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Developing Leaders

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Augsburg College

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DEVELOPING LEADERS

MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP
at
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
1987-1996

Presented to the Faculty
of Augsburg College
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of
Master of Arts in Leadership

by

Teresa Ann Cook
November, 1998
Minneapolis, Minnesota

MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Master's Thesis of:

Teresa Ann Cook

has been approved by the Review Committee for the Thesis requirement for the Master of Arts in Leadership degree.
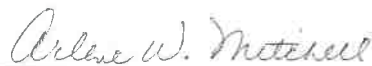
Date of Oral Defense: <u>Tuesday November 24, 1998</u>

Committee: _William C. Svenson_

Adviser

Susan E. O'Len

Reader

Arlene W. Mitchell

Reader

DEDICATION

To the first leaders in my life:

Mom and Dad
Who taught me life is an adventure and every day is an opportunity for learning.

Special thanks to:
Dr. William Swenson
Arlene Mitchell, M.A.-Leadership
Dr. Susan O'Connor
my thesis committee who provided unique perspectives, knowledge and experience
throughout the writing process.

Augsburg College where a Master of Arts in Leadership program was developed and
continues to be nurtured.

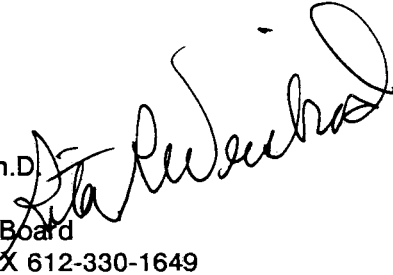The seven M.A.L. alumni who consented to be interviewed.

Dr. Noonan who opened the door to an internship for the MAL program in 1995.
Barbara Pappenfus for her support and encouragement.

DATE: November 30, 1996

TO: Teresa Ann Cook
Box 144
Augsburg College

FROM: Rita R. Weisbrod, Ph.D
Chair
Institutional Review Board
612-330-1227 or FAX 612-330-1649
E-mail: weisbrod@augsburg.edu

RE: Your IRB Application: "A Case Study: Graduate Students Choice of MAL..."

I have received the changes to your application which were conditions of approval noted in our letter of November 13. Your application is now approved.

Your IRB approval number is **# 96 - 13 - 3**. This number should appear on your consent forms.

If there are substantive changes to your project which change your procedures regarding the use of human subjects, you should report them to me by phone (612-330-1227) or in writing so that they may be reviewed for possible increased risk.

I wish you well in your project!

Copy: William Swenson, Thesis Advisor

DEVELOPING LEADERS

Thesis Abstract

Teresa A. Cook

November 24, 1998

The following study takes a snapshot of the MAL program, describing the experience of students between 1987 and 1996. Seven students were interviewed. These students were asked to describe what motivated them, what they experienced in the master's program and what they believed were the benefits of participation. "Why Leadership?" The qualities necessary for assuming leadership are nurtured by the interdisciplinary nature of this liberal arts program. Students gain self-confidence and courage to approach new situations. Students' commitment to leadership is nurtured by study in the MAL program. The history of the development of the Master of Arts in Leadership program provides background to the alumni interviews.

INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with a story about leadership.

In 1984 I was teaching full time in the preparatory[1] grade classroom. My administrative responsibilities included serving as the teacher representative on our school council[2] and acting as the curriculum coordinator for the primary school. Recent changes in the State Education system brought about new expectations for members of local school councils, and greater responsibility was given to parent and teacher representatives. We were being asked to become active with decision making responsibilities previously assigned to senior teaching staff and the school principal. I was invited as a teacher representative to a training program for new school council members in Victoria, Australia. This weekend training program was designed to help us, whether parent, teacher or administrator representatives, learn and understand ways we could work together as parents, teachers and administrators.

We met for the first time on a Friday evening. Participants came from the northern region of the state which includes mostly rural schools who because of their remoteness from a large metropolitan center faced similar challenges and opportunities. All weekend we wrestled with issues and concerns within the changing educational environment. The activities ran both day and night.

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[1] Preparatory is the name for the entering grade in primary school in Victoria, Australia. This grade is similar to what we refer to as Kindergarten in the US.

[2] In Victoria, the local school council has similar functions and responsibilities to the local school boards in USA.

Helen Green, an administrator with the Victorian Department of Education, was asked to serve as a 'critical friend' and summarize all that had been accomplished over the weekend. She began by relating the story of a young girl, whose family was moving.

The girl's father told her to pack her most precious belonging to take in the car to their new home. The child was gone for a long time. When she reappeared, the child had a mysterious parcel, wrapped with brown paper. String had been tied around and around the unusual shape to secure the package. "What took you so long?" her father asked impatiently. The girl replied, "Have *you* ever tried to wrap a cat?"

Helen likened the child's dilemma to her own. Helen continued on to summarize the learning experience in which we had all taken part. This metaphor helped describe the challenge of summarizing complex ideas and outcomes as a tidy list or neat parcel.

I tell this story to illustrate my own struggles. This image of bundling a live cat in brown paper and string returned to me as I began the task of framing the research into leadership that has lead to the document you are now reading. Who can say where the field of "leadership" study begins and ends? Many studies of leadership have sprouted since James MacGregor Burns sowed the seeds when he wrote Leadership in 1978. "Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (p. 2).

What I discovered through my work as the MAL program coordinator, my experience as an MAL student, and the interviews conducted with MAL alumni, was that leadership is more than a common goal. Leadership, as the focus of the Master of Arts in Leadership program, is integral to attracting new students. Leadership has presented me with rewards, challenges and obstacles. Leadership is integral to learning in the MAL

classroom, through the faculty responsible for teaching course content and weaving disciplines together, through the students discovering insights about leadership and challenges of leadership, and through concepts of leadership found in listening to other experiences and reading and writing about leadership.

This document describes benefits of participation through MAL alumni[3] interviews, the implications for the Master of Arts in Leadership program for prospective graduate students, and what we can learn about leadership and leadership development. MAL alumni describe benefits that include personal development and career development. Although many students enter the MAL program motivated by career aspirations, most leave highlighting the personal gains they have made. These gains include an increase in their self-confidence and willingness to take risks. Aren't these some of the characteristics we expect to find in a leader?

The Master of Arts in Leadership program was designed with the knowledge that habits developed in other masters programs couldn't be used to implement this program. The MAL program adapts to the individuals who study leadership. It was set up to accomplish change by providing individuals with skills they needed to effect change in themselves and within their organizations.

Knowing why the MAL program was developed, who was the intended market, where the students come from and why, and how the program is beneficial to future students is important to both Augsburg college and its students. Knowledge of the

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[3] Definition: <u>Alumni</u>: For this study, alumni are defined as only those students who have successfully completed all requirements for the degree, Master of Arts in Leadership at Augsburg College. This group does not include students who have completed the course work and are currently working on their thesis or final project.

benefits to students from participation in a program devoted to the development of leaders has implications beyond Augsburg College and the Twin Cities. What Augsburg has developed in its intentional focus on leaders can be transferred to liberal arts colleges who are interested in "provision of a distinctive, values oriented educational opportunity." [4] The experience of one leadership program can provide insights for others interested in leadership development.

We find themes that provide a fuller understanding of the program, the specific benefits the program gives students and how these benefits are linked to the program design and student needs. These themes, which include improvement in areas of personal development are linked to characteristics of leaders.

How do I tell the story of the MAL program in a way that reflects the thinking of the developers of the program? How has the program evolved into the program we know today? Do the students, both past and present reflect the goals of the program as they describe their experiences and learning?

Graduate students juggle many aspects of their lives; family and personal relationships, work, community involvement and personal time. The compromises necessary to manage this complex balancing act have to provide some rewards. A student expects benefits to result from adding study for a masters degree to their other commitments.

My research led me to stories. When I first came to hear about the MAL program, there was something in the stories that captured my attention and helped influence my

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[4] See Appendix A: Report from the Academic Affairs Committee, November 18, 1985.

decision to apply for the Master of Arts in Leadership program. I don't know how well I understood the actual program, but the stories intrigued me.

Stories make connections with prospective new students. This research involves stories. It is through these stories that I have gained a greater understanding of the complexity of leadership and the student experience in the Master of Arts in Leadership program. Like the cat who can only escape the brown paper and string wrapping using teeth and claws, leadership is entangled in my experience and understanding of leadership, the approach the MAL program takes and the views of the MAL alumni interviewed. Leadership easily escapes attempts to capture it's essential components but this does not mean we do not value the study of leadership or that leadership lacks teeth and claws.

I will begin with my own story. My involvement in the Master of Arts in Leadership program began in 1994 when I was admitted as a new student. It continued when I became an intern for the MAL program in March 1995 and was selected to be the acting program coordinator in July 1995. The history and development of the MAL program will set the context for the stories of seven alumni who experienced the MAL program between 1987 and 1996. I will conclude with a vignette from my own undergraduate experience that illustrates my personal vision of leaders and leadership.

CHAPTER ONE

The Researcher

My focus in this investigation was shaped by my association with the Master of Arts in Leadership[5](MAL) program both as a student and administrator. This association complements my previous experience in curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation as a teacher and administrator in Australia.

Personal Search for a Graduate Program

My search for a graduate program led me to the Master of Arts program in Leadership at Augsburg college. I have two undergraduate degrees from the University of Minnesota, a Bachelor of Arts in Child Psychology and a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education. I worked for seventeen years in Australia as a teacher and administrator for the Victorian Department of Education.

It was not the Leadership development model or the catalogue description that drew me into the program. It was a chance encounter with Tom Morgan, a faculty member at Augsburg College. I previously visited both St. Thomas and Hamline to look at their masters programs in education. I came to campus one day to find out about Augsburg's Masters of Arts in Education-Leadership[6](MEL) program. In the event, the MEL information session had been canceled, but graduate classes were in session. Tom Morgan was taking a break from teaching his MAL course and noticed me waiting in the Marshall Room of the Christensen Center, the faculty/staff lounge.

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[5] MAL is the abbreviation used by students, faculty and administration to refer to the Master of Arts in Leadership program. For ease of reading the program title, Master of Arts in Leadership, will be shortened to MAL throughout this document.

[6] MEL Master of Arts in Education-Leadership

When Dr. Morgan found out I was interested in graduate programs, he talked briefly about the MEL program. Then he said, "you might like to look at our other masters program, the MAL program". He described MAL students. Dr. Morgan said they represented a variety of occupations and diverse undergraduate experiences. The students come mainly from local businesses and corporations. This was interesting.

I wanted to broaden my knowledge and experience. I wanted an advanced degree that would challenge me. The opportunity to attend graduate school with people from different occupations was exciting. When I began to search for a masters program, I found that the typical masters programs in the field of elementary education, including educational administration and curriculum development, did not catch my interest. I had already acquired the qualifications to be an educational administrator (principal) Victoria, Australia during my tenure there.

A few days after meeting Tom Morgan, I attended an information session. Three people told us stories about the MAL program. Dr. Rick Thoni-Vice President for Enrollment Management at Augsburg, Colleen Watson- a MAL alum who runs Career Professionals, and Dr. Norma Noonan-Director of the MAL program.

Dr. Thoni talked about administration of the program and gave us a short history of the MAL program and how it came into existence. He briefly described some of the steps taken to investigate potential programs through discussions with local corporate leaders.

Dr. Noonan came during a break from teaching her MAL class. She provided the viewpoint as the new MAL Director and as faculty who had been teaching in the MAL

program. Dr. Noonan told us stories of successful students. Her excitement for teaching MAL students was evident in her enthusiastic descriptions and keen desire to return to hear projects her students were presenting in class during her absence.

Colleen Watson regaled us with her story. During Colleen's studies she was able to use her research project to help with setting up her own business, Career Professionals. Colleen gave us a living example of orientation to action, part of the Augsburg Leadership Development Model (Appendix B). Their stories depicted a graduate program different from the educational administration programs I had already investigated.

I was hooked! My only concern was the problem of getting references from Australia, which arrived in time. I was admitted for the Spring Trimester. I was intrigued by the opportunity to study with other adult learners who were neither elementary teachers nor educational administrators.

MAL Student Experience

I took ten courses as a student in the MAL program prior to being hired as the MAL program coordinator. The coordinator's position opened up while I was a student in Dr. Noonan's <u>Women and Leadership-ML 545</u> course. Each class I attended included students from a wide variety of companies(Appendix C), with a range of ages, and with a balance of men and women. Only the <u>Research Seminar-ML 514</u> and the <u>Colloquium On Contemporary Theories Of Leadership-ML 580</u> were taken after I was hired as the program coordinator.

We were not a cohort group. Students were able to enter the MAL program in September, January and April, the beginning of the Fall, Winter and Spring Trimesters.

The number of students in each of my courses ranged from a low of four to a high of nineteen.

I was hired as the coordinator while completing my own MAL course work for the masters degree. Initially I was offered an internship in the MAL program office. My role was to serve both the Master of Arts in Leadership (MAL) program and the now-closed Master of Arts in Education-Leadership (MEL) program. As part of this internship, I investigated Augsburg's Leadership Development Model and its use in MAL courses. This gave me a better understanding of the goals of the program. From this experience I was offered the position of program coordinator.

Mal Internship Project:
Leadership Development Model (Appendix B)

My view of leadership has been re-shaped by Augsburg's Leadership Development Model. My first project as an intern for the MAL program was to examine the current and past MAL course syllabi. Dr. Lucie Ferrell and I were asked to find out how faculty incorporated this model explicitly within their course syllabi. In several cases the model was not mentioned. Although parts of the model could be teased out of the syllabi, there were courses where little or no connection was obvious. The MAL advisory committee made recommendations (Appendix D) to MAL faculty, based on our findings, to be explicit about linking their course content with Augsburg's Leadership Development Model.

At the annual Faculty Retreat in January 1996, the Leadership Development Model (Appendix B) was discussed and faculty were interested in revisiting the model

with a view to updating the ideas. To this end, the MAL advisory committee invited Dr.

Tom Morgan and Dr. Rick Thoni to attend the March 1996 meeting and talk about the

development of the Leadership Model. The catalogue description of the MAL program:

> promotes leadership as a process that
> 1) inspires cooperation among people who must compete for limited resources,
> 2) promotes productivity within and beyond the organization, and
> 3) works toward progress for the individual and the organization.
> To accomplish this, individuals aspiring to positions of leadership must possess
> three key attributes: a sense of vision, the ability to persuade and the ability to
> direct action. Underlying these attributes is a broad range of abilities and
> awareness, outlined in the Leadership Development Model that serve as specific
> outcomes for the MAL program. Augsburg's model of leadership development is
> designed to assess, promote, enhance and refine these capabilities within the
> individual. (MAL catalog, 1997-1999, p. 4)

Mal Program Coordinator

This research study is also directly related to my work as MAL coordinator. In my

position with Augsburg College, I talk to prospective students daily. The questions I hear

repeatedly were part of the impetus for conducting this research.

We initially give interested students a view of the program from the faculty,

student and alumni perspectives. This is usually done at formal information sessions

where the three perspectives of student, faculty and administration are provided by the

MAL Director, a MAL student and the MAL Coordinator. The student perspective has

always been a feature of the descriptions given to the public when they want information

about the MAL program. When needed I provide both an administrative perspective as

well as my own student perspective.

Knowledge of the program's history, my involvement as a student in MAL

courses and the alumni interviews I have conducted enable me to provide a larger context

for the MAL program as it is today. My research has enhanced my descriptions of the courses and the benefits of the MAL program.

I have been the MAL coordinator for three years, beginning in July, 1995. I am responsible for the coordination and production of all publications about the Master of Arts in Leadership program. This involves advertising, developing print promotions and program catalog, homecoming reunions, alumni meetings and events are coordinated through my office.

Recruitment of new students is also my responsibility. My interest in communicating specific benefits of the MAL program comes directly from my role as program coordinator. I am in contact with graduate students throughout their MAL graduate program. From the time students make their initial inquiries about the MAL program until they reach the alumni ranks, I am in regular contact with them.

I meet with new and current students for academic advising meetings. We meet to discuss possible course schedules and outline a plan for completing the program together. Once students complete their course work we meet to to discuss possible leadership application projects, non-thesis projects, thesis topics. This helps me give students direction in the selection of faculty advisors and other issues related to completing their degree.

I meet with people who inquire about the program and ask for more information. This takes place informally at various community events as well as formally when we set up information tables or visit employment sites to promote the MAL program. These are in addition to the regular information sessions I organize for the program.

Many prospective students become seriously interested when they hear stories that relate in some way to their own experience, background or goals. If I am a single parent, has anyone else successfully studied in this program with the same demands on their time? Or, as a business analyst, I am intrigued by the MAL degree; I wonder if anyone in my particular field has entered the MAL program and found it valuable. Perhaps an engineer who is tired of dealing only with the technical aspect to his/her job wants to expand his/her mind by the exposure a liberal arts framework provides. These are some of the kinds of stories I hear students tell that shape their questions about the program.

Career Experience: Educator in Victoria, Australia.

One year before entering the MAL program as a student, I retired from a seventeen year career as a primary[7] teacher and administrator for the Directorate of School Education in Victoria, Australia. I was involved for many years in curriculum design and curriculum development for the Victorian Department of Education. This accounts for some of my interest in investigating the benefits of a masters degree program. My most exciting and challenging teaching experiences in Australia came when I began to use multi-disciplinary approaches in the classroom. These approaches employ an integrated style of teaching and learning which is also a distinctive feature of the MAL multi-disciplinary approach to course developmeny in contrast to discipline-based masters programs.

In Australia, I was an initiator of integrated curriculum for my department and across the school, designed to lead students and teachers to become active learners.

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[7] Primary would be called Elementary in the United States. Primary teachers in Victoria teach in preparatory through grade six.

There are parallels to the MAL program and its interdisciplinary design. My experiences and interests from working in Australia heightened my awareness of characteristics of the MAL program which include: more responsibility for the learning outcomes are placed upon the learner, the MAL program is intentionally multi-disciplinary; faculty and students are led to integrate actively new knowledge with their past experience; less use is made of didactic (lecture) teaching methods that allow more student passivity.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Preface

The MAL program seems to take a different path from more familiar masters

degree programs. So exactly what is the Master of Arts in Leadership program? The

Master of Arts in Leadership program is a graduate level program at Augsburg College in

Minneapolis, Minnesota. The program attracts students from a wide array of

occupational and business settings. (Appendix C) It is an intriguing group of students to

study because of the diversity of companies and the occupations represented. Students in

other graduate programs have similar diversity of backgrounds, but the MAL program

frames the learning experience in ways that intentionally incorporate the student's

previous experience within the academic setting. The history of the MAL program is

relevant to an investigation of benefits for students who participate. The original thinking

and research that went into the development of the MAL program had an impact on the

language students use to describe the benefits of their participation. The history of the

program is related through the words of individuals who were interviewed about the

MAL program.

The research that follows has added to my knowledge and effectiveness as the

program coordinator. It is precisely because of my work with the MAL program that I

selected this topic of investigation. My role as program coordinator provides a

"legitimate reason" (Bogdan and Biklin, 1992, p. 79-105) for undertaking an

investigation of the benefits of the MAL program. The questions students ask and my

available masters programs for adult non-traditional students in the Twin Cities area. The

Master of Arts in Leadership is not a technical degree or discipline-specific degree like a

Masters in Business Administration (MBA) that offers courses in accounting, financial

management, or like a Masters in Nursing or a Masters in Engineering which has courses

that offer skills in particular occupational areas. The MAL is interdisciplinary by design

and focuses on the *facility for persuasion, orientation towards action, and a sense of

vision*[8] as they relate to leadership. This makes the Master of Arts in Leadership program

distinct from other Masters in Liberal Studies degree programs.

Stories

My job as MAL coordinator requires me to talk to prospective students over the

phone, at college information fairs, public events and on campus information sessions.

Mainly I relate stories. At times the stories are about my own experience, sometimes

they are the stories of students I meet and sometimes the stories come from the faculty.

In addition to telling stories, I hear stories from the people I meet. Some want to

convince me that they are good candidates for the MAL program, others want to find out

if their past experience will exclude them from participating. Also, I hear stories from

alumni who want to tell me something specific about the experiences they had at the

college.

Describing the MAL program to the uninitiated has best been accomplished by

relating stories. It was the constant hearing and retelling of these student and faculty

stories that led to this investigation. Stories have been used to clarify and explain

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[8] Leadership Development Model see Appendix B.

phenomena since man's earliest days. "Humans are storytelling creatures preeminently. We organize the world as a set of tales"(Gould, 1997, p.171). Robert Coles (1989, p. 23) explains that:

> to be a good listener in the special way a story requires: note the manner of presentation; the development of plot, character; the addition of new dramatic sequences; the emphasis accorded to one figure or another in the recital; and the degree of enthusiasm, of coherence, the narrator gives to his or her account.

Qualitative research and case study research have used the narrative form (Lancy, 1993) of reporting to display the complexity of human situations and "optimize the opportunity of the reader to gain an experiential understanding of the case" (Stake, 1995, p.40). Stories are a major theme. These stories play a role in recruitment and providing descriptions that make connections with outsiders. Students describe their experience in leadership through stories. These stories are told by faculty, students and staff involved with the Master of Arts in Leadership program.

As I sat listening to another group of potential MAL students, the same questions came to mind that have intrigued me from the beginning of my involvement with this masters program, "Why do people choose the MAL program? And what has it done for them... in their careers, outside work and personally?" I have heard stories from many MAL students about their experiences. Each story reflects the individual's background leading up to the MAL program. They bring unique life experiences and a desire for making a change in their life. For some students this desire for change involves advancement in their chosen career. Others are looking to change careers. Still others know only that they want to make a change.

We switch to the MAL Advisory Committee[9] meetings. Dr. Norma Noonan, the MAL Director, uses stories to vividly describe former students. Again the individual stories grab my attention. During the regular MAL information sessions students hear alumni and student stories firsthand. Alumni describe the changes in themselves and the changes they witnessed among their classmates as a result of studying in the MAL program. Prospective students also tell stories to explain what they are looking for in a graduate program.

The first meeting of an MAL class begins with introductions. These take the form of stories as each student and teacher relates background information. We learn a little about the interests, personality and experience of our new colleagues. Knowing the student and his/her experience helps to frame future learning experiences in the classroom.

We use this format, asking for personal stories, to begin MAL information sessions. Information from those present helps us personalize the presentation of each MAL information session. "Because stereotypes about learners' backgrounds and interests tend to be quite inaccurate, effective practitioners find out about participants through such procedures...(ibid, p. 29-30) as initial sessions of our educational program."

I have seen the impact of a story with prospective MAL students. Alumni tell their personal stories to highlight specific aspects of the MAL student experience. After two years of chairing and organizing over 20 information sessions for both graduate

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[9] MAL Advisory Committee is made up of ten individuals, nine faculty from departments across the college, including the MAL Director and the MAL Program Coordinator. This committee oversees all program changes, reviews and approves new MAL course proposals, organizes an annual faculty retreat of MAL faculty and generally is the governing body for the MAL program.

programs (MAL and MEL), I have seen the individual stories make connections with the students who enroll in the MAL program.

This investigation will identify the topics that connect with the alumni who were interviewed. Often there is something in a story that catches the attention of the prospective student. We know how one story can bring to life experiences that all the lists and statistics are unable to capture. Think for example of how the Diary of Anne Frank helped people recognize the horrors of the Holocaust in a personal way.

