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Learning Reconsidered: A Map of Learning Sites for Leadership

By Jane Fried

Learning Reconsidered (NASPA/ACPA, 2004) has introduced new concepts into the student affairs discourse and raises some new questions. The distinction between learning and development, fundamental to our thinking about our work with students, has been blurred if not eliminated. Our ideas about identity formation have been

challenged. The word "identity," similar in origin to "identical," suggests sameness, a consistency to the personality over time. Identity is something that, once formed, seems to remain fairly constant. And yet, it does not. And yet it does. Identity formation and transformation have become paradoxical. The phenomenon has not changed but our language seems inadequate to describe our current understanding. *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA/ACPA) provides new language and new ideas about the learning process including the process of learning who we are and how we want to be ourselves in ever changing environments.

Both Kegan (1994) and Baxter Magolda (2004) have described the processes of self-authorship as continuing and evolving. The self continues to develop through experiences of increasing complexity and increasing capacities to find patterns and meaning in complex processes. This kind of holistic development is essential for people who want to function effectively in our complicated, challenging and diverse world. A technical term for the kind of self-authorship and transformation that these authors describe is *autopoiesis*, "the deep, renewing qualities of all living structures that maintain and enhance the integrity of the structures of the life

"Identity is something that, once formed, seems to remain fairly constant. And yet, it does not. And yet it does."

processes" (O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 261). Autopoiesis allows living systems, including humans, both to renew and transform themselves while retaining a sense of integrity and continuity. Understanding autopoiesis requires us to transform our own thought processes from binary, either/or thinking to more complex, both/and thinking. This notion allows us to think of identity formation as a process in context, a non-linear trajectory of development that constantly interacts with its environment as a person learns about self, con-

text and mutuality. Although this notion initially appears a little fuzzy to the Western mind, it is actually a more accurate description of growth, or identity formation, than linear or stage-based models.

Wilbur's (2001) description of the holon adds depth to our understanding of autopoietic development. Holons are organic forms that exhibit both agency and communion, the ability to act independently and the ability to create relationships. "A holon (is) an entity which, looking down is whole, looking up is part... the whole of any level becomes merely a part of the whole of the next level" (Wilbur, p. 76). The notion of the holon supplants the traditional

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Connections From The Director

As leadership educators, one of our current challenges is to embrace the academic community that we are a rich part of. We need to recognize that our student development work is also teaching, and is worthy of scholarly and academic distinction. We all live in the same academic community, looking to achieve the goals of an educator no matter the context of our field: leadership educator, biochemist, political scientist, or program board advisor. Any effort to distinguish our work as either student development or academic severely restricts the power of the academic enterprise.

These days, four important words echo through the marble hallways of the academy, "accreditation" and "student learning outcomes." As you might guess these terms are not unrelated, and they are as important to leadership educators as they are to all our colleagues in the academic community. I observe a vast crevice between what we as leadership educators say students learn in our classrooms and leadership laboratories and hard-core evidence of student learning. It seems that these echoes about accreditation and learning outcomes have been unearthed at a time when the leadership education community is in search of focus, direction and meaning.

Understanding and articulating what students will learn by engaging in a leadership retreat, workshop, institute or academic leadership course is an essential element for measuring student learning outcomes. Our first words should not be what kind of program do we want to offer but what do we want students to learn as a result of attending our program?

This edition of *Concepts and Connections* I hope serves as a rich tool that will help guide you to greater understanding of the student learning outcomes movement.



Craig Slack

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description of bureaucratic hierarchies which are so prevalent in discussions of leadership and gives us an organic model for interactive development. This model is a nested framework in which development occurs in context. Consciousness or identity constantly interacts with environment to move toward an enhanced understanding of complexity.

Learning Reconsidered (NASPA/ACPA, 2004), through its emphasis on the transformative elements of learning, allows us to think about leadership and leadership identity formation as a process of expanding holonic development.

The new concept of learning recognizes the essential integration of personal development with learning; it reflects the diverse ways through which students may engage with the tasks and content of learning...produc(ing) both educational and developmental outcomes; distinguishing them is both pointless and potentially harmful. (NASPA/ACPA, p. 5).

