



# New Models of Hybrid Leadership in Global Higher Education

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## Abstract

This manuscript highlights the development of a leadership preparation program known as the Nanyang Technological University Leadership Academy (NTULA), exploring the leadership challenges unique to a university undergoing rapid growth in a highly multicultural context, and the hybrid model of leadership it developed in response to globalization. It asks the research question of how the university adapted to a period of accelerated growth and transition by adopting a hybrid approach to academic leadership. The paper uses qualitative methodology to review NTULA's first cohort, including interviews and participant survey responses. The findings illuminate three key areas of the hybridized leadership model that are challenging to balance, including managing the transition from the leadership style required to drive rapid institutional change to the approach needed to preserve that growth, how leaders reconcile the need to be responsive to both administration and faculty, and how to lead in a highly diverse, multicultural space.

## Introduction

Nanyang Technological University (NTU), a research-intensive public university in Singapore, has recently been ranked as the world's best young university according to the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) "Top 50 Under 50," a ranking of the world's top 50 universities that are under 50 years old (NCPRE 2014). Media headlines highlight the rapid rise of this young university, with Channel NewsAsia announcing "NTU emerges second in *Times Higher Education's* young universities ranking" (2016, 2016) and the *Straits Times* reporting that NTU placed 13th in the World University Rankings, up from 39th last year (2016). NTU achieved this dramatic rise in the rankings in less than ten years.

In 2006, NTU's Board of Trustees laid the foundations for a new direction, tasking new Provost Bertil Andersson, former Rector of Sweden's Linköping University, with a mandate to transform NTU from a teaching university to a research-intensive global university (Andersson and Mayer 2015).

This transformation was not painless. After a change in tenure rules, NTU began the “difficult exercise” of reviewing its faculty in accordance with higher standards that “created a unique recruitment opportunity and was a major signal of intent to the whole institution” (ibid. 179).

To rebuild its faculty, NTU initiated an intensive strategy to recruit top candidates from prestigious universities around the world. This hiring initiative resulted in a highly diverse faculty who enhanced the academic environment and prestige of NTU (Andersson and Mayer 2015, 180).

The leadership challenges of a university undergoing such rapid growth in a multicultural context are myriad:

The whole university is moving to a more research-intensive university, to become a global research leader in some areas, improve the academic profile of the school, and develop more leaders... We need to better understand direction, the environment, and the culture - we need to work within it, and outside faculty need time to adjust to this... The challenge is to get everyone to adapt, especially as we are a young university. (NTU Faculty5-3, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015).

Seeking to build the leadership capacity of its faculty, NTU partnered with the National Center for Research and Professional Ethics (NCPRE) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Illinois) to create a set of leadership development resources and programs “to develop leaders who are prepared to deal with complex issues, such as managing change and navigating cross-cultural interpersonal issues, by drawing on evidence-based practices” (NCPRE 2014). Known as the NTU Leadership Academy (NTULA), NTU and NCPRE developed a comprehensive program that included reusable instructional materials, a series of live workshops, a year-long virtual cohort program, and a library of additional leadership resources. The program is now in its second year-long cohort of new participants. This manuscript examines the development of the leadership preparation program, and asks the research question of how NTU adapted to a period of accelerated growth and transition by adopting a hybrid approach to academic leadership. The methodology uses a qualitative approach to review NTULA’s first cohort using interviews and survey responses from the participants, and additional reflections from the NCPRE core team. The purpose of this paper is to explore how leadership came to be defined in the NTULA context, and how these perspectives shed light on how globalization and new models of higher education intersect to create a “hybrid” model of academic leadership (Tian, 2012).

### **How the NTU and NCPRE Collaboration was Established**

NTU was inaugurated in July 1991 as the result of a merger between the former Nanyang Technological Institute, an engineering institution, and the National Institute of Education, Singapore’s national teacher training institute (NTU 2016). NTU became autonomous in 2006, as its Board of Trustees implemented its mandate to transform from a teaching institute into a research-intensive global university

(Andersson and Mayer 2015). Currently, NTU is one of Singapore’s two largest public universities, along with the National University of Singapore.