Students ask questions. Their questions reflect their curiosity about this masters degree program. They also express certain concerns about graduate school. How do I manage a masters program with a full time career? People wonder how they will convince their company or organization that this degree should be recognized for company tuition reimbursement. It is important to communicate the benefits of the degree. Stories provide more information to the prospective student than single one line answers or a list of benefits. "Human interest stories about why similar adults enrolled and the benefits they gained can be persuasive to an adult who is undecided about whether to participate"(Knox, 1986, p. 32). In a recent article for the *Harvard Business Review (1994)*, "Stories are central to human intelligence and memory. From stories, a child learns to "imagine a course of action, imagine its effects on others, and decide whether or not to do it" (Scientific American, October 1994, William Calvin. Strategic Stories: How 3M is Rewriting Business Planning, p. 42).

Stories capture the interest of the student. The stories are unique. Common ideas run through the stories. In a recent information session (July 1997), after the visitors had

introduced themselves and the presenters had spoken, one man told us, "I am not interested in leading people! I'm a loner. The fact that I am a manager is a surprise to me and to the people who know me." He had come, at the prompting of one of our alumni.

Because all the other attendees described aspirations to leadership roles, he decided the program was not what he wanted. But we have learned by listening to the stories of our students that, in reality, many individuals study leadership to gain understanding, not necessarily to prepare themselves to be the next leader in their division or company. Some will choose to lead in other arenas but not aspire to leading groups at work. Other students choose to support people who lead rather than become leaders themselves. Although this student heard the theme of leadership role aspiration, there is potential to pursue other themes related to leadership within the MAL program.

Students have flexibility in their decisions about graduate school. This study will identify what attracts new students to the MAL program. Just as each member of a family has different life experiences due to their age and placement in the family, MAL students relate experiences and motivations that reflect their age, gender, time of entrance, time to complete, and the work they do. This study follows seven individuals as they talk about their experiences in the MAL program and the benefits they describe after completing the program.

Knowing the origins of the MAL program and its development will lay a foundation for exploring the benefits for students. What challenges do students face prior to enrolling in the MAL program? As we read about the MAL program development we find benefits that were envisaged by the people who first researched, implemented, and

promoted the MAL program that are similar to the outcomes alumni describe in the interviews.

Qualitative Investigation

This study does not count students or gather statistics on particular outcomes. Numbers or graphs cannot capture the richness of the MAL program, the students and faculty who make up the MAL. I wanted to learn about the experience, complexity and depth of individual students who enroll in the MAL program. Statistics would not answer the questions prospective students typically ask. Facts and figures would not adequately describe the varied experience students relate about similar courses and instructors over the lifetime of their masters study.

> Reports of qualitative research ..., more commonly employ a narrative format as opposed to a strictly expository format. Because of the enormous importance of description and context, as well as the growing importance of describing in very personal terms the research's history vis-a-vis this particular topic, the qualitative research report is written as a story" (Lancy, 1993, p. 22).

In Lancy's introduction to the major qualitative traditions he cites Stenhouse: "case studies ... have one vital feature in common, they all address very directly the improvement of practice, all are designed to influence educational policy" (1985, p. 264).

Individual stories are pathways to key topics and core ideas at the heart of the MAL experience. It is not how many people enroll, how long on average it takes students to complete the program, or even how much of a raise or promotion resulted from their study. Patton explains:

> Regardless of the unit of analysis, a qualitative case study seeks to describe that unit in depth, in detail, in context, and holistically. The more a program aims at individual outcomes, the greater the appropriateness of qualitative case methods (1987, p. 19).

Research Question

I looked at the research question: *What are the benefits to the student of the Master of Arts in Leadership degree?* I needed to find out background information on the MAL program before I could frame questions for the alumni interviews. In order to learn this background information, I was fortunate in locating many of the key people working at Augsburg. One administrator, Dr. Ryan LaHurd, Dean of the College during implementation of the MAL program and MAL faculty through 1994, was contacted through email.

My study seeks to identify research that relates to MAL program ideas, MAL implementation and the structure of the MAL classroom environment. One goal of this investigation is improvement of practice and the desire to influence educational policy (Stenhouse, 1985) as it pertains specifically to the MAL program. In order to begin it was necessary to look at qualitative methodology. This includes case studies and grounded theory. Because case studies reports traditionally are written in narrative prose, and describe the people and circumstances in context, I decided to formulate my report as a case study of the MAL program. (Appendix E)

As Lawrence Stenhouse put so well: "... the case study tradition may be seen as a systematization of experience within which interpretations are critically handled in the interest of preventing experience from becoming opinionated" (1985, p. 266). The interviews conducted are students' personal accounts of the MAL program. The faculty interviews add oral history to support the minutes of faculty meetings that recorded the MAL program's implementation.

The scarcity of written accounts about the MAL program also provided impetus to use qualitative methods and their "three principal data sources: observation, interviews, and artifacts" (Lancy, 1993, p. 17). In this case notes begun when listening to prospective students at information sessions, continued in meetings and MAL reunions, provide some of the field notes for this investigation. I supplemented these notes with artifacts including minutes of administrative meetings, program publications, and articles written for college publications and local newspapers.

My choice of readers for the review of this research includes a recent MAL graduate who could react and respond to data presented with an insider's perspective. This is what Lincoln and Guba (1985), Lancy (1993), and Stake (1995) offer as one test of the validity of a study, the "member check", where one's conclusions must be screened by members of the group one has been studying. This thesis reader was a member of the MAL advisory committee for two years and recently completed the MAL degree. She was not a participant in this study.

Background Interviews

The first step in my research was to meet with Dr. Tom Morgan. I learned the nature of his involvement through my initial interviews. Tom Morgan played a significant role in the development of the MAL program. His articulate description of the MAL program prompted me to investigate the program more thoroughly as a foundation for my research into the benefits students describe.

Once the background on the MAL program was obtained, I was able to think about the questions I would ask alumni in their interviews. What factors do alumni describe as instrumental in affecting the decision to enroll at Augsburg College? Are their

connections between the benefits students describe, the ideas of the program designers, and the program itself? How would these benefits would be described by students? Are there connections between the student experience of the MAL program and the rhetoric of the advertising promotion? After completion, could students articulate specific outcomes from their involvement in the MAL program?

My informants needed to be students with opinions that would be valued. The suggestion from the IRB[10] that I limit my interviews to alumni actually helped with credibility (Lancy, 1993) of my study. These informants were individuals who had successfully completed all degree requirements for the MAL program.

I looked for the connections between program goals and benefits through content analysis. The next step was to look for common motivating factors between individuals interviewed. Is there a link between what administrators hoped to provide when they developed the program and the expectations of students and the outcomes they describe as benefits?

Interesting connections arise between the stories students and faculty tell about the MAL experience. Stories are told at alumni gatherings and MAL events. Stories are told during discussions on the MAL Advisory Committee. I listen to stories at each new information session. Other stories come at MAL alumni gatherings and events. This investigation looks at specific examples from interviews with alumni who entered and completed the MAL program between 1987 and 1996. The seven students interviewed

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[10] I.R.B. stands for Institutional Review Board. This committee reviews all research conducted by students and faculty at Augsburg College to assess potential risk for participants and investigators.

studied in the Masters of Arts in Leadership program during the first nine years of its existence.

Selection of Interview Participants

Alumni were chosen as the participants of the research. They were chosen randomly using the 1996-1997 MAL student/alumni directory. This is a document provided for students, faculty and staff in the MAL program. I began with an arbitrary number, four, and counted every thirteenth name to include in my study. Once I had moved through the list, I checked the year of entry to the MAL program for each person on my list. To complete the sample I looked for the next individual on the list that filled in the years that were not represented in the first selection. This supplemented the original list with additional names.

One person was added to the original list. In my first interview, the participant thought her story was significantly different from the majority of people she studied with. Since this class was one of only two cohort groups, I added one other member of that cohort. I wanted to provide contrasting perspectives, one from a student who has experienced several career changes since graduation from MAL and one from a person who has remained in the same profession and work-setting up to the present day.

Audience

There are several audiences for this study; (Miles and Huberman, 1994) (Bogdan and Biklin, 1998) the student and prospective student, administrators interested in interdisciplinary programs, both at Augsburg and other colleges, people and organizations who are interested in leadership development for the non-traditional student, and students

of leadership. This research is done for current, future and past MAL students, faculty and administration at Augsburg College as well as future program staff in the MAL program. Much of the knowledge I had prior to this investigation was provided by individuals familiar with the history of MAL. These include the key people in the development of MAL. This study will provide a history of the MAL program for students who wish to learn about the origins of the MAL program at Augsburg. Another group that could be interested in this research are colleges developing new programs for adult learners. One goal of the study is to help maintain the attraction of the MAL program while providing better information about benefits.

This study provides information for future MAL program coordinators. It includes a history of the MAL program's development and the quotes from college administrators and MAL alumni. Knowledge of this history can contribute to future development. The interview responses raise ideas that could develop into future program directions. But the main value of this study may be for future graduate students: understanding how the MAL program can benefit an individual pursuing graduate studies.

As prospective students make their choice between the graduate programs that are available in the Twin Cities area, the specific benefits described by MAL alumni provide more information about the MAL program. I have been able to incorporate parts of these student stories in my presentation for MAL information sessions. I tell stories that relate to individual students and their specific questions and concerns about masters degree

programs. Much of our current knowledge of MAL student experience to date is anecdotal, scattered and unanalyzed.

Categories Of Data

The history of the program provides evidence through oral histories of administrators who have first hand knowledge of the development of the MAL program. Information about early development of the MAL program is recorded only in minutes of meetings and passed on through stories. Minutes identify only results of discussion, interviews with key people add to our understanding of the decisions that were made. The faculty/administration interviews add information about ideas that were considered in the deliberations of the MAL Advisory committee. The ideas that arose from interviews will be familiar to individuals who have promoted, studied or taught in the program. (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 34)

I interviewed key faculty and administrators to obtain information specific to the development and goals of the MAL program. There is presently no written history of the MAL program. "[Qualitative researchers] engage in face-to-face interaction over a prolonged period with "informants" whose opinions they value, thus building trust and credibility for their eventual findings" (Lancy, 1993, p. 26). There are faculty and administrators who remember the decisions and directions that provide some context for initiating a program like the MAL program.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

In Grounded Theory (Glaser/Strauss, 1967) the researcher looks for emerging theory rather than creating an hypothesis at the beginning. "Data collection and data

analysis are concurrent" (Galbraith, 1991, p. 33). The participant determines the
direction of the interview, rather than having the control of ideas rest solely with the
researcher. This process gives us a way to gain new information about MAL students. I
was concerned that making assumptions ahead of the research would hamper my
findings. Developing theory from the information gained in the interviews provides
opportunities to discover new ideas. "...Since the categories(themes) are discovered by
examination of the data, laypersons involved in the area to which the theory applies will
usually be able to understand it..." (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 34). I expect MAL
students and prospective students to read and potentially use my study for further
investigation.

The alumni interview data is presented in categories. The "worldview"(Marshall
& Rossman, 1989, p. 112) of MAL students frames the analysis. The categories were
taken initially from the questions posed by the researcher. (Appendix:F) Themes arose
from the participant's responses: diversity of student background, dynamics of the MAL
classroom, both structure and interactions between people within classes, and the
motivation to study leadership. Themes that were added after reviewing the interview
responses include liberal arts education and its impact on MAL design and particular
characteristics of students that relate to leadership characteristics.

How does this program reflects leadership in its intention and design? Data is
gathered through in-depth interviews that included administrators in order to connect the
ideas of the MAL program with the words and stories students used to describe their
experience. (Taylor and Bodgan, 1984) Emerging themes incorporated interesting ideas

raised by the participants. Quotes related to my findings are grouped together. These quotes established the common themes found in the participants' responses.

Since the anonymity of the participant must be maintained, only comments related to findings will be published in this document. The small number of MAL alumni graduating in any given year precludes presenting separate profiles for each individual. Some of the dates and details would identify individuals if presented with other details about individuals and their experience. Hence, the profiles of the seven individuals interviewed will be done collectively.

Faculty/Administration Interviews

The administrator/faculty interviews helped identify themes involved in the original design of the program. To learn more about the intent of the program as it was originally envisaged, I spoke initially with Dr. Tom Morgan and Dr. Rick Thoni. Both were involved with the development and initial direction of the MAL program. Tom Morgan researched the business literature to find out the needs of business, specifically needs for further educating employees.

After I interviewed the MAL alumni I added interviews with Dr. Marie McNeff and Dr. Norma Noonan. I contacted Ryan LaHurd, former Dean of the College, for his insights via email. Dr. LaHurd is now President of Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory, North Carolina. Dr. LaHurd provided the administrative support for implementation of the MAL program. His arrival and briefing on MAL development was critical to successfully launching the MAL program. He served as the first Director and taught the course Creativity and Problem Solving.

I conducted administrator interviews with Dr. McNeff, Dr. Thoni, and Dr. Noonan concurrently with the alumni interviews. Dr. McNeff replaced Ryan LaHurd as Dean of the College and Vice President for Academic Affairs. She taught in the Master of Arts in Education-Leadership program and currently lectures on Complexity Theory and Leadership for the ML 580 course on Contemporary Theories of Leadership. These administrators provide insights into the thinking that prompted the development of a Master of Arts program focussed on Leadership. These individuals had knowledge of specific actions that were taken during the development of the MAL program. These administrators and faculty were directly involved in discussions about graduate programs at Augsburg. Much of the oral history that is recorded in Chapter 4 was gained from these interviews. The themes expressed in these faculty/adminstration interviews echo ideas heard when individuals describe the MAL program to new people.

The general questions I asked administrators of the Master of Arts in Leadership program addressed the population the program was intended to serve, the market identified by industry leaders, and the needs of Augsburg College for viable new programs to meet public interest while fitting our urban location and the college mission. Feedback from college administrators helped frame Augsburg's Leadership Development Model (Appendix A). Feedback from company leaders influenced the entrance requirements for enrolling in the MAL program.

Interviews with administrators and faculty took place within a similar time frame to the alumni interviews. These additional interviews gave me added knowledge about

the MAL program, the role of key individuals, the history and development of the program.

The Alumni Interviews

The alumni interviews are the focus of this investigation. I focussed questions around the topic "benefits" and guided the interview (Merton and Kendall 1946). What do students expect to achieve by enrolling in the MAL program? Were the student expectations realized? What were some of the disappointments? How did the benefits and drawbacks impact their personal outcomes?

Each individual was phoned initially to gain their verbal consent to take part in my research. This phone call was followed up by mailing or faxing the consent form to each individual who was to participate (Appendix G). The interviewees were provided with a stamped, addressed envelope to return the signed consent form. These were mailed to my home or given to me at the time of the interview by all participants prior to beginning the interview itself. Included in the consent form(page 3) is a section where the individual could 1) consent to the interview, 2) consent to taping of the interview and 3) consent to the subsequent use of quotes in the report of findings. All seven individuals agreed to the interviews, all seven agreed to the taping and all agreed to allow me to use quotes, anonymously.

An eighth individual declined to be interviewed after reading the full consent form. He had positive comments about his MAL experience but cited reservations about whether there was any impact on his career from the degree.

Participants had the option to withdraw their consent at any time.(Appendix E)

Many interviews took place off campus at a setting chosen by each participant. One

person chose to be interviewed on campus before normal office hours. Most interviews

took place in the subject's place of work. In several cases we met in a small conference

room. This helped free us from interruptions.

One individual was interviewed at home. Due to an unexpected work crisis,

phone calls interrupted the flow of this interview, as if we were sitting in the person's

office at work. The atmosphere for this interview was more like interviews conducted in

an individual's office. All of the interviews took place between January 10th, 1997 and

January 29th, 1997. The duration of each interview was approximately one hour.

The interview questions were listed on the consent form. Keeping in the tradition

of qualitative research, questions were used only as a guide. "Guided conversation"

(Rubin and Rubin, 1995) is the method of interviewing which serves to elicit, in this

instance, responses relating to the benefits of an MAL degree for participants in the MAL

program. To encourage respondents to use their own words, I reviewed the outline of

questions, then encouraged a conversational dialogue centered around the individual's

experience, not my own experience, of the MAL program. Each informant was asked to

describe, in their own words, what they were looking for in the Master of Arts in

Leadership program, how they chose the program and what they found were the benefits

both as students and now as alumni.

Informants described their experiences of MAL program in their own words.

Everyone read the consent form prior to the interview. The interviewees knew the

substance of my inquiry. In most cases I found that we had covered all the questions during the course of the interview, without asking the questions in a particular order.

I changed to a less formal format as a result of my first interview. I noticed that the words used by my initial informant mirrored my words in the consent form too closely. By freeing the interviewee from the list of questions, their responses were richer in individual character. As we read in Lancy (1993, p. 18) an open ended questionnaire works for the guided conversation format. This focussed our discussion on the individual experience and allowed more opportunity to "be impressed by recurrent themes" as Diesling describes (1971, p. 145). It gave me freedom to be "open to alternative constructions of reality" (Lancy, 1993, p. 9). For example, Alan's[11] description of MAL classes "It was like verbal and emotional bumper cars. The professor was more skilled at driving his car but they were still bumper cars".

I was concerned about deviating from the original text of the questions. However, when I heard my own words repeated back to me in the first interview session, I focussed on a conversational dialogue and a general introductory question. I asked about the interviewee's personal experience in the MAL program. This focused our discussion on the individual's search for a program at the master's level. This informal questioning helped elicit individual responses, not a repetition of my words. In "Research Interviewing" (Mishler, 1986) it was interesting to note that during interviews where the interviewer is instructed to state questions precisely, a great deal of variation from the written text exists between the interview transcripts.

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[11] Pseudonym for seventh interview participant. (See profiles of alumni interviewed)

Each person chose their own way to tell their story. Without this approach to questioning, phrases such as "verbal bumper cars" or "sticking needles in my eyes" would have been lost. These phrases evoke strong images. When the responses slowed, we reviewed the questions on the consent form. This review gave us an opportunity to go back to specific questions and add any further information the interviewee wished to tell.

In one instance, when I reviewed the transcript, it was obvious that the informant was more skilled than I eliciting information from people. We strayed from the topic more than other interviews. This was partially due to the fact I had already conducted five alumni interviews plus all the interviews with Augsburg administrators.

Once the interviews were complete, I transcribed the interviews from the tapes. This was done shortly after the interview. Notes were also taken at the time of the interviews as long as they did not interfere with the flow of the interview. The transcription process took four to five hours for every hour of interview. The words of each person interviewed were recorded. I elicited responses from all the participants that encompassed the general content of the research questions (Appendix F). Transcribing the interviews myself helped with recall of the context and content of the individual replies.

Interview Questions[12]

The major questions used to frame the interviews follow. When we met for the interview each person was asked to describe their experience choosing a graduate program. Which alumni were members of a cohort class? Who came in later when

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[12] See Appendix F: complete set of questions provided to participants prior to the interview.

rolling admissions[13] began?   This lead to discussions of the MAL program in general.

The alumni were asked to describe changes they observed in themselves as a result of

their involvement in the MAL program.

Here are the questions asked in the interviews along with my rationale for posing

the particular question.

Research Questions

1. What can you recall about your search for a graduate program?

This question acknowledges that alumni are *recalling* motivations from a

time prior to commencing graduate school. From my experience as program

coordinator, interviewing dozens of potential students, the successful quest for a

graduate program that resonates with an individual takes several years. This

process includes enrolling in other programs, even completing other graduate

degrees. Many people in the MAL program have experience of graduate work in

other masters programs prior to entering the MAL program. Students have begun

technical degrees such as MBA's, engineering, social work, nursing, and law.

2. What do you think the key factors were that influenced your choice of a graduate program?

The circumstances around individual alumnae differ, whether age, marital

status, family situation, health or work/career situation. This question seeks

information that may overlap from one individual to others. Despite differences,

the researcher is looking for common factors that exist with different individuals.

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[13] Rolling admissions means that students are admitted to the program at the start of each trimester.

3. How would you describe the benefits of the MAL program to someone who is unfamiliar with the MAL program?

This question asks individuals to use their own words to talk about the MAL program. It couples individual experience with outcomes and benefits that the individual recalls and values.

4. As you reflect on your own experiences as an MAL student, are there benefits or advantages that you were unaware of until you had completed the degree and moved on to new challenges?

This question asks individuals to examine their experience, look for benefits that were not expected but which the individual can directly link to their MAL experience.

5. How does the structure of the MAL program encourage learning?

This question asks for specific feedback on how the program design and implementation relates to individual success. There is a relation to recruitment of new students. Referrals account for many of our new students.

6. What features of the MAL program contribute to its success, ten years on?

This question is seeking the universal and unique aspects of the MAL program. Are the perceived benefits that attract new students into the program similar to the actual benefits reported by alumnae?

7. What is your response to the following statement?

The MAL program brings together diverse work cultures. Educational settings such as the MAL program provide an environment where students

can challenge the assumptions and practices they encounter at work while

searching for better solutions.

This statement relates to some of the researcher's experiences and understandings

about the MAL program, combining my beliefs about education with my

experience in the MAL program, and provides to interviewees topics for comment

such as "cultures" and "solutions".

Profiles Of MAL Alumni

The individuals interviewed represent a sample of seven students who entered the

program between 1987 and 1993. All years of entry are included with the exception of

1991. The participants represent a range of ages and occupations that reflects the

diversity found within the current MAL student body. Three individuals were married at

the time of interview, three were single and one person was divorced. At the time of

starting the MAL program, four of the individuals were single. Five are female and two

are male. The professions represented by the individuals interviewed include health care,

marketing and communications, non-profit management, engineering, strategic market

planning, human resources, employment and training. Several of these individuals began

in other masters programs prior to enrolling in the Master of Arts in Leadership program.

All explored masters programs specific to their career or undergraduate studies in

addition to the MAL program.

The purpose of interviewing a second member of a cohort group came from an

early interview. The first person interviewed from a cohort group believed that the

circumstances surrounding her situation were not typical of others in the cohort group.

MAL was designed originally as a cohort[14] model. The program was later expanded to allow students to enter any term. Three people in the interview group were members of one of the cohort groups. Four enrolled when entrance dates were more flexible and they were allowed to begin in any term. It took these individuals between two and a half and five years to complete the MAL degree. This time span for completion is the same as current MAL students. All alumni interviewed wrote a thesis or leadership application project, no alternative capstone project was available.

The age range of the seven individuals falls between 38-62 with individuals starting the MAL program between 28-53 years of age. Since the current average age of MAL students is 39.9[15], this sample incorporates a range of ages which is similar to the age range within the MAL program. The sample also reflects a similar range of occupations and a similar gender balance. Although current numbers of students represent about 40 % male and 60% female, this sample has more women, due to the withdrawal of one individual. I do not believe that gender is significant to the responses. The comments of individuals would be difficult to link to one gender over another.

The MAL program provided the researcher with current statistics on gender balance and average age that reflects the current profile of students in the MAL program. The ratio of males to females in the alumni is close to 40:60. These include individuals who met the minimum age and experience eligibility for the MAL program as well as those having vastly more experience than the minimum requirement.

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[14] Cohort: A group of students who enter a program and take all classes together.

[15] From current MAL enrollment data.

'Ashley'[16] is married in her mid thirties and working in marketing and communications. 'Ashley' studied with the early cohort group and had initially investigated other programs. Her impression was that many of her peers in the MAL program stayed in the same field or career. Because she viewed her experience as unusual the researcher added an interview with another member of the same cohort group. 'Ashley' completed the MAL degree in 2 and 1/2 years. The interview took place on January 10, 1997 in Minneapolis.

'Rachel' is a single woman who works as a health care professional. She works as an advocate in management for a non-profit, government organization. 'Rachel' is in her mid forties and completed the MAL program in three years. 'Rachel' attended an adult weekend program for undergraduate study. The time between completing her undergraduate degree and entering the MAL program was nine years. The interview took place on January 23, 1997 in St. Paul.

'Matthew' is married and works as a manager in a government non-profit agency. He is in his late forties and entered the MAL program as part of the same cohort group as 'Ashley'. 'Matthew' took five years to complete the MAL program. He works in the same agency he was working for when he started the MAL program. His interview took place on January 28, 1997 in St. Paul.

