Introduction
A few years ago, the National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education did a site visit. One of the leaders made a comment that struck the faculty mentor for this project – “do not forget to study yourselves?” So, we did and posed the following research question: What are the individual team members’ perceptions of being a part of a leadership team facilitating an interprofessional education center?

Study Purpose
In order to design and implement interprofessional education and collaborative practice (IPECP), leaders must possess a unique set of skills to tackle both the opportunities and challenges of IPECP. But leadership is not well understood in this arena nor does a roadmap exist on how for an IPE leadership team to evolve and grow. To understand this phenomenon, the perceptions of a leadership team of an IPE center for a complex, Midwestern university was explored to better understand how an IPE leadership team functions.

Methods
This research study aimed to gather and interpret the perceptions of a leadership team facilitating an academic interprofessional center. A semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire was used in this qualitative research approach. Nine participants were recruited from a midwestern University interprofessional leadership team and were contacted via email. These participants represent members of an IPE center leadership team from the health science professions in the field of medicine, physical therapy, pharmacy, administration, and nursing.

Results
Overall, five core themes emerged from the study including 1) Team Member Attributes; 2) Team Dynamics and Buy-In; 3) Ample Resources; 4) Understanding Accreditation; and 5) Implementing in Ambiguity.

Theme: Team Member Attributes
“You have to be flexible, you have to be more adaptable. You have to find ways to find ways to come to the middle. You have to give some stuff up to make that happen. And that’s exactly the challenge of interdisciplinary, interprofessional work and we need more leaders that can do that. It takes patience, it takes persistence. It takes coalition-building. It takes a lot of very important soft skills. Not always about money and power.”

Theme: Team Dynamics and Buy-In
“Well you need leadership. You need... And I’m not just talking about one leader. You need a leader...You need distributive leadership, so you need people who can really come together as a core leadership team and collaborate and kind of plan and be innovative of how to move forward.”

Theme: Ample Resources
“So you need your core group of workers. You have to figure out a way to expand that group. Because you can’t be everything for the interprofessional education or collaborative care effort.”

Theme: Understanding Accreditation
“All our activities prior to the accreditation thing, you couldn’t get the university to agree that it was important enough to get them a budget.”

Theme: Implementing in Ambiguity
“Challenges have been crossing the way that we have structured health sciences... now, what I mean is interprofessional education is reliant on collaboration amongst the various health science schools, yet we all teach within our own disciplines. We all work within our own disciplines. We really don’t have a functional mechanism to do that. So, that continues to be a challenge when you look towards allocating folks time or allocating educational efforts around different people to whom there’re ultimately accountable to, because there’re gonna be accountable to their profession, yet they may be the expert in something that would benefit all the professions.”

References available upon request.