Leadership identity formation is a particularly powerful example of the kind of learning that *Learning Reconsidered* discusses and explains. "Learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to future action" (Mezirow & Associates, 2000, p. 5). "Learning occurs in one of four ways; by elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning

"Autopoiesis allows living systems, including humans, both to renew and transform themselves while retaining a sense of integrity and continuity."

new frames of reference, by transforming points or view or by transforming habits of mind" (Mezirow & Associates, p. 19). All of these descriptions of learning correlate with Baxter Magolda's ideas of self-authorship, epistemological reflection, intrapersonal development, interpersonal complexity and cognitive maturity (2004), as well as Kegan's description of fourth order thinking (1994) in which the self becomes

object in context, a system in itself and an aspect of a bigger system in which it continues to evolve.

Learning Reconsidered (NASPA/ACPA, 2004) contributes to the process of transformative learning and leadership identity development by providing a

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map of the context in which this kind of learning occurs. Three domains of learning on campus are identified: *the social context, the academic context and the institutional context*. The *social context* includes personal relationships which students develop, group memberships that they acquire and the roles that they play in the groups, and intergroup connections that occur, expanding the complexity of their involvement in the primary groups with which they are affiliated. The *academic context* includes classroom experiences and other faculty supervised events in which there are opportunities to learn new information, reflect on personal meaning, speak with others about connections between academic content and personal significance and engage in experiential learning in the context of academic work. The *institutional context* includes all the oppor-

tunities that students have to engage with structural and cultural elements of the institution, such as work study positions, teaching and laboratory assistantships, paid and unpaid leadership roles to name a few. It also includes the effect of the campus culture on student behavior, cognition, affect and meaning making in such areas as ethical codes, judicial processes, norms of behavior and rituals and celebrations.

Three elements of integrated learning outcomes are also identified: *Construction of knowledge, construction of meaning and construction of self in society* (NASPA/ACPA, 2004). The student is placed at the center of the learning process, moving through the learning domains in the course of a day and throughout the college experience. Construction of knowledge, meaning and self in society are all elements of a larger learning process, conceptualizing our place in the world as holons, people who want relationships (i.e.,

community) and want to achieve our goals (i.e., agency). We are systems within systems, parts and wholes, members and leaders.

Historically, the three domains have not been connected and we have not measured integrated learning outcomes. Nevertheless, our students always have learning experiences that can be integrated if there is time to think about connections. The process is enhanced significantly if members of the educational teams on our campuses can create maps of learning opportunities for and with students. The model of *Leadership Identity Development* (Komives, Owen Casper, Longersbeam, Mainella & Osteen, 2004) provides a grid within which a map might be constructed for a particular campus or group of students. Designers of learning experiences should ask

how a campus structures its leadership opportunities: where these opportunities exist, what kinds of potential roles are available for students, what kind of supervision and peer conversation has been established, what kinds of opportunities for learning about leadership from empirical research and from personal experience have been created for students and so forth. Overlaid on the map of opportunities would be a general framework of the stages as described in the model: where are the students developmentally and how do the leadership/learning opportunities match the developmental status of the students? What changes need to be made in the learning opportunities so that they can be sequenced and matched to the learning/developmental level of the students? If we think of leadership as a process included in the whole domain of identity formation, how can we integrate all the leadership learning opportunities on campus to support the development of

evolving self-authorship including cognitive maturity, integrated identity and the capacity for mature relationships (Baxter Magolda, 2004)?

The design of these learning experiences is quite difficult and complicated. We are putting students into a range of situations in which we expect them to become progressively more able to manage complexity, see themselves in broadening context, feel sufficiently knowledgeable and competent to make effective decisions in ambiguous circumstances and express their points of view even when problems are unstructured and solutions unclear. We then have to design authentic methods of assessing their learning that can cross the great divide to the traditional academic domain where designing and assessing learning is far less complex. Creating transformative learning experiences is much more difficult than constructing syllabi which follow the structure of knowledge presented in a text. In academic situations there is generally no expectation that learning occurs through reflection along with knowledge acquisition or that learning may cause changes in the student's world view and entire sense of self requiring emotional as well as intellectual support.

