



**Center for
Justice, Tolerance
& Community**
University
of California
Santa Cruz

**FEEDING THE FIRE:
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE
DIGITAL BRIDGE ACADEMY FACULTY
TRAINING**

**Miranda Schirmer
Rachel Rosner
Rebecca London
Heather Bullock**

**Center for Justice, Tolerance, & Community
University of California, Santa Cruz**

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FEEDING THE FIRE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE DIGITAL BRIDGE ACADEMY FACULTY TRAINING

Executive Summary

The Digital Bridge Academy (DBA) is a program at Cabrillo College's Watsonville campus that offers students an accelerated academic community college program within a supportive learning environment. The DBA program philosophy is based on the concept of "lighting the fire within," helping students to reassess their educational experience, develop a true sense of self-efficacy and potential, and reclaim their motivation to learn.¹ The program is specifically designed for those students who are at-risk, high-risk, and under prepared for both higher education and well-paying careers.

Prior research has demonstrated the successes of the Watsonville DBA in serving at-risk and high-risk students (Badway, 2005 and 2007). The program is in its pilot phase of expansion within Cabrillo College and is piloting replication at several other California community colleges as well. Up until this point, replication efforts have focused on training community college faculty to apply DBA developed principles in their course curriculum. The faculty members are central both to the success of the replication process and to preparing students with diverse backgrounds to excel in the competitive global economy. Because faculty are key to the success of the DBA, the research project described in this report aims to shed light on the DBA faculty trainings' potential for "feeding the fire" of faculty members, keeping their desire and inspiration for teaching ignited, and ultimately leading to more effective teaching in both DBA and non-DBA classes.

...Many faculty members craved more support and training for teaching in general.

Although the DBA is intended to reach the highest risk community college students, the curriculum or philosophy could be applicable to faculty in many of their courses. The DBA curriculum might also be relevant to community college faculty who never intend to teach DBA courses, but want professional development training in how better to reach all of their students. With this hypothesis in mind, the Cabrillo Community College District contracted the Center for Justice, Tolerance, and Community (CJTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz to conduct an evaluation of their 2007 summer faculty training, focusing specifically on how the DBA philosophy and curriculum aid faculty in teaching their DBA and non-DBA courses.

The CJTC is an applied research center that studies issues of social justice such as educational equity, with the aim of informing policy debates and community based efforts. Having completed an evaluation of the first faculty training in the summer of 2006 – which demonstrated the effectiveness of preparing faculty to teach portions of the DBA foundation course – this year CJTC researchers evaluated potential spillover effects of the DBA specifically on faculty members' non-DBA courses.

¹ For more detailed information on the DBA model, refer to Chapter 2 of the report titled, Digital Bridge Academy Program and Philosophy.

Non-DBA courses are those that are not specifically geared toward a cohort of DBA students, though students who have participated in the DBA may be students.

The overarching research questions for this study were:

- What is the effect of the DBA faculty training in non-DBA courses?
- What are the implications for community colleges?

To examine these questions, researchers from the CJTC observed training activities and interviewed faculty trainees and administrators. Our results indicate that the DBA trainings have helped to “feed the fire” for returning faculty as they breathe new life into their teaching. The implications are potentially far reaching. The DBA model can provide high quality professional development to faculty, students and administrators, while also building cohorts to support its continuation and growth. We have heard from faculty how the multifaceted approach of the DBA has helped them discover new methods for engaging with their curriculum, preparing students to succeed in college, and working within the community college system.

Incorporating DBA Curriculum, Tools and Principles

Most of the faculty members had integrated the DBA curriculum, tools and principles into their non-DBA courses; however the degree to which this occurred varied. For some, the DBA training affirmed techniques they used already or had used in the past. For others, the DBA training introduced them to a variety of tools they had not previously considered. For instance, the Learning Styles assessment is one of the primary DBA tools in which the faculty have been trained and it figures prominently in teaching the Foundation Course. During our interviews, faculty members mentioned this tool more frequently than any other, noting that they intentionally incorporated this framework into their courses. Some took examples from the Learning Styles curriculum and sprinkled exercises throughout their course. Others used the Learning Styles strategies in a more comprehensive way, with one faculty member saying he “overhauled” all of his courses to incorporate it. Some hoped to incorporate DBA exercises more in the future. Instructors also described how they incorporated the DBA principles, or guiding theories, into their courses.

*“When I went through the training I came out with a different perspective on myself, now that I am using it in the classroom I have a different perspective on my students.”
- Faculty member*

Changes in Approach

The interviews highlighted three areas of change with regard to faculty members’ approach to teaching and to their professional relationships: (1) internal changes related to self-awareness; (2) views of their students and different ways of interacting with them; and (3) changes in their interactions at the community college level. Faculty viewed the personal implications of the training very seriously and many felt that developing an awareness of how one’s own strengths and weaknesses play out in their classroom was the precursor for all other levels of professional development.

Perhaps one of the most consistent responses was that faculty developed a greater level of self-awareness in the DBA training. For them, this self-awareness clarified issues related to their teaching and even their relationships outside the classroom, including, but not limited to: Why in the past they had had difficulty in some subjects or situations and excelled in others; why they had connected or not connected with some of their students; the reasons behind their particular approach to teaching and how they might want to make changes to their approach.

Many of the faculty members we interviewed commented on differences in how they interacted with students before and after the training. Some expressed that the impact of this new way of interacting with students showed up in improved retention rates, meaning that they had more students finishing the course. Some also reported that one effect of their new DBA-infused approach was stronger relationships *between* students.

Changes in communication and interaction extended to faculty's relationships with colleagues also. For some, the DBA was an opportunity to build a community on campus – in much the same way that the DBA director encourages students to build a community at school. Many of the faculty members expressed that the DBA training gave them a welcome opportunity to discuss teaching approaches and we eager to share elements of the DBA with their colleagues.

“[I] came to a place in my class where I gave really riveting lectures. I don’t usually lecture much. But when I talk about justice, freedom, will, finding voice, humanity, I feel even more inspired and came across better to students... I catch myself really going deep.”
- Faculty Member

Although not intending to make radical changes in their colleges, many faculty members have used their DBA training in formal ways to influence their colleges on an institutional scale. For example, two faculty members on one campus are in the process of planning an abbreviated version of the DBA training for faculty members and administrators so that the content and principles of the DBA can be more widely shared and used on their campus. The application goes beyond curriculum and teaching approach; faculty can also see the need for improved communication throughout the college administration and for leadership in this area. The 2007 DBA training included a module that delves more deeply into acknowledging how people communicate and how to be an authentic and an effective communicator.

“I’m just processing it still. It’s a lot of work to determine how to integrate it.”
- Faculty member

Challenges to Incorporation

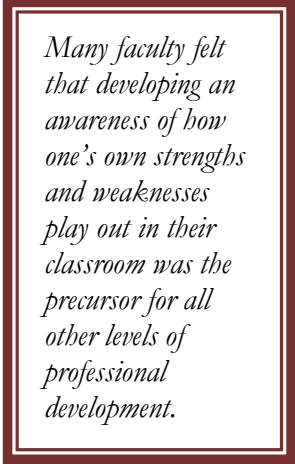
The current DBA faculty training is a pilot version of what will eventually become a larger more developed training and adoption strategy. While much has been learned, there are still challenges to incorporating these components into non-DBA courses in consistent ways. In some cases the instructors reported that they intended to integrate more of their DBA training into their courses but that they had not determined the best way to do it or did not have the time to devote to determine the best way to do so. Instructors were open to suggestions about which aspects of the DBA work well in non-DBA courses.

Faculty members also perceived a tension between meeting content requirements of the existing courses and adding on DBA curriculum to their syllabi. In some cases, instructors felt that the content of the DBA curriculum – the Learning Styles curriculum, for instance – is not appropriate

material to cover in a non-DBA course on Anthropology or Math, for instance. One instructor explained that the DBA teaching approach worked well in her Basic Skills classes but that her “more advanced classes have students with more agency,” and hence the DBA approach might not work as well. Faculty trainees described some instances of student resistance that also posed challenges for them.

Looking to the Future

The DBA faculty training is a valuable means for offering professional development to college faculty. We recommend that the following five recommendations be addressed thoroughly before moving forward with attempts to move the DBA’s current successes at community colleges to scale at the four-year universities. (1) recruit and train a critical mass of faculty at each replicating college; (2) provide even more support to faculty cohorts in sharing their strategies and techniques for incorporating the DBA curriculum and materials into their non-DBA courses; (3) leverage the value of the DBA as a professional development opportunity to attract new faculty and allies in administration; (4) strategically tap into the Basic Skills Initiative resources for DBA capacity building and expansion resources; and (5) amass data to support the DBA’s impacts on students to build clout in university and academic circles.

A quote in a decorative box with a double-line border. The text is italicized and reads: "Many faculty felt that developing an awareness of how one's own strengths and weaknesses play out in their classroom was the precursor for all other levels of professional development."

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE DIGITAL BRIDGE ACADEMY FACULTY TRAINING

Chapter One: Introduction and Research Questions

“Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.”
William Butler Yeats

Introduction

As community colleges and universities struggle to prepare students for an increasingly knowledge-based economy, students of all ages are finding themselves under-prepared for and underserved by the U.S. public education system (Day and Newburger, 2002). Furthermore, California’s funding for public higher education institutions – especially community colleges – does not meet the demand of a growing number of students (Murphy, 2004).² Although funding is a primary concern, other equally valuable resources are also being stretched, including instructors’ time, which affects their abilities to develop skills in order to fully engage with their students and institutions.

