



Introverted Women Leaders in Higher Education

**October 21, 2025
9:30 am – 11:00 am**

[Teams Meeting Link](#)

**Dissertation Presentation by
*Nicole Elizabeth Kurker-Stewart***

This phenomenological qualitative study examined the reports of women who hold leadership positions in higher education regarding the impact of their introversion on their effectiveness in engaging in transformational leadership on campus. The researcher constructed a literature-based conceptual framework to explore three themes, focusing on the real and perceived disadvantages of women introverted leaders, how these leaders have achieved success despite disadvantages, and what is needed to create more positive environments for women introverted leaders to thrive in higher education.

The results of this study revealed that introverted women leaders possess an extraordinary and timely capacity to navigate higher education institutions through the present challenges facing the academy, despite the entrenched cultural bias for extroversion and male-dominated leadership. Findings of this study demonstrated that when introverted women are afforded adequate time and space to prepare, process, and recharge, they are equally powerful and effective leaders with a unique ability to implement lasting change through quiet, thoughtful collaboration and genuine commitment to the well-being of those they lead.

Nicole Kurker-Stewart is the Executive Director of the International Center at the University of Hartford in Connecticut. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Spanish Language and Culture from Quinnipiac University, and a Master of Arts in Spanish Linguistics from Middlebury College. Nicole also serves as an adjunct professor of Spanish at Quinnipiac University.