The processes for creating learning environments that are described in *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA/ACPA, 2004) represent a radical departure from our previous notions of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, we are still firmly rooted in the traditions established by Esther Lloyd Jones in her foundational work, *Student Personnel as Deeper Teaching* (1954). We are attempting to understand what students need to learn in order to become productive members of society who know how to form relationships, manage their lives and develop the aesthetic and spiritual sides of their human nature. Student personnel work, as she called our profession, has always been involved in

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“A key element of identity formation in the 21st century is integrating our leadership responsibilities in all areas of our lives, into our ideas about who we are.”

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helping students create themselves. The current terminology uses “identity development,” but the concepts are functionally the same. A key element of identity formation in the 21st century is integrating our leadership responsibilities in all areas of our lives into our ideas about who we are. *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA/ACPA) provides a map for using the campus and all of the elements of student life as teaching tools to help us and our students achieve our goal. 🏠

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Program Spotlight

Carolina Leadership Development’s Attempt at Assessing Intended v. Actual Learning Outcomes

By Cynthia Wolf Johnson

I ncreasing demands on higher education to ensure effective student learning and development is evidenced by greater attention to formal assessment. With higher education’s mission of preparing future leaders, assessing learning outcomes of leadership development programs is essential. This article provides practical information about how one office, Carolina Leadership Development at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has attempted to assess intended v. actual learning outcomes.

What Have We Learned From the Literature?

A review of the literature on assessment in higher education provides six key themes that guided our leadership development assessment efforts. First, assessment in higher education has been on the rise since the 1970’s and is not likely to wane (Upcraft and Schuh, 1996; Whitt, 1999). Second, “emerging indicators of institutional excellence and quality are linked to the direct evidence that student learning and development is occurring” (Bresciani, Zelna and Anderson, 2004, p.1). Third, as we embed our work in the *Student Learning Imperative*, we must shift assessment from satisfaction to student learning and development as the latter help us determine whether or not we are reaching intended outcomes (Bresciani, 2002; Schroeder, Blimling, McEwen and Schuh, 1996). Fourth, effective practice must include the ability to change based on assessment results. Simply gathering data is not enough (Banta, 2002). Fifth,

understanding “assessment” as opposed to “evaluation” and following the nine principles of good practice for assessment will help guide a successful process (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). And finally, assessment must be integrated into the teaching and learning process rather than being an addition to our daily work (Banta, 2000).

Did we know all this when we started? The simple answer is “no” for we began our efforts long before much of this was written. We went along, as most universities did, doing what we thought was right but not clearly connecting the specifics of what we hoped students would learn as a result of participating in our pro-

grams and courses with the actual outcomes.

Where Did We Start?

Formal leadership education began at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1968 with the North Carolina Fellows Program, a four year leadership development program. This is now accompanied by the Emerging Leaders Program, Womentoring Program, Leadership Foundations, Carolina Consulting, and two academic courses. Carolina Leadership Development’s mission, promoting effective leadership and citizenship through experiential learning, training and resources, should result in students becoming more confident and effective in their leadership and citizenship.

For years, traditional evaluations were administered within the North Carolina Fellows Program providing information about satisfaction and

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quality. Students spoke highly of the program yet had difficulty articulating exactly what they were learning. Beginning in the mid-1980's exit interviews were conducted with seniors completing the program. Questions focused on quality, satisfaction, and program impact. The latter provided information about student learning, yet results were not systematically compared to what we were intending to accomplish.

In the late 1980's we launched a longitudinal study of NC Fellows Program alumni to gather information about whether participation in the program was helpful to their professional careers. We asked alumni what it takes to be successful in their careers and to let us know what the NC Fellows Program should teach future leaders. In the mid-1990's we began surveying Emerging Leaders and Womentoring program alumni, and conducting focus groups with program participants. Yet it was not until the late 1990's, after the publication of the *Student Learning Imperative*, that we carefully began to *define* intended learning outcomes for each segment of each program, recognizing that several programs spanned more than one year, and to revise evaluations to more carefully assess student learning.

Where Are We Today?