Strong attempts toward reform have occurred at all levels of the public education system. For instance, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa campaigned to take over the L.A. Unified School District after calling high school dropout rates “the civil rights issue of our time” (Landsburg, 2006). Outside of California, school districts in Seattle and Louisville unsuccessfully defended the policies they had designed to decrease racial segregation amongst their public schools. And at the national level this issue is getting attention too. The National Center on Education in the Economy recently released a widely regarded report entitled, *Tough Choices or Tough Times*, arguing that:

This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the workforce...in which high levels of education – a very different kind of education than most of us have had – are going to be the only security there is.... The core problem is that our education and training systems were built for another era. (NCES, 2006)

While these drastic actions and dramatic critiques are taking place, new programs are also emerging. The Digital Bridge Academy (DBA) at Cabrillo College in Watsonville, California is one such program. Housed within the community college system – long the starting place for education and training for America’s working and low income people – the program is specifically designed for those students who are at-risk, high-risk, and under prepared for both higher education and well-paying careers.

The DBA program philosophy is based on the concept of “lighting the fire within,” helping students to reassess their educational experience, develop a true sense of self-efficacy and potential, reclaim

² California’s community colleges ranked 45th out of 49 states in terms of revenues spent per student. In the last 30 years there have been increases in real per student revenue of nearly 25 percent for the University of California while the community colleges saw only a 4 percent increase in real per student revenue.

their motivation to learn and envision a future for themselves that they perhaps did not see before.³ It offers students an accelerated academic community college program and the opportunity to experience a positive learning environment. The DBA has two major components: (1) a two-week Foundation Course – an immersion-style program in which students work intensively to get to know each other as a cohort and focus on their own and others’ learning styles and communication styles; and (2) a Bridge Semester in which the cohort takes a full load of courses.

Prior research has demonstrated the successes of the Watsonville DBA in serving these students (Badway, 2005 and 2007). More recently, the program is entering into a new phase, focusing more on piloting expansion within Cabrillo College and replication at other California community colleges. This replication has focused largely on the training of community college faculty, who are charged with the enormous task of preparing a diverse array of students for success in the competitive global economy. As mentioned, the DBA philosophy asserts the need to “light the fire” of community college students; here we argue that it is also necessary to “feed the fire” of faculty members, keeping ignited their desire and inspiration for teaching which can ultimately lead to more effective teaching in both DBA and non-DBA classes.

The DBA philosophy asserts the need to “light the fire” of community college students; here we argue that it is also necessary to “feed the fire” of faculty members, keeping ignited their desire and inspiration for teaching which can ultimately lead to more effective teaching in both DBA and non-DBA classes

The Feeding the Fire Study

Although the DBA is intended to reach the highest risk community college students, the DBA curriculum could be useful to faculty in all their courses. In fact, the DBA curriculum might be relevant to community college faculty who never intend to teach in the DBA but want professional development training in how better to reach all of their students. With this hypothesis in mind, the Cabrillo Community College District contracted with the CJTC in the spring of 2007 to evaluate potential spillover effects of the DBA training and pilot replication efforts on faculty members’ non-DBA courses. Non-DBA courses are those which are not specifically geared toward a cohort of DBA students, though students who have participated in the DBA may be students. This study builds upon the previous year evaluation conducted by CJTC (London, Smith, and George, 2006) titled, *Passing the Torch: An Evaluation of the Digital Bridge Academy Replication*, which found that the DBA’s first training effectively taught faculty to teach the Foundation Course. In particular, the study showed that faculty other than the DBA founder could successfully teach the Foundation Course, that students other than rural Latino youth (the original cohorts) could benefit from the program, and that the training approach was successful in helping faculty new to the DBA embrace its components.

In this second study, we examine the effect of the DBA faculty training on non-DBA courses and the broader implications this has for faculty and community colleges. As the DBA is a multi-leveled learning experience, we must emphasize that the focus of this research is on just one layer of this process. This evaluation concentrates on spillover effects for faculty after they have completed the DBA professional development training. The overarching research questions are: (1) What is the effect of the DBA faculty training in non-DBA courses; and (2) What are the implications for

³ For more information about the DBA, see Navarro (2005).

community colleges? To address these broader questions, we posed the following specific research questions:

- How effective was last summer's training at preparing returning faculty trainees to teach the Foundation Course?
- What effect does the DBA training have on faculty in non-DBA courses in terms of teaching, rapport with students, and classroom management?
- What aspects of the DBA curriculum have faculty trainees incorporated into their non-DBA courses?
- How did faculty relationships with students change because of the DBA training (beyond curriculum and tools)?
- What are some possible implications of the DBA training for the community colleges and potentially beyond?

Report Outline

In Chapter 2 we discuss the background for the study, including a description of the DBA, our previous DBA research, and the history and progress of the replication process. Chapter 3 discusses the study methodology. In Chapter 4 we focus on how faculty members have incorporated the DBA tools and exercises into their curriculum for their non-DBA courses. In Chapter 5 we discuss the changes faculty members perceive in their approach to teaching since the DBA training in 2006. In Chapter 6 we present our findings regarding the challenges to incorporating DBA principles and curriculum into non-DBA courses. Chapter 7 offers some thoughts on future directions of the DBA training. Appendix A offers a list of terms and definitions used in this report and Appendix B includes the interview protocol.

Chapter Two: DBA Background

Digital Bridge Academy Program and Philosophy

The DBA is a program at Cabrillo College's Watsonville campus that offers students an accelerated academic community college program and the opportunity to experience a positive learning environment. In addition to a fast paced interactive curriculum, the DBA uses innovative strategies to engage students, create the conditions for the cohorts to bond as a group, and give students tools to help them to succeed in college. For instance, teachers use self-disclosure, in which they share introspectively from their own lives, as a way to authentically communicate with students, building their trust and capturing their attention. In the DBA classroom, mistakes are framed as learning opportunities.

Importantly, Watsonville DBA students reported strong increases in motivation and self-efficacy as a result of the program. They rated the program very highly, in many cases calling it "life changing."

The DBA has two major components, the Foundation Course and the Bridge Semester. Each cohort of DBA students (up to 30 students) begins with a two week Foundation Course – an immersion-style program in which students work intensively to get to know each other as a cohort, understand their own and others' learning and communications styles, and learn ways to work together in teams. Then the cohort takes a full load of courses during the Bridge Semester: an IT course, a literacy course, a movement course, and an educational planning course, that all feed into the project based course. All of the Bridge Semester courses feed into a social justice primary research projects. By keeping the cohort together in the Bridge Semester, the DBA allows for deep bonding that serves the students through this educational journey. At the center of the DBA philosophy is a desire to make school relevant and meaningful for students, to teach them skills for success in both school and the workplace and to create for them an educational experience in which they are able to express emotions and have time to reflect.⁴

Some fundamental principles that underpin the curricula and approach to DBA classrooms are:

- Instructors should model successful and appropriate behavior, and students will learn from their example, better preparing them for academia and the workplace.
- School should be relevant to students and an effort should be made to relate course material to students' lives.
- Personal reflection and self-awareness is valuable.
- Student learning communities are a powerful tool for helping students learn and stay in school.
- The classroom should be safe and fun.
- Authentic communication in which instructors are honest and self-reflective is useful for connecting with students and building their trust.
- Expectations should be clear.

The DBA founder and staff are cognizant of the need for specific skills in the increasingly knowledge-based economy and have recognized that many schools are not teaching or training students for this new workplace. The DBA operates in the spirit of the quote: "Success in the

⁴ Text describing the DBA in this section and in other places in the report comes from a variety of materials produced by the DBA and its partners.

knowledge economy comes to those who know themselves – their strengths, values and how they best perform” (Drucker, 1999, p. 65). In order to help students better know themselves, the DBA program has several key elements. First, a learning styles framework, developed by Spherical Dynamics Inc., contributes to greater self-awareness, supports the development of individualized strategies for success in school and encourages individuals to form learning groups in which members’ learning styles are likely to complement one other.⁵

Another key element, using the “Laws of Conversation” model,⁶ focuses on developing authentic communication skills that are vital to the classroom, the workplace and personal lives. There is also a behavior system that is integrated throughout the DBA program where students learn important skills, such as: attendance and timeliness, appropriate language, assignment completion and timeliness, learning to focus, and attitude (participates in class discussions and activities and avoids side conversations and put-downs). As students progress through the program they will be eligible to apply for a DBA internship where they can use what they have learned in the Bridge Semester to a more employment oriented experience running the DBA recruiting, enrollment, and student support work systems. In addition to offering students experience with typical knowledge-work systems, such as working in a team, the students in internships, as well as those that take the post-Bridge Semester DBA seminars, are able to remain connected to other DBA students and faculty even after they have transitioned into traditional community college courses.

An external evaluation has shown the success of the Watsonville DBA program – which includes both the two-week Foundation Course and an accelerated Bridge Semester – in keeping these students enrolled in school and helping them to improve their grades, increasing their potential for high-wage and high-demand careers (Badway, 2005 and 2007). Importantly, Watsonville DBA students reported strong increases in motivation and self-efficacy as a result of the program. They rated the program very highly, in many cases calling it “life changing.”

The DBA Replication

Initially, the DBA served predominantly Latino youth from the Watsonville area, and the centerpiece of the program, the Foundation Course, was taught exclusively by program Founder and Director, Diego James Navarro. However, faculty members and administrators at Cabrillo and other community colleges have recognized the tremendous value the DBA could bring to them and their student populations.

From its inception in 2002, the DBA was designed to be replicable at community colleges throughout California. During the summer of 2006, the DBA Director began the pilot expansion phase, training faculty and administrators at six California community colleges to replicate the program (Cabrillo College, College of Alameda, Las Positas College, Merritt College, Berkeley City College and San Jose City College). The expansion involves scaling up the program at Cabrillo College and bringing the DBA to other California community college campuses. The first newly trained instructors taught the DBA curriculum to students in August, 2006.

⁵ Please refer to Appendix A for a definition of the learning styles framework and other terms used in this report.

