the quality of teaching (Cranton, 1994). Pressures are coming from three sources: faculty themselves, student evaluations, and the economic

environment in higher education. Philosopher and educator John Dewey (1938) is credited for stating that felt difficulty is the raw material for learning. Such learning and change takes place (in thinking and acting) when one seeks to overcome that difficulty. The changing environment in colleges and universities—a felt difficulty in institutions of higher learning—may provide the right time for a new faculty model.

Faculty

College faculty often are hired because of their academic degrees, not because of their teaching ability. When first hired out of graduate school, new instructors and professors are generally unaware of how students learn and unprepared for the challenge of motivating students in the classroom. Orientating PhD's to the field of teaching methods is almost non-existent (Buchen, 1998; Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, & Stackman, 2003). Instead, faculty resort to preparing syllabi and lectures the way their professors did. Furthermore, many of their most recent models were graduate school professors whose main focus was research in their discipline instead of classroom teaching and learning. When a new professor starts by asking him/herself, "What do I want to teach?" they are likely to spend most of the class time lecturing or covering the material, like many of their professors did. Often, this type of faculty member starts with him/herself and what they know. Teaching has a faculty-knowledge focus for them, instead of student-learning focus. Covering the content is their goal, and summative grading remains their primary means to assess whether that goal was accomplished. Learning is the student's job, not a shared responsibility in this traditional faculty model.

Some universities are well-known for having tenure-track faculty whose students miss an effective and fulfilling connection with them. Most academics gain considerable experience on how to practice research in their field, but rarely receive training or modeling on how to be effective teachers, i.e., how to cause learning. Additionally, very little emphasis is on developing the dispositions that help faculty connect with students. Some institutional policies appear to be based on the belief that research enhances teaching. This apparent academic myth continues to be debated across academia, despite calls by administrators as well as faculty that scholarly research does not automatically translate to vigorous, stimulating teaching (Sheridan, 1990). Likewise, the findings of the Hattie and Marsh (1996) meta-analysis of time spent on research and teacher effectiveness showed a near-zero correlation.

Boyer (1990) added fuel to this debate by extending the definition of scholarship. Boyer urged universities to see that scholarship has four aspects: application, teaching, integration, as well as discovery of knowledge— the most typical research goal. Boyer's (1990) definition of the *scholarship of teaching* fosters the development of teaching through reflective instruction and peer review, which can then be replicated beyond one classroom or institution. Since this paper focuses on the practice of teaching, an expanded definition of scholarship would theoretically result in more focus on the student learning. However, the built-in rewards at research–focused institutions and tenure committees generally do not embrace this more expanded definition of scholarship (Consulo, Elrick, Middleton, & Roy, 1996).

The frustration felt among newly hired faculty and the scholarship debate in the academy demonstrates that a new model is needed among faculty of post-secondary institutions (Bass, 2000; Buchen, 1998). Their papers also recommended a new leadership model for administration; however, this paper focuses on the faculty portion of their leadership model and the practice of teaching. If faculty can perceive themselves as *leaders of learning*—which is students-outcomes focused, instead of faculty-owned research and covering-the-content lectures, they are more likely to see the results most faculty feel called to achieve.

Students

Bretschneider (2002) stated that "Education is a co-produced good" (p. 99). Students, the second half of the teaching/learning, leader/follower exchange, learn best when they are actively engaged. Action-learning occurs when a student poses and answers mental questions (Katz, 1985). Traditional pedagogy results in passivity and de-motivation for many students, perhaps because of a lack of focus on what motivates students to learn. In fact, Arbaugh's (2001) meta-analysis of "immediacy behaviors" among teachers found that appropriate engagement with the students enhances learning and course satisfaction. "Immediacy behaviors represent the instructor's attempts to reduce the social distance between themselves and their students" (p. 42). Such behaviors include eye contact, smiling, and movement around the classroom, as well as personal examples, humor, providing and inviting feedback, and addressing and being addressed by students by name. Faculty

who have a genuine interest in students and their learning will shift their emphasis from merely the delivery of content (task orientation) to also include a knowledge of the students (relational orientation) by using appropriate immediacy behaviors.

Additionally, student expectations are taken more seriously in our customer-service oriented society. Students have accepted change as a way of life and are looking for ways to continually improve their world (Cornesky, 1993), therefore, faculty cannot rely on traditional methods of content delivery. Faculty can no longer rely on a one-way directional lecture style that assumes an interest in traditional content, but instead must empower students for autonomous and team learning experiences in the course content area. The added benefit is a chance to develop life-long learning skills in many areas. Constructivist action-learning methodologies such a problem-based learning (Barrows, 1985) encourage faculty toward this kind of collaborative inquiry, especially as they function in the role of coach and fellow-learner. Faculty who develop interpersonal leadership behaviors such as active listening, encouragement, and affirmation, plus a willingness to actively engage the students toward collaborative learning (including professors learning from the students) will more likely meet the learning expectations of students in the 21st century.

