



Leadership for the 21st Century: A Catalytic Strategy

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Executive Summary

This design is the result of a Design Lab sponsored by the Bush Foundation and University of Minnesota to develop a catalytic strategy that encourages and supports new acts of community leadership relevant to solving 21st century problems. It was developed to influence both leaders and their communities' awareness of their effectiveness. Throughout the Design, we seek to encourage, support, and inspire more acts of leadership in communities. Communities are thought of broadly, as any group of people who share something significant between them—geography, religious, age, ethnicity, and shared concerns and challenges.

The design is intended to leverage seed capital so that all activities described herein are self-sustaining. It focuses on three major efforts, each focused on achieving a large scale impact:

- The major vehicle for supporting community-based leaders is the ***Leadership Minnesota Commons***. This network functions as a town square for leaders, providing them access to a range of support and resources: facilitation and mediation, analysis and knowledge, leadership training, and support.
- An outreach campaign, ***Minnesota Leads***, ushers people to the Leadership Commons by highlighting small and large acts of leadership and inspiring them to do what must be done to improve their communities.
- Activities that ***deepen and extend the University's 'Transforming the U'*** strategic initiative to new levels across its campuses, allowing it to become an even stronger partner in this initiative. The University brings unique access to thousands of graduates who will play leadership roles in the future. One significant idea in this design focuses on transforming undergraduate education so that it evokes, enables, and inspires leadership.

Within 10 years:

- 90,000 individual acts of leadership encouraged and enabled
- 14,250 community issues addressed

Introduction

Barely ten years into the 21st century, significant and profound changes rock our society. These conditions are creating both new opportunities and new challenges for citizens, our communities, and the nation as a whole. The systems and processes once effective at producing solutions now are at a standstill. Leadership is an essential to chart a course for change.

In this design, we focus on *acts of leadership* rather than more conventional notions of leaders as individuals in positions of formal authority. Acts of leadership can be taken by formal leaders or by any person in a community or organization. Additional dimensions are implied in this notion:

- Leadership is key to making progress on community challenges and addressing issues of the common good;
- Often, leadership is needed at the places where contrary world views and knowledge intersect;
- The most powerful acts of leadership are those empowering others to make positive change;
- Acts of leadership flow from person to person—leadership is everyone’s job and everyone’s opportunity.

At the same time leadership is a practice that is never fully mastered, it can be strengthened across a life time. It is difficult to teach, but it can be learned, and vital capacities can be cultivated to enhance the consciousness, conscience, and competence that will be required to meet the challenges of the 21st century on behalf of the common good.

A goal identified by the Bush Foundation focuses on an outcome that will result from the accumulation of small and large leadership acts; “By 2018, 75% of the people . . . say their community is effective at solving problems and improving the quality of life.” This design focuses on investing in changes that achieve this goal.

Acts of leadership move a community toward effectively addressing complex problems

Toward this end, we identified five challenges inherent to leadership. The Design's three proposed efforts focus on overcoming these challenges, thus enhancing *community capacity*.

1. Envision a better future by charting a path toward that future, mobilizing people and resources to act, and solving problems along the way.
2. Face the chaos present in change, and persevere until the desired future state is reached.
3. Work effectively across cultures, transcending traditional boundaries and interests, and engaging all sectors: for-profit, non-profit, and public.
4. Integrate concepts, divisions, and initiatives creatively – see the *whole* as well as the *parts*.
5. Reflect on actions and events to create understanding and inform future actions.

We often think of communities as bounded by geography, profession, religion, ideology, or ethnicity. Here we also include virtual and other communities brought together by social or political interests, demographics, history, economics, visions for change, or to preserve something. They share a desire for better lives.

Community is any group of people who share something significant between them

The Leadership Minnesota Commons

Minnesota already has many entities involved in leadership development and community problem solving on many important public issues – access to health care, environmental sustainability, and smart metropolitan growth. Yet few platforms exist to facilitate fluid sharing of knowledge, proven practices, or effective processes among leaders working on these issues.

Reminiscent of the traditional town square, the Leadership Commons provides an actual and virtual gathering place offering resources and support that enable leaders to move forward in solving community-based problems. This gathering place will be built face-to-face and using 21st century information platforms that enable self generating linkages between individuals, groups, and institutions. Some members will supply resources, some will use them, and many more will both contribute and find things in the Commons to support their own work. Both collaboration and competition will thrive.

The Commons succeeds when:

1. Communities grappling with similar process issues – contested definitions of problems, unclear mandates and authority, entrenched interests, deep conflict – are able offer and share strategies for overcoming such challenges;
2. More leadership opportunities come into focus and people feel able, with support, to step into those places;
3. At the conclusion of a community process, members both acknowledge the support they received from the Commons yet claim their own responsibility in developing the actual solution.