⁶ Developed by Conversant of Boulder, CO. See:

http://www.conversant.com/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

The second step in the pilot phase of replication took place in June, 2007. During that month, six faculty members who were involved in the previous training as well as over 20 new faculty members participated in a second training. This second round included an additional module of the Foundation Course curriculum on the DBA's Laws of Conversation curriculum (see Appendix A) and spent more time discussing the general program structure and various components of the overall replication strategy. Later stages of the expansion, after the pilot phase is complete, will include increasing the number of students who can be taught in one DBA Foundation Course, training and using teaching assistants in this larger Foundation Course, and building the accelerated Bridge Semester and integrated curriculum at each of the pilot colleges before scaling throughout the state, and eventually, nation-wide.

Passing the Torch

As mentioned earlier, researchers from the CJTC conducted an evaluation of the training process. The resulting report entitled, *Passing the Torch: An Evaluation of the Digital Bridge Academy Replication* (London, Smith, and George, 2006), examined the pilot phase of the faculty training (which covered the first week the Foundation Course). Another 2006 report by the CJTC entitled, *Policy and Institutional Issues Related to the Digital Bridge Academy Replication*, discussed the policy-related issues involved with replicating the program at other colleges (Navarro, Smith, George, and London, 2006).

Feeding the Fire is a follow-up study to Passing the Torch, intended to examine the effects of the training one year after the pilot group of faculty members were initially trained, and to specifically examine how the training affected their teaching in their non-DBA courses

of

The main findings of *Passing the Torch* are that faculty other than the DBA founder can successfully learn and teach the DBA Foundation Course curriculum and principles, that students of all ethnicities and geographic locations respond positively to the DBA's Foundation Course, and that the training pilot was generally well-designed for preparing the next generation of DBA faculty. From the faculty members' perspective the training was very well done. One instructor recalled: "It was extremely instructive. We learned how to do every detail. With one week in Santa Cruz and one week in Merritt, by the time we got back we had it all together."

Feeding the Fire is a follow-up study to *Passing the Torch*, intended to examine the effects of the training one year after the pilot group of faculty members were initially trained, and to specifically examine how the training affected their teaching in their non-DBA courses. As a follow-up to the *Passing the Torch* evaluation, we asked instructors during the course of the research in June 2007 whether they felt prepared to teach the Foundation Course. All reported that they felt well prepared to teach the Foundation Course though some had not yet begun to teach it at their schools. Many also stated that participating in teaching the curriculum in a classroom with students at Merritt College, Las Positas College, and College of Alameda was particularly helpful to solidifying their understanding of the program.

DBA Faculty

Who is the next generation of DBA faculty? The 15 faculty members who participated in the Summer 2006 training came from a range of disciplines, such as mathematics, English, geology, sociology, and auto mechanics. Some of the trainees were administrators or counselors, and some of

trainees went on to teach the Foundation Course and others did not. It was a multiracial group of trainees with a majority of women.

One of the recommendations from the *Passing the Torch* report was about whom should be recruited as DBA faculty, identifying two criteria that seem critical for success: (1) a strong commitment to the curriculum and (2) relevant personal stories and comfort with introspection in order to be authentic with students. All of the trainees from 2006 met these criteria. They were a self-selected group, many of whom reported that they had long been interested in the style and philosophy of teaching that they found in the DBA.

Among the six of these original 15 who returned for a second year of training, the most common reason given for coming back was that they felt committed to the program and inspired by what they learned, and particularly by Navarro's approach and curriculum. We interviewed four of the faculty who did not return by phone, and they cited time constraints and commitments to other projects as reasons for not attending the training in 2007. They each emphasized that they believed in the program and wanted to continue to participate. Faculty who had a cohort of DBA trained faculty at their colleges expressed a particular commitment to continuing to share this work with their colleagues. Those faculty who participated in the trainings reported that they were drawn to the DBA because they were open to improving their teaching and learning about new curriculum and pedagogies to reach students.

The DBA staff's expansion goals were to lead a pilot training of faculty and provide Foundation Courses at three colleges. These expansion goals were fully met.

Degrees of Adoption

At the time of the *Passing the Torch* report, the DBA staff's expansion goals were to lead a pilot training of faculty and provide Foundation Courses at three colleges. These expansion goals were fully met. The summer faculty trainings were conducted, and the Foundation courses were taught at three additional colleges: College of Alameda, Las Positas College, and Merritt College.

The Summer 2006 training also included faculty members from Cabrillo College, Berkeley City College and San Jose City College. Faculty members from Berkeley City College and San Jose City College were involved in the training but the DBA staff did not intend to expand to those colleges at this time. In the 2007 training, there was representation from College of Alameda, Las Positas College, Merritt College, Cabrillo as well as some attendees from Laney College of Oakland and East L.A. College.⁷ Although the *Passing the Torch* report asserted the potential replicability of the DBA Foundation Course, the degree to which the program has become institutionally adopted at the various schools included in the pilot has ranged.

Apart from Cabrillo College – where the DBA was founded and where it is now expanding – the DBA has been most fully adopted at the Las Positas Community College in Livermore. At this college the faculty members have been especially pro-active and have developed their program somewhat beyond the DBA staff's planned replication timeline. Four faculty members attended the Summer 2006 training and an additional four attended the June 2007 training. At Las Positas, the

⁷ Laney, Alameda, Merritt and Berkeley are all in the same community college district.

Foundation Course was taught in the Fall of 2006 and will be taught again in the Fall of 2007 and their version of the DBA Bridge Semester is also in place. The student cohort takes the same set of courses together during the rest of the semester and the faculty members who teach these courses met weekly to discuss the progression of each student. The Las Positas faculty members were also planning a three day DBA training workshop for faculty and administrators at their school to learn more about the program.

Other colleges have had different degrees of adoption: College of Alameda and Merritt College each offered the DBA Foundation Course in the Fall of 2006, but have since not offered the course or developed a Bridge Semester. Both colleges continue to have faculty members who are trained to teach the DBA, who use the DBA curriculum and principles and who are committed to the program despite full adoption at their schools. The fact that the program is not more fully developed at these schools is not an indication of any failure; they fully met the DBA staff's replication timeline goals.

The institutional adoption of the DBA program has varied widely and has been affected by a variety of factors that appear to do more with the individual institutions than the DBA training. In this report, we concentrate on the ways that the faculty trainees have individually adopted the DBA program and especially the ways that the program has been integrated into faculty teaching approaches, curriculum and ways of relating to students.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

To conduct the evaluation of the DBA replication process, the CJTC research team observed the June 2007 training and conducted in-person and phone interviews with key informants. A brief survey was collected with a total of 22 responses from both new and returning faculty members; these were used primarily to cross check our interview data for consistency.

While observing the faculty training in June of 2007, we interviewed key informants for the study, focusing primarily on faculty and administrators from the participating colleges who had attended the summer 2006 training. The topics covered in these interviews related to the research questions. Some of the interview questions included:

- In what ways, if at all, has the DBA training changed your style or approach to teaching?
- Do you see a need for the DBA curriculum/principles in non-DBA classes?
- Have you incorporated any of the DBA curriculum into your non-DBA courses?
- How, if at all, did your relationships with students change because of the DBA training?
- Would you recommend the DBA training to others? If yes, for which of the following purposes: Professional development, to better connect with students, better student retention, better classroom management, none of the above?

The complete protocol used for these interviews is in Appendix B.⁸ The faculty members who were at both the Summer 2006 and June 2007 trainings were interviewed in person. Those who had attended the Summer 2006 but not the June 2007 training were interviewed over the phone. In total we conducted 11 interviews, four of which were with faculty members who did not attend the June 2007 training and whom we interviewed over the phone. We were unable to reach an additional five faculty members, who were away from their jobs during the summer months in which this study was conducted.

In addition to the interviews, the research team members were present to observe the training sessions. The first portion of the training was called the Faculty Experiential Training and included directly experiencing the DBA's Foundation Course curriculum. The second portion of the training, the Faculty Instructional Training, included more of an overview of the program and time for discussing the replication strategy. Researchers were present for seven of the 11 days of trainings. We focused our observation on the research questions, paying attention to the faculty members' conversations with the DBA Founder and one another about how they have used and integrated their DBA training in various ways into the courses they teach.

⁸ The two Likert scale questions in the interview protocol were answered by the respondents in a more narrative manner; therefore they were not quantified and were instead folded into the interview response discussion.

Chapter Four: Incorporating DBA Curriculum, Tools and Principles

“A lot of times I was doing things in my classroom but didn’t have a name for it. [Now] DBA is the name for it.”
- Faculty member

Initially, the DBA did not envision its training as primarily a form of general professional development for faculty. The DBA Director and staff were interested in expanding the program, and faculty and administrators were eager to adopt their own DBA programs. The need for the training emerged as a result. However, in the year after the Summer 2006 training, the faculty trainees were reporting to each other and to the DBA Director how much the training had transformed how they teach in general. Even though many of the trainees were not teaching the Foundation Course, they still reported using their DBA experience and knowledge regularly in their classrooms. The professional development aspects of the DBA training emerged organically from the faculty members’ experiences.

The importance of professional development for community college faculty was recently put forth in a report initiated by the California Community Colleges System Office (Center for Student Success and the Research and Planning Group of the California Community College System, 2007). With the focus on professional development as a backdrop, the CJTC undertook a more systematic examination of how the DBA has affected faculty instructors in ways that go beyond the original focus of the training. While the *Passing the Torch* evaluation goes into a description and assessment of the key training outcomes in great detail, we list them here as touch-points for this assessment of the impact of the DBA training on faculty one year later, especially in their non-DBA courses. The key faculty outcomes for both summer trainings, which were designed by the DBA director and staff, were to:

- Have a value for and demonstrated ability to self disclose internal processes and wounds.
- Understand that there’s no such thing as failing – learning happens through mistakes.
- Have a value in community and an experience of building community with each other.
- Experience authentic communication and community.
- Experience and understand there is outside-in and inside-out learning.