Finally we've reached the 21st century! Through a process of evolution, we have formalized our assessment process. We examined data from what program alumni indicated we should be teaching students, and data from years of exit interviews and program focus groups. We then compared the data with what our program materials stated. From there, we fine-tuned intended knowledge, skills, attitudes and relationships that we hoped students would gain as a result of participating in each of our programs each year. The list of intended learning outcomes were then reviewed and analyzed by at least three leadership educators.

“Assessment can be streamlined if it is planned from the start, along with the establishment or refinement of learning outcomes.”

Schuh, Upcraft and Associates (2001) suggest that learning outcomes can be subsumed under six broad categories based on the *Student Learning Imperative*: complex cognitive skills, knowledge acquisition, interpersonal development, practical competence and civic responsibility. While we did not try to match these categories, interestingly enough our results were similar. In total, we narrowed the list to 48 specific leadership development learning outcomes (yes, narrowed!);

ones that cut across one or more of our programs and courses. They were categorized into seven areas: relationships, constructing leadership, growing self-knowledge, growing skills and changing self, community interaction, networking and miscellaneous knowledge. A chart was created, listing the intended learning outcomes, categorized by theme, and cross-referenced with each year of each program. Asterisks were placed next to the learning outcomes intended for each program, each year. Knowing exactly what it was we were trying to accomplish made it easier to assess the results of our work and to promote our programs.

An on-line Impact Survey was designed, based on the intended learning outcomes. At the end of the spring semester, for the past couple of years, all students participating in Carolina Leadership Development programs were emailed the survey. In addition to evaluating quality, students were asked to assess their program's impact on 37 of the 48 learning outcomes (some items were collapsed) by answering the following question: "To what degree has the program or seminar positively impacted your learning and/or ability in each of the following areas?" Potential responses included "very much", "somewhat" and "not at all."

Survey data were compiled by demographics, allowing us to see which learning outcomes were real-

ized by which program and during which year regardless of whether or not they were intended, and which outcomes were not being actualized. Statistical results were added to the chart, visibly showing how intended outcomes compared to actual outcomes. The results were shared with Carolina Leadership Development's staff and Advisory Board members, where extraordinary insight was gained and intriguing dialogue took place. The end result was a critical analysis of what we were intending students to learn v. what learning and development actually took place. The benefits of the data are continuing to be realized. Results provide us with evidence that we are in fact accomplishing what we set out to do and are doing better than expected in some areas, yet provide us with insight about where to strengthen programs to meet intended outcomes. Another significant benefit is the ability to request or defend resources for leadership education, as was done one year in a budget hearing.

What Are the Next Steps?

Connecting assessment with institutional priorities, as well as mission, is essential. Taking a look at Carolina Leadership Development's intended learning outcomes and comparing them to those of the institution's recently revised undergraduate education curriculum and new academic plan should prove interesting. It will help align, more closely, what it is that students will learn both inside and outside the classroom, and provide a common language with colleagues when sharing results.

Assessment takes time but need not be a burden. Careful planning of intended learning outcomes, programming based on those outcomes, and analysis of actual learning will help to strengthen existing efforts. Assessment can be streamlined if it is planned from the start, along with the establishment or refinement of learning outcomes. As institutions increasingly seek to prove their excellence and quality through direct evidence of student learning and development, leadership educators need to be on the cutting-edge with this proof as leadership education is at the heart of the mission of higher education. ■

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Learning by Design

Creating Learning Outcomes for Leadership Programs

By Julie Owen Casper & John L. Garland

In the foundational document, *Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning*, the argument is made that proper assessment of student learning begins and ends with educational values (AAHE, 1992). Without a clear vision of the kinds of learning we expect students to achieve, we often end up measuring what is easy, rather than what we really care about (Banta, et al., 1996). For the Maryland Leadership Development Program at the University of Maryland College Park, grappling with issues of mission and purpose were a central part of creating assessable learning outcomes.

For the Maryland Leadership Development Program (MLDP), our mission and vision statements serve as the foundational framework for practice. These statements include language and references to the program's values and theoretical foundations. Additionally, the MLDP mission and vision statements attempt to answer the *who, what, and how* questions confronting the organization. While these important statements eventually achieve published prominence, it is important to point out that mission and vision statements are, in fact, living documents subject to future modifications as the organization develops.