The work of the Leadership Commons would be both responsive and proactive. Most often, it would be shaped by requests from communities for resources to help them address problems.

Each year:

- 1,500 individual leaders use the resources of the Commons in their work
- 225 communities draw upon the Commons' resources to help them solve problems.

The three Arrowhead counties want to provide strategic education to their county commissioners about modern approaches to economic development. They seek these leadership development services for 18 county commissioners. In the Leadership Commons, they link up with two key resources: a consulting firm that helps communities apply Richard Florida's ideas to their circumstances, and a private firm that offers to provide a curriculum in strategic management to the commissioners.

Yet some important problems cannot be resolved within communities. On occasion, the Leadership Commons would provide a space and place for convening, and deep listening and new insight in arenas filled with many formal leaders yet devoid of *true* leadership focused on addressing underlying problems.

Design Elements

Statement of Purpose Through its Leadership Commons, Minnesota residents, organizations and communities find and share resources to build skills, access expertise, and share learning. Through these connections, capacity is built for leadership acts that make progress on community challenges.

Users & Members The Commons operates within and between the business, governmental, and non-profit sectors, partnering with geographic, demographic, ethnic, and faith communities. Any individual or organization in Minnesota is a potential leader and user of the Leadership Commons' resources. These resources will be provided by Commons members, both organizations and individuals. All must commit to documenting their issue requiring leadership, the use of resources, and the result. This will enable the whole system to learn.

To support acts of leadership, the following types of resources will be needed:

- Outreach and communication skills;
- Knowledge, information, or contextual analysis;
- Tools and programming that develops leaders and enables acts of leadership;
- Convening, facilitation, and coaching services that both lead to uncommon conversations and support community leadership.

Participating in the Leadership Commons requires members providing such leadership resources to engage in opportunities for learning, document their experiences, be willing to be evaluated by leaders, and pay a fee (a flat fee or a percentage of the revenue

There is a concern that young people are increasingly disenfranchised in first-ring suburbs. Nonprofits working with schools learn about a model, Public Achievement, used internationally to provide young people an experience of working on public issues. Working through the Commons, nonprofit program staff connect with others using the model and, drawing upon a manual developed at the University, bring the model to their setting. Coaches are trained who help uncover youth's passion for two projects: a new mentoring effort for elementary school students and increasing a school's use of renewable products. The Public Achievement coaches help frame these new experiences in terms of public work, helping students to see how what they are doing is both practical and political. Students decide to document the effort with a video.

A community activist in Litchfield is concerned about the environmental impacts from an increasing number of hog farms. She wants to bring concerned neighbors and hog farmers together to find some win-win solutions. Seeking help in the Leadership Commons, she finds staff from University Extension who can provide good scientific evidence about the nature of this problem. She also links up with an experienced facilitator and identifies a

garnered by working through the Commons). They also must agree with the Commons' purpose and principles, and publicly commit to owning them.

The essential role of founding members in defining organizing concepts. Much as people needed to define the plot, make decisions about trees, and sidewalks in a traditional town square, founding members will need to constitute the Commons.

Using a process used to establish a chaordic organization, the founding members will refine the founding principles, create a charter to delineate the rights and responsibilities of membership, and select the network's core (a public purpose non-profit organization). Oversight of the Commons during start-up will rest with the founding members; however, when operational, the Commons will be self-organizing and self-governing. It will have elegant simplicity to support the network's complexity. It will be worthy of the trust of all its members and users.

Founding Principles. The purpose of the Leadership Minnesota Commons is embodied in a few key principles:

- Addressing community problems will be the central focus of the Commons rather than an agenda determined by a particular institution;
- Leadership is key to making progress on community problems and resolving issues of the common good;
- Members would be mutually accountable for learning, connecting, and collaborating with strangers;
- Learning involves accessing and acting on information in a timely way, as well as taking the time to reflect on outcomes to act more skillfully in the future;
- Leadership skill is created through various mechanisms – experience and reflection, research, experimentation, and soulful risk taking;

a well-regarded community organizing class at the local college. There she finds a mentor who can help when she runs into sticky situations. Over the next year, she works her local networks to get the right people to the table to move Litchfield forward on this problem.

A number of foundations are concerned about the lack of progress on controlling healthcare costs and guaranteeing access to all citizens. One has identified the major stakeholders but there is a need to convene the diverse interests in neutral territory to have a productive conversation. The program officer approaches the Leadership Commons to identify an experienced facilitator. She also wants briefing papers that bring facts to the table to enable a new type of truth telling. Finally, she needs some help thinking comprehensively about how to structure and carry out the series of meetings to promote deep listening and reflection (so they actually move formal leaders to a different place). To create this uncommon conversation, staff of the Commons step in as an honest broker to create the space and time for a conversation that fosters deeper understanding and points towards a way of resolving this intractable problem.