New Higher Education Economy
The changing environment in higher education is requiring new approaches to teaching. Most educational systems—including higher education—continue to endure public examination and criticism from within and without the university. Even traditional institutions find that the administration is viewing the students as customers—even if faculty are reluctant to embrace this view. Public debate includes parents' expectations on the topic of the role colleges should perform. A May 2, 2003 report reveals the public's preference for objectives tied to teaching and training over research programs intended to attract businesses and create jobs (Hebel, 2003). Internally, colleges and universities are assessing student perceptions of their faculty through nationally-normed paper surveys and online questionnaires. However, faculty disavow the usefulness of such surveys (Nasser & Fresko, 2002), especially for personnel decisions.

Another environmental constraint involves the "economy of flexibility" highlighted by distributed education, where professors are no longer the source of all knowledge who lead students step by step (Buchen, 1998). Instead, Buchen believes that "the future of our universities may be e-education" where "faculty members…guide students through concepts, ideas, and methodologies that are critical to an understanding of the knowledge of the topic" (p. 32-37). Online classes provide easier access for the students to take courses anywhere and anytime. They also have enabled schools to shift student markets because the institution is no longer limited by geography. Even prestigious ivy-league universities are offering classes anywhere and anytime.

The customer-service orientation by administrations and a new level of competition between universities is requiring a new faculty model. Such a model will likely include interpersonal and learner-focused behaviors by faculty to connect with students more than in previous decades.

Teachers Viewed as Leaders

Teachers, as well as leaders, are referred to the education literature as change agents (Batson & Wynn, 2001; Henderson & Barron, 1995). The concept of teacher as leader was most often addressed in the education literature on issues such as institutional governance or curricular initiatives. A few specific leadership roles were identified for teachers, including self-improvement and development of other teachers—specifically as master teacher or mentor, student advocate, and action researcher (Henderson & Barron, 1995). Teaching itself as a form of leadership within the classroom, however, was more rare in the education and leadership literature. The few exceptions include the following contributions.

Teachers were encouraged to be leaders of learning at the Institute of Education, University of London for K-12 teacher preparation, (Totterdell, 2003). Another report on a 1972 experiment with general psychology students at Michigan State University found that teacher behavior can indeed be investigated as leader behavior. In that study, students taught with high "consideration behavior" were higher on three dependent measures of performance than students taught with low "consideration" (Dawson, Messe, & Phillips, 1972). Much earlier, a study of Grade 9 teachers in Canada found agreement on description of teacher-leader behavior, and that

teachers showing a high degree of leadership tend to induce high achievement in their pupils. Specifically, "initiating structure" was found to be more strongly related to pupil growth than "consideration behaviors" (Greenfield & Andrews, 1961). However, these authors noted that initiation of structure and consideration behaviors are both needed for effective leadership in the classroom. A dissertation at Indiana University's School of Nursing compared two teacher behavior constructs with two leader behavior constructs found in the Ohio State Leadership Studies' (1963). Professional competence by teachers and initiating structure behaviors of leaders were not found to be the same; however, interpersonal behavior by teachers and consideration behavior of leaders were found to be the same (Simons, 1992).

Without naming it as leadership, many non-traditional programs based on constructivist learning theory (e.g., Stinson's "MBA Without Boundaries" at Ohio University, 1996) and facilitator models in adult learning instructional designs (Knowles, 1984; Mouton & Blake, 1984), view teachers as leaders and coaches by the descriptors they use. These writers describe faculty with a focus on guiding others in causing learning, more than on covering the material. Overall, the review of the published material on education and leadership found several indicators of similar leadership constructs when viewing teacher behaviors.

Definitions of Leadership

To see how teaching and leadership constructs can be effectively combined, the multiple definitions for leadership that exist should be examined. Bass (1990) includes the following definitions for leadership:

> "the focus of group processes, a personality attribute, the art of inducing compliance, an exercise of influence, a particular kind of behavior, form of persuasion, a power relationship, an instrument to achieve goals, an effect of interaction, a differentiated role, the initiation of structure" and many combinations of these (p. 20).

Moreover, most leadership scholars agree that the meaning of leadership depends on the context in which it is found (Bass, 1990; Klenke, 1996) and fundamentally involves the expectations of the leader and followers (Hollander, 1987). As definitions and applications of leadership have evolved away from just traits of the leader and now include more emphasis on a combination of the leader, followers, and context (e.g., Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003), it becomes more apparent that teachers can be viewed as influential leaders and agents of change in the classroom.