The process of developing a mission and vision with the entire Maryland Leadership Development Program (MLDP) staff was itself a learning and developmental experience. In addition to those who work directly with student leadership development at Maryland, the MLDP staff is comprised of diverse functional areas including the coordinators of two national clearinghouses (National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs and the National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs), student government association accounts personnel, the graduate student involvement coordinator, and administrative support staff. Bringing together a functionally and experientially diverse group focused on the collective mission of MLDP became an immensely rewarding and challenging process. Throughout our two-semester visioning and mission writing experience, the MLDP staff confronted several challenging questions. First, "What common theoretical frames inform the purposes and practices of the MLDP?" and second, "How do we effectively engage this process with staff members who have varying degrees of knowledge (from little to expert) in leadership and/or student development theory?"

"This process of clarifying issues of organizational identity, purpose, and commonly held values, provided a firm foundation for developing our own set of intended learning outcomes for students participating in our programs."

To achieve our goal of developing sound MLDP mission and vision statements, it was necessary that each team member remain invested in our year-long process. This meant that we needed to develop common frames of reference relating to leadership and student development. In order to practice what we preach, each staff member operated in a dual capacity, functioning both as an MDLP team member and as a peer educator sharing knowledge with colleagues in a way that built community and common frames of reference. During this process when tensions arose around particular topics such as why-we-do-what-we-do and determining how each particular functional area is connected to the emerging MLDP mission and vision, our prior work to achieve common ground sustained us. Ultimately, this process resulted in more than just meaningful mission and vision statements that clearly outline our organization's identity and purpose. Our process also served as an example of the values and principles that guide MLDP's practice. For example, just as we worked collaboratively to transform our organization, the last sentence of our vision statement states that MLDP "will be a catalyst and resource for campus and community leadership collaboration and transformation."

This process of clarifying issues of organizational identity, purpose, and commonly held values, provided a firm foundation for developing our own set of intended learning outcomes for students participating in our programs. Yet, we also had the desire to connect any learning outcomes we developed locally, to recent national approaches to student learning. In 2004, ACPA and NASPA came together to produce *Learning Reconsidered*, a powerful document that argues for the integrated use of all of higher education's resources in the education and preparation of the whole student. This document introduces new ways of understanding and supporting learning and development as intertwined, inseparable elements of the student experience. It advocates for transformative education – a holistic process of learning that places the student at the center of the learning experience (Purpose Statement, *Learning Reconsidered*,

2004). The document acknowledges the role student affairs plays in connecting learning across the broader campus and community, and calls for a collaborative, systemic approach to promoting student learning. Since our program includes both curricular and co-curricular elements, the integrative nature of this document was especially useful for our purposes. The document also details seven broad desired learning outcomes for undergraduate students (pp.17-19).

Using the broad categories of learning outcomes identified in *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA/ ACPA, 2004) as a frame, and stemming from the theories we featured as essential in our mission and vision, the MLDP staff team crafted and sorted programmatic student learning outcomes. In developing learning outcomes, we were careful to express outcomes in terms of observable behavior and to use action verbs in order to facilitate the measurement of learning. Through this process, we identified 21 core learning outcomes, clustered into 6 of the broader categories of outcomes identified in the *Learning Reconsidered* document (see select examples).

Once developed, program coordinators worked to develop and adapt existing leadership programs to intentionally promote any combination of these outcomes. These outcomes are assessed annually so that student progress toward learning can be measured. Assessment results are used for program improvement and refinement, as well as to be able to effectively communicate to students the benefits of involvement at Maryland. An additional benefit of clearly stated and regularly assessed learning outcomes is our ability to benchmark our leadership and involvement programs against other campus offerings as well as institutional peers.