- Learning and expertise originate from various places in the network. They can be shared through various forums (virtual, formal learning programs, facilitated meetings, conferences, etc.)

Practices. Most of the work in the Commons will focus on linking community leaders with resources to help them clarify their vision, build skills, and develop solutions to problems. Most resources will be provided by network members. However, there are some key practices and resources the Commons should provide or hold:

- *Listen to leaders* who require assistance. Learn from their needs. Highlight approaches that make a difference in various settings.
- *Create a virtual platform* on the World Wide Web to facilitate requesting and sharing of resources. This platform should be built with the tools of Web 2.0 and enabled to incorporate the innovations of Web 3.0, Web 4.0, etc. Currently, this would involve self-tagging entries (to enable self-organizing), peer feedback mechanism (to enable customer assessment of Members' products, courses, and tools), and documentation tools.
- *Administer the Leadership Fund* (explained below), which provides financial resources that enable communities and individual users to access resources provided by Commons members.
- *Analyze, discuss, and disseminate learning* about the process and outcomes of leadership.
- *Identify gaps and inform investments* in the development of new products or methods, in unique collaborations among members, or in bringing some tried-and-true methods to a larger scale.
- *Convene selectively and proactively*, gathering people to discuss and seek to resolve larger-scale state, national, or international challenges. As the healthcare example illustrates, there are some issues which might necessitate face-to-face sharing of ideas, deep listening, and courageous action. As a neutral town square,

the Leadership Minnesota Commons could provide that valuable—and all too rare—space.

- Provide ongoing management and *integration of the Minnesota Leads campaign*. Staff use leadership experiences (and documentation) in the Commons as ongoing material for the campaign. This constant flow of experience, story-telling and communication will encourage more leaders to partake of the Commons and cement a new understanding of leadership.

These specific design elements will create and support a range of leadership activities. If well-crafted, the Leadership Minnesota Commons will leverage, improve, and spotlight current leadership acts, encouraging and supporting new leadership from diverse communities. There is great responsibility in embarking on this endeavor.

At the end of this design, we describe how investment capital from the Bush Foundation and other funders will multiply existing investments, provide essential seed capital, and create dynamics to support an ongoing, sustainable funding base for the Commons.

Minnesota Leads:

identify leaders, connect them with resources, raise awareness, and inspire others

“Minnesota Leads” is the outreach and awareness arm of the Leadership Commons. A public campaign, Minnesota Leads makes people aware of the Commons and opens it up to them. Initially, the effort can rely upon existing networks, such as the Bush Fellows, other leadership program alumni, U of M graduates, civic associations, foundations, other nonprofits, and businesses. When better established, Minnesota Leads can engage public and nonprofit media (particularly TPT and MPR) to usher even more people into the Commons.

Beyond guiding people to the Commons, the campaign can do more.

Many people still think of leadership only in traditional, podium-bound terms. We do need wise and courageous leadership from people in official authority positions in the public, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors. But that’s not enough. Every one of us can make things better in our communities and inspire others to do the same.

Nurturing small and larger acts of leadership across communities requires a new and broader awareness. Designed to locate, recognize, and inspire thousands of leaders to act (and recognize their actions as ‘leadership’), Minnesota Leads conveys simple messages:

- Leadership abounds
- Leadership transcends boundaries and takes various forms
- Leadership nurtures and is nurtured
- Leadership springs from community and seeks the common good
- Leadership can be learned—from success, failure, and the muddle in-between
- Leadership grows at home
- Leadership takes risks and risks change

In the first year:

- Minnesota Leads will bring 7,500 “visitors” of various kinds to the Commons
- From this, 750 individual leaders and 100 communities connect and take advantage of at least one resource there

By the third year:

- 15,000 visitors of various kinds will come to the Leadership Commons annually
- From this, 1,500 individual leaders and 225 communities connect and take advantage of its resources

Minnesota Leads succeeds when:

1. **Tens of thousands of leaders and prospective leaders enter the Leadership Commons and connect with resources.** People across Minnesota see the Commons as a comprehensive resource to access services, upgrade skills, connect with like-minded peers, and more. Individuals, groups, communities, and others know how the Commons can help them, what is available, and how to access it easily. Providers of services, tools, and products for leaders also understand how they can engage with the Commons for mutual benefit. The synergy between these leaders and resources improves communities and improves lives.
2. **The leadership conversation is changed.** Raise awareness of new ways of thinking about leadership. Communities partner with existing leadership initiatives, the media, and others to change the conversation. People realize that leadership is what we do each day and that more acts of leadership mean more vital communities. Everyday leadership matters.
3. **Existing leadership is identified, recognized, and shared** to shine a light on acts of leadership. The Commons enlists and supports business, foundations, and other sponsors to celebrate, and reward in multiple ways acts of leadership. Tell the story of leadership.
4. **Awareness about simple skills and basic knowledge is raised.** Leadership is not rocket science. We can raise confidence and enable more people to step up and commit “small acts of leadership” by helping them recognize and acquire simple leadership skills and knowledge.
5. **Communities’ confidence is raised.** As people see and appreciate a stronger “flow” of leadership in the community, they have more confidence in their community’s ability to handle problems and improve life. More confidence reinforces the community’s ability to generate even more acts of leadership, again and again.