Teaching and Leadership Concepts Combined

Leadership is what effective teachers do in their classrooms when they *influence* a passion for the subject matter, *initiate structure* in areas of professional competence, *guide* group discussion, *persuade* peer tutoring to occur, *design and motivate* action-learning processes, *clarify* goals or learning objectives, *encourage* individual persistence, exhibit *consideration* for students in a variety of interpersonal behaviors, and in many other ways that *facilitate* learning outcomes among the students. Cornesky, author of *The Quality Professor* (1993) stated that "leadership is the most important ingredient in establishing quality in any organization, including the classroom. Faculty who exhibit their own love for learning and, at the same time, show respect for the students as learners will see them stretching their abilities and interests in what they've seen modeled in their learning coach. The result is empowerment and expanded knowledge for everyone in the course" (p. 41).

Peter Senge (1990) identified a teacher-leader link when he called for *leaders to be teachers*. He believed that the best leaders teach people throughout the organization not only *how* to see the big picture and how the different parts interact, but *why.* They do this with "clarity and persuasiveness of their ideas, depth of commitment, and openness to continually learning more. They do not 'have the answer' but they to instill confidence in those around them that, together, we can learn whatever we need to learn to achieve the results we truly desire" (p. 359). The result of his philosophy was the A*rt and Practice of the Learning Organization*, his national bestseller on leadership with that subtitle. Thus, both leaders must be teachers—to maintain a continuous learning organization (Bennis, 1997), and teachers must be leaders—to be most effective in the classroom.

Proposed Leadership Style for College Faculty

When a teacher is a leader of learning, some models of leadership may be more effective than others. Most leaders want to do what it takes to achieve results. For teachers, the result is learning. Therefore, the teacher who is a leader of learning will want to remove any barriers to learning that exist, and enhance the opportunities for learning which are available. Among the various definitions and theories of leadership, the leader concept I propose to be most effective in the college classroom is *servant leadership*. Servant leadership is a mindset within good leaders that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant leaders are effective at seeing their role "as one of learning and then teaching…so followers can lead themselves" (Fairholm, 1998, p. 64). This is similar to a teacher whose "self-concept is not as an expert who knows all the answers, but rather as a helper with a solid understanding of the subject matter…who instills in students a sense of inquisitiveness and desire for learning" (Cornesky, 1993, p. 43-44).

Professors who are effective as leaders of learning will empower students to become more responsible for their own learning (Mouton & Blake, 1984), and will be "hero-makers" (Manz & Sims, 2001). For some faculty, this is a significant paradigm shift away from a focus on presenting the knowledge, and then trusting the students to learn it well enough to pass an exam. Servant leadership, on the other hand, is built on the notion that everyone wants to develop his or her potential and has a relational orientation that values and develops individuals. In business organizations, "servant leadership is the desire to see those you work with become all they can be" (Winston, 1999, p. 76).

Therefore, servant leaders reach their goals by first focusing on the person who will perform the task. In the classroom, teachers work with students whose task is *learning in the content area.* For learning to be most effective and long-lasting, teachers also function as leaders who assist students *to learn how to learn*. With these learning outcomes in mind, postsecondary educators will likely need to employ constructivist learning theory and a myriad of action-learning instructional designs (Stinson, 1996). Furthermore, since the peer group was identified as the single most powerful influence in undergraduate education (Newcomb & Wilson, 1966), faculty should not only lecture as the proverbial "sage on the stage" but should also utilize collaborative approaches to enhance learning in the course. With a servant leader mindset, the faculty member becomes the "guide on the side" by influencing the group process of student interaction with their peers. Then faculty who see themselves as coach and cheerleader will more likely empower students to peer tutor one another in the collaborative learning process (Knowles, 1984; Stinson, 1996).

Examining the Relationship Between College Teaching and Servant Leadership

Bass (2000) suggested a connection between college teaching and servant leadership when stating that he believes "servant leadership offers future faculty the opportunity to transform higher education" (p. 30). Buchen (1998) was more specific when recommending servant leadership to redirect ego and image, which is often displayed in newly hired faculty who have recently earned their terminal degrees, as well as tenure-track institutions that stress research over teaching. This paper builds on Buchen's prescriptive article by focusing on the faculty and students only, and expands his idea by suggesting that servant leader characteristics can be exhibited in the college classroom for the benefit of student learning.

Servant leaders develop people by providing learning and growth opportunities for their followers (Laub, 1999). The focus on others as *the* distinguishing feature of servant leadership has been highlighted in a study by Stone, Russell, & Patterson (2002). Their research showed that servant leadership differs from transformational leadership—perhaps the most popular concept in the leadership field today—primarily because of *a leader focus on others* (p. 3). The "servant leader's focus is on the followers, and achievement of organizational objectives is a subordinate outcome" (p. 2). Furthermore, when followers recognize that their leaders epitomize the ideals of servant leadership, then the followers are more likely to want to serve others also, according to Greenleaf (1996).