According to President Andersson, the transformation of NTU into a research-focused institution was driven by a number of major initiatives, with internationalization as the key driver of its strategy (ibid.). The first major change was for NTU to become more comprehensive, adding disciplinary coverage in the arts and humanities, as well as business, international studies and education to its core STEM fields (Andersson and Mayer 2015). The next major step was the recruitment of international faculty and leaders, with the addition of senior-level academics from prestigious universities around the world. NTU also leveraged Singapore’s National Research Foundation Fellowship program and introduced an Assistant Professor initiative to create attractive start-up conditions for new faculty (ibid.). This intensive strategy resulted in NTU becoming “one of the most internationally diverse universities in the world” with its faculty representing 70 nationalities (ibid. 180). NTU also established two “Research Centres of Excellence,” drawing academic talent from around the world (ibid. 180). Finally, NTU also benefited from Singapore’s proposal to bring in international academic institutions to create research partnerships with their national universities, building links with top institutions from around the globe (ibid.). It was in this environment of academic globalization that the partnership with Illinois’s NCPRE was formed.

The National Center for Professional & Research Ethics (NCPRE) studies, creates and shares resources to support the development of best ethics and leadership practices in academia, research, and business (NCPRE 2016, Home). NCPRE is led by C. K. Gunsalus, Professor Emerita of Business and Research Professor at the Coordinated Science Laboratory within the College of Engineering of the University of Illinois. The author of two books for college administrators and young professionals, Gunsalus consults broadly in higher education, including presentations and problem-solving advice on a range of issues. (C. K. Gunsalus & Associates 2016). Upon reading Gunsalus’ books and learning about her seminars, NTU invited her to give a workshop on leadership development and ethics in Singapore in 2013. NTU Deputy President and Provost Freddy Boey proposed a collaboration to establish a leadership academy within NTU for university leaders throughout Asia. In 2014, Illinois and NTU launched a partnership to develop a signature Leadership Academy (NTULA) as “the premiere program in Asia for global research universities of the future” (NTU and Illinois 2014, 2). According to Gunsalus, the goal is to work with NTU “to develop higher education’s next crop of leaders into more ethical and evidence-based decision-makers” (NCPRE 2014).

In November 2014 NCPRE hosted the NCPRE Illinois/NTU Leadership Retreat on “Leading the Research University of the Future,” a thought leader conference designed to build relationships and explore topics relevant to the NTULA. The conference themes were strategic leadership, anticipating and managing change, and data-informed decision-making (NCPRE 2014). Attended by academic leaders from Illinois,

NTU, and other universities, this event featured plenaries and discussions with former presidents of preeminent research universities on developing global leadership, institutional integrity, and the future of research universities. The overarching goal was to lay the groundwork for an ongoing collaborative relationship, to identify themes relevant to the NTULA's leadership development needs, and to exemplify NCPRE's approach to leadership and collaboration.

Amidst robust discussion, collaborative group sessions and conversations led by NCPRE and the thought leaders, some key takeaways emerged:

Acknowledge global forces - cross-cultural and intercultural fertilization provide opportunities to increase the competitiveness and quality of the academic product... An institution must embody institutional integrity as seen from the outside. It must be true to its mission. Integrity is rooted in values, custom, habit and leadership (Larry Faulkner, President Emeritus of the University of Texas at Austin).

Universities are international but not global, as investments tend to be done on a local level... this can be achieved in universities via collaborative peer-to-peer relationships and partnerships (Jim Duderstadt, President Emeritus of the University of Michigan).

To prepare for an environment of increasing globalization, higher education leadership in research universities must critically listen to and engage with the internal and external stakeholders of the university... Look at data to make decisions... and train leaders to ask the right questions (Mary Sue Coleman, President Emerita of the University of Michigan).

In lively discussions during the plenary presentations and in small groups examining case studies presenting leadership challenges, NTU participants added their perspectives, often observing, "It doesn't work that way in Singapore..." This response highlighted some of the institutional and cultural differences and similarities between research universities in the United States and NTU in Singapore, including the degree of faculty and unit autonomy, and forms of directive leadership across different institutions. It drew attention to the ways in which the Singaporean context had its distinctive concerns, as do all institutions at the local level.

One difference is that NTU has a more centralized budgeting and top-down management structure than most U.S. research universities, which tend to have more decentralized budgeting systems and more participatory decision-making that involves consultations with faculty through informal and formal mechanisms of shared governance. Additionally, while U.S. research universities have internationalized faculty, typically the majority of faculty are American (National Center for Education Statistics 2004, 18). At NTU the preponderance of its faculty are from outside Singapore, though many have become permanent residents.