Sponsor a contest for people to capture acts of leadership through video. Show a million acts of leadership at once (and people didn’t even know it was happening). Provide cameras in diverse communities, simple suggestions, and some basic editing and uploading support. Create a YouTube-like site featuring the videos. Share the best ones to draw even more people to the Commons.

Use existing networks to identify young leaders in a variety of communities. Building on the 1000 Friends of Minnesota’s Legacy Letters, work with TPT to create one-minute video testimonies, recognizing and celebrating the unique connections of leaders to Minnesota. Distribute them to the network of Bush Fellows and other leadership program alumni. Write brief print versions and distribute to weekly newspapers that are seeking content. The write-ups end with a plug and link to the Commons.

Create a chat book (text, visuals) that tells 20 stories of the ways leadership changed things in communities – neighborhood revitalization, open space protection, organizing early childhood providers, etc. Distribute widely through existing networks.

Design Elements

We envision a multi-faceted, distributed outreach effort, loosely structured but aggressively steered by the Commons, which engages anyone we can energize. It can proceed with these design elements:

- Assess current attitudes within the various communities in Minnesota about leadership. What do people believe leadership is? What does it look like? Draw upon already existing research, such as that done by Leadership for a Changing World at New York University, to explore barriers to recognizing the multiple faces of leadership.
- Develop a multi-pronged campaign using multiple media forms focused on ushering 15,000 people annually to the Commons. Initially, the process of identifying and highlighting leadership acts could proceed much like a traditional, political campaign. The state could be broken down into regions and individuals identified who then take responsibility for finding leadership examples in the area, using guides and materials to improve ease of the process.
- Engage the media as a partner. The commercial media will be difficult to engage constructively, but there will be “news” anywhere we are actually taking on community issues. State public television networks (including the MN Channel), the nonprofit press (MPR, KFAI, MinnPost), and blogs offer more opportunities to share our messages and stories. We will want to create opportunities to tell the myriad stories that ultimately lead to stories people see as the “news.”

Once launched, the Minnesota Leads campaign enables more people to say, “Yes, We Can!” and connect their efforts to the Leadership Minnesota Commons.

Sponsor a documentary film festival showing communities meeting their challenges, growing, learning, and improving. Connect aspiring filmmakers with communities working on improvement. Reward successes with exposure. Make these examples available to schools, leadership programs, churches, and others. Learn from everything.

Encourage university and high school students to create their own ways to reach out and make things happen as part of Minnesota Leads activities. This creates and implements outreach methods, and also documents and shares impacts, triggering even more interest in leadership and the resources available in the Commons.

Find many ways to recognize existing acts of leadership. Co-sponsor awards. Create a website where peers honor leadership in others they know. The Commons can use Twitter to provide different communities with leadership updates of interest. Recruit business sponsors for recognition prizes, such as a free meal, car detailing, movie tickets, or gift certificates.

Specific Strategies for the University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota could be an essential partner in the establishment and ongoing operations of the Leadership Minnesota Commons. This network offers many opportunities for the University to advance its strategic plan and reinvigorate the public's faith in the University's role of providing relevant, unbiased and rigorous support for community leaders in the 21st century. For example, the Colleges of Design or Biological Science, or the Institutes of Technology or Public Affairs could be Commons members, offering communities a variety of resources such as student teams or research briefings. Units, such as Continuing Education or the Business School, which provide non-credit leadership development programs, could use the Commons to make their offerings more accessible. Faculty with facilitation expertise could offer their services to communities through the Commons. Outreach centers, such as the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs and the Academic and Corporate Relations Center, could use the Commons to put their concrete tools and rigorous analysis in the hands of people who need them. Rather than requiring the community to come to the U, *the Commons brings the U to the community*.

21st Century Land Grant: Name it, Claim it

Other University-based efforts also will add unique value. The rest of this Design focuses on exploring these options. It reinforces the “pillars of strategic positioning” described in *Transforming the U* regarding exceptional students, faculty and staff, organization, and innovation.