Employing a servant leader approach can help faculty members focus attention more on the students and how they learn and develop intellectually. Faculty-student interpersonal relationships are similar to *consideration behavior* (Simons, 1992). Both relational and task leader behaviors are employed in servant leadership,

however, servant leadership starts with a mindset of serving (which includes relational behaviors), more than a focus on task or structure (Laub, 1999). Servant-leader behavior appears to enable the professor to function as a "leader of learning" or "first among equals" and thereby encourages collaborative inquiry with the students. Similarly, servant-leader visionary Robert Greenleaf (1977) espoused *primus inter pares* for leaders and followers in organizations. Such a relationship emerges when the job responsibilities and educational preparation may establish a distinct leader role but everyone's contribution is continually viewed as important. Translated to the classroom, this become collaborative inquiry, both student-teacher activity and students-with-students approaches.

Developing students for lifetime careers is the goal of many academic institutions, especially when the teachers are learner-focused and the learning objectives have life application in the professions or in general liberal arts foundations. Therefore, the proposed link between servant leadership and college teaching includes a relational focus on the students, and results in learner-centered—instead of teacher-centered—instructional methods.

Definition of servant leadership

Servant leadership has the followers as its main focus, where they *grow as persons* and thereby are more likely to also *reach the goals of the organization.* In a university context, this means students learn how to learn what the leader envisions for the group, i.e., the course objectives.

This paper is built on an operational definition of servant leadership that was distilled in Laub's (1999) dissertation research, which used strict application of the Delphi method (Sackman, 1975). This method supported the validity of the servant leadership definition which follows:

> *Servant leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interests of the leader. Servant leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led, and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organization and those served by the organizations. (Laub, 1999, p. 83)*

The expanded version of the definition consists of 18 characteristics, as seen in Exhibit B. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument was built on this servant leadership operational definition—though the questionnaire never mentioned the term servant leadership. The OLA has strong reliability measures which were confirmed in multiple field studies and subsequent dissertations by Horsman (2001) and Ledbetter (2003).

The Enabling Variable in College Teaching

Examining beliefs about teaching is essential to curricular and instructional improvement (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, & Stackman, 2003). Servant leadership can provide a self-study approach to humbly examine what Senge called "mental models" (1990), i.e., the deeply entrenched assumptions about what faculty do. Though effective teaching methods are plentiful in the K-12 education literature, knowledge of these among college faculty is neither well-known nor commonly practiced. Therefore, this paper suggests that servant leadership values and behaviors may be the key to enabling effective faculty teaching methods, and thereby lead to more effective teaching and learning in the college classroom. Several examples of effective teaching methods from the education literature are compared below with Laub's (1999) operational definition of servant leadership used in this paper.

A Comparison of Servant Leadership and Effective College Teaching

Table 1

SERVANT LEADERSHIP	EFFECTIVE TEACHING METHODS
Values people • By believing in people • By serving other's needs before his or her own • By receptive, non-judgmental listening	"The secret to education lies is respecting the student" Ralph Waldo Emerson Learner-centered vs. lecture-centered; action learning methodologies; Educators are often advised to encourage talk as a means of understanding ideas and information (Lewis and Starks 1998).
Develops people • By providing opportunities for learning and growth • By modeling appropriate behavior • By building up others through encouragement and affirmation	Students are advised to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process. Student-focused methodologies in postsecondary and adult ed literature, e.g., andragogy, PBL, action-learning, and other constructivist learning strategies, (Knowles, 1984, Stinson, 1996).
Builds community • By building strong personal relationships • By working collaboratively with others • By valuing differences of others	Collaborative inquiry and facilitators of the group learning process; the synergogy alternative (combining pedagogy and andragogy) vs. resistance to authority figures (Mouton & Blake, 1984); peer accountability.
Displays authenticity • By being open and accountable to others • By a willingness to learn from others • By maintaining integrity and trust	More perceived learning noted with teachers using "immediacy behaviors" which reduce social distance (Freitas, Myers, and Avtgis, 1998); "Teachers who can relate to students, confess their own faults and mistakes, and foster mutual respect encourage more student interaction than teachers who seem all-knowing, uncaring, and intimidating (Dossin, 2002)
Provides leadership • By envisioning the future • By taking initiative • By clarifying goals	Teachers are leaders of learning and agents of change; faculty serve in role of coach and facilitator; clarifying the learning objectives; a common pursuit of knowledge (Batson & Wynn, 2001; Henderson & Barron, 1995; Stinson, 1996).
Shares leadership • By facilitating a shared vision • By sharing power and releasing control • By sharing status and promoting others	"Students feel free to speak in classrooms where the teacher is fully human and treats the students as friends, not underlings or opponents in a power struggle" (Dossin, 2002); collaboration and peer tutoring embraces the concept of *primus inter pares*, or first among equals (Greenleaf, 1977).