'Yvonne' is divorced in her mid fifties and works as an employment and training planner. She completed the MAL program in five years. Her interview took place on January 29, 1997 in Minneapolis.

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16 All Alumni will be listed under pseudonyms: Ashley, Rachel, Matthew, Yvonne, Laura, Georgina, Alan.

'Laura' is single and in her early fifties. She is a human resource professional working in a government agency. 'Laura' completed the MAL program in five years. She investigated other programs directly related to her work, but was concerned about maintaining the energy and enthusiasm needed to complete a masters program. She was interviewed on January 21, 1997 in St. Paul.

'Georgina' is married and works in strategic marketing planning in the telecommunications industry. She also participated in a nontraditional weekend program for her undergraduate degree. 'Georgina' completed her MAL degree in three years. The interview took place on January 23, 1997 in Minneapolis.

'Alan' is single and in his mid thirties. He works in a not-for-profit service organization that supports the utility industry with engineering and communication services. 'Alan' completed the MAL program in three years. He was interviewed on January 29, 1997 in Minneapolis.

Four interview participants graduated from private institutions for their undergraduate work while three were graduates of state-funded institutions. Two individuals completed undergraduate degrees through a weekend college programs designed for non-traditional adult learners. Two were undergraduate alumni of Augsburg.[17]

This sample of students represents 10% of current graduates at the time this investigation started. There were 69 graduates and I interviewed seven.

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[17] This information reflects current status and occupation of informants at the time of the research interview, January, 1997.

In this paper, excerpts from the interviews are used to make connections between the student experience and the ideas that were incorporated in the Master of Arts in Leadership program. So sit back and read the stories from this unique program.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Our American society recognizes advanced college degrees as one path to move

individuals forward in many fields of work. The masters degree is a way to distinguish

yourself from others in the same industry, occupation or within the same organization.

This is in contrast to Australia where the baccalaureate degree was the level sought by

individuals in my field, education, because many had 2-3 years of post secondary

education.

This chapter reviews literature which examines adult learners and their

motivations, attitudes and expectations for education. I have included the current research

on teaching and learning in higher education as it impacts adult learning. The final

section discusses the particular design of the MAL program and includes Augsburg's

Leadership Development Model. Historical information about the MAL program follows

in a separate chapter, based upon interviews and artifacts; including articles in college

and local newspapers, field notes and minutes of meetings.

"Adults engage in educational activities for multiple reasons" (Boshier and

Collins, 1985, p. 115). Many of the students who enter educational programs want

occupational advancement (Knox, 1986) and other career related benefits. These benefits

include the desire to advance in their company, an interest in investigating alternative

careers, and the desire to learn skills for leadership.

There is "support to the claim that the need for mental stimulation is an insatiable,

on-going experience, regardless of age" (McGraw, 1982, Abstract). Completing the

academic credential gives people confidence to make transitions. Education opens up

possibilities for individuals because we broaden our expectations, our knowledge of the

world and understandings of people and society.

A person's view of learning is tied to expectations and past experiences of his/her

formal education. Our system of education has traditionally placed more emphasis on

stripping an idea down to some singular set of parts rather than exploring life with all the

natural complexities and context. Traditional methods of education and the high

specialization that results have pushed us towards increasingly specialized areas of

learning. "American education assumes a brain that compartmentalizes and localizes

knowledge, a stimulus-response organ in which a single stimulus leads to a uniform

response" (Hall, 1981, p. 199). "We cannot avoid becoming aware of the tremendous

complexity of teaching and learning, in particular how what learners take from education,

and what for them are crucially transformative learning events, are varied, idiosyncratic,

and often unanticipated both by learners and teachers" (Galbraith, 1991, p. 53).

Certainly, this is the way many of us experienced our undergraduate coursework.

Another hidden assumption is that thinking is possible only when using symbols, words

and numbers. Yet, according to Luria, "the brain functions in several different ways.

Some functions ...are, in contrast to memory storage, actually localized; others are

integrative in character" (Hall, 1981, p. 199). The past focus of education has been "to

provide instruction" (ibid).

This shows a shift from the "instruction paradigm to the learning paradigm" (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 14). The shift is both a result of the student attitude toward learning and the professor's guidance from the instruction mode to learning as the main focus. Augsburg College describes as its mission:

> To nurture future leaders in service to the world by providing high quality educational opportunities, which are based in the liberal arts and shaped by the faith and values of the Christian Church, by the context of a vital metropolitan setting, and by an intentionally diverse campus community (Augsburg Catalog, 1998-2000, p. 9).

Adult Learners.

I began investigating adult learners while framing questions about the Master of Arts in Leadership program. Research on adult learners provides background on the motivations and circumstances that many adults describe when they seek further education, in the formal arenas of colleges and universities, or technical and community programs. I wanted to understand the broad motivating factors before approaching the motivations relevant to students in the MAL program. Knowledge of motivations of adult learners was fundamental to the process of finding questions that were appropriate to adult students returning to formal education at Augsburg College.

In the research of adult learners we find that the general reasons adults enter formal education programs include 1) gaining career and work related knowledge, 2) networking and 3) personal development. (Clark, 1992). Often a change event "heightens readiness to learn and often triggers participation in educational activities" (Knox, 1986, p. 21). Although adults will often cite the career benefits as their priority when they enter a formal education program, it is the personal development gains that are rated highest when they complete a program (Valentine, 1990).

Motivation

The literature on non-traditional[18] adult learners tends to focus on the undergraduate student. Students who complete their undergraduate study and proceed directly to graduate school are traditional aged. Many non-traditional students have been out of formal education settings for several years. Most have family responsibilities as well as a full time career. This is the same general population of students that enter the MAL program. The adult learners in the MAL program have a minimum of five years experience after their degree is completed.

The motivations for adult, non-traditional students to enroll in education programs provide a starting point. Knowing the motivations aids the investigation of the benefits of a MAL degree. These motivations fall into both career and personal development categories. "Multiple motives are common" (Knox, 1986, p. 33). In career related motivations students have expectations of increasing network opportunities, gaining advanced skills or enhancing their opportunities for promotion and advancement as well as easing future transitions into new fields of endeavor (Clark, 1992).

People motivated by personal development report confidence building and increased self esteem as areas they wish to improve. Educational participation results from "combination of personal and situational facilitators and barriers (Knox, 1986, p. 33)." The factors affecting an adult's decision to enroll as a student are detailed in literature on adult learning and adult education. Clark (1992) identifies personal

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[18] For the purpose of this study, non-traditional students are defined as individuals enrolled in an education program post high school, who are not the traditional age of college student between 18-22.

fulfillment, career advancement and income enhancement, gaining specific, marketable skills for the workplace whether to enhance current skills or acquire new skills, and making transitions to new workplaces or new careers.

> Many reasons identified by adults in many programs include occupational advancement, content interest, compliance with external expectations, service to others, enjoyment of mental stimulation and interaction with other participants. For an individual participant and a given topic, one of these reasons is likely to be paramount and several others influential. Multiple motives are common" (Knox, 1986, p. 33).

> Applicants to the [MAL] program must have five years of experience (or equivalent) with one or more organizations in a position of leadership or position demonstrating leadership potential"(MAL catalogue, 1997-1999, p.10).

The order of importance of motivations for individual students in general varies when students enroll, but usually career-related components are ranked higher at the beginning of a program. According to the research, at the conclusion of educational programs, most students describe personal growth and development as most important.

If we look at Brookfield's description of the 'motives for learning,' he emphasizes "it is important to consider the nature of the teaching-learning transaction itself and the extent to which features of mutual respect, negotiation, collaborativeness and praxis are present" (1986, p. 9). Galbraith (1991, p. 40-52) describes several "elements of how adults experience learning" which are pertinent to MAL student population. These are the "imposter syndromes, connectedness, episodes of challenge, reflective speculation, transitional fluctuation, a learning community and teacher credibility". These elements include possible/potential barriers to participation as well as motivations and benefits.

The imposter syndrome refers to the feeling many students have that they have somehow been admitted under false pretenses. I don't really belong, and the college has

not figured out I am an imposter disguised as a student. Somehow one does not feel worthy of sitting in the same class with all these more capable adults. This imposter syndrome is common among all adult learners (Galbraith, 1991).

Obstacles/Barriers

Barriers to pursuing further education were discussed in the literature on adult learning. These include situational, attitudinal, and financial barriers (Clark). Valentine (1990) describes blocks to adult education including "those deterred by personal problems, lack of confidence, educational costs and those not interested in organized education"(p. 37).

The *situational barriers* include home and job concerns, age of children, health of family and self, or distance to the institution. The *attitudinal* barriers are things such as *I am too old to go back to school. Is my past experience relevant? Are my academic credentials adequate? I goofed off as an undergraduate, my grades are poor. I had personal problems, or health concerns.*

Finally *financial* barriers loom large for many adults. In the case of MAL students, some individuals do not work for companies that provide tuition reimbursement. Sometimes their company will not approve the MAL program as fitting their guidelines for course work eligible for tuition reimbursement. These individuals are unable to pay the cost of education on their current salary. Will the outcomes provide the individual with greater financial security? Perhaps they have children already in higher education settings. Some students have the expenses of mortgages and bills that prevent their entry to higher education.

Knox introduces a paradox: "This accumulating life experience both helps and hinders educational activity" (1985, p. 35). Experience helps because it gives rise to the aspirations that motivate adults to participate and current proficiencies on which they can build. Experience hinders because it creates competing time demands that can interfere with progress in educational activities (Knox, 1985).

Liberal Arts Education-Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

"Those who hope to lead cannot achieve their full potential without considerable breadth of knowledge" (Gardner).[19]

How does liberal arts education fit this picture? Study of the liberal arts encourage individuals to look at the broader view through multiple perspectives. Every situation we encounter is better understood when we look at the context. Contrast the traditional focus in education with its tendency towards increased specialization to current research that describes how students learn best when they are engaged in the learning process and take time to make connections from their previous learning and experience as a way to understand new theories and ideas (Astin,1997).

"Effective teaching depends on being responsive to the learners in the program, not to adults in general" (Knox, p. 38).

Ewell (1997) describes the key insights into the nature of learning:

1. The learner is not a receptacle of knowledge, but rather creates his/her learning actively and uniquely.
2. Learning is about making meaning for each individual learner by establishing and reworking patterns, relationships and connections.
3. Every student learns all the time, both with us and despite us.
4. Direct experience decisively shapes individual understanding.
5. Learning occurs best in the context of a compelling 'presenting problem'.

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[19] Echo October 3, 1986. Volume 93 #3. *Augsburg to Start Leadership Program*. Smith, Samuel B.

6. Beyond stimulation, learning requires reflection.
7. Learning occurs best in a cultural context that provides both enjoyable interaction and substantial personal support. (Ewell 1997, p. 3-4)

When new ideas are presented, the essence of the learning is how the individual uses the information to make their own conclusions and arrive at solutions for a specific situation. From the current research literature on how people learn we know that making connections from our experience to new knowledge provides a powerful learning situation.

How we change and encourage change in others begins with finding facts in our own knowledge base that either conflict or relate to the experiences and reality of others. Edward T. Hall helps us understand the hidden aspects of culture in his book, Beyond Culture.

> **Culture** in its most basic sense is a set of internalized understandings and rules developed by a group or organization for its survival and success. It determines how people think, what they value, and how they behave and communicate with each other (Simons, Vazquez, and Harris, 1993, p. 20).

Each individual who enters an educational program brings their unique understanding of organizational culture, based on their experience and educational framework or as Galbraith describes, "different marker events, transitions, roles and crises" (1991, p. 19).

In Knox's discussion of responding to the diversity of learners:

> As people grow older they become both more similar and more different. They become more similar in that they confront more and more widespread dilemmas of society and in that their essential self becomes more apparent. [Adults] become more different in that their specialized circumstances, abilities and experiences produce among all adults an increasing range of individual difference within each increasing age cohort (Knox, 1986, p.29).

My own experience living in Europe for three years as a teenager and 17 years as

an adult, gives me a unique outlook with which to view people, culture and interactions.

Secondary to personal development and growth, students list promotions, job and

career transitions as well as acquiring additional skills (Valentine, 1990) (Clark, 1992).

Under the area of personal change, students identify increased self confidence and ability

to handle and manage changes, as well as risk-taking as key benefits from their

experience in educational programs. As you will read later in this study, the findings in

the literature are reflected in the outcome of the alumni interviews.

Systems Approach to Improving Learning

Dr. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, author of <u>When Giants Learn to Dance</u> (1989)

describes the need for an 'adaptive workforce' in the future.

> The opportunities are clear: an adaptive workforce for which getting ahead
> means getting better-growing in skills, growing in ideas, or finding ever more
> challenging arenas in which to apply skills and ideas. [We need] Companies that
> know how to learn because their people know how to learn. (p.320)

This adaptive workforce points towards changes needed in learning and education. This

follows current research in higher education that encourages us to view learning through a

systems approach. In order to use a systems approach to improving learning the

following strategies are suggested in 1996 AAHE[20] Bulletin:

- focus on learning as key to change
- student learning is core process of institution
- faculty and staff learning is essential for effectiveness in new environments
- administrator learning is key to leading change efforts

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[20] AAHE-American Association of Higher Education.

Leadership

We can look at Borman and Borman's three major research approaches to studying leadership to describe the ideas imbedded in the MAL program. These research approaches include: the trait approach, the styles of leadership approach, and the contextual approach.

> The notion that leaders are born and not made just did not stand up under careful and systematic study. Clearly, the purpose of the group and the kind of work it had to do played a part in determining the best "style" of leadership for that particular group. Bormann concludes that the contextual approach to study of leadership is the "most satisfactory explanation. ...leadership is a result of the individual traits and orientations (inherited characteristics plus training), the purposes of the group, the pressures put on the group from the outside, and the way the persons in the group talk, work, and relate to one another.(p. 167-68)Such an explanation provides a more complete view of leadership than do either the trait approach or the one-best-style approach(168)".
>
> The contextual approach, the consideration of the total context, or all components, of each instance of "a group", explains why a person who emerges as a leader in one group may fail to emerge as the leader of a second, apparently similar group. It also accounts for successful groups that follow leaders who have quite different styles of leadership.(168)"

This study adds to the body of knowledge in leadership. This study describes a successful masters program that has leadership development as its purpose and guiding principle. The adults who enroll focus on developing their understanding of leadership issues, increasing their confidence to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities and improving their awareness of the challenges and multitude of variables that confront us when we undertake new leadership opportunities.

> Most organizations seek leaders with the following qualities: a vision that is ethically and morally responsible, extending beyond immediate concerns; an understanding of how change occurs and affects the immediate environment; a sensitivity to the complex problems organizations face and an ability to achieve solutions consistent with an organization's mission; the ability to motivate and inspire individuals and groups to work toward a common goal; and the ability to

effectively represent the organization both internally and externally (MAL program catalogue, 1997-1999, p. 3)

Augsburg made a commitment to providing leadership in educating adults to undertake leadership roles in their work and community. In addition to "developing future leaders" (ibid) Augsburg went one large step further. Current leaders were invited to give input into the kind of program that company leaders believed would move individuals into leadership roles. Studying leadership with students who have significant life experience has enriched the value and education of everyone in these classes. Colleges with liberal arts programs may be interested in how Augsburg College successfully developed, implemented and now operates this program in leadership.

The following chapter tells the story behind the M.A. in Leadership program. The details were related during interviews with key individuals in Augsburg's administration during the time new programs were being investigated in the early 1980's. Faculty were interviewed who were involved with the research and discussions that lead to the development of this program focussed on leadership. As I listened to their stories I found themes that were common to the alumni stories. It is through these stories that the nature of this program is revealed.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORY

Master of Arts in Leadership

This section adds information gained from interviews and artifacts such as: newspaper articles, college catalogs, minutes of program committees and MAL publications. The interviews involved faculty and administrators who were involved in the research and development of the MAL program and those who assisted with its development and implementation at Augsburg College.

In order to formulate this research in terms of Augsburg college and the current MAL program, I needed to learn about the development of the MAL program. Who were the key thinkers that shaped the program? Why did they focus on leadership? What historical/community influences were important to the program that emerged? How do we describe the MAL program to the individual student in ways that make connections to their needs and experience?

The previous chapter answers the questions: What additional information do we need to know about adult learners? and How are our non-traditional students described? Now we ask: What other information would help students make their decision to enroll in a masters program? Are individuals who complete the MAL program able to articulate the benefits of their degree to others? Finally, how do all of these questions and the answers relate to leaders and leadership development?

History- Master Of Arts In Leadership Program

The story of the Master of Arts in Leadership program development is told through the words of key administrators and faculty. The genesis of a masters in liberal studies program came through administrator and faculty investigation and research. Leadership was a recurring theme in the research that Tom Morgan found as he investigated the business literature. The idea of a masters program based in the liberal arts rose out of faculty discussions.

This section describes specific aspects of the MAL program including the Augsburg leadership development model. This model drove course and curriculum design. The original vision of the MAL classroom is found in Dr. Thoni's description which you will read later in this chapter.

Key Players:

College faculty and administrators, their roles related to the MAL program.

I interviewed individuals for their historical knowledge and long term involvement with the MAL program development. I talked to people who could talk mainly about the ideas and initial actions that laid the foundation for the MAL program. These people include Dr. Rick Thoni, Dr. Tom Morgan, Dr. Norma Noonan, Dr. Marie McNeff and Dr. Ryan LaHurd. All of these individuals were faculty and administrators at Augsburg during the program's development and implementation stages. Dr. Ryan LaHurd left Augsburg in 1994.

Dr. Thoni was part of the team that developed the Master of Arts in Leadership (MAL) program and the Weekend College (WEC) baccalaureate program. Both MAL and WEC were aimed at the non-traditional student. The Weekend College program

preceded MAL by several years. Dr. Rick Thoni was the first Director of Weekend College and was Vice President for Enrollment Management when this study began.

Dr. Noonan is the current faculty director of MAL She is a professor in the Political Science Department and teaches undergraduate courses in international relations in addition to her role as MAL director. Dr. Noonan teaches the Women and Leadership and Political Leadership courses in the MAL program. She has served on the MAL committee and early faculty committees that were involved in the investigation of possible masters programs prior to the beginning of MAL. Dr. Noonan's appointment occurred at a time when the MAL program needed a strong champion.

Management of the program had been part of various administrative structures. At one time the person running the program was also in charge of the WEC program, MSW[21] and all special programs for the non-traditional adult population. With several varying initiatives a program that was running well was left to the administration of the MAL advisory committee.

Dr. Noonan began to involve MAL alumni and students in the MAL program in more intentional ways. By providing links between alumni and current students, opportunities opened up for successful students to mentor newer students. An endowment fund added to the interest in returning something to the college that had provided this interesting program. A thesis prize is now awarded to the thesis deemed the greatest contribution to leadership studies by an alumni committee each year. This

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[21] Masters in Social Work.

renews interest in the program and provides an avenue for recent alumni to stay involved with the program.

Dr. LaHurd was the Academic Dean at Augsburg during the implementation of the MAL program. Dr. McNeff is the current Dean of the College. Dr. Morgan is a professor in the Business/MIS department of Augsburg College. He co-teaches ML 531 Dynamics of Change with Dr. Diane Pike. He has taught the Research Seminar and was responsible for preparing the original MAL thesis information booklet. A revised version is used today to guide students through the thesis process. Dr. Morgan conducted the research into what kind of graduate program Augsburg should implement.

It was apparent from these initial administrative interviews that the individuals involved directly with the development and implementation of the MAL program were Dr. Thoni, Dr. Morgan, and Dr. LaHurd. Many other faculty were involved as members of advisory and faculty committees. My purpose is to describe the thinking of key individuals who investigated, researched, implemented and subsequently promoted the program.

Since the focus of this study is the benefits of the MAL program to students, I did not identify and interview everyone who was involved in the MAL program in less direct ways. My interviews with the above mentioned administrators helped provide background on the MAL program. As I talked with alumni, this background helped me understand the early decisions that were made about program design and the outcomes these individuals were hoping to achieve for students.

The Beginning

The Master of Arts in Leadership degree program was established in 1987 by Augsburg College. The designers expected to attract students in their early thirties with degrees in technical fields like engineering and business administration, with some experience in middle management within their organizations. (Thoni, LaHurd) The program's evolution shows how the reality of student lives had an impact on early decisions and how the program evolved to meet the needs of students. The roadblocks or obstacles that changed the original ideas in significant ways are described. The emphasis on a program that was multi-disciplinary changed the way some of the courses were designed and the delivery of the courses to students. For example, Rick Nelson, faculty from the History department who teaches in MAL program, suggested the addition of Thursday evening classes to enable him to cover all the content of the Foundations of Leadership course. (Noonan interview)

Investigating Graduate Programs, Discussions with CEOs, Influences

The college investigated liberal studies programs at the masters level in the late 1970's and early 80's. The people involved in this research included many faculty and administrators who later worked with the MAL program design. Dr. Thoni:

> What came out in the original discussions was the idea of a MLS or master of liberal studies. The idea was that Augsburg is a liberal arts college. Indeed we didn't feel we wanted to invest or field the expertise in a particular discipline area.

Augsburg faculty and administrators met with individuals at management and CEO levels in local companies to find out what the needs were of the business community that serves Augsburg and that Augsburg serves or hopes to serve. The companies that were

interviewed and represented on the initial advisory committee included Apache, St. Paul

Companies, Farm Service Banks, Honeywell-CIM division, and Control Data

(AAL grant submission).

Thoni continues:

> We decided we would go out in the corporate world to talk with executives about
> what they needed and how liberal learning could benefit them from a liberal arts
> (perspective) component. We put together a seminar. We took the seminar to a
> number of corporations. Apache was one of them. Farm Services Banks,
> Control Data, and a couple of others. We went into these corporations. St. Paul
> Companies. [The seminars] were targeted at the executive folks, trying to
> convince them of the value of a liberal arts education. We had a faculty speaker
> talk about the benefits. The speaker was [Ron] Palosaari. [The seminar] was
> run by Jim Krause. He was from American Management Seminars. They were
> contracted to run seminars for the IMPUL[22] study. Jim Krause was contracted to
> run these seminars, set them up with corporations. And we went out and talked
> and listened.

These companies saw a need for individuals in the middle management positions

to broaden their skills in people management. They had found that many managers reach

the limits of their technical expertise and need broader skills to manage people across

company divisions. The skills they wanted their employees to gain included improved

ability for communication and visioning as well as critical thinking and self-confidence.

The Augsburg administrators involved in these discussions with business leaders

heard that among company leaders the reason employees were not getting promoted was

their lack of skills. As Dr. Thoni explained, according to these CEO's:

> people within organizations could not communicate. They could not persuade.
> They could not lead across divisions. They could not put things together in
> reports. They could not critically examine [issues] other than in their field. They

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[22] IMPUL -Improving Public Understanding of Liberal Learning grant received from the Northwest Area Foundation.
"The task was [within the grant] to propose a way we would try to educate the public on the benefits of liberal arts
education (Thoni interview)".

didn't have good writing ability. They were not confident. They did not have self confidence that transcended their area [of technical expertise].

Whatever the technical skill needed; accounting, engineering, information technology, individuals did not move beyond a certain level in management because they lacked communication skills, especially writing and critical thinking. Many management employees also lacked the self confidence to effect change within the organization beyond their area of technical expertise. Dr. Thoni explained that people in corporations wanted enabling functions. The corporations wanted someone with vision who could lead and imagine a future. Due to pressing economic concerns and the beginning of the Weekend College program Dr. Thoni said "the idea of a graduate program got backburnered for a bit ".