In *Transforming the U*, the University developed a roadmap for audacious change. The following ideas focus on accelerating the pace of that change and making the transformation more tangible, both internally and externally. In the spirit of this Design Lab, we focus on ideas that both build on University strengths and transform it into more of an *outside-in* organization.

Such an approach is congruent with the original purposes behind the creation of land grant universities; could a 21st century version of the land grant mission become the moniker for all these outside-in initiatives?

Exceptional Students

One barrier that internal and external stakeholders involved in this process identified as “impermeable” is the structure of disciplines as the principal organizing concept within the University. Yet we recognize disciplines are an essential structure for organizing knowledge and approaching the process of education. The University, as we know it, needs both disciplines and rigorous scholarship within those disciplines.

In response to this tension, *Transforming the U*—“Spotlight 18” devoted considerable efforts toward supporting “inter-disciplinary” initiatives inside the University. Clearly the University’s strategic direction anticipates having disciplines be a fundamental organizing element of education and scholarship while simultaneously exploring other academically rigorous organizing approaches.

Major in a challenge, minor in a discipline. What if students were to major in a “challenge”—an issue facing their nation, their geographic or other community—and minor in a traditional discipline? In this sense, “challenge majors” are similar to other extant interdisciplinary initiatives like urban studies, applied plant science, or communication studies. For example, a challenge might be: *How can cities grow in ways that are environmentally sustainable?* Or *How can offshore oil platforms be designed and engineered to be safe to the surrounding ecosystem?* Or *What are the ethical dimensions and legal implications of current developments in health sciences?*

One key to defining a challenge as a major is framing the challenge as a question rather than a topic. This helps establish the framework for rigorous scholarship. Another key is to originate

the challenge major in real world issues—large issues for which no current solution exists. This supports the “outside-in” philosophy underlying *Transforming the U*.

Such an approach would preserve the basic structure of the University. Yet it would encourage students to approach their education exploring societal needs with the tools of classical disciplines. This approach compliments traditional disciplines and holds these potential benefits:

Challenge majors...

- help students link their University experience with future vocational or life interests;
- provide an additional vehicle for defining faculty research, supporting cutting edge interdisciplinary research, and making it relevant to the community;
- provide faculty opportunities to develop and more engaging pedagogical approaches (see below);
- create new opportunities for alumni, practitioners, and others in the community to participate in education and research as anticipated by *Transforming the U*;
- create an additional vehicle for employers and philanthropies to connect with the University.

As such, this approach reinforces the direction of other key University initiatives, including the establishment of major interdisciplinary initiatives and the mission of the Office of Public Engagement and Center for Teaching and Learning. This approach also is consistent with reforms suggested by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as a key strategy for liberal education. Acting on it now, throughout the entire University, however, provides a leadership opportunity for the University of Minnesota in relation to its peer institutions.

Design Elements

Leadership Every *challenge* curriculum would involve a rigorous leadership module. It could involve both a traditional class and an experiential learning component (service learning, internship, and practicum). These modules and approaches could be shared

with other higher education institutions nationally. By taking this approach, every University bachelors graduate would have exposure to leadership education and practice. Such a leadership module for all *challenge majors*, regardless of school or discipline, could focus on the following attributes important to 21st century leadership:

- Self-awareness
- Emotional intelligence
- Courage
- Systemic thinking
- Conflict mediation and resolution
- Storytelling
- Ability to intervene effectively in complex systems
- Collaboration
- Cross-cultural facility and ability to relate and lead in a variety of contexts

In addition, specific knowledge of the context and interdisciplinary research that bears on the *challenge* question would be a required part of every major.

Alternative approaches to learning Many University faculty already are supplementing traditional pedagogical approaches with other methods focused on enhanced learning. The *challenge major* facilitates this direction and makes it easier to involve community resources in the educational process. Some possibilities include:

- Case study analysis and simulation;
- Students majoring in the same challenge have a practitioner mentor who is working on the question and willing to be a resource to the students;
- New types of media – multi-media case studies, pod casts, vlogs, blogs – can be used to enrich understanding of the challenge, as well as deeper understanding of how problems and solutions are framed;
- Case-in-point methodology that brings ‘real’ leadership issues and individual reflection on experience into the classroom;

- Project-based learning, working on analysis of some dimension of the challenge, can provide an integrative experience for individuals or teams.

Major advising The *challenge major* will provide new opportunities for faculty already collaborating on research to work together on advising students. Additionally, alumni and other practitioners working on a particular challenge also could be brought together as ‘advising panels’ for students.