A Field Study to Test this Proposed Relationship

Several assumptions are at work in this paper, therefore, a field study was designed to test the following hypotheses.

a) The teacher-student relationship affects the student's perception of effective teaching.

b) College students can distinguish between their most effective and least effective professors.

c) A questionnaire will use an operational definition of servant leadership (without using that term) as the basis for rating values and behaviors of professors.

d) Results from a survey will show that students rate their most effective professors higher than their least effective professors on a list of servant leader characteristics.

Method
A field-based study was designed to test these hypotheses. Using the 18 characteristics of Laub's operational definition of servant leadership (Exhibit B), these 18 descriptors were slightly adapted to use classroom and student/teacher terms, and together formed a two-sided paper questionnaire (Exhibit C1 & C2). Eighty-seven traditional-age college students participated in the survey.

Instructions about choosing their most effective professor and least effective professor were brief, in order to not bias any responses. Students were asked to choose a professor who, in their opinion, was "most effective" with them, and one who was "least effective." They should then proceed to rate those two persons on the 18 characteristics on each side of the questionnaire. It is important to note that the term "servant leader" was never used in any of the instructions, verbal or written, nor included in the characteristics listed on the survey. Therefore, students were not unnecessarily biased in rating their most effective professor to be how they envision a servant leader would be.

A convenience sampling of students in lower level general education courses and upper level elective courses were chosen so that the study had a random sampling of participants from a variety of different departments. The respondents included sophomores, juniors, and seniors. This also provided that a random sampling of faculty perceived as most effective and least professors were likely selected from various departments for rating by the students. The participants' majors and year in college were determined by a show of hands when administering the survey. The 18 characteristics on the paper survey provided values and behaviors believed to reveal a servant leader mindset by the teacher in a college classroom. Students scored a *most* effective and a *least* effective professor on these characteristics on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = disagree and 5 – highly agree (Exhibit C.1 & C.2).

Results
The results of the students' ratings are listed (Exhibit D) in order of their mean scores (high to low). The results showed the average mean scores on each of these items for *most* effective professors ranged from 4.9 to 4.4. The average mean scores on each of these items for *least* effective professors ranged from 3.3 to 2.2, with only one item above 2.87. The mean is a balance point between the range of scores on each item from the 87 participants.

Most effective professors were more likely related to the characteristics of servant leadership than their least effective professors. This apparent correlation between servant leadership characteristics and most effective professors (4.9 to 4.4 on a 5-point scale) indicates that students perceive their best instructors to have a servant leader mindset in the classroom. Conversely, professors who were rated lower (3.2 to 2.2) on the list of characteristics are not consistently demonstrating servant leader values and behaviors in their classrooms.

This difference is apparent from the difference in the means scores from the most effective faculty compared with the least effective faculty. The most effective faculty were rated with scores that are nearly double that of the least effective faculty on this survey. On the items concerning *collaboration* and *sharing status and power,* the most effective faculty are rated more than twice a high as last effective faculty. These results link with the education literature claim that active learning strategies are most effective in helping students learn, and learn how to learn. When students learn how to learn, they are more likely to become life-long learners because they will know how to find and decide on the information needed to keep learning (Knowles, 1984; Stinson, 1996).

Likewise, *most* effective faculty were rated twice as high on the highly relational items, e.g., *building up the students* and *building strong relationships* with students. These items relate to consideration and relational-oriented leader behaviors found in studies as benefiting students in performance and achievement (Dawson, Messe, & Phillips, 1972; Greenfield & Andrews, 1961).

The characteristic that was at the top on each half of the survey also stands out as most similar in rating between most and least effective faculty. It is in *maintaining integrity and trust* (4.908 vs. 3.2706). This likely indicates that all faculty represented in this sampling are doing their best in this behavior. All of the rest of the scores on *least* effective faculty are 2.8736 and lower, with ten of the items below 2.5 on the 5-point scale.

Implications from This Survey
Student perceptions of what is an "effective professor" were not discussed when administering the survey. Therefore, it was left to the student to determine what is most effective for them.
However, the earlier conversations with students were informal and suggested that their most effective professors motivated them toward development as a better person.

The 18 characteristics were items that would likely be perceived as positive in a college classroom, especially from the view of the student. Items such as really *believes in the student, being a good listener, serves student needs first,* and *builds students up* would have direct impact on the self-perception of the student.

Other items that are typically associated with learner-centered instructional designs, such as *guides our learning experience* and *our future role* are rated very high for the *most* effective professors and only perceived about half the time in *least* effective faculty. This lends support for the relationship between a servant leadership mindset and a learner-focused classroom.

Some items were just about the professor, indicating a personal character trait of that faculty member. For example, *modeling behavior expected* and *being open and accountable* were in the top half of the scores for *most* effective professors. This indicates the personal cost that effective teachers with a servant leader mindset are making. Effective teaching is servant-oriented. As a group, these students see faculty who are *trustworthy* and *have integrity* as their best professors.