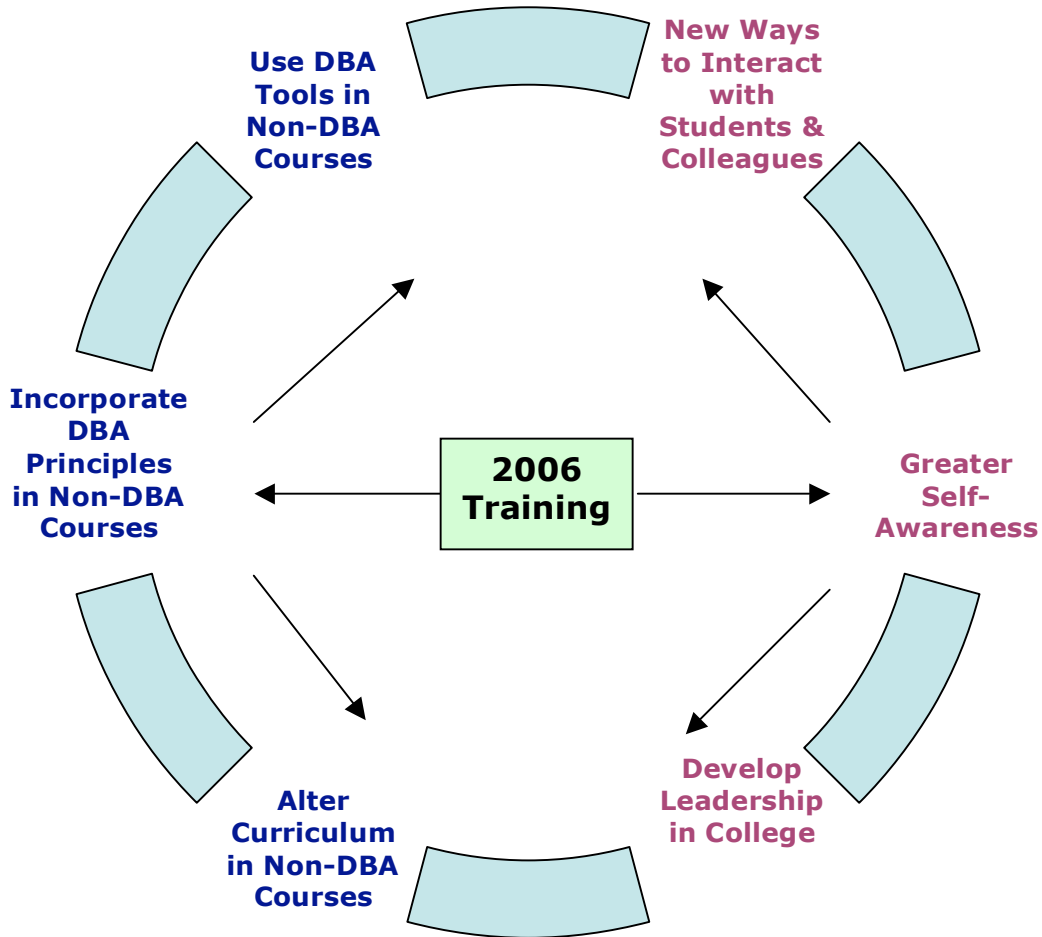
Even though many of the trainees were not teaching the Foundation Course, they still reported using their DBA experience and knowledge regularly in their classrooms. The professional development aspects of the DBA training emerged organically from the faculty members’ experiences.

Framework of Multifaceted Changes

The premise of this study is that the DBA faculty training affects not only faculty members’ teaching in DBA courses, but also their teaching in non-DBA courses. We set out to explore the ways in which this occurs. We were not focused on other ways that the DBA training might affect trainees, but found that the training impacted not only their teaching, but also their self-awareness, their personal lives, and their interactions with their colleagues and others. Figure 1 shows pictorially the ways that the DBA training has affected faculty trainees. The circle’s elements include personal, professional, and institutional change. Those to the left (in blue) relate to curricular changes, with

their use of the DBA principles as the driving element, and those to the right (in purple) relate to changes regarding engagement with students, colleagues and their institutions, with greater self awareness as a driving element.

Figure 1
Framework for Understanding Changes in the Faculties' Approach to Teaching and Use of DBA Tools, Curriculum and Principals



The framework was developed after compiling faculty members' responses to our interview questions to capture their individual and collective experiences. In this chapter we focus mainly on the ways that faculty members are incorporating DBA *curriculum and tools* into their non-DBA courses, saving faculty members' perceived changes regarding *approach and interaction* for Chapter 5.

Effects of the DBA Training on Non-DBA Teaching

The degree to which instructors incorporated their DBA tools and curriculum into their non-DBA courses varied. For some, the DBA training affirmed the use of techniques they used already or had used in the past; as one instructor remarked: “DBA validated what I was already doing and gave me more ideas on what to do differently.” Another recalled an exercise she had used in her classes until she was being reviewed for tenure and was concerned that the exercise would not be viewed by course evaluators as professional enough. After the DBA training, she reinstated the exercise and received positive feedback from students about it.

For others, the DBA training introduced them to a variety of new tools. Some took these examples and sprinkled exercises throughout their curriculum and others utilized DBA strategies in a more comprehensive way, with one faculty member saying he “overhauled” all of his courses. Below we examine this issue along the following dimensions: (1) how instructors use the DBA curriculum, or exercises, in their courses, (2) how DBA tools, such as the Learning Styles framework, are used, and (3) how DBA principles are incorporated into non-DBA courses.

Because the Summer 2006 faculty training was not designed to include information on how faculty members should incorporate the DBA into their non-DBA courses, the ways that the instructors have done this was described by them as “flying by the seat of our pants” or “playing with the material.” Some faculty members truly took ownership of the program and modified it according to their needs. One instructor who had modified the DBA curriculum expressed to the DBA Director, that “I was wondering – is this DBA? – I couldn’t ask you, Diego, so I just went ahead and did it.”

DBA Curriculum and Tools

Faculty members reported using the DBA “whip-around” exercises – in which each person responds briefly to a simple question – as a way to get all the students in the class to speak at least once. In this way, the faculty member reported that the exercise can remove some of the fear the students might have about public speaking. One English teacher said that she used the DBA’s

*“DBA validated what I was already doing and gave me more ideas on what to do differently.”
- Faculty member*

timeline exercise – in which students draw a timeline of major events in their lives – as a spring board for a writing project. Another said that she “Re-did all my lectures to incorporate the DBA whereas before I just used the textbook.”

The DBA Bridge Semester, which follows the Foundation Course, seeks to integrate courses where the goal is to begin to link course material between the Bridge courses. This model inspired two of the faculty members at Las Positas to experiment with integration of their courses: “We did one small little integrated project between our courses during our Bridge Semester. I made them do the calculations by hand and then in the other class they did the same calculations in Excel. They learned how useful Excel is.”

Others hoped to incorporate DBA exercises more in the future. One instructor said that she wanted to figure out a way to use the DBA Museum exercise – in which students draw pictures that illustrate their past educational experiences – for a writing project. Another said, “I’m just thinking about how when I teach math I could use the [DBA’s affirmations CD] in order to build students’

self-confidence.” Another explained that she was impressed by the DBA’s “same style work teams” curriculum but had not yet come up with a way to work it into her class.

The Learning Styles assessment is the core of the first week of the Foundation Course and was therefore one of the primary DBA tools in which the faculty were trained during the Summer 2006 training. It was not until the 2007 training other modules, like the Laws of Conversation and an introduction to the Behavior systems, were covered. As would be expected, during our interviews, faculty members mentioned this tool frequently. One instructor explained that her reason for using the Learning Styles framework is because “it is a tool to empower students.” Another said that he “introduced and exposed them to the [Learning Styles] information, but [I] don’t insist they use it.” He also explained that over time he sees evidence that students are using the information and adjusting their behavior in response to the Learning Styles tips for success. One instructor said that she used the framework because it helped her “be more thorough with group work” as groups can be designed with regard to the Learning Styles of each students. Using the Learning Styles framework for creating groups was cited by an ESL instructor as especially valuable:

“The number one thing [from DBA] that I used the most was the grouping strategies. I utilized the knowledge I got from DBA to identify students Learning Styles and changed my grouping strategy. Now I create Learning Style balanced teams. The way I was taught to teach ESL was that you create groups based on language proficiency, matching students with high abilities with those with low. Now I base it on Learning Styles.”

Another instructor re-designed the structure of her whole course around this grouping strategy. First she adapted the DBA’s Learning Style matrix (a paper assessment given to students to determine what type of learner they are). Then she had the students create balanced teams, made up of students with a variety of Learning Styles, and then had each team choose a team captain. The captains took attendance for their group and collected the homework. She recalled: “They absolutely loved it...and the teams bonded.” She said the students studied together outside of class and supported one another in many ways. It also relieved her of certain duties, including taking attendance and collecting the homework, and encouraged the students to become accountable to each other. Yet another instructor spoke about how she expanded her use of reflection for writing and grew to appreciate multiple methods of learning. Each of these examples shows the potential for bringing the classroom to life by both engaging students more fully and inspiring the instructor.

*“I stopped answering questions. I ask the students to look up the answers, or if they checked the procedure manual. I told them, who are you going to ask when you are at work? It is empowering.”
- Faculty Member*

Applying the DBA Principles

The instructors described a variety of ways in which they incorporated into their courses the DBA principles or guiding theories.

Instructors should model successful and appropriate behavior, and students will learn from their example, better preparing them for academia and the workplace.

- “I have much more awareness of time. This was so emphasized in the DBA. Diego explained how it is really important to model being on time. Before I wasn’t as aware of my

being a bit late. Now I emphasize that being on time is important in school and in the professional world.”

- “I stopped answering questions. I ask the students to look up the answers, or if they checked the procedure manual. I told them, who are you going to ask when you are at work? It is empowering.”

School should be relevant to students and an effort should be made to relate course material to students’ lives:

- “I teach Geology. When I talk about a rock, I relate it to them. I break it down and they loved it...I say ‘this rock is made up of this material and plants have the same material, and so do we.’”
- “I want to personalize it and take it to another level. This will be powerful to students because they can go into guilt and shame.”