Tenure expires when a faculty member reaches the age of 65, whereas in the U.S., there is no time limit on tenure. A last major difference lies in the financing of education. In Singapore, there are substantial resources for funding higher education, while in the U.S., many institutions are facing deep budget cuts and students often require loans to attend university. These differences in national and institutional culture emphasized the importance for both NCPRE and NTU to explore how leadership and globalization are interrelated within NTU, recognizing that leadership models and strategies differ across settings, conditions and constraints, and using that information to shape the development of the NTULA.

To deepen the understanding of NTU needs, in February of 2015, NCPRE Post-doctoral researcher Tonini conducted an interview-based needs assessment with NTU faculty and staff at NTU. The goal was to gather more specific insights to inform planning and content development for the NTULA.

### **Literature and Data - NTU Needs Assessment Survey and Interviews**

The needs assessment was designed as a research study, and was reviewed and approved by the Illinois Institutional Review Board. The participants were 31 current faculty at NTU recruited by NTU's Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. The interviews were largely conducted in a one-on-one format, although four were conducted in a group format. The interview protocol included how the participants defined globalization and how it affected their roles at NTU. The interviews were followed six months later by an electronic survey administered by NCPRE, to assess NTULA content interests. The interviews and surveys were thematically coded and analyzed to provide NCPRE with a more comprehensive view of NTU, its faculty, and its hybrid culture and leadership models.

#### *Literature Review on Globalization and Views on Globalization in the NTU Context*

The terms globalization and internationalization are often conflated. Although related, there are clear differences between them, as pointed out by Altbach and Knight (2007): "We define globalization as the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement... Internationalization includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions—and even individuals—to cope with the global academic environment" (290). This definition differentiates between globalization as a phenomenon and internationalization as actions institutions take as a result of economic and academic trends. While NTU interviewees were not consistent in making this distinction, their responses made clear that their work and aspirations were affected by the confluence of global forces.

When asked 'how do you define globalization, and how does it affect your role,' many interviewees focused on the human aspect of the phenomenon with one participant positing, "Globalization drives diversification of faculty and their role. We have diverse faculty and bodies, diverse viewpoints, and no dominant viewpoint" (NTU Faculty3-F,

interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Another respondent echoed those remarks, stating, "Regarding globalization, first, we have an international faculty, who bring with them complex relationships from different cultures to their teaching" (NTU Faculty3-5, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Still another interviewee highlighted the actions necessary to take as a result of globalization, asserting that "even more than before, [we] need to engage with professors overseas internationally and to engage with strategic partnerships...make alliances with peers, particularly with universities in the West" (NTU Faculty3-1, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015).

Despite acknowledging some of the opportunities presented by globalization, participants also saw potential barriers to internationalization, expressing on several occasions; it was not possible to simply import policies and leadership strategies across institutional contexts. These responses echoed those at the Leadership Retreat, citing the different leadership dynamics in a Singaporean institution with a European at the helm in an Asian context. Khondker (2004) refers to this phenomenon as hybridization, pointing out that postsecondary education in Singapore combines the British model of higher education with aspects of the U.S. model. Lee and Gopinathan (2008) explain that this hybrid model was driven by the Ministry of Education, which in 2000 granted universities more autonomy for personnel and financial matters, while continuing to monitor the university sector and hold overall responsibility for policy parameters.

Inherent in western-based institutional models are participatory management models supported by high levels of individualism that many scholars claim are culturally specific to the West (Hofstede 1980, Dorfman, et al. 1995). Singapore's hybrid model of higher education exists in an environment where the local leadership style is, as described by their Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Manpower, "a small apex of leaders directing a base of disciplined followers" (Yong 2005). This interweaving of the global and the local is often referred to as "glocalization", or adapting global policies, practices and products to local culture and preferences (Khondker 2004).

Another layer of complexity stems from NTU's growth imperative that fueled its rise to the top echelon of research universities. Now that it has achieved that, the policies that spurred its development may not be the same needed to maintain its standing. Specifically, are the policies employed to identify and retain established faculty and recruit new faculty who share an aspiration to global excellence, the same policies needed to reward and retain those faculty – especially when they come from institutional cultures that assume a high degree of faculty autonomy and self-determination? As NCPRE Principal Investigator Burbules questioned, "How long can you keep your foot on the accelerator? Is what you need to do to get to this status the same policy you should follow once you get there?" (Nicholas Burbules [Principal Investigator, NCPRE] in discussion with Tonini, May 2016). Thus, if NTU uses a hybrid of higher education models combining some participatory management with a non-participatory

leadership style, cultural intersections combined with a glocalized model and fast-paced growth could explain some of the perspectives expressed by the NTU respondents.