Proposed Faculty Model to Explain the Relationship

The research in this paper contributes findings from a comparison of the literature on college teaching and Laub's (1999) operational definition of servant leadership. In the leadership field, this study contributes a change in the *context* of servant leadership from a business organization, which is the focus of most of servant leadership literature, to a college classroom. A "relational context," i.e., the relationship between the teacher and student in this study, is "where the servant leader actually leads" (Stone, et. al, 2002, p. 13). Since interpersonal relationship [teacher] behavior was found to be the same construct as consideration [leader] behavior (Simons, 1992), and similar consideration behaviors comprise the primary factor in servant leadership (Laub, 1999), this paper proposes that the characteristics of servant leadership can be the enabling variable for effective teaching in colleges and universities today.

A new faculty model (Exhibit A) was constructed to explain this relationship. It is based on the literature review in this paper and faculty effectiveness as perceived by students. The model starts with the current expectations and pressures that exist for college faculty. These include parent expectations, student expectations, institutional expectations for research, and a new economic environment in higher education. These factors moderate faculty efforts toward one of two instructional methods: traditional lecture, which is labeled in the model as "faculty-focused," and relational/collaborative approaches, which is labeled "learner-focused." The literature indicated research experience and faculty ego (Buchen, 1998), as well as institutional expectations for more research (Consulo, et. al, 1996), influenced teachers toward faculty-focused instructional designs. The education literature also indicated many instructional designs that are learner-focused, which are linked to the characteristics of servant leadership (Table 1). A field survey of student perceptions of 18 faculty behaviors indicated that servant leadership characteristics apparently enabled teaching methods that were perceived as more effective. Learner-focused faculty models, enabled by servant leadership, are perceived as most effective by students who participated in the survey. The model is provided to explain these relationships (Exhibit A).

Implications from This Study

The findings of this study indicate that teachers do function as leaders, and servant leadership is the best leadership mindset for the classroom. If we did a study and found that most faculty were not manifesting servant leader characteristics, then we might assume that students are not learning well, at least according to their perception of effectiveness. Then, Bernard Bass (2000) is right, and higher education needs transformed and servant leadership models are needed.

If servant leadership is a perceived need in the college classroom, this has implications for selecting, training, reward systems, and ongoing faculty development. Recruiting and reference checks will not only include knowledge, but also seek more information about dispositional and relational skills. Training and faculty development workshops can include focus on interpersonal skills and character-building objectives. Incentives and rewards for faculty should include collaborative versus competitive approaches in the classroom, as well as accomplishments in specific areas listed in the 18 servant leader characteristics. For example, faculty who co-publish with students would receive higher, even double rewards. Professors who receive high scores on student surveys for teamwork and real-world capstone projects would receive recognition for their efforts in developing people, as well as trusting and inspiring their students to make a difference in the world.

Recommendations for Further Study

The field of leadership studies is a new discipline on many campuses, and the concept of influence outside of hierarchical power and administrative positions is foundational to further study. Servant leadership is a relatively new term for most people, and is often confused with only acts of service, or leadership that only serves, when in fact, this leadership style is more than the sum of the parts of those two words in the term. Therefore, training and modeling with faculty on the characteristics of servant leadership is needed.