Personal reflection and self-awareness is valuable:

- “One thing I learned from DBA is the importance of reflection; I had them write a paper on some aspect of themselves to explore. It became an identity essay.”
- “The other question I ask [students], which really came from the DBA experience, is ‘How can you use your strengths to help with the weaker areas – to get the most of their strengths?’”

Student learning communities are a powerful tool for helping students learn and stay in school:

- “The whole idea of student learning communities and seeing their interactions with one another made me more aware of helping each student to interact more; I’ve tried to use more activities, each student did a presentation, helped get across the idea that everybody contributes.”
- “[The concept of building student learning communities] made a huge impression on me. The idea of the teacher not being the center [of the class]. I have them face each other. The discussions flow across the classroom and not through me. It is challenging but I saw the rewards.”
- “I even changed the course web site. There are chat rooms and discussion questions now and [the students] use them.”

The classroom should be safe and fun:

- “One thing I learned is that if students are having fun they’ll be more engaged. It seems obvious but that really made an impression on me last summer. Having fun will help them learn better.”
- “Students need to get excited about their learning.”
- “We drew from everything that we came across that seemed useful. Everything I could think of to get the students really hooked.”
- “I learned from Diego about making the students feel comfortable, warm environment. This is a theory in the language learning field too; it’s about creating a comfortable space for students to learn ... without fear of making a mistake.”

Authentic communication in which instructors are honest and self-reflective is useful for connecting with students and building their trust:

- “When the students were in group work, I was reticent to get involved. But now I am better at listening in and reflecting back and also pointing out things that were a part of the process. I talk with students about the process more and they like having that transparency.”
- “[I] came to a place in my class where I gave really riveting lectures. I don’t usually lecture much. But when I talk about justice, freedom, will, finding voice, humanity I feel even more inspired and came across better to students. I have a lot of better days. I catch myself really going deep.”

Expectations should be clear.

- “I’ve changed. I’m now setting very clear expectations in the syllabus.”
- “Now the rules are tighter: I have a list of expectations of what they will get from me and me from them. Now it is not just talked about, it is in the syllabus.”

These statements illustrate that faculty members have not only learned the DBA principles through the training, but they have begun to use them in their courses, and in some cases interpreting and using a single principle in multiple ways.

For some instructors the ideas regarding how to incorporate the DBA came easily. As one remarked, “During the experiential training last summer I was always seeing ways that I could improve myself and improve my classes.” For others, the change was not as immediate, which was reflected in comments like: “Overall, I’ve done a bit of incorporation but I need to go back and figure out how to do more.”

Every instructor reported that they were able to incorporate something from the DBA into their courses, regardless of subject matter. The courses that were mentioned as conducive to incorporating DBA included English, Basic Skills, Race and Ethnicity, Geology, and Mechanics. ESL teachers, however, reported that fully incorporating some aspects of the DBA, especially the Learning Styles framework, was somewhat difficult as their students have limited English skills and the curriculum uses some language that is inaccessible to them.

The instructors’ ability to incorporate the DBA principles into non-DBA courses demonstrates the key training outcomes mentioned at the onset were successfully met, as many of these key outcomes are derived from these DBA principles.

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- Faculty Member

Chapter Five: DBA Training and Changes in Personal Approaches

“When I went through the training I came out with a different perspective on myself, now that I am using it in the classroom I have a different perspective on my students.”
- Faculty member

“The DBA totally changed my relationship with students.”
- Faculty member

“Another thing is the impact outside the classroom. It helped me in the way that I approach colleagues.”
- Faculty member

Beyond incorporating the DBA into non-DBA courses, faculty trainees reported ways in which the training DBA personally affected them. In particular, we focus on three areas of change: (1) internal changes related to self-awareness; (2) views of their students and different ways of interacting with them; and (3) changes in their interactions at the community college level.

Faculty Members’ Internal Changes Related to Self-awareness

Perhaps one of the most consistent responses in the interviews was that faculty developed a new level of self-awareness in the DBA training. For them, this self-awareness clarified a range of issues, for example: Why in the past they had had difficulty in some subjects or situations and excelled in others; why they had connected or not connected with certain students; the reasons behind their particular approach to teaching and how they might want to make changes to their approach. The effects went beyond just pedagogy. As one faculty member explained: “It affected us all personally. Even in our personal lives... You know it’s important for students but it is also important for you.” The impact on one’s personal life was repeated by others: “It improves my relationships with family and colleagues... Now I see that there is plenty there to like in a person and now I know that it might be their [learning] style that is difficult for me, not who they are.”

“It improves my relationships with family and colleagues... Now I see that there is plenty there to like in a person and now I know that it might be their [learning] style that is difficult for me, not who they are.”

- Faculty Member

The personal implications of the training were viewed very seriously and in fact, one faculty member reported, “The biggest change was internal, and this needs to happen first.” In line with the Figure 1 framework for understanding changes, many faculty felt that developing an awareness of how one’s own strengths and weaknesses play out in their classroom was the precursor for all other levels of professional development.

Others described the way that understanding their own the learning style helped them teach better, as one faculty member commented:

Knowing my own Learning Style (synthesizer) gave me a lot of self-awareness in terms of how I teach....Now I try to use other learning styles in how I teach too. Try to sometimes be an interactor and concluder in order to connect with all the students in the room. I have much more awareness of my students.

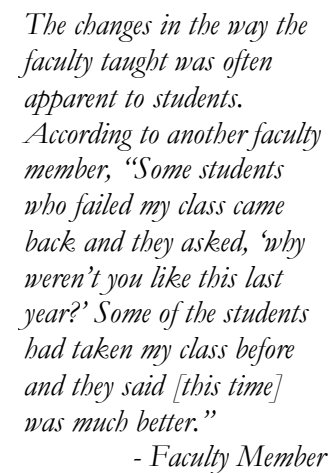
In this case, the self-awareness translated into action as the teacher altered the way she interacted to better meet students' needs. Another faculty member similarly altered her approach due to a greater understanding of her own personality: "I am already a high interactor. My energy can be very performance like. I am aware of this and that I can be overwhelming. In office hours I know I need to moderate that depending on the student. I draw upon what I learned."

In another case, the DBA training was so completely integrated into the faculty member's own approach she was unaware of how she used it until prompted: "I internalized [the DBA principles] through the training. It came so naturally. I'm almost not even aware of all the ways I use it, until I started looking at your [interview] questions." The ease with which she incorporated the DBA training into her teaching is a testament not only to the effectiveness of the training itself but also to the value of the DBA content and principles.

Interactions with Students

The changes in the way the faculty taught was often apparent to students. According to another faculty member, "Some students who failed my class came back and they asked, 'why weren't you like this last year?' Some of the students had taken my class before and they said [this time] was much better." Many reported that listening and the way that they perceived students actions and behaviors changed. As one explained, "I treat students better. I listened more. I learned more about what was wrong with them."

Differences in how faculty interacted with students before and after the training were commented on by many of the interviewed faculty members. One said, "The DBA totally changed my relationship with students." Another remarked that she is "much more accessible and approachable to my students...The way that I know this because students come up and approach me now and share their personal information with me. It's not as though they want to get something out of it – like an deadline extension – it's more like they just want [to have] authentic communication." Authentic communication is a central tenet of the DBA and a key focus of the Summer 2006 training. Another mentioned being less quick to judge since being training in the Learning Styles framework used by the DBA: "Now when I see students talk in class I can deal with them according to their style rather than thinking they are rude. Now I understand them so much better." One result of these stronger relationships between students was that, in the words of one instructor, "The projects were better."



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- Faculty Member

A faculty member shared a moving story about a student who had begun acting up and behaving in a disrespectful manner during her course on race and ethnicity. She explained,

He was saying ‘This is stupid. I don’t want to do this.’ I said ‘We need to talk after class.’ Normally I would have just ignored him or written up a class disturbance citation form privately. The fact that I said we need to talk after class was because I was in touch with my [DBA Learning Styles] energy.

We met afterwards and I was really authentic with him saying ‘You’ve been doing this...what’s happening? I’m disappointed. I thought you were a really positive guy.’

He started to cry. He said: ‘Do you remember that essay you read 2 weeks ago on slavery and the Africans who committed suicide and jumped over the ship to avoid being slaves? I didn’t know...’ He was having a really painful emotional reaction to that story. He didn’t know that story and felt lied to. He was really feeling that. His emotions were coming out because of that.

We talked about it. Instead of filling out some form to punish him – like I usually would have done – I talked to him. I was sitting down calm and saying to him authentically what I was feeling about his behavior.

I went back to class later and said to the rest of the students: ‘I feel the pain of this stuff too. I’ve been reading this for a while now so sometimes I don’t show the emotion of it or acknowledge it enough.’ It’s like we were supposed to check our emotions at the door. The experience ended up bringing the whole class together as they saw it brought him and me together. Had it not been for my DBA training I would have handled it totally differently.

In this example, the faculty member used several elements of her DBA training to interact with her students: She became more self-aware, acknowledging and accepting her personal need to directly and quickly communicate with the student regarding his behavior; she used authentic communication to check in with the student and explain her disappointed feelings with him; she created a safe space in her classroom where her student was allowed to express his emotions; and she was able to create more of a bond between her students by being transparent and authentic with them. Even though she did not use the DBA curriculum in this class, her DBA training had impacted her so greatly that her entire approach to interacting with her students was transformed, which led to important transformations in the classroom as well.

*One result of these stronger relationships between students was that, in the words of one instructor, “The projects were better.”
- Faculty Member*

Some faculty members expressed that the impact of this new way of interacting with students showed up in improved retention rates, meaning that they had more students finishing their course. While some of the faculty had relatively high retention rates so there wasn’t a notable change, others reported that their retention rates had been especially high since incorporating DBA into their courses. One faculty member conducted a program review of her courses, including the retention rates from 2000-spring 2007 (Williams, 2007). The results showed how over the course of this time period she could easily identify how the retention rates changed based on what was going on in her life. Just a year after attending the 2006 training there were noticeable improvements: “My retention rate was low (60 percent) ... After using DBA, in one semester, my retention rates went up to 90 percent.”