Implementation

A Masters Degree Program for Augsburg College

Augsburg began to work on the idea of a masters program in the early 1980's under Dr. Richard Green, then Dean of the College. An article in the Augsburg NOW published in 1992 states:

> The program can trace its roots back 15 [now 21] years, to an idea born in the imagination and experience of Tom Morgan, professor of business and management information systems. After completing a traditional MBA program at the University of Denver and going on to conduct market research for a young California company, Morgan came to realize that the skills he really needed in the workplace were never even addressed in the MBA program.

The beginning of undergraduate weekend college programs in 1981 pushed discussion of masters programs aside. However, this Weekend College program provided a model for delivery of education to the adult learner market. Because Augsburg had gone to

corporations when they were setting up the weekend college program in the early 1980's,

they decided to retrace these steps and return to some of the same corporations.

Focus on Leadership?

What kind of masters program would fit the mission of the college while

providing new challenges for the senior faculty? Dr. Morgan said, "Rick [Thoni] and I

would just dream about the kind of graduate program we wanted". Dr. Thoni continues:

> That spurred our thinking to say, we had this master of liberal studies idea a few
> years back. We didn't want to become another business college. We were a
> liberal arts college. We didn't feel we had the wherewithal to mount a
> discipline-based masters program. That was clear in the faculty discussions
> Given what we were hearing, the content went right along the lines of liberal arts.
> We decided to look at this (liberal arts) more specifically. Ryan [LaHurd] was
> there then.

Augsburg needed to provide a degree that would fit a niche in the business market

and be innovative enough to sustain interest in the future. The intention was to provide a

program that would make a difference in the individual.

When Ryan LaHurd was hired as Dean in 1984-1985, it was necessary to describe

the previous work and research into potential graduate programs at Augsburg. Dr. Rick

Thoni and Tom Morgan had an initial debriefing with Ryan LaHurd concerning graduate

programs at Augsburg. According to Dr. LaHurd:

> Rick Thoni and Tom Morgan told me about the result of the IMPUL study.
> This study indicated an interest among those [companies] consulted in a
> graduate program that would educate technically-prepared employees with B.A.s
> for broadening out toward upper-level management. CEOs and upper-level
> management felt that the skills needed were lacking in those educated in
> [technical] areas like business or computer science. What they needed were broad
> liberal arts abilities, attitudes and skills.

Dr. LaHurd continues:

> Rick Thoni and I got a grant. [We] bought some time release for Tom
> Morgan and set to work researching the issue of leadership skills and abilities. In
> the process we consulted with other faculty; I remember Diane Pike and Norma
> Noonan were involved. We also talked to people in the business community,
> putting together an advisory committee. (see appendix listing) At the time we
> were still not sure of the title of the program and thought of it as some sort of
> specialized masters in liberal studies.
>
> We got time release for Tom to do some work on a literature review
> around leadership. Leadership seemed to be the concept that embodied those
> things we were hearing in the information seminars. We were contrasting
> management and leadership. Management was more this control function. What
> we were hearing, what they wanted were enabling functions. Somebody who had
> vision, someone who could exhort, lead, imagine a preferred future.

Augsburg NOW article describes the grant this way:

> Augsburg has received a $14,800 grant from Aid Association for Lutherans
> (AAL) to develop and promote a Masters of Liberal Studies Program (MLS).
>
> The project, to be in place by fall 1986, involves the designing and
> marketing of an MLS program for working adults in the Twin Cities area. The
> MLS program will blend the mission of a Christian liberal arts college with the
> needs of organizations and businesses. The program will be presented to faculty,
> regents and the North Central Association for approval. The program will
> capitalize on the college's liberal arts strengths, opportunities of the metropolitan
> community and our experiences working with Weekend College students.
>
> The idea for an MLS program was developed by Augsburg's Graduate
> Studies Committee. "We appreciate this support from AAL. It will help us
> continue in our efforts to serve our urban community with quality liberal
> learning," said Tom Morgan, Augsburg business faculty. (*Grant from AAL for
> Graduate Program*, Augsburg NOW Summer 1985)

Tom Morgan continues: "The masters program needed to take advantage of resources

that we had but with more than a collection of liberal arts courses. We needed a focus

around which we could wrap courses." As Tom continued his research, he found a 'cry

for leadership' in many of the current books being written about business and

organizations.

Faculty Chosen to Teach in MAL program

Warren Bennis, well known author and teacher on leadership, reminds us that "we

need an organization's commitment to providing its potential leaders with opportunities

to learn through experience in an environment that permits growth and change." In the

Report from the Academic Affairs Committee to the Augsburg faculty (November 18,

1985): "The opportunity to develop and teach graduate level courses will have a

stimulating and vitalizing effect upon the faculty by expanding intellectual vistas and

affording additional opportunities for professional growth." The developers recognized

the need for confident and experienced faculty teaching in the MAL program. Senior

faculty were chosen to teach in the masters program. Graduate programs provide prestige

for the college and an opportunity for faculty to test their own pedagogy. The college

wanted to provide avenues for faculty to meet new challenges and work with adults

learners who are committed to the pursuit of graduate studies.

"The non-departmental focus will foster improved faculty collegiality"(point six).

Some faculty were concerned that the use of senior faculty would have a negative

impact on the traditional college program. In an article published on December 3, 1985,

it was reported that:

> English professor Catherine Nicholl expressed concern over the fact that there
> were a limited group of people here doing so much already. "Their energies,
> talents and ideas are needed at the undergraduate level".
>   A key factor in the decision was that the program not upset Augsburg's
> undergraduate program. Most faculty seem quick to agree that first and foremost
> Augsburg is a four-year, undergraduate degree college.
>   Some faculty questioned the feasibility of the proposal. Professor of
> political science Norma Noonan suggested that the final question for Augsburg
> should be "do we want this program?"
> ...   It is hoped that there will be enough diversity between the programs
> [Hamline's, St. Catherine's and Augsburg's] so that all can operate effectively."

Making the program interdisciplinary moved faculty out of their individual disciplines and into a learner role themselves. "Expanding into a graduate program will increase teaching opportunities for faculty in many of the traditional liberal arts disciplines. As LaHurd describes: "One of the early problems we had was faculty who refused or felt incompetent to go beyond the pure liberal arts to make connections to organizational leadership. We eliminated them from the program eventually." Just as some students find the program unable to meet their needs, faculty need to have the choice of teaching in the program or pursuing other challenges.

As Dean, Dr. LaHurd's commitment to the M.A.L. program was evident in the direct role he took to develop and teach the course on creativity and problem solving. He was the program director initially. In his role as Dean he later asked Dr. Norma Noonan to be the program Director.

The faculty working with graduate students "creat[ed] an atmosphere for strong dialogue to occur [in the MAL classroom]" according to Dr. McNeff.

> The structure [is] such that we would come together and share our learnings and understandings. That may take another twist for the next session. There is structure but beyond that structure was enough freedom for exploration.

The MAL designers envisaged classrooms that would allow learners to experience flexible roles where risk taking and change are encouraged. Both professors and students are challenged in these classroom settings.

Dr. McNeff goes on to describe the challenge to teachers in this setting:

> ...The faculty had to be very confident teachers. When you get out of your discipline you are just another learner. Some faculty need that level of control because they are not secure enough to say let's go outside my field. What they do

say is, I learned this stuff. I'm the expert. You're the novice. I'll communicate it to you. I have control. I know what is going to happen in the classroom.

As recently as 1995 in the Web of Inclusion, Sally Helgeson talks about the

need for new methods. "How adults learn at the level that knowledge is part of them.

Web of inclusion seems to demand new methods" (p. 182). Dr. Thoni:

> But when you get in these interdisciplinary situations with new information, you've got to be open to being wrong, open to not knowing. You've got to be willing to orchestrate and not control. We've got some of our best faculty in these [MAL courses]. When you take the introductory course from Rick [Nelson] or Ron [Palossari] you'll find very different styles. For awhile Ryan [LaHurd] taught creativity. If you took creativity from Garry [Hesser] or Ryan [LaHurd] it's a very different course. The intention was still the same. Get people immersed. Ryan taught [creativity] more as a literature course. Garry taught it from sociology, strategic planning and pure creativity base. I think Marie [McNeff] has even taught that course in the Master of Arts in Education-Leadership.

Curriculum Design

When the program designers began to think about what the curriculum would

look like they had trouble finding anything that was already written. Dr. Thoni tells us:

> It didn't seem like there was any curriculum that seemed to fit. There wasn't any curriculum in entrepreneurship at that point. The curriculum that seemed to fit most was the idea of leadership. We looked at the Center for Creative Leadership.
> It occurred to us the only way we could do this (program) was to actually create courses. That's where the 'difference in your life' thing came from. The subject was not the discipline. It was some broader skills that transcended disciplines. The subject was the person.

The Report from Academic Affairs states in point nine: "Development of new

integrated courses will precipitate the infusion of new concepts and pedagogical

techniques into the undergraduate classroom." This was seen as a benefit that arose from

the faculty participation in MAL.

Dr. Thoni continues as he describes the variety of courses in the MAL program:

You didn't have to have a certain number of specific courses to get this content. What you needed was a variety of courses that gave you this laboratory to learn these skills. Then we got somewhat uncomfortable. Are we teaching leadership here? I think we are developing leaders. But are we teaching leadership?

We got a little more intentional. We got a little more aggressive. We developed the course, the Colloquium [on Contemporary Theories of Leadership] to get the contemporary ideas in the program. Initially the whole visions of leadership [course] was supposed to be that. It was called foundations of leadership. With Rick [Nelson] they looked at Alexander the Great, Pericles.

Rick [Nelson] believed in developing the person but he wasn't sure we had a firm handle on what leadership is. If you look at it historically versus contemporary. The intention was to create a difference in lives. Impact [the student's] professional skills.

Development of MAL Classroom

How did the seminar style of the MAL classroom come about? Dr. Morgan

describes:

The aim is to create a learning setting where different perspectives are brought to a common problem so that the problem can be solved, and in the process, everyone can improve their problem-solving skills.

Dr. Rick Thoni describes the evolution of the Master of Arts in Leadership classroom

from initial conception to the present day reality.

It's the whole idea that the class is a laboratory. What developed was the idea of a common ground. [This is] where you bring your senior faculty in, you bring high ability students, and new kinds of cross inter-disciplinary curricula together. Stir that together in a common ground. Do not make it horizontal. What we needed were role-taking opportunities within the class. Students needed to be able to exchange roles in class. They needed to have the opportunity to teach, to take a lead in a group, to persuade in front of others. The advantage of not having discipline-based courses is that the goal is not a particular discipline, the goal is you and your skills. The subject matter had to be a vehicle more than an end in itself for people to work with one another. What made sense were case studies, simulations, group presentations, papers and defending them. We are going to focus on making someone different.

Add to Dr. Thoni's thoughts the comments of other administrators. Dr. LaHurd:

> I liked the idea of an advanced management preparation that recognized
> the need for the breadth of critical thinking, problem solving, human relations,
> and communication skills that we in liberal arts colleges try to (and think we do)
> teach. It seemed a good fit for Augsburg.

Dr. McNeff describes it this way:

> There was a fabulous sense of co-learning. The group came together so
> strongly, in terms of collective exploration of the whole idea. That was a high-
> light of teaching in that area. We really allowed [ourselves]not to be boxed in, in
> terms of proscription. The structure was such that we would come together and
> share our learnings and our understandings. That may take another twist for the
> next session. There was structure but beyond that structure there was enough
> freedom for exploration.

The MAL program was providing a crucible for leaders to develop skills needed to lead

others; communicating, teaching, leading.

Interdisciplinary/Cross-disciplinary Courses

All MAL courses are designed to be interdisciplinary with at least two different

academic disciplines represented in a given course. Some are taught by individual faculty

while others are team teaching settings and still others make use of additional faculty to

present a variety of theories to the students.

With leadership as our focus, we are able to investigate new courses and

encourage investigation into areas not found in traditional business programs. Currently

the committee is exploring adding a colloquium style course on Spirituality and

Leadership. Other recent additions to the program include courses on Contemporary

Theories of Leadership, Organizational Theory and Leadership, Personality and Systems

Theory, and Digital Communication and Leadership.

Practicum/Assessment

In addition to courses, an assessment process was implemented. This was an attempt to find ways to measure the learning and personal changes that occurred when students had experience in MAL program. Students spent an entire day taking various instruments and being videotaped by faculty. The practicum were designed to fill in areas of weakness the students identified during the assessment process. LaHurd explains:

> Skills too technical for liberal arts or too elementary were handled in the parallel program that came to be a big hassle. It was reshaped and redefined several times. The whole program was then presented to faculty committees and the full faculty for approval.

These workshops were held in the evening around specific topics, i.e. Conflict Resolution, Time Management, Diversity, etc. Thoni explains:

> As the practicum emerged, it was clear that a lot of the courses were doing [what we expected the Practicums to accomplish]. There was so much laboratory and interaction stuff going on [in the classroom]. We really didn't need the practicum. They were artificial situations created that were naturally occurring in the [MAL] classroom. We were more willing to let [the practicum] go. [Rick Thoni] was becoming more tangential to the program. The Practicums became enrichment. We had evidence that [leadership development] was happening in the courses.
>
> So much of the value was the people coming into the program. You get good strong people together and challenge them. If you can convince these people, you can convince anyone in the corporation. [It is] a sort of gathering of eagles. Bring in people who had a lot of potential, who just need to do a little prep stuff with each other.

The program begins

The decisions about implementing this graduate program were facilitated by administrators who ensured that many of the questions and concerns were anticipated and addressed prior to final decisions and votes occurring. The groundwork had begun with

earlier faculty investigations into a masters of liberal studies program. Dr. LaHurd

explained:

> One of my major roles besides involvement in the design was presenting it to faculty groups and arguing its merits. I also designed and taught one of the first courses--in Creativity and Problem Solving--and was a main speaker at the information sessions for prospective students. I still think the model is excellent. It offers students a broad liberal arts education at a graduate level but helps apply it to issues of leadership. It uses guided reflection.

Leadership became the focus as a result of the literature review undertaken by Tom

Morgan coupled with advice from the original advisory board.

The report from AAC states that "offering a quality graduate program will yield

an enhanced educational image, increase the prestige of the college and raise academic

recognition." MAL program begins with advertising in various articles that describe the

new program to the public. In Metro Lutheran, under the title: *Augsburg College*

Announces graduate program in Leadership, we read that: February 1987

> Courses incorporate the content and approaches of the traditional liberal arts disciplines and focus on situations, issues and problems relevant to those organizational leadership positions. This hybrid nature distinguishes the program from other graduate programs in the metropolitan area.
> Augsburg College's venture into this program represents our way of responding to the needs of the community in which we live, said Dr. LaHurd, while remaining true to our mission as a liberal arts college.

The St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch describes the new program this way: 11/21/86

> *Augsburg Offers Graduate Course*
> The program will be based in the liberal arts and designed to educate people for leadership roles in profit and non-profit organizations. It blends the traditional master of arts curriculum with professional studies of specialized focus such as the masters of business administration (MBA) degree.

Naming the Program

Meanwhile Augsburg became aware that the College of St. Catherine's was

working on a masters program in organizational leadership. Organizational leadership had been the working title for Augsburg's program. When St. Catherine's advanced their program launch date, the organizational descriptor was dropped from Augsburg's program title. Augsburg wished to maintain some distinction in title, so the decision was made to call Augsburg's program a Master of Arts in Leadership. Ryan LaHurd tells us:

> We had trouble coming up with a name. There was no precedent. At the same time, St. Kate's[23] started a similar program and called it Master's in Organizational Leadership which we liked, but did not want to copy to avoid confusion.
>
> We tried a number [of different names] but ended up with Master of Arts in Leadership. [We] suffered some from it--to some it seemed too pretentious (Can you teach leadership?); to others, confusing (Is it about studying leadership or forming leaders?)--but mostly it was so unique in title. In reality we were always having to explain and defend (MAL) before we could sell it.

Today the general focus on leadership has prevented the program from becoming too specific. The MAL Advisory Committee has considered proposals to add "tracts" that focus on business and technology. The concerns raised by student representatives on the MAL committee was moving in a direction that would lose our distinctiveness. MAL would look more like other programs, particularly MBA's and organizational leadership courses.

The goal is not information exchange. According to Dr. Rick Thoni:

> the goal is not the discipline, the goal is you and your skills. We wanted to focus on making the individual different when they come out [of the MAL program]. They had to be active, involved, immersed. Are we teaching leadership? We are developing leaders. These students are in a more reflective stage of their careers than a progressive stage of life. This enriches the program. The value is in the people coming into the program.

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[23] St. Kate's refers to the College of St. Catherine's in St. Paul.

CHAPTER 5

STORIES AND EMERGING THEMES

This chapter describes the important role stories play in the Master of Arts in Leadership program. Stories describe our history, our students and our experience. The form of telling stories differs. Sometimes the stories are part of an interview, either in person or on the phone. Other times stories are part of what we tell the public.

> I want to beg you, ... to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue (Rilke, 1962, p. 35).

Public Stories:

Information sessions are an important opportunity for describing the MAL culture and history to new and prospective students. We tell stories that pass on the values and mission of Augsburg college as well as the expectations of the program to incoming students. Usually new MAL students have talked to several people, read parts of the program descriptions and met with staff and faculty in the MAL program. Here we see the power of stories. Stories illustrate the experience of students and the benefits students derive from their participation in MAL. MAL information sessions provide a way to describe the program and pass on stories of the program and stories of MAL students. We use stories to illustrate examples of student experience and to make connections between MAL student experience and the goals of prospective students.

Interviews serve a similar function. During interviews the coordinator or director describe the program to the interested student. Although the descriptions are limited to

one view, many of the student stories are ones that we have heard during an information session, an alumni event or in talking with and advising current students.

The unique elements of the MAL degree program captured my attention. The program brings together people with a multitude of backgrounds and experience levels in the work world. The field or major you received your undergraduate degree in is less important as preparation for the MAL program than how it impacted your career, your life expectations and your experiences. This masters program is interesting because of who becomes a student in the program.

I gain insights into the type of student Augsburg attracts through conducting interviews with prospective students as well as hosting information sessions. Interviewing some of our successful alumni has added to my knowledge of the benefits and shortcomings of the MAL program. As we improve our understanding of the program within the college, we can provide more information to new students. This increased information will help prospective students make appropriate and informed decisions about graduate school.

Informational interviews and information sessions provide information about student needs for graduate education. As I listen to people who have yet to decide on a specific master's program, I hear a yearning. They are searching for something more out of life. Motivating factors that are described to me in my role as recruiter and coordinator include: "I need a degree to advance in my company", "I need something new to challenge me as my job is getting routine", or "There are no new challenges ahead, I have always wanted a masters degree, and I am most attracted to this program". Some people

who enroll in the MAL program at Augsburg have already completed graduate degrees in disciplines such as Nursing, Law, Business and Engineering. Most were in technical areas. The student is dissatisfied. Transitions through early career changes, personal crises and events, and reaching middle age are just a few of the events that can change an individual's focus.

Many people make their first personal contact with the program when they call for more information. Their questions give me an opportunity to tell stories about successful MAL students. Two composite stories follow that reflect the general kinds of inquiries I handle daily. I use these 'stories' to illustrate the typical format of an initial phone inquiry. The first is a student who has recently completed their undergraduate degree as a traditional-aged student. The second is a non-traditional student who is searching for possible master degree programs. Listen as we go through some of the more common questions when a student firsts calls about the MAL program. The direction of the questions reflects the student's understanding of the potential benefits of a masters program for them individually.

Common Questions

Consider "Mona". She is looking at graduate school options. She calls for information. The MAL degree sounds interesting. "What can it do for me? I would like a new job with better salary and work conditions." An M.A. after her name might make her more competitive in the job market. She has been working for 1-3 years. Her current job is definitely not her life's work. Mona wants marketable skills. Her focus is now. "You don't accept applications from someone with less than five years post graduate

work experience! Why? What is this degree? What kind of job can I get with this degree?"

She enjoyed school. Perhaps a masters degree could help her achieve her immediate goals, an interesting job. The addition of a masters degree to her resume might give her confidence to relocate. "Tell me about the jobs your graduates have secured. Oh, your students are all employed?" I mention the five year experience requirement. This presents an obstacle.

I ask her to tell me more about herself. What exactly does she want or expect a masters program can do for her? "I'm exploring my options. A friend told me about Augsburg's program. I want a degree that will move me out of this job I have. It really isn't very exciting. I thought a leadership degree would help me apply for management positions. I really enjoyed college. Can you tell me what jobs this program could lead me into?" Her job isn't meeting her expectations of a career. She wants a degree that will lead to a new job. The personal development benefits seem to be of little interest to Mona.

Mona is focused on what this degree could do for her immediately. She wants to know exactly what kind of job others get after graduation from MAL. I explain that our students are currently working full time, many in jobs they enjoy. The lack of connection between her personal goals and what the MAL degree provides becomes apparent. I describe the program in more detail, including the average age of our students and their full time employment. If that doesn't make a connection, I suggest several colleges for Mona to contact. Mona hangs up. I send the MAL information packet.

Contrast this to another interested student. "Marcus" is 40 years old. He has held a number of positions with his company including management. He is searching for something to rejuvenate his excitement for life and learning. One day he opens his mail and discovers a postcard from Augsburg. "A Masters Degree that Makes a Difference" leaps out from the cover. "What is this? Why haven't I seen this before? I like the sound of the multi-disciplinary aspect of the program. I would like to learn about systems and structures. Leadership is a passion for me." He is curious and wants to know more. Marcus thinks to himself, "maybe I'll check out this program."

Marcus picks up the phone and calls. The coordinator answers. Marcus gives basic information; his name, address and phone number. He expects to get an information packet in the mail.

I ask him, "Do you have any specific questions I might be able to answer?" He asks, "Can you tell me something about this program? Who are the students? Is it new? Why haven't I heard of it before?" I describe some of our students. I ask for details of his undergraduate degree and the work he is doing now. Then I ask, "How did you hear about the program?" Marcus describes the mailer. "I was curious so I called for more information."

"I finished my bachelor's degree almost 20 years ago. Work has been getting rather routine." The challenges seem easy, even predictable. The predictability of the upcoming years pushes him to look for new directions. He, like others, does not know exactly what form this journey will take. But the MAL ad made a connection. "I want to make a difference".

As the program is described, "Marcus" focusses his questions on the students. Where do they work? What have they done with their degrees? How have they marketed the degree, with their employer or with new employers? What do graduates do with this degree? He is intrigued. "You know, I have been looking at graduate degree programs for a few years. This one really has me interested. How can I find out more?" I give Marcus the choice of a personal interview or attending one of the information sessions. He chooses the interview. He is anxious to move forward.

In some instances both callers are genuinely interested in the MAL degree and may apply. More often, it is the younger inquirer who does not think that the MAL degree will lead to the job she/he wants. The direction of the program sounds too vague. Once in awhile the second caller doesn't follow through either. Perhaps he misunderstood the schedule and can't come on weekends. Sometimes a new job or promotion delays his entrance to graduate school. The student with greater experience is more often attracted to the goals of the MAL program.

Just as leadership is difficult to wrap in one kind of package, students who enter the MAL program have an intuitive understanding of the difference between leadership and management. Here is a program with interdisciplinary courses that will stretch my thinking in new and challenging ways. Younger students often have little experience outside traditional classrooms. They are focussed on 'getting a job' or finding the right 'career'. The broader issues that perplex and challenge older adults as they gain experience are still ahead of the young graduate. The new college graduate is much more focussed on securing the best job, whether that job is their future career or a stepping

stone. This focus is evident in their questions about graduate programs. These young graduates want to know what job they can expect as alumni of the Master of Arts in Leadership program.

The following section tells the stories of MAL alumni. These stories are organized in the themes that arose from my interviews and themes that were part of my initial interview questions. These interviews took place with the seven alumni who are profiled in an earlier chapter.