More empirical evidence is recommended to support the student indications in the field study, since a convenience sampling of 87 in one private university is not enough to generalize the results across all types of colleges and universities. The suggestion that teachers are leaders of learning, functioning as servant leaders of their classrooms could be investigated via qualitative interviews with faculty. Finally, student perceptions of teaching effectiveness may be best measured in alumni after they have graduated and have matured enough to discern which professors had the most long lasting effect on their learning.
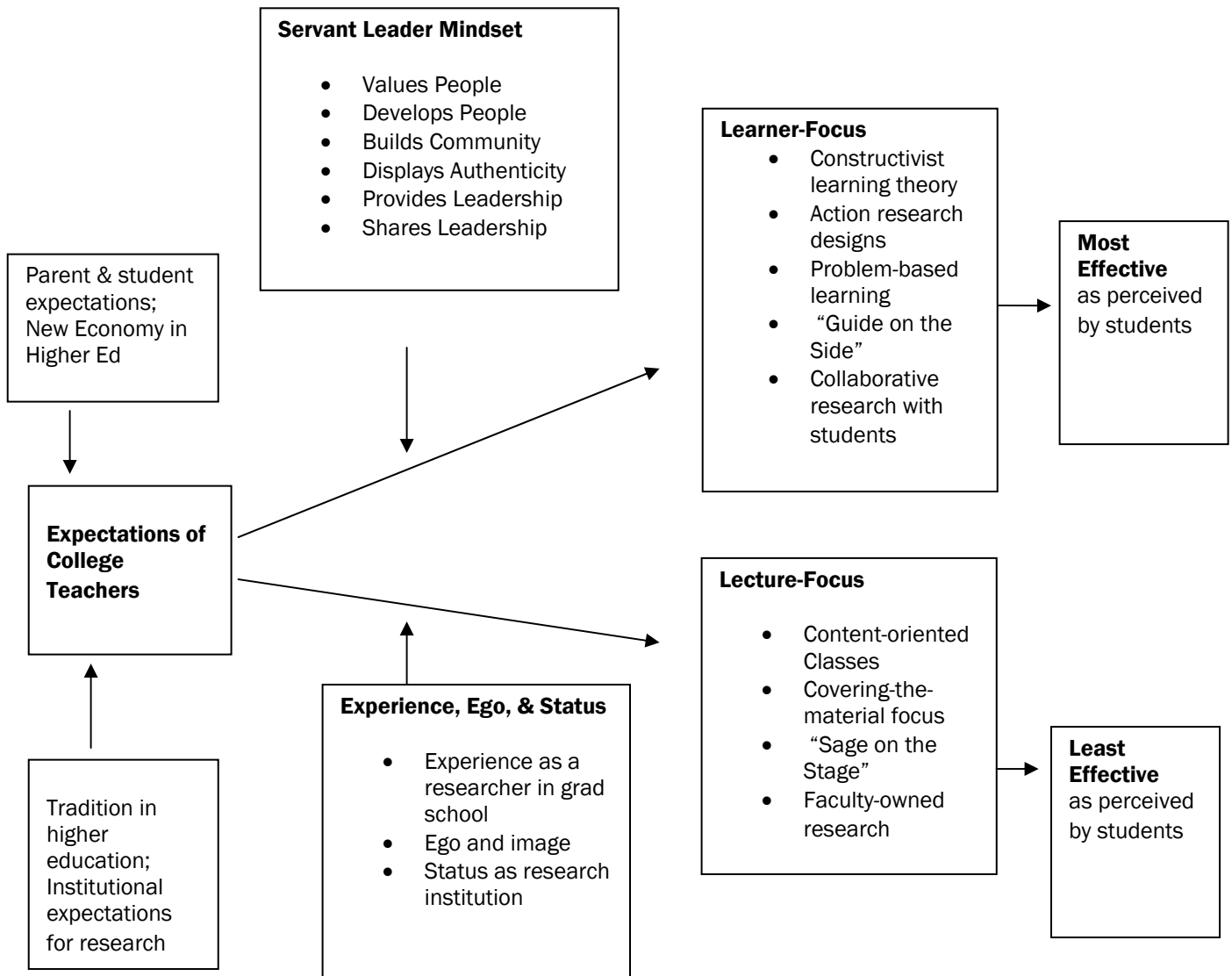
Conclusion

The changing environment in higher education is calling for a new relationship between faculty and students. A paper survey of student perceptions of their *most* effective versus *least* effective professors revealed a relationship in the former that incorporated the characteristics of servant leadership. An analysis of the literature comparing college teaching with leadership found that instructor behavior can indeed be interpreted as leadership behavior. Servant leadership is suggested for the best leadership mindset for the college classroom. A field test with college students scoring their perceptions of effective teaching found higher scores with servant leader characteristics in most effective professors than in least effective professors. A model was constructed to explain this relationship. The findings of this study support Bass's (2000) assertion that servant leadership can transform higher education, if faculty develop servant leader characteristics that enable student-focused instructional methods. It also extends a portion of Buchen's (1998) research calling for a paradigm shift to servant leader attitudes and behaviors in college and university settings, to the meet the new economy in higher education today.

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EXHIBIT A.
Teacher as Servant Leader: A Model to Explain the Relationship

Servant Leader Mindset

- Values People
- Develops People
- Builds Community
- Displays Authenticity
- Provides Leadership
- Shares Leadership

Parent & student expectations; New Economy in Higher Ed

Expectations of College Teachers

Tradition in higher education; Institutional expectations for research

Experience, Ego, & Status

- Experience as a researcher in grad school
- Ego and image
- Status as research institution

Learner-Focus
- Constructivist learning theory
- Action research designs
- Problem-based learning
- "Guide on the Side"
- Collaborative research with students

Most Effective as perceived by students

Lecture-Focus

- Content-oriented Classes
- Covering-the-material focus
- "Sage on the Stage"
- Faculty-owned research

Least Effective as perceived by students

EXHIBIT B.
Operational Definition of Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership is...

An understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organization and those served by the organization.

The Servant Leader...