“My retention rate was low (60 percent) ... After using DBA, in one semester, my retention rates went up to 90 percent.”
- Faculty Member

In referring to a student cohort that participated in the Foundation Course and Bridge semester at Las Positas College an instructor said, “We kept them all semester, 100 percent retention; that is not common [of courses in our school].” In one of the non-DBA courses mentioned there was a high percentage of students with learning disabilities (85%), and 60% of the class made it through the course. This was thought to be a highly successful outcome, the instructor said “I was asked to do an impossible thing, the students were at very different levels – from grade 3 to 14...Everyone made progress.” And, although other faculty had not monitored their retention rates closely enough to say whether they had changed, several reported that students’ feedback regarding their courses had improved.

Several faculty trainees reported an effect of their new DBA-infused approaches was stronger relationships *between* students. Some reported that they witnessed students in their courses bonding more as a group due to the inclusion of the DBA team building curriculum in their courses. According to one instructor, “I set up the class in a way that students get to know each other. Before I felt that the teacher had to have a good rapport with each student (like hand holding). But it is better that students support each other.”

“Our campus cohort is incredibly supportive; the four of us worked through it all together.”
- Faculty Member

Interactions with Colleagues

Changes in communication and interaction extended to faculty’s relationships with colleagues also. For those faculty members from the same college who experienced the training as a group, it was a bonding and team building experience. In their own words:

- “Our campus cohort is incredibly supportive; the four of us worked through it all together.”
- “The experience last summer [in the DBA training] transformed my work relationships with my colleagues. [One other faculty member trainee] and I worked together for a year in the same department and we barely even spoke to each other...Now she’s one of my best friends at [my college].”

For some, the DBA was an opportunity to build a community on campus – in much the same way that the DBA director encourages students to build a community at school – and this became very valuable, as one instructor explained: “The biggest benefit was our community.” But the benefits went beyond building new friendships and included new approaches to interacting with a variety of colleagues on campus. One of the faculty members who has taught at the community college for many years remarked,

I deal drastically differently with my department since DBA. That’s changed a lot. I’m way less authoritarian and controlling. I’m beginning to think about how I can pass on what I’m doing with my students now to other faculty, especially because in six years I will retire...We have a young department and I’m using what I’ve learned [in DBA] to help them learn about how to teach.

Many of the faculty members expressed that the DBA training gave them an opportunity to discuss teaching approaches and even shared elements of the DBA with their colleagues. This kind of learning community for faculty is rare and very much appreciated. For example:

It helped me in the way that I approach colleagues... I've shared some things with colleagues that have helped them in their classrooms. A close friend and faculty colleague who teaches Basic Skills reading was struggling and had a lot of students with learning disabilities. I shared some of the DBA curriculum and theories with her, and [another faculty trainee] went in as a guest speaker and gave a Learning Styles presentation. She had really positive results.

Despite the fact that all currently taught courses (with the exception of the few administrators in the group), many craved more support and training for teaching. One faculty member shared, "What we need in general, and especially through DBA, is more serious dialogue about teaching."

Several faculty members reported that their relationships with colleagues on campus had improved after going through the DBA training, especially with colleagues who had also participated. They also built new relationships on campus. One faculty member explained that since her involvement with DBA she had joined a group on her campus of faculty and administrators who work in special campus programs. She explained that the group met regularly and gave presentations to one another about their campus programs. She reported that out of those meeting members began to see connection between their programs and ways of working together to promote their programs on campus. Also, instructors have built new relationships with faculty members across colleges during the faculty training sessions.

Leadership at their Colleges

Although not intending to make radical changes in their colleges, many faculty members have used their DBA training in formal ways to influence their colleges on an institutional scale. For example, two faculty members on one campus are in the process of planning an abbreviated version of the DBA training for faculty members and administrators so that the content and principles of the DBA can be more widely shared and used on their campus. The application goes beyond the classroom – faculty can also see the need for improved communication throughout the college administration and for leadership as well.

Although originally focused mainly on disadvantaged students – by developing faculty members' self-awareness, their skills for interacting with students, their success in their relationships with colleagues and their leadership abilities within their colleges – the DBA has created an effective (and greatly appreciated) professional development program for community college faculty members that is a benefit for all students

The faculty trainees found that they had been trained in something that was of interest to others – and that their particular experience in the training was especially valued because it clarified how the DBA could be replicated at new locations. As one faculty member recalled,

We gave a presentation at Laney College [in Oakland, CA] after a faculty member there contacted me. She found out about [me and the other DBA trained faculty member at my college] because we'd given a presentation on the DBA at a professional development

day...She really wanted us to focus on what we were specifically doing at our college. She knew what was happening at Cabrillo College but she really wanted to know how we were using it.

DBA trained faculty members are developing a unique expertise in the curriculum, and equally important for replication, how to implement its principles, tools and exercises within their particular college's institutional context. They seem to be beginning to take more ownership of the program as some of them have given presentations in classes, events and professional development days attempting to attract greater support for the program at their schools. Their enthusiasm about the DBA program and their desire to see it replicated is moving some of them to exercise leadership within their colleges. For some, shaping the direction of their college and affecting the faculty who teach there is a major priority. As one faculty trainee remarked, "I'd like to go beyond helping under-prepared students to helping under-prepared faculty." It should be reiterated that some colleges are further along in this process, while others are still working on building a cohort. However, all returning faculty had an awareness and an interest in seeing the program expand.

Although originally focused mainly on disadvantaged students – by developing faculty members' self-awareness, their skills for interacting with students, their success in their relationships with colleagues and their leadership abilities within their colleges – the DBA has created an effective (and greatly appreciated) professional development program for community college faculty members that is a benefit for all students.

Chapter Six: Challenges to Incorporation

The current DBA faculty training is a pilot version of what will eventually become a larger more developed training strategy. Because the training is still in the pilot stage some of the results are unexpected. As was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, the faculty members not only frequently use the various components of the DBA, they saw important results in their classrooms and in their relationships with others at their colleges.

Despite this, there are still challenges in incorporating these components in consistent ways. Perhaps because the DBA training was not explicitly designed to prepare instructors for incorporating the DBA concepts into their other courses, sometimes the challenges were related to instructors wanting to incorporate but not knowing how it could be done. In addition, instructors reported that there were specific barriers to using the DBA approach to interaction, curriculum, tools, or model in their non-DBA courses. The challenges fall into three broad categories:

Still Figuring it All Out

In some cases the instructors reported that they intended to integrate more of their DBA training into their courses but that they had not determined the best way to do it. As one said, “It’s just about me sitting down and figuring it out.” Other instructors felt that the fact that they were still learning about the program was a challenge to incorporating the curriculum and approach. As one instructor mentioned, “I’m just processing it still. It’s a lot of work to determine how to integrate it.” Incorporating the DBA meant, in many cases, revising course syllabi and finding the time for this was an additional challenge. As many instructors are already very pressed for time, this will also come into play as they are asked to replicate the program in their colleges.

“I’m just processing it still. It’s a lot of work to determine how to integrate it.”
- Faculty member

Instructors also said they wanted suggestions about what aspects of the DBA work well in non-DBA courses. Several instructors reported that they are interested in participating in an online forum where ideas for incorporating DBA curriculum are shared with one another.

Content and Course Limitations

Faculty members also perceived a tension between meeting content requirements of the existing courses and adding on DBA curriculum to their syllabi. The sentiment is that even though they feel integrating the DBA into the courses would be valuable, their own views of what should be included in their courses limits their ability to add more. Instructors are grappling with balancing the content that should be included in their courses and the time limitations they have per week and semester.

One instructor expressed another content-related conflict in a course she teaches: “I have to model a thinking process that includes judging facts and evaluating data with criteria. DBA is all about not judging and not evaluating so there’s a bit of a mismatch there.” In some cases, instructors felt that the content of the DBA curriculum – the Learning Styles curriculum, for instance – is not appropriate material to cover in a non-DBA course on Anthropology or Math, for instance. One of the instructors who felt this tension reported that, “It’s my own gauge, not the department’s” when asked about the source of her concerns regarding content appropriateness.

One faculty member acknowledged that “I’ve read that you can structure your class so that you read less content, spend more time on community building and get deeper with the material.” However, she was unsure that covering the DBA curriculum was worth sacrificing her other course material.

Another instructor explained that the DBA teaching approach worked well in her Basic Skills classes but that her “more advanced classes have students with more agency.” She then explained that this creates a need to adapt the approach “in a way that will be attractive to them.” Modification of the curriculum and approach to make it effective for a more academically prepared and successful population than it was designed for would require more effort than simply interjecting the DBA exercises into courses.

Student Resistance

Faculty trainees described instances of student resistance that also posed challenges for them. One faculty member recalls a scenario in which students were resistant to the DBA concepts of authentic communication and thinking about group dynamics. She explained,

One time in a class I stopped to ask the students why they were being so quiet, saying ‘Is something wrong? Did you do the reading?’ One student said to me that whenever he speaks I challenge him and that’s intimidating to others. I said that ‘It is my job to challenge you.’ We got into a discussion. Other students in the class said: ‘This is a waste of time talking about our group [dynamics].’ They weren’t interested in it. They’ve gone through a traditional system of education and aren’t used to thinking about the group.

Another instructor explained that she “needed more trust with the students to do [the DBA exercises] so they wouldn’t feel condescended to,” but that she did not have enough time to explain each of the exercises she might have wanted to use and so did not incorporate them into her course.