Internal University funding The new approach to allocating revenues and costs to the operating units of the University lends itself well to supporting a transition to *Major in a Challenge*. “Units” – both traditional departments and interdisciplinary centers – would sponsor *challenge majors*. Multiple units might offer *challenge majors* in the same topical area but with differences in the way the *challenge* question is phrased. Students will be drawn to one *challenge* or another, and that challenge’s sponsoring unit will be rewarded with the enrollment (25%) share of the funding. Students also will take classes necessary to fulfill the requirements for majoring in their *challenge*. Because students will likely require classes outside of the traditional discipline, other units offering relevant course work will be rewarded with the per credit (75%) share of the funding.

There already are financial incentives to a) offer *challenge majors* relevant to students; and b) offer courses relevant to *challenge majors* built into the new financing approach.

Minor in a discipline This element is crucial. While the attention, structure and process for a major would be changed, there is additional importance on *minoring in a discipline*. The choice of a minor is important. If four different disciplines bear on the *challenge*, a student could minor in one of those disciplines. Some schools or units may decide to require students to choose from certain minors as part of the curriculum for the major.

Why make *challenges* a major? Why not just allow for an interdisciplinary approach as we do today? *Major in a challenge* takes a portion of the undergraduate

educational process and dramatically changes the approach. It is just a portion, however. There will still be courses, disciplines and minors. Making this change at the level of the major (rather than the minor or adding a certificate) elevates the importance and would have these additional impacts:

- This approach would be iconic for the University of Minnesota. It would say “come here to get a rigorous traditional education *and* to learn leadership skills that help answers questions that the world needs answered.”
- The “major” carries heft in terms of scholarly vigor, demanding expectations, and the flow of resources. It is a serious acceleration of the basic ideas underlying *Transforming the U*.
- Because the major is an important element to the outside world—particularly employers and graduate schools—it speaks loudly about the extraordinary and innovative commitment of the University to take an “outside-in” posture with the communities it serves.

Ramping up

The transition from the present state to *major in a challenge, minor in a discipline* would take place over a five-year period.

1. While the strongest major will be squarely grounded in the needs defined outside the University, every *challenge* needs to have rigorous high standards of scholarship and a curriculum designed for it. This requires an investment of faculty time, encouragement of early adopters, and clear documentation for replication. On pages 24 and 25 of this document, we suggest options on how this investment might be financed.
2. *Major in a challenge* requires some additional elements of infrastructure to support faculty in the educational process. Such additional elements might include ways to

ground challenge majors in community needs, staff to create service-learning experiences, methods for communicating *challenge* options, alternative pedagogical tools, close links with the University Foundation around the development of majors linked with philanthropic opportunity, and close ties to the Placement Office to link various majors to employer interest.

3. Tap existing University leadership development courses and programs to help them ramp up to deliver a leadership course to all *challenge majors*.
4. Start quickly with some early adopters and, then, begin with 25 majors and several hundred *challenge* graduates in the first year. The effort would be gradually ramped up over five years to a point where 10,000 students/year are graduating with a *challenge* major. The transition could start in a particular school, or with a sampling of *challenge majors* in various schools.
5. Evaluate closely as you go. The stories of early adopters should be documented and shared. The work in the first year (25 majors) should be evaluated, in terms of both process and results, and shared widely.

While a great deal can and should be learned from this early experience to help bring the initiative to scale successfully, we are **not** suggesting a pilot. (Pilots can be a mechanism for organizations to dabble with something new without making a commitment to it. To be successful, this approach will require *commitment from the outset* with openness to modifying the approach based on what is learned.)

Exceptional Faculty & Staff

This approach to teaching and learning could bring new excitement and resources to faculty and staff. It provides a means to deepen *Transforming the U* and move the organization toward a new embodiment of the land grant tradition. It provides an organic mechanism for integrating the conventional distinctions made between research, teaching, and outreach. As faculty and

After five years:
10,000 undergraduates will
be *majoring in a challenge*,
minoring in a discipline

staff work together to develop curriculum around societal challenges, they will be able to bring disciplinary expertise to multi-disciplinary contexts. They will see gaps in the existing curriculum and questions for future research. They will form new working relationships that can easily develop into new research teams or broaden existing research collaborations.

This design also opens the way for additional investments that support faculty—particularly those early in their careers – in their participation in the Leadership Minnesota Commons.

Provide matching grants for community-based research and tools that translate research into usable knowledge. When business and philanthropies are approached for support of particular challenge majors, additional resources could be solicited that encourage faculty to engage in community-based research or translate research into tools and applications that help leaders solve problems. These funds could be provided as matching grants for other resources secured by faculty, and could be designated as “Land Grant Research.”

Support PhD programs that develop scholars able to move back and forth between community concerns and disciplinary interests. As more curriculum and research focused on community-based challenges is created, they will create a new demand for a new type of scholar. In the 21st century, it is likely that more scholars will need to be both relevant and rigorous. They will need to be comfortable with traditional scholarship and creating usable knowledge. Clearly, some units already train future scholars in this vein; others should be encouraged to do so with seed funding and support through the Compact or other processes.