#### *Managing Change in an Institution with Accelerated Growth*

The interview responses contributed valuable qualitative data that illuminated the challenges that respondents face, their perceptions of gaps in their knowledge, and the skills they sought to lead more effectively. This research revealed the following programmatic priorities:

1. Managing people, both up the chain to university administration and within respondents' units, encompassing faculty colleagues, staff, and students;
2. Building cross-cultural communications skills and establishing trust;
3. Managing change, including strategic decision-making and balancing administrative duties and research;
4. Negotiation, in reference to dealing with difficult people and meeting stakeholder needs.

The data reinforced the importance of not only preparing content that met identified needs, but also making the content culturally and contextually relevant. Specifically, interpersonal and communicative dimensions of leadership require a flexible range of strategies for dealing with people from diverse national and cultural backgrounds, and who have very different styles of direct and indirect personal expression, tolerance for conflict, and attitudes toward authority. Guided by these responses, the NCPRE team shaped the NTULA workshops to focus on issues that resonate globally, while applying solutions tailored to the local environment. Major research universities around the world have become similarly internationalized; many of NTU's experiences of coping with cultural intersection are familiar elsewhere.

#### *Literature Review on Academic Leadership and Leadership in the NTU Context*

The electronic needs assessment that followed the interviews was administered as a questionnaire, focusing on leadership at NTU, and what leadership traits respondents perceived to be the most critical to becoming successful leaders. Many of the respondents were not only new to NTU and Singapore, but also were taking on their very first leadership positions. Common to front-line academic leaders in other settings, many found that excelling in their roles as researchers, instructors and mentors did not prepare them to lead an academic unit. The rewards of leadership, such as they are, are quite different from the incentives that drive educators and researchers. One particularly poignant remark on the March 2015 NTULA evaluations reflected these concerns: "New leaders often lose their enthusiasm and aspiration after confronting the reality of being a leader; time is fragmented; bothered by nonsense issues...and so on. Therefore, it would be great if NTULA can provide ways... to overcome that problem" (NTU Faculty, Workshop Evaluation, March 2015).

The conflicting demands of being a leader highlighted by this participant called for a more nuanced definition of leadership. Authority needs to be linked to persuasion and influence; overseeing a multi-cultural faculty and staff requires multiple strategies and communicative skills, including a heightened sensitivity to different cultural norms and styles. In the first NTULA workshop, Illinois President Emeritus Robert Easter discussed the oft-made distinction between leadership and management, emphasizing the difference between what he called positional authority with the actual legitimacy and influence needed to get things done: “Leadership is influencing people—by providing purpose, direction, and motivation (*U.S. Army Field Manual 22-100*) and Management is the organization and coordination of activities of a unit in order to achieve defined objectives ([www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com))” (2015). Easter pointed out that not only is a good leader required to be able to distinguish between these two ideas, but also that “an effective administrator knows when each function is necessary” (*ibid.*). While the online questionnaire protocol was open-ended and did not distinguish between leadership and management, the survey respondents described elements that fit within the categories Easter discussed. The corresponding protocol and responses follow, with analysis informed by a study on Dean Effectiveness conducted by Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck.

The literature on academic leadership contains several studies categorizing leadership traits. Neumann and Neumann (2015) cite three strategic leadership skills (visioning, focusing and implementing), Wolverton, Ackerman and Holt (2005) list six major areas (budget, evaluation and supervision of faculty, time management, building community within the department, balancing demands (scholarship vs. chairship) and legal), and Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) identify three dimensions (community building, setting direction and empowering others). The traits discussed in the literature include characteristics within the scope of leadership Easter discussed (i.e., visioning, building community, empowering others) as well as management (i.e., implementing policies, setting budgets, managing programs). For the survey analysis, the study with the most comprehensive set of characteristics fitting the NTULA is by Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck, who developed “a systematic approach for evaluating the leadership effectiveness of deans and directors from individual and institutional perspectives” (2003, 1).

Based on a review of the literature, Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck (2003) established seven domains of criteria to evaluate the institution within their study. These domains included:

- Vision and Goal Setting
- Management of the Unit
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Communications Skills
- Research/Professional/Community/Campus Endeavors
- Quality of Education
- Support for Institutional Diversity

From 865 responses from the faculty and administrative staff reporting to deans at their research site, the authors found that “...all seven domains contribute significantly to the measurement of the deans’ leadership effectiveness, both within and between groups. The parameter estimates describing the relationship between each domain and the leadership effectiveness factor were all sizable and significant both within groups...and between groups...” (*ibid.* 13).