Limited Adoption of the Program at Colleges Other than Cabrillo

The DBA replication is still in its early stages and is slated to be more fully adopted at colleges other than Cabrillo in the Fall of 2008. Another round of training will take place in the Summer of 2008 in preparation for this expansion. At this stage, faculty members at community colleges other than Cabrillo have been trained and, in varying degrees, have created Foundation Courses and their own versions of a Bridge Semester using a one day high level overview of the components of the DBA provided by Diego to guide their design. At this time the DBA goals are focused on implementing the Foundation course, however some of the colleges have gone further to incorporate some of the critical components of the Bridge Semester. Each college has taken its own approach with taken it to different levels: none have incorporated all of the key components of the Bridge Semester. DBA leadership report that soon the training will cover the entire program and the replication will involve implementation of all aspects of the DBA program. All of the training is currently in the pilot phase in order to test the effectiveness of the training protocol and further refine it.

Missing Pieces

The DBA program is designed so that students take the two-week Foundation Course and then, with their cohort, go through the Bridge Semester. Yet when faculty are incorporating the DBA curriculum and approach into their non-DBA courses, their students have not participated in the Foundation Course and are not part of a cohort. Even with fully adopted Foundation Courses and Bridge Semesters, faculty teaching non-DBA students would face these challenges and indeed, some instructors reported concerns regarding the efficacy of the DBA material and philosophy in non-DBA courses. There are great advantages to having cohorts (student and faculty), and in their absence there is a sense that it is more challenging to run the program effectively. One faculty remarked that “I have serious questions about whether people can get all the different concepts without the Foundation Course. Also, they’re not bonded as a group.”

Another said, “There isn’t time to go into depth and explain the purpose, but you can integrate it without explaining everything. It would be wonderful if all students did the Foundation Course when they came as freshman. That is ideal, but we can’t do it.” One faculty member who taught at a college that has developed and adopted both the Foundation Course and a version the Bridge Semester – that was based on the DBA key components – warned others against certain modifications to the model such as allowing a student into the Bridge Semester who had not been on the Foundation Course. She described their experience attempting that as a “disaster.”

“There isn’t time to go into depth and explain the purpose, but you can integrate it without explaining everything. It would be wonderful if all students did the Foundation Course when they came as freshman. That is ideal, but we can’t do it.”

- Faculty Member

Infrastructure and Administrative Support

Another related issue is that the instructors involved in this pilot do not yet have the same program and support infrastructure that is in place at the Cabrillo Watsonville campus. The lack of supporting infrastructure meant that many faculty members reported being exhausted by the multiple responsibilities related to participating in the faculty trainings, teaching their traditional courses, attempting to incorporate the DBA curriculum into their non-DBA courses, and advocating for adoption of the DBA program at their colleges.

The degree of local institutional support for the adoption of the DBA program varied between the community colleges, as colleges had different priorities and funding capacities. Instructors at one of the colleges that was able to or wanted to support the adoption of the DBA program reported that, “We got all the support we asked for.” In this case, many faculty members were trained in the DBA, and as one instructor there said, “A close knit group of faculty made a huge difference.”

However, at other colleges where the DBA was less institutionally accepted or supported, instructors reported that they “need to get release time.” One faculty member said, “It took me out of the classroom...Once the financial assistance dried up it was hard... I was so tired and overworked.” Others said that the DBA approach, with its emphasis on authentic communication and self-disclosure, “is exhausting work...you have to show up for the academic work and show up emotionally.” All faculty members who expressed feeling tired or overworked also felt that greater institutional support at their own colleges would address the problem. All felt supported by the Watsonville Cabrillo DBA staff.

In conclusion, the challenges to incorporating the DBA approach and curriculum into instructors' non-DBA courses included:

- The newness of the DBA material to instructors,
- Their need to continue to think about how to apply what they had learned in training,
- Content and time limitations of their non-DBA courses and whether the DBA curriculum was an appropriate fit into the subject and format of their other courses,
- Resistance from some students to elements of the DBA model, and
- Barriers related to the limited adoption of the program at the pilot-site colleges, such as not having some important pieces of the DBA model in place, and uneven institutional support.

Chapter Seven: The Digital Bridge Academy, Looking to the Future

In previous chapters we have reported findings regarding the ways that the DBA faculty training has affected instructors' approaches to teaching, their use of DBA curriculum and principles in the classroom, the ways the DBA training has affected them outside the classroom, and the challenges to incorporating elements of the DBA into non-DBA courses. In this section we outline some recommendations for sustaining the momentum of the DBA as a valued program and as a means of professional development. In short, based on what we heard from the faculty's experience, we highlight below the ways to increase the successful use of the DBA curriculum and lessen barriers to its application. We conclude with a brief discussion of how DBA relates to larger structures like the statewide Basic Skills Initiative and potential implications for other higher education systems.

Strengthening the Base, Softening the Barriers

The 2006 and 2007 summer trainings provided faculty members an opportunity to undergo a learning experience with a cohort of fellow faculty, and this was an experience that the faculty craved. They were eager to come together in an honest, safe and open space where they could reflect on their teaching and their lives. This intensive learning experience, much like the one student cohorts experience, is central to keeping faculty engaged. However, like many trainings, it is the follow up that can be most important. The one time inspirational experience can fade during the regular business of the academic year.

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Refreshing the faculty training each year so that people can return for another positive experience is a good strategy for sustaining faculty involvement. Perhaps for those returning, the option for a shorter commitment would increase participation. As mentioned previously, of the fifteen 2006 training participants (13 faculty and 2 administrators), six returned for 2007. Of the four that were interviewed by phone, they said time was the primary obstacle for not participating for the second year. The time limitation carries into the academic year, as over

extended faculty struggle to find the time to revise syllabi and work on committees. Course releases and other methods of recognition or compensation will help to soften the extra workload.

Ideally (and as planned), the faculty cohorts will grow and eventually build strong learning communities at each campus. We saw the progress at Las Positas where the cohort has expanded, and with it the enthusiasm on campus is multiplying. The quality and size of the cohort created accountability and connectedness with its members. Where the cohort did not take off yet, there may be strong leadership, but less momentum. If the support for the campus leader declines (financially or otherwise), then the DBA model will inevitable lose ground. Clearly, the continued emphasis on expanding and energizing the existing cohorts is needed to move the work forward.

With a critical mass of faculty, there is the possibility of creating a comprehensive program that includes all the program's components – this was thought by some to be necessary for integrating the DBA fully. The DBA staff could provide ongoing technical support to take the curriculum to higher levels in non-DBA courses. In addition the staff provide a mechanism for sharing innovations between faculty on the same and multiple campuses. This connection can help

accelerate the sharing of best practices and potentially accelerate the adoption process. As faculty deepen their use of the DBA curriculum and approach, they will be able to argue more for its implementation.

Providing an in-depth knowledge of the DBA program while at the same time encouraging its adoption at different campuses is important. Bringing in administrators and key staff through the training early in the process, as they are proposing at Las Positas, is an excellent means of organizing and recruiting allies throughout the system. While faculty have felt relatively comfortable after going through the summer courses working DBA into their coursework, would they be equally at ease training administrators or colleagues? Streamlining and naturalizing the curriculum to reach these different audiences will be critical and can be another area of support for core DBA faculty and staff.

The enthusiasm and energy coming out of the summer training is a precious resource. While most faculty are very much aware of the college infrastructure and departmental politics, they can still become frustrated with the pace of the administration as they work to expand the use of DBA on the campus. Focusing on professional development to educate potential allies in the system will become increasingly important as tough decisions about resources are being made. Even strong arguments about retention can be ignored if there isn't the political will to reach the most high risk students. Resistance will be more likely to soften if the decision makers have a positive experience to associate with the program.

Such experiences are relatively rare. However, in the written surveys that were distributed at this year's training, several faculty referred to the *Great Teachers Seminar* (GTS) – a national network that offers seminars on a regular basis – as another valuable training that they'd participated in. A basic premise of this decentralized teacher's network, which has been in existence for over 30 years, is that teachers learn to improve their teaching through the collective wisdom of the group. Along with this sense of community, similar to that expressed by DBA participants, there are elements of rejuvenation, self reflection and commitment to teaching. Again, we see the demand for more of this type of learning.

Focusing on professional development to educate potential allies in the system will become increasingly important as tough decisions about resources are being made.

GTS facilitators refer to this work as professional development and also organize retreats on campuses with all stakeholders: administrators, faculty, support staff, and in few retreats students were also invited. According to their website, in these retreats they meet to “to discuss college-wide issues, to celebrate, elaborate on what's working and to identify issues that need attention. These have turned out to be the most popular, most frequently held seminars ... And they may be the most valuable. It is an opportunity for faculty to see a broader cross-section of college issues.”⁹ The seminars create opportunities for administrators and staff to gain a better understanding of student and faculty priorities.

Comparison of the DBA faculty training with this long standing successful program indicates the high quality of both the experiences. The DBA faculty training, while also offering professional development for teachers and others working in school systems, focuses on a particular approach

⁹ For more on the Great Teachers Seminar See: <http://ngtm.net/pdf/Adapting%20GT%20Model.pdf>

and curricula. The GTS experience could inform the DBA model and connecting with the GTS networks could potentially bring in more allies throughout the colleges.

In sum, strategic and comprehensive support to the cohorts is an effective means of encouraging individual faculty to apply their DBA training. Having the learning community creates a space for exploring how the tools, principles, and pedagogy can be used in non-DBA courses. Opening up time for faculty and incentives in the system will greatly help to reduce barriers to DBA application.

DBA and Other Systems

The Basic Skills Initiative

On January 17, 2006, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges unanimously adopted the final draft of the Strategic Plan¹⁰. The purpose of the plan was to improve student access and success – the plan contains seven areas of focus, one of which is basic skills. The related Basic Skills report, titled *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*, which was prepared for the California Community College System Office to identify effective practices in basic skills programs, is striking because many of the best practices they highlight are an intrinsic part of the DBA program. Indeed, the DBA program is one of the model programs discussed in the section titled “Summary of Example Programs for Basic Skills in the California Community College”.