Support a peer-reviewed scholarly journal in this new type of leadership studies. The various elements of this design focus on a new definition of leadership to support 21st century community problem solving. Participating in the activities of the Leadership Commons will provide many new venues for faculty engagement and research. Developing curriculum and teaching around challenges would offer new insights about engaged problem-focused teaching. Information documented by the Leadership Commons could provide sample frames, data, and new questions relevant to leadership studies and research. To magnify this potential – and

position the University as the thought leader in this field – a peer-reviewed scholarly journal (ideally affiliated with a number of research associations) could be established.

Recognize established faculty with a proven record of working in an ‘outside-in’ way.

Create a prestigious university-wide award (similar to the Distinguished McKnight University Professorships) to acknowledge and reward scholars who integrate teaching, research, and engagement. This would help highlight and reinforce the importance of rigorously exploring community-based challenges and supporting community leadership.

Exceptional Organization

Establish a University-wide Leadership Alliance. Our scan inside the University reveals numerous departments, centers, and programs across all campuses involved in teaching and research related to the vision of community capacity and leadership. There is a fairly new Office of Community Engagement focused on supporting bridges between the University and various communities. Yet these efforts are not coordinated to increase marketing efficiencies, capitalize on program learning, or reveal research collaborations. An internal network could improve this integration. This Alliance could build intellectual capital and provide oversight to the implementation of major in a challenge and minor in a discipline. In the short-term, it could also be the primary link between the University and the Leadership Commons, assuring clear communication and alignment while the full Commons platform is being created. (In the longer term, the self-organizing character of the Commons will likely make this type of linkage unnecessary.)

Partner with other higher education systems. What if the University were to form a leadership collaborative with the other higher education systems? The other systems have complementary assets and offer geographic diversity. Suddenly, the leadership curriculum and learning would be available locally through, potentially, 56 different geographic outlets.

Exceptional Innovation

Engaging alumni. The University has over tens of thousands of alumni currently living in Minnesota. These people represent a tremendous asset for the University to leverage its leadership development activities. What if alums were engaged in linking community people with University leadership resources? What if a cadre of alums were trained, equipped with some sort of toolkit, networked virtually, and were made available – or even sent out – to assist communities solve problems? Many alumni themselves are incredible leaders, helping others come to solutions about many problems, large and small. The Alumni Association could sponsor an effort to identify their acts of leadership, use these acts in the Minnesota Leads campaign, and highlight the University’s tradition of leadership development.

Leadership Recognition. The University has exceptional reach, networks, and access to communities throughout the state. It also has great credibility. What if the University was to work through the Leadership Commons and create recognition programs to recognize great leadership in the community? By granting its legitimacy and holding up examples of best leadership practice, it could help the overall Minnesota Leads campaign —and create more goodwill toward the University.

Investing in Leadership

This design provides the opportunity for the Bush Foundation and others to invest, over the next ten years, in acts of leadership that help meet community challenges. The investment strategy has three parts:

1. **Leverage** — Use human and capital resources to attract funding from other resources directed to the purposes in this design
2. **Seed capital** — Make critical one-time investments in the near future to “prime the pump” for the leadership enhancement strategies in this design
3. **Leadership Fund** — Create a fund with highly leveraged resources that drives the development of both individual leaders and solutions to community problems

Leverage

A critical feature of the Leadership Minnesota Commons is that it will attract funds from multiple sources and channel those funds into highly focused activities that advance the goals of this design. Other philanthropic foundations, businesses, governments, nonprofits, employers, and/or individual philanthropists interested in a particular issue or community will have excellent opportunities to invest in either a) a community with a problem to solve; or b) an individual or set of individuals (either formal or informal leaders) who connect through the Commons to access resources.

In addition, some seed capital investments and all Leadership Fund investments will involve some sort of match from the participants.

The program desired by the three Arrowhead counties for education to their county commissioners around modern approaches to economic development costs \$85,000 (about \$4,700 per commissioner). The Iron Range Resources Board contributes \$10,000, the Blandin Foundation puts up a like amount, and each of the counties contributes \$7,500. The Leadership Fund matches this with \$42,500. The Core collects a total of \$4,200 (5%) for making the match.

The nonprofit youth service providers bringing Public Achievement to their suburban community need about \$19,000 to select and train coaches to work with youth groups and provide modest stipends to youth leaders. By pooling resources from youth grants from the McKnight Foundation (\$7000) and making requests of three community notables(\$2500), they secure additional money. The Leadership Fund matches this amount. As part of their Public Achievement mentoring project, students raise \$250 from thankful parents; they use these funds to buy video cameras for the school and document next years' project.