Alumni Interview data

Motivation

Initially I wondered if there was one understanding or motivation that drew students into the MAL program. Was there something inherent in the program design and promotion of the program that draws individuals to this program? All masters programs have students with extensive qualifications. There are numerous masters programs that attract adult learners with extensive experience in the work place. However, the small size of the MAL program and its focus, leadership, prompts questions about the nature of the program and its benefits. When individuals are investigating potential masters programs, the interdisciplinary nature of the MAL program requires us to know more about the specific benefits described by alumni and students.

New students are looking for someone who has successfully traveled the road they are considering. This study explores the benefits of the Master of Arts degree program from the alumni viewpoint. What was interesting to the student prior to applying? Did this change? Recording the insights of alumni who span the 10 years of the MAL

program, provides us with true-life examples of student experiences. This document

provides a history and perspective that was not available to the pioneers of this program.

Some MAL students come with significant leadership experience. Others come

searching for knowledge to help understand the leaders they encounter. Others wish to

develop as leaders. They may want to improve their leadership skills as they develop

their personal leadership capabilities. Their comments highlight the benefits of the MAL

degree and discuss outcomes that relate to new students' goals as they search for a

masters program to fit their needs.

Personal Stories

> Contrary to what is predicted by classical psychological accounts, Amabile has
> shown that creative solutions to problems occur more often when individuals
> engage in an activity for its sheer pleasure than when they do so for possible
> external rewards (Gardner, 1993).

Georgina begins:

> I enjoy learning. I enjoy education. It doesn't have to be an academic education.
> It could be my work. It could be learning about my garden, my backyard. I just
> enjoy the process of learning. It is not unusual for me to embark on some kind of
> learning. Mayber I'm learning a new athletic skill, a physical skill.

Rachel's thoughts:

> I was one of those people who chose my life career back in high school. I found
> that going back to school as an adult was a completely different experience. I'm a
> person who wrestles with concepts. I couldn't figure out why I would get more
> narrow in an arena where I needed to broaden. I needed to communicate with the
> rest of the world from a broader focus.

Alan: I wanted to get a master's degree before I finished the bachelor's degree. I
> started looking through various programs to start stretching myself, by taking

courses. I tried to pick courses outside my area, exposure to different kinds of applications. [I planned] organization [of my master's program] in a way that builds. The first three or four classes [I used] to spread out and get some idea of what the program had to offer and what leadership is about. Then add specialized courses to focus more deeply in. A swing back and forth. The program was set up to do that well. There was always an opportunity to dig back in and realign that foundation and configuration. There was opportunity for reflection and change.

The MAL program attracts students with diverse work experiences and

educational backgrounds.(Appendix C)

Georgina:

This was the liberal arts background I never got to have because I focused on the business degree. ...In an organization, it's people, it's systems, it's communications. People come from a huge diversity of backgrounds putting all this together.

Ashley:

I knew I had always wanted to do [a master's degree] at some point in my life, as

a value. If I could have created my own program this would have been it!

Professors provide liberal arts courses that are interdisciplinary. The combination of

nontraditional student and experienced professor produces a dynamic learning

environment. Processing of the presented material through writing and discussion

is integral to the program. Yvonne describes "Whatever you are, whoever you are, let's

sit down and we'll all talk about it. I think that all the teachers, professors, facilitators

were as excited about us as we were to be there.

The seminar discussion atmosphere allows for an open exchange of ideas that challenge everyone involved. People expecting straight lectures will be disappointed. This program moves away from using the traditional lecture method of delivery. Greater emphasis is placed on the student. This can be very unsettling. No answers are given. This creates tension. It requires the individual to examine his/her own assumptions, question and alter their thinking. They strengthen their own ideas as they examine the diversity of viewpoints within the class. New information and knowledge will influence our future decisions and actions. Students learn to value the risks and challenges.

Student Perspective

What do we know about the successful MAL student? When talking to students who are interested in the MAL program, I gain clues as to what they are looking for. Alan remarked:

> It was a case of intuitively recognizing [that] I was very interested in the [MAL] program, even if I didn't know quite why. It [the MAL program] would help me find out why I was interested at the same time as it met my needs. It had that revealing and educational feel about it.

> Students have to be willing to accept some ambiguity. MAL students must be prepared for challenge, whether it is their ideas or their assumptions that are questioned. They also need to be willing to share their own experience. Students increasingly recognize the value of their personal experience as they engage in learning together.

We are all interested in finding solutions. Those people with experience realize the complexity to every situation. Solutions vary depending on the decision makers and the people involved. Solutions are not always quick or easy. The MAL program provides

a place where individuals gather and discuss real issues and talk about past solutions, what worked, what did not work. Because students come from widely different organizations, their responses are widely varied. Senior faculty provide depth of subject knowledge and skill in examining viewpoints to the problem solving process.

Laura:

> I had always thought about going back for a master's [degree]. I was so broad in so many things and I had so many experiences that if I started to get a degree [in specific field] I would be pegged. I'd be nailed into this for the rest of my life. I didn't want a degree that would be narrowing, I wanted a degree that would be broadening; interdisciplinary. I was attracted to the course descriptions and the model of leadership [in MAL]. [The model] branched out and courses were tied to the model.

> I had an intuitive, gut level sense of excitement reading the description of the courses. I was always blown off that isolated narrow perception. Everyone in the [class]room had a different way to look at the book. That was mind expanding. Also humbling. It's what a good education is supposed to be, make you realize how much you don't know.

The Quest

Adults inquire about the MAL program searching for answers. Their questions cover a variety of subjects; 1) the nature of the MAL degree, 2) its practicality and marketability and 3) whether one can be a successful student while juggling a career, family and personal interests. These questions relate directly to the benefits of a liberal arts masters degree and the individual's desire to pursue this particular degree.

Students have flexibility in their decisions about graduate school. Who are the students who come to the MAL program, what is special in their experience and what

measures of success do they describe? A few companies and organizations place value on formal liberal arts education programs.

Personal Development-a story

In one case, the person I interviewed did her own research on graduate programs. Her goal was to determine what program would best fulfill her needs and the needs within her industry. Georgina compared several graduate programs and surveyed individuals in similar companies who make the hiring decisions. She wanted to find out if the outcomes of particular masters programs matched the needs of organizations in the industry. This student approached the search for a graduate program as though embarking on academic research. Once the potential programs were identified the student surveyed several companies. Key elements of each graduate program were identified by the student. She wrote or contacted people within organizations in her industry. She was fortunate in having access to key personnel. In many cases these were contacts provided by a colleague. She was successful in getting feedback that was helpful in making her final decision. The majority of individuals responded to her survey, partly due to the in-house contacts the student was able to locate. From the respondents the liberal arts component was identified as being highly desirable.

Why did Georgina go to all this trouble? Her industry was in a period of uncertainty and she was interested in programs that would enhance her employability with other companies, should she need to look for another position. Another factor was the need for higher education qualifications because of her location in Minnesota. Colleagues in other areas of the U.S. did not need a masters degree to be distinct from the

competition. However, in Minnesota the competition for positions and the higher levels of academic qualifications held by many residents makes a masters degree necessary to differentiate yourself from the competition. It is interesting to note that this student continues to work for the same company today.

Students describe their reasons for enrolling. Some have come up against a system or corporation in which they no longer believe they can work. MAL alumni describe situations in organizations where individuals were not treated ethically or fairly. Others may have weathered significant events or challenges in their careers, or begun to make changes to new careers. Students are motivated to seek training and further education for a variety of reasons. Many of these stated reasons are the same factors that motivate the adult learner in general (Clark, 1992). "Part of it [enrolling in the MAL program] was to get advancement," Matthew says. Another individual, Yvonne, was recovering from a situation that had rocked her self esteem:

> I think I was kind of, not beaten down, but I hadn't done a lot. I wasn't used to failure. What you brought to the table were your thoughts, your experience in particular companies. It was so reaffirming. That is not what I thought I was looking for.

Other students are looking for new challenges. Laura tells us: "I just needed to wipe out the cobwebs in the old upper story". Georgina: "Work was not driving me crazy. I wasn't traveling very much at the time, and the work I was doing wasn't very challenging."

Listen to two students talk about what motivated them. Yvonne:

> I needed something to help me get ahead. The [Masters degree] was going to be a marketing tool. ... One thing I didn't realize at the time [I entered the MAL program]. You are not always connected with every decade of age [in work].

The experience I had with all the different ages. Rick Nelson [ML 510 instructor] would ask a question. He would divide you up and you would have to take the opposite side. Fascinating, [it] really made you think.

Rachel:

I really wanted to have a masters for career mobility. It seemed there was a tremendous shortage of leaders and visionaries out there. We were never driving the bus. It was as though someone had designed this curriculum for the way my mind works. ...Do you know what it means to tell someone they had a 'seminal idea'? There's a self-esteem component in there. You're talking about interpersonal relationships, you're talking about self-esteem issues. Those are the really important aspects of the program in my opinion. It really did make me a better person.

Challenges

Now read stories about the challenges students encountered. One student describes her first attempt to study in a business masters degree program. "It was like sticking needles in my eyes. I hated it" (Ashley). Students of MAL describe the human element in this program as a benefit. One of the attractions is the personal contact students have with administrators and faculty.

MAL program puts people from various work and life experience together in classrooms with senior faculty. The faculty bring the depth of their research and academic experience to the learning environment. They provide the framework. The students provide the intercultural (work) experience. I asked whether students experienced diverse work cultures in the MAL program by asking their reaction to the following:

The MAL program brings together diverse work cultures. Educational settings such as the MAL program provide an environment where students can challenge the assumptions and practices they encounter at work while searching for better solutions.

Ashley:

> When I read that, it struck me as right on the nose. One of the unifying things in our group of very diverse people; every one of them were, maybe dissatisfied is the wrong word. In their current work situation there was something missing. I'm sure everyone changed personally or maybe chose to look at things differently. But they were searching for something more. The MAL experience really met a need.

Alan said it was a:

> Version of the Leadership Development Model. Here's a model I recognize. It's similar to how people view leadership or how leadership works in various organizations, sort of hierarchical. It was obvious people had given attention to [the model].

> When you examine your own motives, desires, wishes and dreams in depth, you

have the potential to become a compassionate, empathetic person to the different desires, dreams and needs of others. Alan describes the result of putting people together to wrestle with a difficult idea:

> The MAL program says we are human beings. These are some of the things in liberal arts we have learned. We learned that one of the ways to get people to think is to throw a bunch of people in a room, give them some ideas, let them think about [the ideas] for awhile and ask for an answer. Watch people look in stunned amazement at how different the answers are. Trying to take what

happens to people and an internally directed perspective helps build empathy, awareness.

Having passion to pursue your own dreams while helping others realize their own dreams is a positive experience for everyone involved. Instead of win-lose you have a win-win situation. The intentional inclusion of personal development as a desired outcome of the MAL program is one way Augsburg program differs from programs with a technical focus. The MAL program focuses on people and their interaction with their experience and learning.

Classroom Environment

The challenging environment of the classroom is described in every interview. Alan begins:

> You would read a book and twelve people would come to class with twelve different papers. We're just all very different people. As amazing as it seems, it isn't just the instructor throwing out this crystalline web. This is how it will be.
>
> We get on this boat together and who knows where we get to? Some people got drenched. It's just an amazing experience. It's helped me understand. How can you do the same thing over and over and not get bored? Each time I'm a different person. So the experience is different.

Ashley tells us "There was a lot of support there. We all felt pretty comfortable challenging one another's work and asking questions". Matthew adds:

> The diversity of classes gave us a wide variety of experiences. When you work in public service, you hear how bad public service is. More than half my classmates were in private enterprise. The issues are the same. I always thought the corporate world was different.

Georgina tells how "you're interacting with people, systems, communications. People come from a huge diverse background." Rachel talks about how:

> You have people's opinions, ideas, challenges and different perspectives. You're taking a concept that can't be quantified; interpersonal relationships, sharing concepts. You capture something in those classrooms that is not going to be reinvented anywhere else.

This classroom environment is a setting that encourages the expression of new ideas and risk taking. The professor encourages critical thinking and improving your ability to communicate ideas. Here Alan describes the classroom environment:

> The variety of people are almost as valuable, if not more valuable than anything the instructor brings in. It's like mental and educational bumper cars. Yes the instructor may be more skilled at driving his bumper car, but it's still a bumper car. Off we go. It's great!

I am reminded of the course in Creativity and Problem Solving with Dr. Swenson. We looked at a painting, first from the usual view, then turned it on its head and looked again. This action visibly altered our perception, yet we were still looking at exactly the same art work. All that changed was our vantage point. What changes when your perspective is changed? Each of the individuals interviewed describes his/her amazement whenever a viewpoint stretched his/her mind. Students had to rethink a conclusion that had seemed so obvious before listening to their classmates' comments. Does this expanded view make an impact on the individual? Rachel tells us about " this group of like people sitting around a table with all these different perspectives on these things we were reading." An interview from the Augsburg Echo(February 1987): "The [MAL]

classroom is quite different from any other class setting, according to LaHurd (Dean of the College)".

The 1997-1999 MAL catalog (p. 3):

> The program is based on the assumption that the men and women who enroll are employed, self-disciplined and well-motivated individuals who seek a balance of classroom experience, group interaction and individual study.

Yvonne talks about:

> The experience I had with all the ages. You are what your life experience is. The difference in how their perception and expectation of management [is]. If we had not had those real live discussions in class, I would not have understood what motivated [generation X'ers *her words*] or their expectations.

In an Echo article about the first class of MAL students we read: "Most class time is spent in discussion," says Bellile. "The people that are in the program had to have had a good sense of business and a good G.P.A." Often there are as many points of view as there are individuals in the classroom. 'Laura' put it this way:

> I would read the selection for class and think, 'there's only one way of seeing this.' And I was always amazed at how diverse and individual the approaches to the same piece of literature could be. I came to realize that there are often multiple ways of viewing a problem or issue as well as multiple solutions and directions one can take.

Class Structure

The specific structure of the classes is mentioned by several of the students interviewed. Each course brings together a group of people who are diverse in age, gender, experience, occupation, education, career and world view. There are some students who bring ethnic diversity to the classroom. I studied with international students from Jamaica and Nigeria. The ethnic diversity varies, but remains small. This program

can incorporate different worldviews. Students provide corporate experience and knowledge of a wide variety of work settings outside the academic world.

The learners bring wealth of experience and knowledge into the MAL classroom. The faculty moderate discussions. They encourage risk taking. These faculty are individuals who are willing to release the constraints and trust that when the discussion diverges from the plan, real learning will occur. Faculty set expectations by providing the structure with lectures, written assignments and readings. As Dr. McNeff describes, "There was structure but beyond that structure there was enough freedom for exploration".

The dissatisfactions and worries of individuals reflect their encounter with new ideas and thoughts. Students come together to learn. Are they ready for the experience? Old beliefs and facts are challenged. Students are asked to wrestle with ideas and issues that cross the boundaries between work, personal (family and community) lives. Everyone comes to the realization that the viewpoints will vary. Learning is encouraged in an atmosphere of openness to new ideas and a willingness to struggle with change.

Part of the willingness to listen and incorporate alternative viewpoints and information is related to the commitment to learning and the respect students develop for their colleagues and the faculty. This program uses interdisciplinary teaching to provide an atmosphere that welcomes diversity in ideas, background and solutions.

Commitment And Respect

Students experience feelings of support and commitment to their student colleagues. Georgina highlights the:

Respect for students. You wouldn't come to class [unprepared], not so much for the professor as the other students. If you weren't there, didn't participate, you weren't giving [the other students] what they'd come for. You respected the energy and the fact they were there.

It's a group of people learning about leadership or testing out leadership skills. Hadn't you better be paying attention? You need to pay attention. ...There was no opportunity [in MAL classes] to be passive. If we didn't do the reading, or bring our life experiences or preparation for class, if we didn't participate, THERE WAS NO CLASS.

It's guided by the professor. They set the agenda. If you get too far off track, they say 'hey, we're talking about this over here'. But if we didn't participate, either in the big classroom forum or breaking out into groups and coming back to talk, there were no classes. They didn't happen.

When a student is concerned about how their ideas will be received they may initially remain quiet. But Georgina tells how: "You couldn't be there very long without starting to connect. Whether it was a positive connection or negative. At some point you'd think, I have to participate." Rachel adds: "I'm a person who wrestles with concepts, rather than I know these things. I needed to broaden, to communicate with the rest of the world from a focus broader than my discipline." For Yvonne, "It was going to be a marketing tool. I was kind of beaten down, looking to prove your brain cells haven't died, take on this challenging thing."

Rachel talks about:

The brightest and most interesting and engaging people in the world. The Homecoming gathering did recapture that sense of what it means to interact with intelligent, thoughtful, interesting people. To have people listen to me, I mean LISTEN. There's a self-esteem component in there.

Ashley:

> This might be true of anyone going back to school, especially when you are
> working full time. One thing that comes to mind is that the level of commitment
> was not what I would typically experience with people [outside the program].
> People did what they said they were going to do. They were highly motivated,
> highly responsible.

Rachel goes beyond the classroom dynamics to talk about her commitment to the future:

> I'm looking for those enlightened arenas where people, the like of which MAL
> creates, that allow for expanded thought and new directions. Tragically that often
> leads me away from my profession of choice because I don't think the field is all
> that enlightened right now. If Augsburg College is in the business of creating
> people for tomorrow, if they want to see the people they educate get out there in
> the world and do things, then there's some burden on the people who come out of
> the [MAL] program to do that. I'm investigating where that might be. It's
> probably going to be a volunteer arena, not in employment.

Alumni describe benefits that fall within themes of personal growth, liberal arts education

and leadership. Let us listen to the students own words.

Personal Growth and Development

Alan told me:

> I've learned a lot about myself. What do I want to do as far as leadership is
> concerned? Do I want to be a leader? If so, what kind of leader do I want to be?
> There was always an opportunity with instructors and assignments to dig back in
> and realign the foundation and configuration [of my understandings of
> leadership]. There was opportunity for reflection and change.

Alan concludes with:

> What we accomplished was incredible. What I know about myself is different.
> What I am capable of is different. I want to associate with people with like

interest, with divergent views to keep going forward. Connections to other leadership groups around the state, country and world are potential people. It's harder on an individual basis to build the network of interactions. MAL alumni are some of those individuals. My ability to evaluate tells me a lot about leadership. That's a neat development of the program within myself.

Matthew says:

I think I have a broader view of systems and how they interact and what is needed in organizations. I'm infinitely more suspicious. I have less tolerance for all the management crap. The strength of the program is the professors who work well with adult learners.

Georgina:

If you look at where I was when I started to where I am now, I had two promotions and a huge increase in responsibility. Your confidence got built up. The professors were teaching you how to take a role in leadership.

Rachel says:

I'm better read, God knows I'm better written! It really expanded my mind. I really did change. You get a whole different way of thinking. It's such a brain stimulating experience.

People are not being nurtured in their work environments. They are systematically being snuffed out of every creative juice they have. The MAL program has allowed me to identify those environments where I'm likely to be taken advantage of, snuffed out or allowed to wither on the vine because there is too much bureaucracy, because people don't practice what they preach. I don't want to stop thinking there is such a place.

Liberal Arts Education

Alan describes:"It's [MAL] an attempt to explore leadership from a liberal arts and human perspective, not a scientific and numerical perspective." Alan describes his process in choosing from the elective and required courses within MAL:

> I tried to pick courses outside my area of exposure to different kinds of applications. [I planned] organization [of my master's program] in a way that builds. The first three or four classes [were chosen] to spread out and get some idea what the program had to offer and what leadership is about. Then [I added] specialized courses to focus more deeply in. A swing back and forth. The program was set up to do that well. There was always an opportunity to dig back in and realign that foundation and configuration. There was opportunity for reflection and change.

Georgina: "This was the liberal arts background that I never got to have because I focused on a business degree. People in organizations come from a huge diverse background."

Rachel:

> What appealed to me were these courses in generalized concepts. What do you say about multi-cultural perspectives? Well of course that's important to dissect, look at and navigate. Methods of Critical Thought. What a novel idea? What are they? Have I been using them? Are there some [methods] I don't know about? Foundations of Leadership. What does that mean? These are all concepts you can take with you no matter what arena you're working in. It was as though someone designed the curriculum for the way my mind works.

Leadership- in community and in organizations

Alan:

> I don't think a person can really be a leader until they integrate themselves with the world and have empathy and compassion and stay connected to people.

There's no way a leader who stays stuck can participate as a leader until they integrate themselves with the world. The MAL program is a way for people to learn how to do that well.

Ashley:

I think leadership is a very rare quality. It's something that enables a group of people to achieve a vision to get where you need to get, through whatever creative means possible. Sometimes it's a real direct role. Sometimes it's a real soft indirect role. Have a clear vision. Be able to read the situation and people. figure out the best way to be successful and to keep people motivated to get there.

Georgina:

I have a leadership style. It's consistent. I have a personal tendency to go with a style. I could talk about what I could be, in an employment situation. What they would see in my behavior would be consistent with how I describe my leadership style. That was real exciting for me.

I don't really believe in situational leadership. But I do think situations draw out different needs in a leader. In me you would see different skills in different situations. That is the essence of a leader. A modular capability. There are skills that are very well rounded. They come forward when they are needed. As I see leadership, it is not by position or authority. Leadership occurs within groups. There is visioning. Leaders see a bigger picture. The potential of various scenarios and their possible impact. I group that under visionary. Leaders see the potential of actions now. They provide some guidance or leadership focus for whatever is going on. Leaders communicate direction and potential outcomes. Multicultural is important but multi-class is very important. In our country we don't think we have classes, we don't live by class structure. But we come from different socioeconomic [backgrounds]. I'm in a medium to high tech industry. I work with engineers. Their education is at a high level. They come from different mindsets. Maybe they come from a rich background. Maybe sitting next to them is someone whose mom took in laundry. Max Dupree talks about his

job as a leader is to find out what each person can contribute. What makes the

person behind the degree? Your job is to never close a door or put up a barrier.

Rachel:

> There are a lot of people, a lot of leaders in the world and a bazillion managers
>
> who do not take enough time to wrestle with concepts. If they did workplaces
>
> would not be so disorganized, so devaluing. They wouldn't be on a treadmill.
>
> They wouldn't be so dehumanizing. I wish the leaders of the world would take
>
> their managers, sit them down and tell them, "You're now going to take 24 hours
>
> to wrestle with these concepts. Come back and tell me where you're at. People
>
> don't do that. We're so busy "doing' all the time that no one is thinking. It's the
>
> thinking portion of leadership that is a sorry mess, in my opinion. Whoever put
>
> the leadership program together was very wise in many ways.

Yvonne:

> It takes a long time to make change. Those who are making decisions have not
>
> sat in a conversation with anybody who is on the other end. It's not all the people
>
> you stereotypically put into the bunch [of welfare recipients]. They are not high
>
> school dropouts. What happens to the two thirds who didn't finish
>
> postsecondary? They don't tell us what happens to those who don't finish.
>
> They're on welfare. We're in this mess together. Bring people together, sit down
>
> and talk as they have never talked before to each other. They are figuring it out
>
> faster than management. People working on the front lines are saying here's
>
> what we need to do. Are you going to help or just worry about funding streams?
>
> We think that education will help us find better solutions. This requires more

interaction and engagement from the learner. The learner is an integral part of the

learning process. Many students are accustomed to sitting and listening while professors

pour information into them. This change of teaching delivery is uncomfortable for the

learner and can be disorienting. People expecting answers from faculty begin to realize

that the answers come from themselves. The professors push the students to critically

analyze a text or situation and arrive at their own conclusions. Students are expected to

make connections between the readings, information and their experience to make critical

responses to the material.