Reviewing the data from the February 2015 interviews, there were strong themes relating to the need to gain administrative, communications and relationship-building skills – all of which fit into the categories framed by the Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck study. As stated by one interviewee, “Philosophically, you need to be a visionary with great ambition and passion, [and you] need tremendous interpersonal skills... to create a very happy team” (NTU Faculty5-2, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Thus, the findings of the Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck empirical study were helpful in conducting a more comprehensive review of our own research on the survey-based needs assessment of NTULA participants, and categorizing the leadership skills respondents sought. Yet, at the same time, the specific strategies by which these broader functions could be achieved were diverse and eclectic, tailored to the hybridized context of NTU as an institution.

#### *Contrasting Views of Leadership – Participant Evaluations of the Workshops*

NCPRE ran a pilot version of the NTULA in March 2015, delivered to an audience comprising NTU faculty and leaders, with a few attendees from universities around Asia. Over a three-day event, participants were exposed to the foundations of leadership, exploring the special challenges of the academic environment, practicing hands-on data-informed leadership exercises, negotiation skills, and approaches to mentoring and managing conflict. Throughout the seminar, NCPRE used a case study approach called “2-Minute Challenges” developed by Gunsalus, longer scenario cases, and role plays customized to reflect the NTU context (2016). Our efforts to understand and respond to the participants’ expressed needs resulted in a high level of satisfaction, with one attendee remarking in the workshop evaluation: “The information has been very helpful in providing a methodical framework to address daily leadership and professional challenges. The materials have been very well delivered and contextualized to local setting” (NTU Faculty, Workshop Evaluation, March 2015).

The evaluations also revealed that participants wanted more content on managing upwards as well as within their units (i.e. coping with the pivotal position between top-down mandates and sensitivity and responsiveness to an independent faculty), and even more NTU contextualization. For example, many participants indicated the need for additional skills to help them to collaborate better with those to whom they reported in order to better manage their workloads, while at the same time expanding the skills required to manage within their own units. These needs were supported by data in the interviews, with one interviewee

relaying the following list: “planning skills, managing difficult people, resolving disputes, negotiation, how to deal with management, [and] managing up and down” (NTU Faculty4-F, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Notably, “managing up” is not a unique concern within Singapore; virtually all administrators work in structures where they are accountable upward as well as downward, and reconciling or balancing top-down mandates with maintaining credibility and goodwill (in both directions) is an existential condition of academic leadership everywhere.

Armed with this information, NCPRE spent the next six months reformatting and redesigning the workshop for the NTULA’s first official internal year-long cohort. The initial workshop was broken into a multi-part series, comprising two 2-day sessions in October and February led by NCPRE, interspersed with bi-monthly half-day meetings led by NTU administration. For the incoming cohort, NCPRE ran a supplemental needs assessment, this time in electronic

format, to ensure that the updated content met the new participants’ needs.

We received responses from 17 of 25 participants in NTULA’s first year-long leadership development cohort. That cohort included sitting Chairs, Associate Chairs and others identified with leadership potential. Of 19 questions on the survey, four addressed leadership. Three of those four questions are analyzed in the tables below, while the fourth question is summarized at the end of the section. The responses were aggregated and categorized with 58 Likert-type items from the seven leadership domains in the Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck study (ibid. 21). The responses were then matched to the domain corresponding to the relevant Likert items. Although the study grounded the 58 items in the literature and prior research, the authors found that the domains did not account for all possible leadership factors or potential overlaps and intersections with other domains. The results are found in the below tables.