Seed Capital

Five seed capital investments are recommended:

1. An investment of approximately \$1 million in the form of a grant to a public purpose nonprofit organization that will be the Core of the Leadership Commons. In the long-term, the Commons is designed to be self-sustaining through membership and performance fees. This grant will provide funding for a small staff and support the creation of the chaordic network by the founding members. The grant should be awarded through a competitive process.
2. Purchase of services of a public relations organization for the purpose of planning a “campaign” that identifies 15,000 leaders annually who are working to solve community problems and channels those leaders into the Commons (\$50–100K). Subsequent results-based grants and/or purchases would fund ongoing conduct of the campaign (see below).
3. Purchase of service to build an IT infrastructure that supports the virtual aspects of the campaign, brings the leadership resources supplied by members to match the needs of communities and leaders, and captures learning taking place from the resulting work (around \$100K).
4. A planning grant of \$350,000 made to the University of Minnesota (with an equal match by the University) to develop a change strategy for deepening and extending elements of *Transforming the U* described in this design. Pending success with that process, the University would be eligible to receive annual performance grants over the next 10 years as specified in the description of the Leadership Fund below.

Total Seed Grants	\$1,550,000
Total Seed Grant Match	\$ 350,000

The Litchfield activist concerned about the environmental impacts of hog farms gets assistance through the Commons from University Extension at no charge. She also finds a facilitator whose services cost \$4,000 and the community college course in organizing for \$1,000. The Leadership Fund offers a grant on an 80%-20% match basis. The activist raises \$500 from sympathetic neighbors and gets another \$200 from a grocery store bothered by the odor from a neighboring farm. She puts up the remaining \$300 herself.

A group of neighbors in St. Paul’s Frogtown is struggling with a burgeoning graffiti problem. They find immediate help in the form of in-kind services from the St. Paul Police Department that is an active part of the Leadership Commons’ community policing strategy. A community-based nonprofit organization offers to help the neighbors develop alternative “canvas” for graffiti makers, and to develop a zero tolerance strategy for destructive graffiti. They want \$2,000 for their help. The neighbors raise \$600 from local business and get a matching grant from the Leadership Fund. The matching grant comes from monies donated by The Travelers Companies, Inc., which also made a \$50,000 contribution to the Leadership Fund for property protection outcomes.

Leadership Fund

The primary ongoing mechanism for stimulating leadership development is called the Leadership Fund. Though the Bush Foundation might initiate the fund, the Leadership Commons design is intended to attract contributions from various other sources. Conservatively, the Bush Foundation contribution could be leveraged 2:1 from other sources; should the Commons realize its full potential, that leverage could be 5:1, or more.

For purposes of illustration, we assume that, over the next 10 years, the Bush Foundation makes the following investments through the Leadership Fund:

- \$500,000/year to fund the Minnesota Leads campaign. The Commons core will conduct a competition to select a firm to implement the Campaign plan. The organization(s) chosen to conduct the campaign may earn up to this amount based on their performance bringing at least 15,000 people each year to the Commons.
- \$1,500,000/year to support communities in meeting specific challenges. The communities would match grants, dollar for dollar, ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000 each. These monies would fund the assistance communities need to develop leaders and leadership cohorts actively engaged in making progress on and solving presenting issues.
- \$500,000/year to support individuals recognized by their communities as leaders, seeking a variety of development, support, and coaching services through the Commons. All individuals would be required to match their grant, but the match could range from 5% to 50%, depending on their access to resources.
- Pending the success of the University's commitment to a change strategy, \$500,000/year to develop a curriculum for 25 "challenges."

Bringing the Design to Scale

The Leadership Fund can bring the initiative to its necessary scale if the fund is leveraged 2:1 and if the Bush Foundation puts \$3.5 million annually into the fund. Then the fund will have \$9,000,000/year to invest in the desired outcomes.

- **Individuals**

- In the first five years, as the University ramps up the *Major in a Challenge, Minor in a Discipline*, 25,000 graduates will have majored in a challenge, earning strong leadership credentials and experience. During the subsequent five years, the University would turn out 10,000 trained leaders per year. Together, these would total 75,000 new leaders.
- In addition, if individual leadership development grants average \$1,000, 1500 individual leaders using the Commons would be supported through the fund each year.

Total 10-year individual leadership support: \$90,000.

- **Communities**

- If community support grants average \$20,000 each (matched by an additional average of \$20,000 from the respective communities), 225 community issues would be addressed each year.
- In addition, University students majoring in a challenge, along with their faculty, would be actively engaged in helping communities solve critical issues. If cohorts of such students averaged 6 students per issue (and an average of 7,500 graduates/year), over 1,200 cohorts per year would be addressing community issues.

Total 10-year issues addressed: 14,250

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