Alumni have come to realize is that it is not the solutions that are the critical

piece. It is the increase in knowledge and understanding that will help the individual find

better solutions, taking all the factors into account that relate to the issue at hand. Every

new situation requires time for reflection, considering the options and choosing the best

solution, given the information and expertise you have at your disposal.

Maybe something you read or hear strikes a nerve and helps you in the situation

you are confronting. I cannot tell you what to do in your situation. But I can talk about

my experiences, successes and failures. What keeps adults interested and motivated to

finish the MAL degree? The theme which arose from the interviews was the challenge

and excitement of discussing important ideas with a group of diverse individuals, from

occupations and organizations quite distinct from any one individual's experience. This

challenge is echoed throughout the interviews. Rick Thoni envisaged a program where

the professor and students would come together in a "laboratory of learning" with some

expectations in advance, but allow the material and the sum of all their experience to

influence the direction of the discussions and the learning.

What does all of this have to do with leadership? In the following chapter the

themes that arose from the student stories will be used to make connections between the

MAL program and the graduates it develops. The program is designed to prepare leaders

and the students who fully engage in this program are developing skills that will help

them lead in their work and their community arenas. The Master of Arts in Leadership

program is a leadership development program.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

Since the beginning of the MAL program students with a wide variety of backgrounds and professions have enrolled. It is difficult to describe the typical MAL student. Their professions, their undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as their career aspirations are as different from each other as the composition of one MAL class group. We know about specific individuals. What is the common thread that draws people into the MAL program, motivates them and helps them succeed in the future? Is there a set of values or beliefs that are common to the students who succeed?

It is no accident that Augsburg is the college where a Master of Arts in Leadership degree was born. Augsburg is a liberal arts college steeped in the Lutheran tradition "which prizes ambiguity, risk-taking and controversy"(Hughes, 1997, p. 98). This tradition "calls for thoughtfulness and reflection rather than an affirmation of clear-cut absolutes and simple answers" (ibid).

Several factors influenced the beginning of the MAL program. The college faculty and administrators had been discussing potential masters programs prior to the beginning of Weekend College. Faculty were intrigued by the possibility of teaching graduate students. Faculty and administrators were involved in telling the public specifically about the value of liberal arts education through IMPUL (See footnote 19). MBA programs were plentiful in the Twin Cities in the 1980's.

CEO's were telling Augsburg administration that their needs were for people (in technical engineering companies) who could lead across divisions, take their technical

expertise to the next level of management and provide leadership (Thoni). Managers were needed with knowledge of how to lead people who may not have the same technical background as the designated leader.

From the outset, the people involved with implementing the MAL program were able to see the need to provide broadening experiences for graduate students. The MAL program attempts to expand student thinking and challenge outlooks. Life experience shapes our lenses, so does additional knowledge and new understandings. This program gives people an opportunity to discuss broader perspectives on the problems that face us.

The MAL program opens our eyes through different lenses to understand the complexity of leading. Rather than being overwhelmed by this complexity we are encouraged to find our own answers. Here is Alan:

> You may or may not be successful. It's(success) often a fantasy. It was a wonderful experience. What we accomplished was incredible. It may have been an absolute disaster. I'm a very different person. Who I am is not different. What I know about myself is different. What I am capable of is different. I want to associate with people with like interest, with divergent views to keep me going forward.

MAL classrooms emphasize the diversity of viewpoints. This emphasis results in part from the mix of students in each class. Students bring their life experience and challenge assumptions and viewpoints. The ideas faculty present are designed to challenge students and encourage them to use new perspectives in order to expand their understanding. This may be due to the industry they have worked in, the technical training they have had, their life experience or their age. We are encouraged to turn assumptions on their heads and try to see in new ways. Leaders are needed who can look

at situations and people in novel ways when the old methods no longer result in positive change. The Master of Arts in Leadership program intentionally forces students to explore many disciplines and in the process find new ways of looking at problems and potential solutions.

Another way of thinking about diversity involves ethnic diversity. The Master of Arts in Leadership program has students that reflect some of the ethnic diversity found in the Twin Cities area. The numbers of students from any particular ethnic background remain small. The interdisciplinary design of this program invites viewpoints and varied experience to enhance the learning of all students involved in the courses. Another commitment of Augsburg is towards increasing the diversity of students as one way to address the needs of the community in which the college resides. Increasing the ethnic diversity of students at Augsburg and subsequently in the Master of Arts in Leadership program will add to the diverse mix of ideas already found within the graduate classroom.

How does this change or transform students?

People may stay with the same organization but gain new understandings. As Matthew states, "I got a better understanding of how many players there are in the decision making world." He has understandings that enhance his knowledge of the world. Students respond from their increased understanding. Education has the potential to show us ways we can change ourselves and our assumptions. The solutions we find have more impact on our community and work when we can use broader understanding of what created the problem. The impact is broader than one individual. The stories told in

the Master of Arts in Leadership program reflect the program's value, the potential for change and the opportunity to make an impact that is wider than the college classroom.

The MAL program builds our understanding of the diversity of views and perspectives others hold about similar issues or situations. Individuals would experience change without the MAL program. But students attribute their growth in risk taking, increase in self-understanding and self-confidence and renewed enthusiasm to tackle leadership roles directly to involvement in the MAL program.

We know the program provides a place for individuals to discuss and wrestle with ideas. Everyone is striving to meet personal and career goals. The diversity of experience brought by students provides the industry input the designers thought they would have to provide by hiring consultants to co-teach some courses. As more voices are added to the conversation/discussion that occurs within the classroom, students are found talking about ideas with a group of people that mirror the potential range of viewpoints they might encounter in a work setting. Rather than thinking this multitude of voices complicates the situation, students learn to value and use this additional information. They can take leadership in complex situations when they understand no problem has only one dimension or one solution.

One style or theory of leadership is not the key. In fact, in Badaracco and Ellsworth's book, Leadership and the Quest for Integrity, we are cautioned to "avoid the seductions of the "style" school" (1989 p. 199). Leaders who are able to find a balance and consistency between particular situations and their personal beliefs and react accordingly reflect leadership that has integrity as a basis or beginning point. "In

essence, integrity is consistency between what the manager believes, how a manager acts, and a manager's aspiration for his or her organization" (Badaracco, 1989, p.9).

Augsburg provides a place where students are challenged to discuss and reflect on larger community and organizational issues. At the same time these students maintain work, career, family and community obligations. Everyone is in a rush to find solutions. The MAL program is intense but the seminar format encourages us to be thoughtful and reflective as we try to respond to complex issues. We want the chance to have real impact on our own lives and careers. The classroom gives students a forum to test ideas with a critical but supportive audience. The experience of others provides students with challenges to assumptions that encourage more creative solutions.

Why is this program about leadership?

We do not "lead" in isolation. We lead because we find ourselves involved and passionate about a particular organization, project or circumstance. Each circumstance raises the potential for various individuals to step forward in leadership roles. Leadership is dynamic. To describe a leader in one context is not going to describe the same person in another context, time or place. Leaders respond to their followers, their immediate circumstances, the issues surrounding the action being undertaken and even other leaders. A group of individuals must have some stake in the outcome and believe it is necessary to engage with one another.

Individuals are attracted to the MAL program from a variety of professions, organizations, and stages of adult life. Although students seem interested initially in "what a master of arts in leadership will do for me", they express most satisfaction with

the personal growth that emerges. Adult learners enter graduate programs in order to enhance their current job/career/skills, improve promotion opportunities, change from one career to another, and for personal development (Knox, 1990) .

The alumni interviewed had examined their personal situation and reflected on ways to have more impact on their lives. Several experienced transitions. The transitions were the result of job losses, voluntary or forced, divorce, and job relocation. Some transitions are a personal choice, other transitions are forced upon the individual. Their experience is similar to the experience of prospective students who describe their reasons for investigating master degree programs. I hear these same circumstances when I listen to people inquiring about the Master of Arts in Leadership program at Augsburg.

'Matthew' described getting passed over for promotions. "I decided that one of the things getting in my way was a masters degree. I didn't have a masters. Part of [my goal] was to get advancement." Matthew wanted a masters degree to enhance his resume for the next promotion opportunity within his organization. Another student, Rachel had been caught in a "house-wide downsizing phenomena where [her] position was eliminated. These things were still going on all these years later. I really wanted to have a Masters for career mobility." Yvonne describes an event in her personal life that had lowered her self-esteem. Other students anticipate changes in their company and seek education as a way to add to their resume should an expected merger or restructuring push them out.

The MAL program encourages this evaluation of experience. Students examine their past experience and reflect upon new knowledge while incorporating other

viewpoints. The courses promote personal challenge in a supportive environment. Students encounter diversity in work teams and groups they lead. The MAL classes mirror this diversity. Peter Ewell's research tells us people learn best when they are in an environment that values people as individuals, with knowledge and experience. (1997)

Personal Development

The benefits most often described are increased self-esteem, renewed confidence in one's abilities, support and confidence for risk-taking, and increase in confidence to make transitions to new work places and/or careers. There is renewed confidence in the value of your own ideas. You may disagree with others or have different viewpoints. That does not diminish the ideas or their validity.

Risk Taking

Many people talk about the increase in their risk-taking abilities. Yvonne described her lack of confidence and feeling of failure due to events in her personal life. "I did not realize I had been so beaten down. I found the MAL program was so energizing. These were articulate, bright people." Augsburg designed a masters program that provides diversity of viewpoints through the mix of students who enroll in MAL program. The MAL program brings together diverse thinkers and workers. The classroom provides a place for testing and trying out ideas while learning from colleagues and professors about other ways of approaching problems and issues.

Involvement in the Master of Arts in Leadership program heightens awareness of other ways of doing things. People use the MAL program to explore new ideas, learn about people, and learn about themselves. At worst, new ideas intimidate students until

they gain confidence in their own abilities and experiences. The professors are excited about the students who do not accept easy answers, but ask and challenge and learn.

The ability to make changes based on learning more about oneself is an outcome that this program promotes. A student moves towards more ethical practices, realizing limitations. Recognizing that all jobs will not fit the individual prompts some to resign, look for new careers or expect more challenge and rewards from their current position. Some will decide that the MAL program is not suiting their current needs and move to new programs.

Unlike more traditional programs, the MAL committee consistently tries to maintain the flexibility of choices for students. This means that each person's education experience is unique. A framework is provided to guide students through the masters program, while acknowledging that needs and experience differ.

The flexibility of the MAL program has added to its attraction and the value of participation to individuals. MAL encourages learners to be engaged in the classroom. Course content is designed to build on the knowledge and experience the learner brings. The increase in confidence and self knowledge will ease future transitions as well as equip individuals for the changing market place. Students become equipped to handle the challenges in your workplace. These skills are transferable to other settings and other careers.

One paradox that surfaced is the discord between a flexible liberal arts program that is interdisciplinary having a quantitative thesis or application project as the capstone project. Many students have undertaken research that falls within the parameters of

qualitative investigation. The research methods course is taught by individuals with expertise in quantitative methodology. Some students recognize their own interests falls outside the quantitative realm. The addition of case study research to the Colloquium on Contemporary Theories of Leadership adds to the tools students need as they begin their capstone projects. I sought the advice of Dr. Susan O'Connor who has background in qualitative research. But this happened by accident. As coordinator I had access to faculty from other work that I have done. Students need a choice of research design. Those of us who veered from the traditional quantitative study have had to add research into qualitative methodology.

My research experience has encouraged me to ask the MAL committee to take a more deliberate approach in addressing the present balance of time given to qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Faculty will be discussing qualitative research methodology as part of their January 1999 retreat. The intent of a course in research methods is to provide the tools a student needs to engage in research. This is essential in a program that already pushes students to encounter new ways of thinking. The opportunity to discover ideas from your research rather than try to anticipate outcomes is more common to qualitative methodology than quantitative methodology.

Leadership

How do we become leaders? One way is to look for opportunities to expand our knowledge and skills. A recurring theme in my conversations and interviews with students is the search for something beyond the routine of work and everyday challenges. People want to find like-minded individuals who are concerned about making a

difference in lives. How do they reconnect or maintain connection with individuals who want to bring their values to the community in ways that improve the lives of others? The opportunities are vast. Leaders look for the connections as ways to involve others in positive change.

Alumni talk about their desire to have an impact. The challenges are bigger than one individual. The MAL experience prompts alumni to become active: in work, the community and leadership. Georgina:

> I never had an alma mater that I really cared about until I went to Augsburg. Not my high school, not my undergraduate school. I do try to participate in things when we have new students coming in or the thesis program and the mentoring meetings.

Alan described his own need to be involved with a community group where he could test out some of what he was learning in the MAL program. He found that serving on the board of this community group provided the testing ground for his newly found leadership aspirations.

MAL alumni are committed to ideals and actions that demonstrate leadership. Their actions range from community activism, mentoring-formally and informally, and leading boards and committees. If learning about leadership is learning what people value, the MAL program has succeeded in providing a program that moves people from study to action.

The MAL program provides individuals with courses designed to enhance our understandings of leadership. If you are looking for answers, correct models or the perfect way, the MAL program will not provide them. Instead the MAL program

provides opportunities for individuals to try out new ideas, encounter alternative perspectives and find connections. My example of the change in thinking about research methodology is a way I found to exercise leadership in my role as program coordinator.

A student complaint regarding the 'failure' of faculty to make connections to leadership is ironic. Although many students want faculty to make direct connections between the material and leadership, they also describe their delight and amazement at the variety of perspectives brought to class by the other students.

Alan discusses:

> One of the weaknesses of the program is the tendency to present information but not always much work done by the professors to link it to leadership. That was very often left to the student. Another weakness. There is a transition a graduate student needs to make in terms of being more responsible, looking to the instructor as less an authority figure and more like a librarian or coach image. Someone who knows the lay of information. Help to discover what's available. The program spans such a wealth of information. It was hard on occasion not to get lost in it. Sometimes there's a need for role modeling, so people can see examples of ways to do things.

But Alan goes on:

> There was always an opportunity with instructors and assignments to dig back in and realign the foundation and configuration [of my understandings of leadership]. There was opportunity for reflection and change.

Leadership requires an understanding and awareness that change is integral to future growth and development. Can leadership be taught? Learning about leadership is learning about what people value. Our values are unique to each of us. We all bring different experiences to new situations. The MAL program intentionally puts people

together who share an interest in leadership but reflect a wide array of abilities, personal and organizational experience. This is Leadership.

One of the values that arose was the alumni commitment to improving the community. It was expressed in different ways but all the alumni talked about wanting to use their skills in a more direct way to make a difference.

Commitment to community

People strive for community. In our quest for a fuller life, we look for places where our personal values mesh with public values. The alumni interviewed describe their personal involvement in community. MAL alumni describe new directions their experience has taken them. For Alan, it was involvement in a successful launch of a community based enterprise. His motivation, "I needed an environment, atmosphere where I could practice what I was learning [in the MAL program]". Alan got involved in community project and saw the success of launching a new venture. He wants to do more. He describes the connections made through study in the MAL program as being connected to people with the potential to have an impact on society.

Yvonne's MAL experience reminded her that our different perspectives affect our behavior and our decisions. Without the mix of ages she studied with in the MAL program, she would not have understood what motivates the Gen X-er's [her words]. Yvonne's career puts her in the daily struggle to improve communication and understanding of current societal problems in order to take action for the benefit of others. Her awareness of the differences between generations has helped her work.

Ashley successfully launched her own business. She was surprised to be chosen as a leader by her colleagues during her MAL program. Ashley has gained confidence through her experience. Her involvement now extends to volunteer membership in organizations that provide leadership in the community.

Rachel is searching for like-minded individuals and a workplace that encourages and supports honest open dialogue. She continues her search for a workplace that is closer to the experiences she encountered as an MAL student. In her profession, the direction of organizations is not the direction she is seeking. So in many ways the MAL program is leading her away from her original profession.

Matthew describes " a lot of folks [MAL students] who had been in the workforce awhile. [They] were not content with 'because I said so'. He was attracted to the MAL program because "you go through with the same people. The MAL program provided a sense of community for Matthew.

Laura, like Alan and Ashley has become active in non-profit boards. She mentors new MAL students through the thesis process. Georgina spends time mentoring others and eagerly assists with MAL program related meetings. These students have found ways to practice their newly gained confidence and leadership skills.

Many of those interviewed have taken action in their community or work setting to improve life for others. They express a desire to continue this commitment to improving the future. This commitment reflects people who are finding ways to make a difference in their own lives as well as the lives of others. Alan:

> People in the program are exactly the people I want to keep connections with because they will be doing the things the way I do. They share a common level of

interest in leadership that is very important to me. A large number have an interest in leadership that will be ongoing. Nurture the interest. What a potent group of people to nudge into relationship and the impact we as a group have on society, singly and together.

The fact that students find ways to continue their involvement in leadership activities is a tribute both to these individuals and to the program at Augsburg. I have heard administrators complain that these students do not show leadership when it comes to alumni activities. These students want to be involved in activities that make a difference, whether mentoring a student or taking an active role on a non-profit or community board. This also is leadership. Students decide where they want to put their time and energy. Their choices reflect their unique set of values and commitments.

Something More:

People need meaning in their life, in their work and in their homes. As I talk with students, listening to their concerns and questions, I often sense a desire, a hunger for connections. Alan talked in his interview of wanting to find other individuals wrestling with leadership issues. He was hopeful that Augsburg and the MAL program would continue to be a meeting place for leaders, a catalyst for change. Rachel searches for work that encourages frank and open discussion of important issues. The inclusion of courses on ethics, communication and multicultural issues forces many of us to think beyond the narrow world we live in each day. We are part of a larger and shrinking global world.

There is a hunger that moves the MAL student towards learning as much as they can about leadership. As we feel more disconnected in our work, we seek ways to

become part of a community with others. We want to improve the future for others. My conversations and interviews with students searching for graduate programs reveal many of these individuals are searching for something more in life. There is a desire or hunger to make a difference.

Sharon Parks from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University speaking on The New Commons: Connections, Complexity and Commitment (November 8, 1996 conference speech) said that "part of leadership is offering metaphors that work." Parks quotes a graduate student who explained why he had stayed in a leadership program by telling her that "Leadership is a word that holds a lot of hungers". This metaphor describes the catalyst that brings students to seek more education.

The MAL student takes action to pursue a degree. The next step differs. Some improve or change their career, others make changes in their current workplace and still others seek community avenues to make a difference. What prompts the actions of leadership? We need to make accurate "soundings" (Parks ACE-NIP) and move beyond our own limits of experience and culture. The broader understandings that come with experience help us challenge our individual assumptions. The MAL program strives to provide one forum where individuals meet new ways of thinking. The program puts the study of leadership through the liberal arts, individuals from diverse work cultures, and professors with academic expertise together. This provides all participants with exposure to different frameworks for understanding the issues and finding solutions to the problems we encounter in our lives. This increased understanding prompts individuals to

accept leadership, whether they are in a designated leadership position or helping to change from within. These people will be leaders.

Leaders For The Present - Leading In The Future.

Students discover a community of learners who are interested in varied experiences and prepared to bring their own experience to enrich the learning environment. One aspect of the MAL program that was never fully developed was an idea to bring industry leaders in as co-facilitators. Dr. Thoni believes the program enrolls students with this industry background. Augsburg expected to attract students between ages 25 and 35. The actual profile of students is closer to ages 35-45. This brings people from a more reflective stage of their careers.

That distinction is supported by my interviews of alumni. Matthew: "I met some talented interesting people. I got better understanding of just how to work in the decision making world and how many players there are." Georgina continues: "If you weren't there and didn't participate, you weren't giving [the other students] what they'd come for. You respected the energy and the fact they were there. It's a group of people learning about leadership." Laura sums up her experience with:

> I was always blown off from that isolated narrow perception, there's not going to be much to talk about with this class period, there's only one way to look at the assignment. Everyone in that room had a different way to look at that book. It was mind expanding. Also so humbling. It's what I think good education is supposed to be. Make you realize how much you don't know. Then balancing that humility with courage. Heck, my views are as good as anyone else's. I can do it. I can put forward my ideas. Why not? As long as they're thought out, they're rational, I can explain them and I've got the background. My views are

just as valid, just as acknowledged. I think that gave me both the humility and

courage to do things I might not otherwise have done.

In addition to developing leaders, the focus on leadership evolved in part from changes to

the original name of the program.

Name of Program-Problem or Advantage?

In the settings where the MAL program is promoted, the fact that it has a unique

name is part of the success. The need to explain the Master of Arts in Leadership

program requires people to be more attentive. They listen to stories to get a better picture

of the program. They listen to individuals who have experienced the program.

If prospective students are wondering what the MAL is about and how it can meet

their educational needs, we can talk about other graduate programs in contrast to the

MAL program. Will another program match their needs in education? The inquiring

student gradually moves away from the view that a masters degree, like other training

programs, has to "do something" to enhance their qualifications. They change their

thinking to "this was a program for me, it made me understand who I was, gain self-

esteem." This realization happens at various times for students. Sometimes it is

expressed in the beginning, sometimes in the middle of the MAL program. All alumni

and students I meet talk about their increased personal development at the conclusion of

the program as alumni reflect upon their experience.

The title of the Master of Arts in Leadership program is viewed as both a positive

and negative factor. Nobody has been able to pigeonhole a Master of Arts in Leadership

degree. Ryan LaHurd, Dean of the College in 1987 stated "the title: Master of Arts in

Leadership was "problematic" for the college. How could we profess to teach

leadership?" LaHurd viewed this title as an obstacle, "We were always having to explain what it was."

The process of explaining the program provides prospective students with an understanding of the complexity of the program that either intrigues them, confuses, or perplexes them. Within each explanation qualities emerge that make connections with the student. Students are either sold on the idea of the MAL program, want more information and more time to reflect. Some recognize that a program like this has wider applications. Others walk away because what they really wanted was something specific, like an MBA.

With a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the intended audience is wide. The ability to cater to diverse needs and goals is part of the success. The program is more dynamic and interesting due to the attractions it holds for a diverse group of individuals. This title, Master of Arts in Leadership, prompts individuals to ask questions that help us describe the nature of the program more fully than when a slick one line label can be attached that puts the program into a simple package. The title adds to the sustained interest in the program.

A general focus on leadership has freed the MAL program to develop its strengths. Interdisciplinary courses invite students with varied life experience and varied work settings to come together. The focus on leadership has encouraged a different evolution for the MAL from the other business or technical-oriented masters programs. Georgina:

> I think [the focus on leadership] was smart. It allowed [the program] to evolve.
> Right now, if you're stuck with organizational leadership...you've sliced a piece

of leadership off. You said we're going to focus on this area. Over time it's going to be hard to bump the parameters of that. ...We hit politics. We hit history. We hit language. We hit religion. We hit all of them in (the MAL program).

The flexibility of the MA in Leadership adds to its attraction and the value to individuals from a range of occupations and work settings. Adults have responsibility for their learning. People learn and retain knowledge best when they are active in the research and distillation of ideas and materials (Ewell, 1997). Leadership opens up potential course offering that would not be available in more proscriptive programs. As John Scully says in <u>Why Leaders Can't Lead: The Unconscious Conspiracy Continues</u>, "What I look for in people is the ability to transform their experience into ideas and to put those ideas in context" (Bennis, 1989, p. 120). The MAL advisory committee consistently maintains a framework of quality and challenge, while allowing students flexibility in their choices.

There are concerns from faculty that we need to decide which courses are core to the MAL curriculum and should be required of all students. Student feedback was strong that the flexibility is one of the attractions of the program. But as we look toward the future, are there courses which the committee and faculty believe are essential to gaining the desired changes? That question needs to be asked and answered each time the program is evaluated. All programs undergo evolution based on student needs and the college requirement to maintain viable educational programs.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The Master of Arts in Leadership program equips students with knowledge, understandings and skills that help them in their own journey towards leadership. Daloz (1997) describes the mentors of adult learners who "prepare [the] individual to be a competent traveler"(p. ix.). We learn best when we are in a learning environment that values us as individuals, with our unique experience and knowledge. We challenge students by providing a multifaceted class setting. Learning occurs in this atmosphere of challenge, support and reflection.