A	<b>Question 10: What changes are required to manage a professional role more easily?</b>		
	<p><u>NTULA Participant Survey Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve communication skills</li> <li>• Build strong relationships</li> <li>• Create and maintain robust collegial networks, collaborations</li> <li>• Motivate and inspire teams</li> <li>• Maintain focus and establish vision</li> <li>• Increase problem-solving and decision-making skills</li> <li>• Enhance organization and time management skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> </ul>	<p><u>Domains</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications skills</li> <li>Interpersonal relationships</li> <li>Interpersonal relationships</li> <li><b>Not a Domain</b></li> <li>Goal setting</li> <li>Managing unit</li> <li>Managing unit</li> </ul>
B	<b>Question 13: What tools/skills are needed to implement change?</b>		
	<p><u>NTULA Participant Survey Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively</li> <li>• Improved skills to build and motivate teams</li> <li>• Strengthen ability to delegate, negotiate, and maximize human resource potential</li> <li>• Increase collaborations and networking and better manage relationships with stakeholders</li> <li>• Enhance ability to manage time and prioritize</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> </ul>	<p><u>Domains</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications skills</li> <li><b>Not a Domain</b></li> <li>Managing unit</li> <li>Interpersonal relationships</li> <li>Managing unit</li> </ul>
C	<b>Question 14: What leadership strategies have been most effective facilitating change?</b>		
	<p><u>NTULA Participant Survey Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly communicate vision and goals</li> <li>• Motivate teams to share responsibility for goal success</li> <li>• Openness, inclusion, collaboration and academic respect</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders and secure support</li> <li>• Listen and help staff</li> <li>• Instill passion in teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> <li>→</li> </ul>	<p><u>Domains</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal setting</li> <li><b>Not a Domain</b></li> <li><b>Not a Domain</b></li> <li>Interpersonal relationships</li> <li>Communications skills</li> <li><b>Not a Domain</b></li> </ul>

When no domain expressly listed the characteristics represented by the survey answer, it was marked as “Not a Domain” in the tables. With five responses categorized this way, we reflected on how NTU’s hybrid combination of higher education components from both Britain and the U.S., globalized for the Singaporean setting, affected its leadership model. From the February interviews, we gleaned that the faculty experienced globalization in the “interchange of people and ideas” influencing faculty, students, partnerships, research, funding and leadership (NTU Faculty4-4, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Yet, interviewees also noted how “globalization is making it even more challenging...you need to have efficient leaders and effective associates”, in an environment where “real tensions” are created between a “faculty who have high expectations for faculty governance and leadership that wants authority to move quickly.” In some cases participants were told that “faculty really don't have decision making authority” (NTU Faculty4-8, interviews by Donna Tonini, February 2015). Thus, the interviewees saw their roles as drivers of change and opportunity, yet also faced challenges caused by perceptions of governance and leadership that sometimes conflicted with NTU’s centralized decision-making. Here, globalization and leadership intersect to create a need for a model of leadership that requires the communications, relationship-building, management and goal-setting skills as outlined above in the domains, as well as competencies in the motivational and inspirational realm to better “manage from the middle” and cultivate the “adaptability, flexibility and restlessness that is inherent in society” (NTU Faculty4-8, interview by Donna Tonini, February 2015).

The literature also provided another viewpoint. The survey results labeled as “Not a Domain” were similar in that they reflected the participants’ need to motivate and inspire teams, instill passion, and promote openness and inclusion – characteristics that were not clearly addressed in the Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck study. Bass’ narrative on transformational leaders is a better fit, describing such leaders as individuals who “...broaden and elevate the interests of their employees when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group” (1990, 21). According to Bass, transformational leaders contrast with transactional leaders who expect followers to do “...what is expected of them and what compensation they will receive if they fulfill these requirements” (ibid. 19-20). Transformational leadership includes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, whereas transactional leaders secure their followership with contingent rewards (ibid.). Bass (1990) asserts that transformational leaders energize, inspire, and intellectually stimulate their colleagues and staff, and argues that through training, leaders can learn transformational behaviors.

Of the above seven domains, survey respondents prioritized four areas: goal-setting, managing the unit, managing interpersonal relationships, and engaging in effective communications. This is not to say that the other domains

were not important to the cohort; rather, they were not represented as strongly in collective responses. The survey responses suggested that the cohort sought to become more transformational leaders. Categorization and grouping methods are subjective and imperfect, making it critical to examine responses in context to understand their import. To demonstrate reliability of the categories, Tonini triangulated the qualitative data from the February 2015 interviews and the electronic survey. The results were consistent with what the faculty leaders from NTU perceived as the necessary skills to have to lead effectively. These skills are reasonably captured by the 4th survey question referencing leadership, asking respondents to list the key skills and knowledge needed to do their jobs. The top ten skills listed (appearing more than once) by the respondents included listening, patience, empathy, socialization, communication, diplomacy, tenacity, knowledge, negotiation and motivational prowess – many of which fall into the transformational realm.