Values People	• By believing in people • By serving other's needs before his or her own • By receptive, non-judgmental listening
Develops People	• By providing opportunities for learning and growth • By modeling appropriate behavior • By building up others through encouragement and affirmation
Builds Community	• By building strong personal relationships • By working collaboratively with others • By valuing differences of others
Displays Authenticity	• By being open and accountable to others • By a willingness to learn from others • By maintaining integrity and trust
Provides Leadership	• By envisioning the future • By taking initiative • By clarifying goals
Shares Leadership	• By facilitating a shared vision • By sharing power and releasing control • By sharing status and promoting others

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EXHIBIT C1

My **MOST** Effective Professor

Describe this faculty member by circling one number before each descriptor below.
1=disagree to 5=highly agree

1 2 3 4 5 Really believes in the students.
1 2 3 4 5 Is interested in serving student's needs before his or her own needs.
1 2 3 4 5 Is a good listener--receptive and non-judgmental.

1 2 3 4 5 Provides opportunities for learning and growth to students.
1 2 3 4 5 Models the kind of behavior he or she desires in the students.
1 2 3 4 5 Builds students up through encouragement and affirmation.

1 2 3 4 5 Builds strong relationships with students and others.
1 2 3 4 5 Works collaboratively with students and others.
1 2 3 4 5 Values differences among students.

1 2 3 4 5 Displays openness and accountability with students.
1 2 3 4 5 Is willing to learn from others, including students.
1 2 3 4 5 Maintains integrity and trust.

1 2 3 4 5 Envisions the future and our role as students in the future.
1 2 3 4 5 Takes initiative to guide our learning experience.
1 2 3 4 5 Clarifies the goals of the class and learning activities.

1 2 3 4 5 Helps students catch the vision of the importance of the material.
1 2 3 4 5 Shares power and decision-making about class activities and direction.
1 2 3 4 5 Shares status and promotes the work of students and the work of other faculty

(Continued)

EXHIBIT C2

My **LEAST** Effective Professor

Describe this faculty member by circling one number before each descriptor below.
1=disagree to 5=highly agree

1 2 3 4 5 Really believes in the students.
1 2 3 4 5 Is interested in serving student's needs before his or her own needs.
1 2 3 4 5 Is a good listener--receptive and non-judgmental.

1 2 3 4 5 Provides opportunities for learning and growth to students.
1 2 3 4 5 Models the kind of behavior he or she desires in the students.
1 2 3 4 5 Builds students up through encouragement and affirmation.

1 2 3 4 5 Builds strong relationships with students and others.
1 2 3 4 5 Works collaboratively with students and others.
1 2 3 4 5 Values differences among students.

1 2 3 4 5 Displays openness and accountability with students.
1 2 3 4 5 Is willing to learn from others, including students.
1 2 3 4 5 Maintains integrity and trust.

1 2 3 4 5 Envisions the future and our role as students in the future.
1 2 3 4 5 Takes initiative to guide our learning experience.
1 2 3 4 5 Clarifies the goals of the class and learning activities.

1 2 3 4 5 Helps students catch the vision of the importance of the material.
1 2 3 4 5 Shares power and decision-making about class activities and direction.
1 2 3 4 5 Shares status and promotes the work of students and the work of other faculty

EXHIBIT D.
Results from a Field Study with College Students on Perceptions of their Professors

All were significant at the .05 level in t-tests comparing the two samples. N=87

Most Effective vs. Least Effective Professor scores on Servant Leadership Characteristics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Maintains integrity and trust.	4.91	0.33	3.27	1.28
2. Really believes in the students.	4.83	0.41	2.87	1.21
3. Models the kind of behavior he or she desires in the students.	4.80	0.50	2.80	1.19
4. Helps students catch the vision of the importance of the material.	4.73	0.52	2.66	1.08
5. Provides opportunities for learning and growth to students.	4.71	0.48	2.63	1.22
6. Envisions the future and our role as students in the future.	4.69	0.47	2.64	1.29
7. Takes initiative to guide our learning experience.	4.64	0.59	2.56	1.20
8. Builds students up through encouragement and affirmation.	4.62	0.72	2.52	1.21
9. Displays openness and accountability with students.	4.59	0.58	2.49	1.21
10. Builds strong relationships with students and others.	4.57	0.66	2.44	1.18
11. Clarifies the goals of the class and learning activities.	4.57	0.62	2.37	1.15
12. Is interested in serving student's needs before his or her needs.	4.52	0.63	2.33	1.20
13. Is a good listener--receptive and non-judgmental.	4.52	0.70	2.22	1.06
14. Works collaboratively with students and others.	4.45	0.62	2.22	1.06
15. Values differences among students	4.44	0.75	2.20	1.10
16. Is willing to learn from others, including students.	4.43	0.79	2.16	1.13
17. Shares status and promotes the work of students and the work of other faculty.	4.43	0.64	2.15	1.21
18. Shares power and decision-making about class activities and direction.	4.41	0.73	2.11	1.10