What is also striking is the absence of many DBA elements that are common to students needing basic skills support. For example, the report does not define what a high risk student is – this is significant because high risk students often need the type of assistance that the Basic Skills initiative seeks to provide.¹¹ The report also doesn't dissect the use of students services. The traditional approach of using student services to support at-risk students by providing one-in-one coaching is expensive and makes programs using this model difficult to sustain or expand. On the other hand, the DBA embeds this element in the classroom curriculum utilizing the student cohort as a support structure and training the faculty to use a behavioral system to further support the students. This design allows for the DBA to be sustainable when fully implemented. There is no additional cost outside of the faculty in the classroom and the coordination required for the integration of five linked courses. Additionally, the concept of using academic acceleration with this student population is not even on the radar, something the DBA model has found to be a promising aspect of its approach. Furthermore, the concept of integrated curriculum is not identified as an instructional practice that is very effective with Basic Skills students. In the Basic Skills report the DBA is listed under “Learning Communities” even though it could have been listed under “Integrated Reading and Writing Programs”, “Technology”, “Evaluation,” and “Staff Development” because it incorporates these elements too.

Clearly the DBA model takes the basic skills training to another level, but this does not mean that they are exclusive of each other. The DBA could take advantage of the programming and resources that are coming out of the initiative through multiple entry points. For example, the report explains that:

¹⁰ See <http://strategicplan.cccco.edu/> for more information on the plan.

¹¹ Outside of the references “high risk” is mentioned only four times (“at risk” is mentioned seven times) in the entire 156 page report, and two of the times is in the description of the DBA as an example of learning community practices.

According to the literature, the importance of comprehensive training and development opportunities for faculty and staff who work with developmental students cannot be overestimated. Programs with a strong professional development component have been shown to yield better student retention rates and better student performance in developmental courses than those without such an emphasis.” (Center for Student Success and the Research and Planning Group of the California Community College System, 2007).

It also states that effective practices include, among other things: promoting instructional methods that accommodate student diversity and how ongoing staff and faculty development should be clearly connected to intrinsic and extrinsic faculty reward structures.

Exploring how to tap into these resources is a great opening for building DBA capacity. During the FIT training, faculty raised issues about how different units or departments on campus would naturally be protective of holding onto resources; therefore identifying these potential conflicts of interest early in the process will be important to taking full advantage of this opportunity.

Implications for CSU and UC?

As the DBA continues to grow its reputation and is more widely known, amassing data to support its impacts, especially on students, will build clout in university and academic circles. The increased exposure and rigorous long term studies of its accomplishments will naturally attract interest from other educational entities. Currently the DBA is directed to the California community college system.

For those who are exposed to its rich curriculum, there seems to be no reason for limiting it to a particular system; rather it could be geared toward the student population that is being targeted. The more traditional bridge programs, EOPS, and counseling resources could certainly benefit from DBA based training. One of the faculty interviewed who runs a workforce development and internship program found that the DBA’s Team Self Management Course (also referred to as IDM) in the Bridge Semester was exactly what needed to be incorporated into her curriculum and was very different from what her program currently offers.

We found that for those who have experienced it, the DBA is an exciting model where seemingly every individual, course or program has something to take away from it.

There are likely to be many examples of how existing programs could use the DBA principles for re-conceiving and refreshing programs that have been operating under established models that may no longer apply in today’s increasingly multicultural and knowledge based classrooms and workplaces. However, the most direct route to other university systems may be to support high risk students at the community colleges who eventually could advance to four year institutions. We suggest that the DBA not distract or diffuse its current successes at the community college level; and when the time is right, invite other universities to learn from and support their efforts.

Concluding Thoughts

What is the effect of the DBA faculty training on non-DBA courses and what are the implications for community colleges? This study has shown how the DBA trainings have helped feed the fire for

returning faculty to stay enthusiastic about their work and curious about their own learning and the implications for teaching. We found that for those who have experienced it, the DBA is an exciting model where seemingly every individual, course or program has something to take away from it.

Still, gaining traction on campuses to more fully integrate the program presents some challenges. As the evidence from research on the impacts on students is measured with more detail and over longer periods of time, support for the program and its faculty cohort will surely increase. And as the DBA staff works with the faculty cohorts to increase their capacity, they will be prepared to move through the inevitable roadblocks on college campuses. The DBA instills a sense of possibility to those who come in close contact with it, and it is this collective momentum that will take it to the next level.

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Appendix A: Terms Used in this Report

Non-DBA courses: Refers to the faculty members' traditional courses, those that they taught before and after becoming involved in the DBA program; these courses include English, mathematics or English as a Second Language (ESL), for example.

The Foundation Course: The course that includes a cohort of DBA students (up to 30 students) and is a two-week immersion-style program in which students work intensively to get to know each other as a cohort, understand their own and others' learning and communications styles, and learn ways to work together in teams. The goal is for students to leave the Foundation Course motivated and ready to learn. The faculty trainees who participated in the Summer 2006 training were trained in just the first week of the Foundation Course. They and new faculty members were trained in second week of the course in June 2007.

The Bridge Semester: After successful completion of the Foundation Course, students move into the Bridge Semester, an integrated academic program of college level courses that prepares them for individual immersion into their community college's typical courses and programming. Students do much of their work as a cohort in self-managing work teams, a technique used widely in high-tech and other knowledge-work companies. The DBA offers students an experiential educational program and gives them the academic and behavioral tools they need to move forward into technological and other majors, and associated professional fields.

DBA curriculum: Refers to a cross-disciplinary set of group and individual exercises, designed to prepare students to operate in a variety of knowledge-work environments, with a focus on methods and basic skills rather than a specific subject, occupation or degree major.

DBA principles: Refers to a set of guiding theories. Three examples of the DBA principles are: (1) the idea that teachers use self-disclosure, in which they share introspectively from their own lives, as a way to authentically communicate with students, building their trust and capturing their attention, (2) classroom mistakes are framed as learning opportunities and (3) students form a 'learning community' or cohort and support one another throughout the course and into the college semester.

Learning Styles: The learning styles framework that was developed by Spherical Dynamics Inc., which provides a "remarkably accurate, quick and easy-to-use roadmap to detect and utilize an individual's optimal learning style" (Spherical Dynamics, 2007). The DBA philosophy is that learning styles framework contributes to greater self-awareness, supports the development of individualized strategies for success in school and encourages individuals to form learning groups in which members' learning styles are likely to complement one other.

Authentic communication/Laws of Conversation: A module of the second week of the Foundation Course. Faculty members were trained in this exercise during the June 2007 training. The practice is based on the premise that conversations are more effective when people move away from communicating with pretense towards communicating with sincerity, accuracy and authenticity. The curriculum used in the Digital Bridge Academy was developed by Conversant, Inc. and utilized at Hewlett Packard, Inc. to train their top 600 executives in leadership.

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Read to each interviewee:

I am a researcher from the Center for Justice, Tolerance and Community at UC Santa Cruz. Last summer we evaluated the effectiveness of the replication training for new DBA teachers. Our basic research question last summer was: Can other faculty, besides Diego, effectively learn and teach the first part of the DBA's foundation course?

This summer we are conducting an evaluation to determine if and how the DBA training impacts faculty members' non-DBA courses - in essence the 'spillover' effect of the training.

Your responses to these questions will be aggregated in our final report, and names will be kept confidential.

1. Background: How many classes do you teach each year/semester/quarter? How many in DBA and outside of DBA. In what department(s)?

2. This is a series of questions on your teaching approach (using a DBA approach without using the actual curriculum):

LIKERT: How would you describe the impact of the DBA training on your style or approach to teaching?

- _____ greatly improved
- _____ somewhat improved
- _____ no difference
- _____ negative impact
- _____ not applicable

- How has the DBA training changed your style or approach to teaching?
- Have the ways you manage your classroom changed? If so, how have they changed?
- What kind of support would help you to better integrate the DBA training, curriculum and approach into your non-DBA courses?
- What impact has the training had on your approach to classroom management? On your retention rates?

3. This is a series of curriculum questions:

- Do you see a need for the DBA curriculum/principles in their non-DBA classes? Is it the students they work with? The style of teaching? A need to better connect? A need to connect students to each other?
- Have you incorporated any of the DBA curriculum into your non-DBA courses? What pieces of the DBA curriculum have you incorporated into your non-DBA courses? Was the process relatively easy or difficult? Why? How did you do incorporate it? (examples)

- Have you modified any pieces of the DBA curriculum to fit into your non-DBA courses? If so, what changes/adjustments did you make to the curriculum in order for it to work well in your non-DBA classes? Was the process relatively easy or difficult? (examples)
- Are there barriers to your use of the DBA theory and practice in non-DBA courses? If so, what are they? What would make it easier to adopt?
- If you teach several types of courses, do you incorporate the DBA curriculum into some more than others? Why?

4. This is a series of questions about interactions with and between students:

- How did your relationships with students change because of the DBA training (beyond curriculum and tools)?
- Do some students respond more than others to the DBA approach that you've incorporated?
- Do you notice an overall difference in your rapport with students? Please describe.
- In what ways have relationships in the classroom changed (between instructor and student and between students)?

5. Percent change: Roughly, about what percentage of your courses were impacted in some way by the DBA curricula and or your DBA training?

6. Other: Are there any other benefits or challenges of the DBA theory and practice as it relates to your other roles on campus (such as in your other courses) that we did not touch upon at this point?

7. Recommendations:

LIKERT: Would you recommend the DBA training to others?

If yes, for which of the following purposes? (Check all that apply)

- _____ for professional development
- _____ to better connect with students
- _____ for better student retention
- _____ for better classroom management
- _____ none of the above → please explain _____

If no, why not?

8. *For those who were not present at the DBA Summer 2007 training*: Why did you choose not to participate in this summer's training? Scheduling conflicts? Lack of interest in the content? Other commitments? Please explain.