In October 2015, the first NTULA session with the year-long cohort was held at NTU in Singapore. Based on the February 2015 interview data and bolstered with the survey responses, NCPRE organized the October cohort program around six themes:

- becoming an academic leader
- managing change
- improving communications, problem-solving, conflict management skills
- meeting diverse expectations of leadership, staff
- using data for decision-making
- developing relationships

The session was not only augmented by participant input on topics, but also leveraged participant agency by having each initiate a personal Individual Development Plan and contribute a personally-encountered professional dilemma for discussion. NTU also invested more in participant growth by assigning mentors to each of the faculty leaders for continued guidance and support beyond the scope of the individual events and the year-long program. This enrichment was in addition to the series of bi-monthly half-day meetings NTU planned across the academic year for members of the cohort.

Reflecting on the surveys to inform further workshop development, the respondents highlighted that leaders must clearly communicate their visions and goals and motivate teams to share the responsibility for the success of the goals. In a similar vein, cohort members listed openness, inclusion, collaboration and academic respect as ingredients for effective leadership. Cohort members also noted as effective leaders those who engage with stakeholders and secure their support, and those who listen and help their staff, and instill passion in their teams. These responses indicated the leadership models and strategies the cohort believed most effective in facilitating change - most of which are considered by Bass (1990) to be transformational leadership characteristics. Knowing the participants’ requests for transformational leadership competencies but also acknowledging what we learned from them about their hybrid model that combined globalized and globalized

aspects of leadership with centralized administration, we understood that our typical approach would need to be finessed to accommodate the challenges they would face.

The first two-day seminar included a mix of goal-setting, unit management, managing interpersonal relationships, and engaging in effective communication as defined by the above seven domains. The first session also explored aspects of transformational leadership, especially in the realm of managing change, communicating expectations and handling problems.

Observing the participants in the sessions, some of the most informative moments resulted from how the members of the cohort, representing different cultures and backgrounds, interacted in the various group activities. During one particular role play demonstration of a promotion and tenure case between Gunsalus and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Angela Goh, participants were transfixed by how Goh's character would continually attempt to escalate the conflict, while Gunsalus demonstrated how to actively manage the interaction with calm demeanor and response tools known as "personal scripts," or words prepared for anticipated situations, to help defuse difficult situations. Another activity with group discussion featured Burbules, an American, assertively acting out the part of a disgruntled professor, to the surprise of his fellow discussants who responded, "an Asian would not have reacted like that" (Nicholas Burbules [Principal Investigator, NCPRE], in discussion with Tonini, May 2016). These reactions highlighted some of the challenges of the globalized and glocalized elements of a leadership model informed by an awareness of culture and context.

The evaluations reflected that the NTULA largely met participant needs, with the top request for the next session to cover managing both upwards and within units, emphasizing how "leading from the middle" comes with its own set of challenges. We used these recommendations to inform the content of the second NTULA session in February 2016.

That session, also in Singapore, was held at an offsite location to provide participants distance from the NTU campus and time for focus and collaboration. The first day concentrated on why organizational culture matters, how to handle complaints, and leadership versatility across styles. The second day focused on negotiation skills and building healthy departments, along with bully-proofing academic units. After reflection on evaluations from the first cohort meeting, NCPRE added sessions on cross-cultural communication and organizational agility working within hierarchies, led by former United Nations Chief Ethics Officer Joan Dubinsky. NCPRE also added more nuanced tools to the sessions to help these faculty managers "lead from the middle," managing relationships more effectively with those above them in their reporting chains, as well leading colleagues and staff in their home units. NCPRE thus built on the building blocks of the NTULA and reached beyond the four original domains, branching out into supporting diversity and transformational elements of leadership. These efforts paid off as the evaluations indicated satisfaction with the content that addressed "leading from the middle." The lessons we learned enforced how both global and local forces create

leadership opportunities and challenges, and that culture permeates leadership interactions on all levels, aligning with Altbach and Knight's (2007) framing of globalization.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The evolutionary story of NTU is notable in its globalization-driven growth imperative to become a top research-intensive university in the short span of less than a decade. The risks of this transformational path were enormous and included refocusing NTU's core mission, changing the metrics by which faculty are evaluated, and a resulting massive reshaping of its faculty. For the retained faculty, adjusting to the university's new goals and the absence of their former colleagues was a challenge. For new recruits brought to NTU from abroad, there were varying forms and levels of culture shock requiring quick adaptation to the principles, values, and beliefs of a new nation and a quickly-evolving university, as well as the more standard adaptation to any new academic research and teaching home. New faculty leaders needed to navigate a diverse environment, while overcoming cross-cultural communication challenges and maintaining departmental harmony and collegiality.