The Master of Arts in Leadership program attracts adult learners who are risk takers, interested in learning for personal development and attracted to a broad liberal arts program which offsets their specific skills, undergraduate program and the organization or work setting. MAL alumni value continuous, life long learning. Growth and change are important features of the MAL program.

When I began this investigation I had the outlook of a masters student who had completed all the required coursework coupled with a year of working as the MAL program coordinator. I have gained a broader understanding of the MAL program, the people and the benefits of participation. My perspective has prompted me to facilitate changes to the way we administer this program.

The Master of Arts in Leadership program reflects factors that were in play at the time the program was developed. Faculty and administrators found ideas in the literature that cried out for leadership (Morgan) in organizations. Augsburg's mission statement to

"provide future leaders"[24] added the institutional goal, to pursue leadership studies. Feedback from leaders in local businesses and organizations included a general concern that employees lacked the communication and critical thinking skills they needed to lead others. This feedback connects with liberal arts education and Augsburg's mission.

The MAL program's implementation was facilitated by individuals committed to liberal arts education. These administrators and faculty wished to provide a program for adults that would wrestle with the issues and concerns of today's organizations. These administrators were able to translate the goal of leadership development into a viable masters program. The Master of Arts in Leadership program continues to be one of a kind, 11 years later.

Students recognize complex variables in the study of leadership. Yet the design of many research projects in MAL has students struggling to focus narrowly on one theme or idea. Fortunately the MAL program added a course where students are exposed to case study research, ML 580. It is my hope that more emphasis will be given to alternate research designs that fit with the interdisciplinary nature of this program. The MAL classroom provides a place where ideas are exchanged, leaving room for individuals to draw their own conclusions.

Supportive Atmosphere

As I found in the research on adult learning, development of support groups among students contributes to successful students. Success is measured by those who complete the degree. The initial cohort design of the MAL program and subsequent

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[24] (1997-98 Augsburg College Student Guide)

informal cohort groups that develop are like Galbraith's "learning community...[that] function as a support network of learners who reassure each other that the feelings of inadequacy, confusion, and depression they each experience are not idiosyncratic but shared by all" (1991, p. 42). Every person I interviewed described other students, family, friends and faculty who provided on-going feedback and encouragement while the student completed his/her final project. The 'community of learners' described in the MAL program catalogue is noted by alumni, whether they were part of a defined cohort group or created their own.

MAL faculty encourage informal networks to develop by organizing small group discussions and group projects within their courses. I continue to work with the individuals I met through small group work in MAL classes. Georgina told about a group of four who met weekly to support each other while completing their theses.

Faculty

I am impressed with the experience of the Augsburg faculty. The decision to involve senior Augsburg faculty provides a depth of subject knowledge that complements the experience of the work world brought by students. Parker Palmer reminds us: "Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique. Good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (1990).

I would like to highlight one individual who has enhanced my own involvement with the Master of Arts in Leadership program, Dr. Norma Noonan. Dr. Noonan became the Director of the MAL program in 1993. Her enthusiasm and vision led to a number of improvements to the MAL program. The January MAL faculty retreat was introduced by

Dr. Noonan. This retreat provides an opportunity for the faculty, the MAL advisory committee members and MAL program staff to meet and discuss program initiatives, student and faculty concerns. This retreat has often been similar to the experience of an energetic discussion in an MAL classroom!

Dr. Noonan recognized the need to make connections with our MAL alumni in more intentional ways. Dr. Noonan implemented an alumni advisory committee in MAL which spawned several activities; the implementation of an endowment fund for the program, annual homecoming gatherings, mentoring opportunities and the implementation of a non-thesis plan. The MAL advisory group was active for several months and continues to show interest by getting involved on the Augsburg Alumni Board and mentors thesis students.

Dr. Noonan's championship of the MAL program among faculty colleagues, through involvement with national leadership organizations and through articles published for graduate level liberal studies publications is a valuable contribution. A strong public voice is crucial to attracting and retaining students, maintaining a group of experienced faculty with commitment to the MAL program and keeping the program in the view of the academic community.

The use of senior faculty has raised a problem as these faculty reach retirement age or relocate. Those faculty who had 10 to 20 years of teaching ahead of them in the 1980's are now retiring or beginning to think about retirement. Here is an opportunity to revive excitement in the MAL program among faculty. As we involve other faculty in

teaching for the MAL program their enthusiasm for the challenge will add renewed life to the program.

Students

Students who complete the MAL program often come into a masters program for occupational advancement. They may have leadership experience or a desire to work towards increased responsibility. Some begin other graduate programs before they enroll in the Master of Arts in Leadership program. Many are seeking new skills in a program that stresses communication, people and organizations. The mix of students reflects the universal appeal of a masters program designed to expand our thinking and enhance our abilities to communicate, persuade and develop a vision for the future. These students describe risk taking, making connections between their experience and leadership opportunities and a broader world view as benefits of participation in the MAL program.

Risk Takers

The multi-disciplinary nature of the program attracts a broad spectrum of individuals. The exposure to multi-disciplinary courses and senior faculty provides a learning environment where everyone is involved in both the process and the outcomes. Ashley describes:

> There were several people [in the MAL program] who were pretty high level managers or had their own companies. I was a peon, a writer. It was good experience for me to see how I ended up taking a leadership role of the group.

The Master of Arts in Leadership program is neither a technical (ie. engineering, nursing, business,etc.) nor a discipline based (sociology, psychology, English, etc.) program. MAL is based in the liberal arts. The MAL student takes a risk on a program that does not

have immediate market identification. Students bring significant corporate and business experience to the MAL classroom.

The MAL program serves as a vehicle for building up students' self esteem. One student was described as "a revolutionary" by one professor. Rachel's Foundations of Leadership professor said she had a "seminal idea". These are examples of feedback from professors that enhance students' self-esteem. Positive feedback gives people courage to face future obstacles.

People move from organization to organization. Some leave formal work settings to work for themselves. Other individuals remain in the same organizations, changing the corporation from within. All the alumni interviewed were candid in pointing to the MAL program as a place where like-minded people could come together and talk. They were free to test ideas in the academic environment. The greatest learning occurs where individuals are challenged to process ideas, reflect on their learning and incorporate new ideas.

Connections

The students in the MAL program are seeking greater connectedness. This translates into a desire to use new knowledge and understanding to improve the world that MAL students inhabit. We see students make transitions from one career to another, from one place in an organization to greater decision making and leadership responsibilities. Students taking their thesis beyond the library shelves. One student presented his paper to a conference in Puerto Rico. Another uses her research data to

establish a job placement firm. Others found they had an aptitude for leading and developed more opportunities to lead through their work and in the community.

The MAL program provided me with several benefits. It was an intense reintroduction to American ways of thinking. I was able to catch up with some of the 18 years of history, trends and people that were common denominators to my American classmates. It challenged my thinking, gave me opportunities to write about and synthesize my experiences in cross cultural learning as well as in my teaching career. Discussion with other mature adults gave me new ways of looking at organizations and examining the leaders I have encountered.

My role as coordinator has improved the information to students as well as enhancing the advising process. Carrying the dual role of coordinator and student, I have experienced many of the same obstacles and successes that other MAL students encounter. I made a major life change when I resigned from a career as a teacher and elementary administrator in 1993. I arrived in the US and after a year of travel and intermittent work I commenced the MAL program.

One current initiative in the MAL program comes directly from this research. There is growing recognition that qualitative research methodology is an equal partner to quantitative research methodology. We spend months, years, studying interdisciplinary coursework in the MAL program. The content is designed to challenge and stretch our minds. Then we take a research methods course that emphasizes quantitative methods, finding a narrow topic to concentrate and focus our research. What a paradox! If we

believe the components of the Leadership Development Model, does not an emphasis on one type of research strike you as contradictory and immobilizing for students?

World View

The MAL program does not promote a style of leadership or one particular leadership theory. The original advisory committee described elements of leadership that Augsburg believe are necessary to develop leaders for the future. These elements of leadership are found in Augsburg's Leadership Development Model. The MAL program promotes leadership development, through the development of people's self esteem, risk taking and communication skills. Leadership is a natural outcome for some individuals.

The MAL program provides a place where individuals from diverse work settings gather to discuss real issues, possible solutions and new perspectives to problem solving. (p. 100) In general, MAL students value how they changed their thinking and world view in light of their newly acquired knowledge. "Leaders believe change equates with growth and change"(170 Bennis 1989).

Many students talk about a desire to do something more with the experience and knowledge gained through the MAL program. This is where leadership occurs. MAL alumni tackle the problem of program completion by volunteering their time and energy to mentor students through the thesis process. The commitment to the ideals of the program and the desire to help others succeed comes from the value alumni place on their own experience in the Master of Arts in Leadership program.

To describe my theory of leadership I am going to tell a story from my days as a post graduate student in education at the University of Minnesota in 1974.

The Dancer

A young student, eager to meet the world famous dancer, walks up the steps of Norris Hall. Everyone is milling around, waiting. The gymnasium fills. There is anticipation, tension. We were an odd assortment of students, waiting. Most of us were not physical education or dance majors. We were ordinary students, soon to enter our own classrooms as teachers. What would this day hold for us? What could we possibly accomplish in a brief day? The last time I had formal dance training when I was four years old!

A woman enters. She is dressed in black, a soft caftan-like tunic flowing over a black leotard. Nothing pretentious, in fact, she looked like someone's grandmother, silver through her hair. There was nothing to reveal her famous identity.
She spoke. Her voice grabbed our attention. Fifty young people awaited instructions. The woman told us how she wanted us to move. Did she describe intricate dance steps? No. She merely asked us to look for the space. What did she mean? How could we avoid hitting each other with no boundaries?

I don't remember any music. Perhaps there was a lone drum, but I don't recall. Only this one instruction, 'find the space'. While we puzzled over this, Martha gave the signal to begin. Movement began. At first, everyone was hesitant and walked very slowly. Then we gained confidence. The tempo quickened. We were finding space! Three people moved, heading toward certain collision. Just as we came within inches of one another, space cleared. We moved to avert collision and a new path opened ahead. None of us even brushed against the others. Fifty people were moving, dancing. We

were not performing intricate steps or trying to follow some new music. We were in synch. We were moving to a silent rhythm. Yet we were constantly aware of everyone else and where they were heading.

Anticipating, moving ahead, never colliding, constant motion with rhythm and symphony provided by one instruction. Look for the space. The dancer was moving with us.

This describes leadership. We were thinking ahead, trying to anticipate and pick up cues from everyone around us. Movement became our action, space our goal. Inspired, we move on to other activities. I recall the sense of amazement, inspiration and confidence I felt. Each of us found our own rhythm, found our space. Wonder, joy, amazement. We moved without structure, without form. Yet the whole mass of students moved together in a single dance, like a well rehearsed ballet. Fear was gone. We took bolder steps. We knew we would succeed. We were touched that morning by a woman I have never forgotten. Martha Graham found her way into my heart and into my soul.

We experienced the delicate balance between chaos and order, danger and safety. Without complicated instruction we could move in ways that looked rehearsed. We made our own decisions, yet each of our actions had an impact on someone else. We should have been bumping and colliding, instead it felt like floating. No one spoke. The tension was gone. Martha Graham led us to understanding ourselves and the intricate connection we have with others.

I found something in common with this dancer. She had the grace and movements of a young dancer. From reading her autobiography I realize she was 85!

The joy and sense of discovery found in that morning has never faded, remaining a goal for every step of life. Whenever I face a new challenge, I feel the same excitement that was present on that day so many years ago. We can integrate our thoughts and actions with others. Dance and dodge and feint. But never leave the stage. Try out new steps. Others will support you. Move away when you need space. Pause for reflection. New ideas, new challenges, differing points of view become our steps to new experience, not obstacles to be feared.

Leadership comes from within each of us. The leader choreographs our beginning but it is each person's awareness of the group, their position and their intended direction that kept everyone moving. We moved in concert because we looked to each other for clues to the next step. It wouldn't have been a success without all of the dancers being alert to the circumstances around them.

This story reflects my view of leadership and leaders. None of us truly gain success without the direct involvement of others. We bring different abilities, talents and experiences to each new situation. Just like this dance, we have to look at our present circumstance, the movement and needs of others and anticipate changes of direction to keep from colliding. This enables us to move forward together rather than against each other.

Summary

Our values, attitudes and beliefs are constantly undergoing change. As we encounter new cultures and value systems, the ability to be open minded yet critical, use our skills to observe and analyze will give us ways to manage new challenges as we

encounter them. In each attempt to communicate our thoughts and ideas we engage in dialogue and discussion with others.

Georgina:

> Everybody changes depending on the circumstances, but I have a personal tendency to go with a style. If I were sitting in an employment interview, I could talk about what I could be as a leader and know now it would be consistent in what they see in my behavior.

The college expected to attract people with technical backgrounds as a way for them to broaden their experience through a liberal arts masters degree. It has also attracted students who wish to build on their previous liberal arts experience. The flexibility of the MA in Leadership has added to its attraction and its value to individuals from a range of occupations and work settings. People learn better when they are active in the learning process. This places great responsibility on the student for their learning. Unlike more traditional programs, the MAL committee consistently maintains the flexibility of course options while maintaining a high quality of elective courses for students. Learning changes us, sometimes a little, sometimes a lot. The Master of Arts program in Leadership at Augsburg College develops leaders. Yvonne:

> You came together and listened to what people have to say. You do not have to agree with them, or their viewpoints, but you are willing and encouraged to listen to the diversity of views other than your own.

CHAPTER 8

Future Recommendations and Investigations

Further investigation: Can leadership be taught? What are the reasons people do not complete degrees? What are the insights of students who leave or drop out of the MAL program? It would be interesting to study and compare two groups of students, a MAL class and a MBA or other technical masters program. A longitudinal study of MAL students over 10 years would yield some interesting information about the longterm benefits of the program.

There are many possibilities for future MAL students to investigate within the MAL program. Interviewing people who discontinue their partipation would yield insights into what interferes with continuation in a program-is it a change in the motivation, difficulty juggling family, work and education, or something else?

Since much of the literature on adult learners describes similarities between adults in terms of motivation and obstacles to participation, what draws individuals to Augsburg's MAL program? Is the attraction different to what draws students to programs offered by St. Thomas, Hamline and St. Catherine's? Is it as simple as personalities that promote the program, the ideas and program design, the schedule of evenings and Saturdays, the college's reputation, or gaining specific knowledge and skills?

1. I would like to see the college expand the leadership dimension to the community beyond Augsburg college. Many of today's leaders are interested in developing future leaders. Augsburg has a commitment, stated in the mission statement and reaffirmed in

current strategic planning documents, to prepare future leaders. Alumni from the MAL program are interested in maintaining a connection to the college through future leadership forums.

Augsburg has a masters program in leadership that provides the 'common ground' for diverse individuals to come together in a supportive environment to learn and study together. The benefits go beyond the students involved in the program to encompass the faculty and others in the college who want to come together in Thoni's "gathering of eagles". The MAL alumni echo the Augsburg commitment to provide leadership to the wider community. How can we tap this resource in ways that provide change for the community as well as the individual?

Alan:

> People in the program are exactly the people I want to keep connections with because they will be doing things the way I do. They share a common level of interest in leadership that is very important to me. A large number have an interest in leadership that will be ongoing. Nurture the interest. What a potent group of people to nudge into relationship. The impact we as a group have on society, singly and together.

2. As each student leaves the MAL program, a focus group or exit interview would add to the knowledge of current issues, concerns and benefits. We are losing an opportunity to get feedback that will help mold future directions of the MAL program. This interview would also provide insights into changes that are occurring with the market and the needs of adults. Hearsay is not an adequate rationale for major program initiatives. Focus groups and individual feedback is a valuable source of information and future direction that we are not currently tapping into in any systematic way.

3. At present new initiatives are mainly faculty driven. If we incorporate the idea in future planning that students and student learning are what drives the educational program, we can explore new ways to involve students in proposing new initiatives and/ or courses within the MAL program. The alumni add depth to the program with their experience and the practical uses they have made of their masters degree. We could tap into the resource of MAL alumni through opportunities that bring current students, faculty, alumni and others interested in leadership together for special programs.

> If education in its fundamental sense means the development of persons as persons, it is clearly an undertaking which can never be finally accomplished or brought to any sort of absolute completion in the span of a human life. (Paterson)

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Dr. Marie McNeff, Vice President for Academic Affairs, 7 February 1997.

Dr. Tom Morgan, Assistant Professor- Business, 14 September, 1996.

Dr. Norma Noonan, M.A.L.-Director, Professor-Political Science, 5 March 1997.

Dr. Rick Thoni, Vice President for Enrollment Management, 4 February 1997.

Dr. Ryan LaHurd, President, Lenoir-Rhyne College, email sent to author, 21 March 1997.

ALUMNI INTERVIEWS-*Master of Arts in Leadership Graduates*
Pseudonyms have been used to preserve confidentiality of the alumni.

"Ashley" 10 January 1997. Minneapolis, MN.

"Laura" 21 January 1997. St. Paul, MN.

"Georgina" 23 January 1997. Minneapolis, MN.

"Rachel" 23 January 1997. St. Paul, MN.

"Matthew" 28 January 1997. St. Paul, MN.

"Alan" 29 January 1997. Minneapolis, MN.

"Yvonne" 29 January 1997. Minneapolis, MN.

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Augsburg Echo "Graduate Programs Leads its First Class to Caps and Gowns". February 17, 1989.

APPENDIX A

Graduate Program Committee

The graduate program would be administered by a Graduate Program Committee. The committee would have the following functions:

1. To maintain control to assure the quality of the graduate program
   (a) by setting and overseeing admission standards
   (b) by directing the development of courses and syllabi for the program
   (c) by choosing and evaluating for recommendation to the Dean and Director the faculty to teach in the program. (Staffing recommendations will be made in consultation with department chairpersons.)
   (d) by recommending to the Dean candidates for the position of director of the graduate program
   (e) by approving changes in the shape and direction of the program.

2. To oversee the maintenance of proper support services for the graduate program.

3. To act as board hearing petitions from graduate students and faculty for exceptions to program policies.

The committee will consist of seven persons nominated by the Faculty Senate and elected by the faculty:* a faculty representative from each of the four divisions, a representative from the precursor committees which studied the possibility of initiating graduate programs, a representative of the Department of Business Administration and Economics with expertise in dealing with organizations, and the Dean of the College. Effort will be made to include on the committee experienced faculty having Ph.D.'s and publication/research records. An advisory council including the Head Librarian, the Registrar, the Director of Admissions, the Director of Weekend College, and representatives from local profit and non-profit organizations will be appointed by the Graduate Program Committee. The advisory committee will be consulted on appropriate matters by the Graduate Program Committee.

The committee will draw up guidelines for course submissions that fit the proposed program and program outcomes. The committee will meet to approve and shape courses to create a coherent program and will oversee the development, teaching, and evaluation of the courses to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved. The Dean will retain ultimate responsibility for the program.

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*Because of the necessity of shaping the program for accreditation before the February Faculty Meeting, the Graduate Program Committee would operate with the nominated constituency ad interim pending approval at the February meeting.

Having reviewed and discussed the "Proposal for Graduate Liberal Arts Program" we have attempted to identify the benefits and risks to Augsburg of offering a graduate program. These benefits and risks serve as a basis for our recommendation and should be taken into consideration by faculty members as they make their individual assessments of the relative merits of the proposed program.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Potential benefits to Augsburg of developing and offering a graduate program similar to the one proposed have been identified:

--The proposed program will offer service to the community through the provision of a distinctive, values oriented educational opportunity.

--The program will offer a service to persons working or planning to work in organizations by providing them opportunities for growth toward personal success and greater service to their organizations and the community.

--The opportunity to develop and teach graduate level courses will have a stimulating and vitalizing effect upon the faculty by expanding intellectual vistas and affording additional opportunities for professional growth.

--The graduate program proposed will facilitate cross-disciplinary interaction among various departments.

--Providing graduate level study will precipitate an improved self-image and promote positive morale.

--The non-departmental focus will foster improved faculty collegiality.

--Expanding into a graduate program will increase teaching opportunities for faculty in many of the traditional liberal arts disciplines.

--The addition of graduate students to the Augsburg community will further diversify the student mix.

--Development of new integrated courses will precipitate the infusion of new concepts and pedagogical techniques into the undergraduate classroom.

--Offering a quality graduate program will yield an enhanced educational image, increase the prestige of the college and raise academic recognition.

--Among the graduate programs currently offered or proposed by other private colleges in the Twin Cities, the program under consideration offers an innovative approach to an existing community need.

POTENTIAL RISKS

Assessment of the benefits outlined above should be tempered with a concern for the potential risks which the college may face. Several issues have been raised and warrant consideration.

--While the start-up cost represents less than one half of one percent of the annual operating budget the existing resources of the college are not sufficient to support additional expenditures for program development.

--Much of the benefit of the program rests on the reinvestment of generated income into the academic budget, yet the proposal lacks a mechanism for insuring reinvestment.

--With graduate classes being taught by full time faculty the full time ranks of the undergraduate program could be depleted.

RECOMMENDATION

The potential risks outlined above suggest several administrative conditions which the faculty should consider placing upon the program before approval.

--The start-up funds must come from external sources without hampering current fund raising efforts.

--The revenues and expenditures for the program should be operated through a separate fund with the net proceeds committed to investment in the academic sector and restrictions placed upon the transfer of dollars to the general operating fund.

--A commitment should be made to replacing faculty teaching in the graduate program with full time faculty replacements whenever possible.