The NTULA was developed in response to the known challenges first-level faculty leaders encounter, and it evolved as we learned more about their needs in an environment of extraordinarily rapid institutional transformation in Singapore's culturally-hybrid higher education system. Our study followed the creation of the NTULA, informed by the qualitative data, feedback and input provided by the participants. We applied the lens of the evolutionary force of globalization, and the need to internationalize leadership development in NTU's setting, factoring in its tremendous growth. The intersection of these factors offers key points for reflection.

First, globalization is a huge driving force behind the NTU story, and as explained by Andersson and Mayer (2015), those economic, political and social forces have their roots in the development of Singapore, itself as an industrializing and globalizing nation. In Singapore, the internationalization of higher education and the reformation of the university model into its hybrid structure was initiated and supported by the top leaders. However, many of their international faculty body come from higher education institutions in the West, and are used to more faculty autonomy than is present within NTU, given its top-down leadership tradition. As a result, NTU's emerging globalization-fueled hybrid model highlights leadership challenges for existing and emerging, Western and non-Western, universities alike. NTULA's workshop content, focused on transformational leadership development, is responsive to the needs expressed by many rising faculty leaders in the changing higher education environment, and applies in Asia as in the West. The literature supports this view, with Bass (1997) stating that some assume:

...because much of the theories and methods of the transactional-transformational leadership paradigm originated in the culturally individualistic United States, the paradigm is likely to have little

relevance in countries with collectivistic cultures. The opposite appears to be more likely. Transformational leadership emerges more readily in the collectivistic societies of East Asia (132).

This finding does not mean that interpersonal issues are not contextual. The NCPRE approach has always been to customize and contextualize the overarching issues to a more globalized resolution. As Gunsalus points out, "human nature is human nature and the issues resonate; solutions always require local adaptation" (C. K. Gunsalus [Director, NCPRE] in discussion with Tonini, May, 2016).

What we learned about NTU's hybrid model of leadership is that leaders must acknowledge and integrate both the global and the local to develop a more flexible and fluid leadership style that can work across cultures (Tian 2012). We discovered that listening to and engaging learners permitted us the insight necessary to work collaboratively to tailor strategies of effective leadership to their context, such as adapting communication approaches cross-culturally. Thus the NTULA leadership training is rooted in normative prescriptions about ethical leadership and informed by surveys of client needs, while allowing space for these concepts to be negotiated in practice.

We found, specifically, three areas of tension in this hybridized model of leadership. First, how to manage the transition from the aggressive top-down decision-making and metrics-driven evaluation that were needed to drive rapid institutional change, to a more steady-state model that can preserve the very achievements of that growth: the policies that force people to reassess their priorities (or that force them out) are not the same as the policies that reward and engage faculty who are already high achievers, and who expect recognition and involvement in the decisions that affect them. Second, and related to that point, how leaders in these pivotal positions reconcile in their activities the top-down mandates that press upon them from above, while being responsive to and maintaining legitimacy with the faculty for whom they are the main point of contact with broader institutional policies and priorities. Third, how generally established and research-supported dimensions of effective leadership translate into a context where communication, conflict, and traditions of authority differ widely, and in which no "one size fits all" set of strategies will work across diverse interpersonal relationships. On top of all the usual challenges of effective leadership, these three key aspects of the hybridized NTU context complicate the needs of leadership development.

All of this highlights the question framed by Burbules, "What is a sustainable model of excellence?" (Nicholas Burbules [Principal Investigator, NCPRE], in discussion with Tonini, May 2016). The answer seems not to lie in the construction of one unitary approach, but in adopting a fluid model of hybridized leadership that acknowledges these tensions and evolves with the needs of its stakeholders in a rapidly changing institutional and national context. It is the very success that schools like NTU achieve in remaking themselves as upwardly striving institutions that sharpen these tensions and makes them higher stakes for individuals

as well as for the institution as a whole. As in Otto Neurath's famous analogy, how do you rebuild a boat that is already afloat at sea, maintaining what is good, refashioning what needs change, all while remaining effective and responsive to the ebbs and flows of the ocean?



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## Acknowledgements

The authors thank the NCPRE team, especially recognizing contributions from Vance S. Martin, Gene Amberg, and an anonymous reviewer. The authors also extend their gratitude and appreciation to NTU, the participants and cohort of the NTULA, and Angela Goh, Associate Provost of Faculty Affairs.