With these conditions added we recommend the proposed graduate program be adopted by the faculty. The initial investment is small particularly when considered in relation to the potential benefits. The financial risks of the program will be limited because costs will be based on unit costs which vary directly with enrollment accommodating financial flexibility. In the unlikely event that the program is not the success it is anticipated to be, our losses will be minimal.
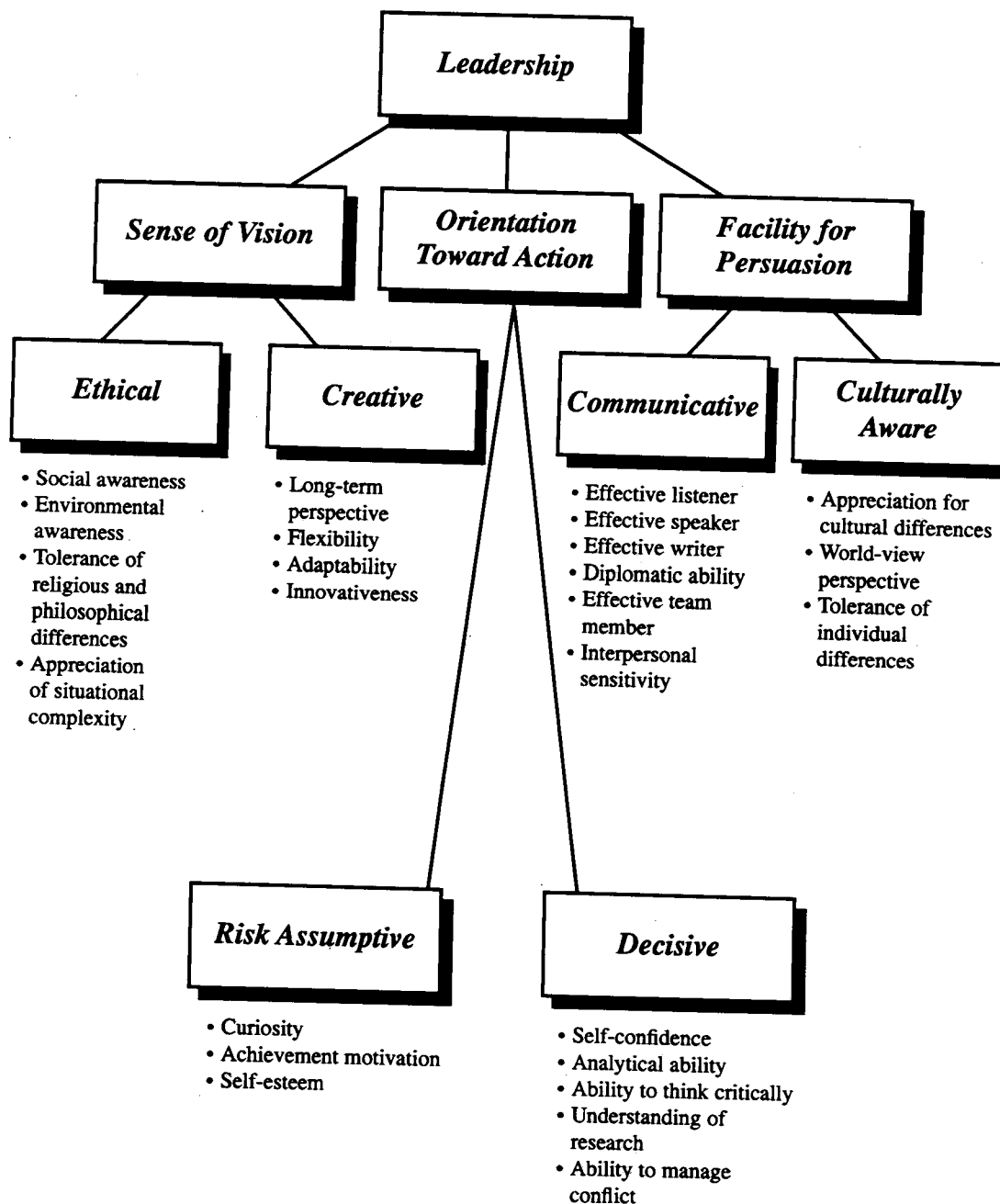
AAC
11/18/85

APPENDIX B

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MODEL—AUGSBURG COLLEGE

The MAL program promotes leadership as a process that 1) inspires cooperation among people who must compete for limited resources, 2) promotes productivity within and beyond the organization, and 3) works toward progress for the individual and the organization.

To accomplish this, individuals aspiring to positions of leadership must possess three key attributes: a sense of vision, the ability to persuade and the ability to direct action. Underlying these attributes is a broad range of abilities and awareness, outlined in the

Leadership Development Model, that serve as specific outcomes for the MAL program. Augsburg's model of leadership development is designed to assess, promote, enhance and refine these capabilities within the individual.

Leadership

Sense of Vision

Orientation Toward Action

Facility for Persuasion

Ethical
- Social awareness
- Environmental awareness
- Tolerance of religious and philosophical differences
- Appreciation of situational complexity

Creative
- Long-term perspective
- Flexibility
- Adaptability
- Innovativeness

Communicative
- Effective listener
- Effective speaker
- Effective writer
- Diplomatic ability
- Effective team member
- Interpersonal sensitivity

Culturally Aware
- Appreciation for cultural differences
- World-view perspective
- Tolerance of individual differences

Risk Assumptive
- Curiosity
- Achievement motivation
- Self-esteem

Decisive
- Self-confidence
- Analytical ability
- Ability to think critically
- Understanding of research
- Ability to manage conflict

(This model was developed by Augsburg Faculty Graduate Advisory Committee, 1985-87.)

APPENDIX C

Augsburg College
Master of Arts in Leadership

Corporations or Agencies Represented by 1997-98 MAL Students

Abbot Northwestern Hospital
AgriBank
Army National Guard
ASL Interpreter
AT&T
Attorney General's Office (2)
Augsburg College (5)
Augsburg Fortress Publishers
Augsburg Youth and Family Institute
Beckman Instruments
Best Buy
Beth Jacob Congregation
Carlson Marketing Group
Carlson Real Estate
CENEX
Children's Health Care
Cigna Healthcare
Colle & McVoy Advertising
Computing Devices International
Courage Center
Detector Electronics Corporation
Fairview University Medical Center
Fallon McElligott Advertising
Farirview Hospital and Healthcare Services
Federal Express
First Bank System
Ford Motor Company
Fortis (2)
FSI International
General Mills
Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce
Harriet Tubman Center (2)
Health Partners
Honeywell
Lutheran Brotherhood
Mercy Hospital
Miller Meester Advertising

Minneapolis Urban League
Minnegasco
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (2)
MPAF Travellers Assistance
National Car Rental
New Horizon Day Care Centers
North Memorial Medical Center
Norwest Banks
Ochs Services
Pillsbury
Prudential
Radewald Hayes Advertising
Riley Hayes Advertising
Rottlund Homes
Smarte Carte
St Paul Bank
Stride
Super Valu
Traveller's Express
Twin Cities Co-ops Federal Credit Union
United Health Care
United Hospitals
United States Postal Service
Video Update
Vomela
Wendell's
West Group Publishing
Western Bank
Xerox Corporation

APPENDIX D

To: Norma Noonan
        MAL Committee

From: Lucie Ferrell
        Terry Cook

Date: April 20, 1995

Re: Review of Course Syllabi, MAL Program

Enclosed is the report of the review of MAL Program syllabi for content and reference to the Leadership Development Model. Specific conclusions and recommendations from this review are:
1. With some exceptions, most syllabi do not include overt reference to the model! Exemplary exceptions are noted*. Most do not indicate in any way how/where a specific course fits into the whole MAL curriculum or the model. Some don't mention leadership.
2. During initial program orientation the model should be presented and discussed as the framework for MAL program. Also, each aspect of the model serves as a thesis idea or topic.
3. The course syllabus needs explicit statements re: The Leadership Development Model and how the course fits into it.
4. This review should be undertaken on a regular basis as an ongoing part of program review.

In addition to the comments about the model in each syllabus, the following general recommendations are offered, also as a result of this review.
1. A consistent syllabus format (including the model) is strongly recommended. There is such wide variance that it is confusing.
2. The syllabus could set the structure and direction for the course.
3. Faculty should (be encouraged to) discuss the syllabus and model at the first meeting of each class.
4. The catalogue description should be included as part of the syllabus. This would help the student see the connection.
5. Text citations should be complete in the syllabus (as example for students and as expectations of them).
6. There are drastic differences between the _same_ course when taught by different professors to the extent that, although each has the same number, they are in actuality different courses.

APPENDIX E

GRADUATE STUDENTS' CHOICE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP

IS THIS A MASTERS DEGREE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

CONSENT FORM
(IRB approval number #96-13-3)

You are invited to take part in a research study of adult students and how they make choices about graduate school. I will specifically examine which attributes of the Master of Arts in Leadership program attracted our MAL students. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a graduate of the MAL program and are currently listed in the 1996-1997 MAL student/alumni directory. I am planning to interview ten MAL students who entered the program between the Fall of 1987 and Fall of 1996. I have chosen the participants through a random selection process.

We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.**Your participation is entirely voluntary.** This study is being conducted by Teresa A. Cook, Augsburg College, Master of Arts in Leadership Program. This study is being conducted by me as part of my master's thesis at Augsburg College. This research is under the supervision of William Swenson, Ph.D.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that attract students to the MAL program. I will examine what students and alumni describe as pertinent factors affecting their decision to enroll at Augsburg. I want to interview MAL alumni who will provide me with a cross-section of some of the occupations that are represented in the MAL student body. The analysis of benefits will add to our knowledge of graduate students and how they decide on the MAL program. Does the MAL program's multidisciplinary liberal arts focus on leadership play a role in student choice? I will examine the reasons individuals choose the MAL program. I am looking for descriptions of benefits that show students being lead to change their personal approach to leadership. This will assist the MAL program in developing future marketing strategies. It may provide new directions for the MAL program to examine. How do MAL students describe the longterm benefits of a Master of Arts degree in Leadership?

PROCEDURES:

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be interviewed about your experiences as a student (past or present) in the MAL program. Your interview will be taped and transcribed for analysis. Each interview will take approximately one hour to complete and will be conducted at a time and location that fits your schedule. I will use an interview/ questionnaire guide to ensure that you and each participant are exposed to the same questions. I will ask you a series of questions that include but are not limited to the following interview questions:

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What can you recall about your search for a graduate program?
> Were there specific components of the MAL program that helped you to choose Augsburg's MAL over other masters programs?
> Were you looking at more than one program? Which programs?
> What helped you choose Augsburg over these other programs?
> How did your experience as an undergraduate student influence your choice of masters program?
> Can you describe experiences in your career that lead you into the Master of Arts in Leadership program?

2. What do you think the key factors were that influenced your final choice of a graduate program?
> What do you think the factors are that lead other students to choose the MAL program?
> Does the focus on leadership play a role in attracting students to this program?

3. How would you describe the benefits of the MAL program to someone who was unfamiliar with the MAL program?
> What aspect or aspects of the MAL program had the greatest impact on you ?
> Please share your thoughts about the MAL program as you experienced it.

4. As you reflect on your own experience as an MAL student, are there benefits or advantages that you were unaware of until you had completed the degree and moved on to new challenges?
> Have these benefits changed over time in a way you could describe for someone who is unfamiliar with MAL and your personal experience of the program? (*alumni of MAL*).

5. How does the structure of the MAL program encourage learning?
> What stands out in your memory as something you learned in this program that you have actually used to help you be a leader?

6. What features of the MAL program contribute to its success, ten years on?

7. What is your response to the following statement?
> *The MAL program brings together diverse work cultures. Educational settings like the MAL program provide an environment where students can challenge the assumptions and practices they encounter at work while searching for better solutions.*

The information you share with me will be kept confidential. My advisor will see the interview data after I have removed identifying information and inserted pseudonyms. In the case where an interview produces insights that I would like to quote directly, your name will not be used.

RISKS AND BENEFITS OF BEING IN THE STUDY

The risks are minimal. *Please note:* I am acting in my role as an MAL student, but I am currently the MAL program coordinator. The information you give me in the interview will be used for my thesis. It may also benefit the MAL program in determining future directions as well as providing a better understanding of what attracts and keeps students in the MAL program. This study will have no physical or psychological risks associated with your participation. I am planning to interview a minimum of five men and five women. I am aware that with the small sample size there is some risk of invasion of privacy of part-

icipants. I will personally transcribe the interviews. Any identifying information will be removed, but there is some risk of invasion of privacy. No one will have access to the interview data before I have removed identifying material. There is no financial or personal credit for your participation in this study. Your participation may help the administration of the MAL program examine practices and assumptions regarding graduate students in the MAL program. It may help improve both the advertising and program descriptions of benefits for future students.

Confidentiality

Your identity and the identity of the company you work for will be kept confidential. Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation or decline to answer any question at any time without prejudice. Research notes, transcripts and tape recordings will be secured and kept confidential. Only the researcher (Terry Cook) will have access to original tapes and transcripts. I will transcribe the information personally. I will assign pseudonyms to individuals to preserve the confidentiality of the individual interviewee. I will assign a number/letter combination like 4E, 11A, to each interview to assist me with keeping the interview data separate. No identifying information about you will be included in any quotes I use. Following my review of the transcriptions, to verify accuracy, the tapes will be destroyed by September 1, 1997. All confidential notes and materials will be destroyed by December 1, 1997.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Augsburg College. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. If you are willing to be interviewed but do not want the interview taped, that is an option for participants.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is Terry Cook. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Terry at 330-1787 or my advisor, Dr. William Swenson at 925-4716.

You will be given a copy of the consent form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers.
I consent to participate in the study.
Signature_____ Date_____

Signature of Investigator_____ Date_____

INTERVIEW TAPING

I would like to tape the interview and use quotes in my thesis where your name is not identified, however, I will not do so without your consent.
I consent to having the interview taped.
Signature_____ Date_____
I do not consent to having the interview taped.
Signature_____ Date_____

USE OF QUOTES

I understand that quotes may be used, but my name will not be identified.
    I agree to have quotes used.
Signature_____ Date_____

    I do not agree to have quotes used.
Signature_____ Date_____

INTERVIEW QUOTES

The following are quotes responding to the specific questions that the researcher posed.

1. What can you recall about your search for a graduate program?

Ashley: "I wasn't actively looking. I knew I had always wanted to do (a master's) at some point in my life, as a value. If I could have created my own program, this would have been it!"

Laura: "I had always thought about going back for a masters. I really didn't think I wanted to go back to the same school. ...I thought normal people go somewhere else and experience a different school setting when they go back for a graduate degree. I really didn't take Augsburg very seriously, until I went to an information session. It was mostly because (the Master of Arts in Leadership program) offered what I was looking for."

Georgina: "I enjoy learning. It could be about my garden, my backyard. I just enjoy the process of learning all the way. It is not unusual for me to embark on some kind of learning. I knew that were I not able to stay (in my current company) I needed something in my portfolio to set me aside.
This was the liberal arts background that I never got to have because I focussed on the business degree.
In an organization, it's people, it's systems, it's communications. People come from a huge diversity of background putting this all together."

Rachel: "I was one of those people who chose my life career back in high school. I found that going back to school as an adult was a completely different experience. It was as though someone had just reached into my head and pushed a button. I couldn't figure out why I would get more narrow in an arena where I needed to broaden. Somehow I needed to communicate with the rest of the world from a focus that was broader. I really wanted to have a masters for career mobility. My interest was in watching all this chaos going on (in my field). It seemed to me there was just a tremendous shortage of leaders and visionaries out there. We were never driving the bus. It was as though someone had designed a curriculum for the way my mind works."

Matthew: "I decided that one of the things getting in my way (at work) was, I didn't have a master's degree. I saw an ad for this program so I thought I would go and listen. The presentation sounded more like what I was interested in."

Yvonne: "I needed something to help me get ahead. Pat Parker told me about a new program at Augsburg. I came over and talked to Joanne Karvonen (first program coordinator). We exchanged information. This seemed like a nice fit. It was going to be a marketing tool."

Alan: "I had actually started looking for a graduate school and participating in one in 1987. I relocated and didn't finish. I started looking through various programs. Hadn't found anything. Thought about an M.B.A. in international management. Almost applied, but it was too technical, too oriented around nuts and bolts and not enough (around) human beings. So I stepped back. A couple of months later a cold flyer dropped out of the blue into my mailbox from the MAL program. This looks like what I was looking for. It was a case of intuitively recognizing (that) I was very interested in the program. Even if I didn't quite know why. It would help me find out why I was interested at the same time as it met my needs. It had that revealing and educational feel about it."

2. What do you think the key factors were that influenced your final choice of a graduate program?

Laura: "I was leaving one job and starting another job. I didn't think this job was going to be as demanding (as my previous job). I had always thought about going back for a masters. I just had an intuitive, literally a gut level sense of excitement reading the descriptions of the courses. Laura had heard others talk about their graduate programs but no one seemed to be having any fun."

Ashley: "I just didn't want a degree that would be narrowing. I wanted a degree that would be broadening. I wanted to be in a program that had a variety of private sector, public sector, non profit sector."

Georgina: "This was the liberal arts background I never got to have because I focussed on the business degree."

Rachel: "I really wanted to have a masters for career mobility. It seemed to me there was just a tremendous shortage of leaders and visionaries out there. We were never driving the bus. It was as though someone had designed this (MAL) curriculum for the way my mind works."

Yvonne: "I needed something to help me get ahead. (The Masters degree) was going to be a marketing tool."

Alan: "This (MAL program) looks like what I was looking for. It was a case of intuitively recognizing (that) I was very interested in the (MAL) program."

Matthew: "I had started a degree in my field. Some of it was finishing off something I didn't finish 20 years ago. I had no desire to get a doctorate but I did have a desire to stop having people ask me why I didn't have a masters (degree)."

3. How would you describe the benefits of the MAL program to someone who is unfamiliar with the MAL program?

Alan: "The MAL is sort of like the integration of a human being into a whole. Making them aware of the world that is out there at the same time so that what people who are MBA's know is something a leader can draw from. I don't think a leader can really be a leader until they integrate themselves with the world and have empathy and comparison and stay connected to people. The MAL, with the wealth and variety that is there, is a way for people to learn to do that well."

Ashley: "I don't believe the pre-graduate 'Ashley' would ever have thought about (some of the steps I've taken) let alone do it. Just in terms of confidence, kind of unlimiting my beliefs. I got better having to present so many papers and speak all the time. Just interacting with people in a confident way, presenting what I believe with conviction.
It is the liberal arts approach to leadership. The real benefit of that is you learn to think critically. So instead of just pouring a bunch of knowledge into you, you take this in and figure out how to apply that to your life. It is probably a life transforming experience, that the possibility is there."

Matthew: "It depends on their personal motivation. People that actually want to mess with the people in organizations and see people as a resource rather than a commodity. (I encourage them to explore the Augsburg MAL program). The program is helpful in terms of defining some of the issues. When you work in public service, you hear how bad public service is. More than half (my cohort group) were in the private sector. The issues are the same. I always thought the corporate world was different."

Yvonne: "One thing I didn't realize at the time (I entered the MAL program). You are not always connected with every decade of age (in your work). The experience I had with all the different ages. Rick Nelson (ML 510 instructor) would ask a question. He would divide you up and you would have to take totally the opposite side. Fascinating. That really made you think."

Laura: "I have heard people talk about the schedule. I've heard people talk about the breadth of topics. Being exposed to some of the things you might otherwise have chosen (was a benefit). I have "

Rachel: "Do you know what it means to tell someone they had a 'seminal idea'? There's a self-esteem component in there. You're talking about interpersonal relationships, you're talking about self-esteem issues. Those are the really important aspects of the program in my opinion. It really did make me a better person. Number one, I'm better read."

4. As you reflect on your own experiences as an MAL student, are there benefits or advantages that you were unaware of until you had completed the degree and moved on to other challenges?

Ashley: "I don't believe the pre-graduate 'Ashley' would ever have thought about (some of the steps I've taken) let alone do it. Just in terms of confidence, kind of unlimiting my beliefs. I got better having to present so many papers and speak all the time. Just interacting with people in a confident way, presenting what I believe with conviction."

Matthew: "I have a better appreciation of taking a slice of the loaf and getting that kind of incremental change. Little slices of wonder bread. A lot of what they had there (at Augsburg) made me a little less crazy."

Georgina: "Everybody changes depending on the circumstances, but I have a personal tendency to go with a (leadership) style. If I were sitting in an employment interview, I could talk about what I could be as a leader and know it would be consistent in what they see in my behavior."

5. How does the structure of the MAL program encourage learning?

Rachel: "Oh my God, my master's program is going to kill me! That feeling countered by the absolute energizing that you get in these courses. When you have this group of like people, sitting around the table and all these different perspectives on these things we were reading...really piqued my interest. Somehow I needed to communicate with the rest of the world from a perspective that was broader than (the narrow world of my everyday work)."

Ashley: "It was a pretty diverse group in terms of, everyone worked full time, most came from corporate life, some from health care and a pretty diverse group of professions."

Matthew: "We had a big age spread. We had a couple right out of college. The strength was with the diversity of classes. We had a wide variety of experiences."

Yvonne: "Whatever you are, whoever you are, let's sit down and we'll all talk. I think all the teachers, professors, facilitators, were as excited about us as we were to be there. The experience we had with all the different ages. You are what your life experience is."

Laura: "I decided I wanted a program that had a balance of men and women. I work mostly with men, and if anything, I needed to continue to grow in that communication skill. I wanted a program that was interdisciplinary, so I was very attracted by the course descriptions and the model of leadership. How it branched out and how the courses were tied to that (model)."

Georgina: "Diversity in your background, in your formal education, has some value. I'm in a business that is male dominated and guess what? Feeling good

about myself around women isn't necessarily going to get me where I need to be in my business. You would read a book and twelve people would come to class with 12 different papers. We're just all very different people. ..."

6. What features of the MAL program contribute to its success, ten years on?

Matthew: "I think I have a broader view of systems and how they interact and what is needed in organizations. (I am) infinitely more suspicious. I have less tolerance for all the management crap. From the thesis process and what I wrote, I got some better understanding of just how to work in the decision making world and how many players there are. I have a better appreciation of taking a slice of the loaf and getting that kind of incremental change. Little slices of wonder bread. A lot of what they had there (at Augsburg) made me a little less crazy."

Yvonne: "It was so reaffirming. That is not what I thought I was looking for."

Laura: "My views are as good as anyone else's (views). I can put forward ideas. As long as they're thought out, they're rational, I can explain them, I've done my homework, I've got the background, my views are just as valid. I would come out of work and be exhausted. (I'd) think, how am I going to make it through class tonight? I would go to class. After an hour and a half, I would drive home and I would consciously be smiling. I have more energy and I am higher than when I came out of work. Something happens for me, just hearing and interacting (with students and teachers) that gave me energy. That was a surprise. The thesis was another surprise. I never thought I would enjoy writing a thesis. That was where a lot of rewards came for me, in the process of doing it. It is still continuing. From the master's program I recognized in myself the need for continual learning of some sort."

Georgina: "I've been able to identify, either enhance or modify my leadership style. I have some frames of reference from all the different disciplines and then I have myself. I have a tendency to go with a style (of leadership)."

7. What is your response to the following statement?

The MAL program brings together diverse work cultures. Educational settings such as the MAL program provide an environment where students can challenge the assumptions and practices they encounter at work while searching for better solutions.

Alan: "The variety of people are almost as valuable, if not more valuable, than anything the instructor brings in. It's like mental and educational bumper cars. Yes, the instructor may be more skilled at driving his (or her) bumper car. But it's still a bumper car! Off we go. It's great!

I needed an environment, atmosphere, where I could practice what I was learning. So I joined the board of a volunteer organization. If I hadn't had this (work) supporting what I was learning, I don't know if (the experience) would have been as valuable."

Rachel: "You develop some intimacies with people in classes that you don't have with any other person in you life, on that level. No one puts you in those situations in real life. You capture something in these classrooms that's not going to be reinvented anywhere else."

Ashley: "We really got to know each other. There was a lot of support there. We all felt pretty comfortable, I think, challenging one another's work and asking questions. The experience everyone talked about was that intellectual stimulation. It was very rewarding. For two years, I looked forward to going to class. I never dreaded those eight hour Saturdays because it was always so interesting."

Matthew: "There were a lot of folks who had been in the workforce awhile. (They) were not content with "because I said so". One of the valuable things in the program and it did attract me, was you go through with the same people. I know that's changed."

Yvonne: "They listened and you knew they were listening. Even those you didn't agree with. I got more respect for the conservative point of view."

Laura: "That perspective. Sometimes we think, there's only one way (to view an issue). You get an assignment to read a book. There's not going to be much to talk about with this class period. There's only one way to look at (the book). Every time, I was always blown off from that isolated, narrow perception. Everyone in that room had a different way to look at the book. It was mind expanding. Also so humbling. It's what I think good education is supposed to be. Make you realize how much you don't know. Almost from the beginning, there were new people in every class."

THEMES

COMMON GROUND

Ashley: "One of the unifying things in our group of very diverse people is everyone of them were, maybe dissatisfied is the wrong word, but there was something missing in their current work situation. I'm sure everyone changed personally and maybe chose to look at things differently. But it was the searching for something more. That really met a need."

Matthew: "What makes sense is trying to get people motivated. (Rick) Thoni and (Ryan) LaHurd were going about this (MAL program) assuming people were competent."

Yvonne: "It's the respect for students. If you weren't there and you didn't participate, you weren't giving them what they'd come for. You respected the energy and the fact they were there. It's a group of people learning about leadership. You need to pay attention."