The process of identifying core learning outcomes related to leadership and involvement proffered

interesting insights. First, the MLDP staff realized the intertwined and multi-dimensional nature of our programmatic offerings. No one

program or service adequately promoted all 21 learning outcomes. While some programs offered a broad spectrum of learning opportunities, others had more defined, specific goals. We realized the importance of intentionally communicating intended outcomes to students in advance of their participation in our programs and services. This also means reviewing programs to be sure they are serving students to the best extent possible. Secondly, the process of reviewing our programs and services led us to identify possible areas of collaboration across units of the MLDP, and the campus at large. For example, we decided that co-curricular leadership programming could be more intentional about targeting leadership development opportunities for non-positional leaders in all student organizations, including groups sponsored by Residence Life and other campus departments.

Thus, the development of mission, vision, and learning outcomes demonstrated both the need for, and potential benefits of, a more integrated approach to student leadership and involvement opportunities at Maryland. Coordinating programs and services across functional units, with an eye toward promoting a broad spectrum of student learning outcomes, allows us to continue these discussions of what is the best way to put the holistic learning and development of students first, and not be hemmed by traditional functional lines, or "we've always done it that way" thinking. Especially if leadership education is to remain a viable entity that provides effective and affordable programs that meet

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Learning By Design

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intentional learning and development goals, careful strategic planning and outcomes assessment must part of the long-term plan.

The following is the mission and vision statements and a sample of the learning outcomes that resulted from our process.

University of Maryland Leadership Development Program

Mission and Vision Statements

Vision Statement

University of Maryland students will become positive change agents among their peers and communities. The Lead Team at the University of Maryland seeks to develop leadership in individuals, groups and communities in order to foster a lifelong commitment to socially responsible leadership. We will broaden access to leadership learning opportunities in curricular and co-curricular settings. By fostering leadership learning environments, we will promote student leadership identity development and encourage students to conceptualize their understanding of leadership beyond the traditional leadership paradigm. Lead Team will be a catalyst and resource for campus and community leadership collaboration and transformation.

Mission Statement

The University of Maryland Lead Team promotes leadership within individuals, groups, and systems for the advancement of a socially responsible citizenry. We believe each individual has the capacity to develop and practice leadership within multiple contexts. We facilitate leadership learning across the curriculum and co-curriculum for lifelong application.

These principles and assumptions guide our Mission:

- Our practice is informed by the *Social Change Model of Leadership Development*.
- We utilize additional leadership frameworks including the emerg-

ing *Leadership Identity Development* (LID) model and the social learning theories of collective efficacy and organizational development.

- We believe leadership is demonstrated in local, national, and global communities of practice.
- Our leadership initiatives embrace the values of diversity in content and process, preparing students to be effective change agents in our pluralistic world.
- We support and collaborate with campus partners from academic, research and student affairs communities.
- We contribute to and learn from national and international leadership educators by collecting and disseminating leadership knowledge.

Sample Maryland Leadership Development Program learning outcomes and associated Learning Reconsidered constructs:

Through participating the MLDP, students will learn to....

- View leadership as a process, not merely a position. (COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY)
- Value the multi- and inter- disciplinary nature of leadership. (KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION, INTEGRATION, & APPLICATION)
- Understand the uses of power and nature of oppression. (HUMANITARIANISM)
- Create sustainable change. (CIVIC ENGAGEMENT)
- Engage others across difference. (INTERPERSONAL & INTRAPERSONAL COMPETENCE)
- Develop effective written and oral communication skills (PRACTICAL COMPETENCE)

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The Leadership Bookshelf

The Bases of Competence: Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability

By Frederick Evers, James Rush and Iris Berdrow

Reviewed by Krista Jorge Bailey

In *The Bases of Competence: Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability*, Evers, Rush and Berdrow (1998) introduce the concept of skill development focused on four base competencies they believe all college graduates need to develop to have a successful transition from college to the workforce. The authors advocate for an enhancement of education that goes beyond the simple acquisition of discipline specific knowledge and moves to truly preparing students for a demanding and evolving workplace. The competencies create a common language that can 1) help students make meaning of their co-curricular activities and translate their experiences to employers, 2) be used to create a developmental plan for student leaders, and 3) be used to work with academic affairs to integrate learning in and out of the classroom. The book provides a tangible set of skills supporting and encouraging holistic learning. Although the research is limited to Canada, the views and competencies expressed here are easy to understand and offer measurable student learning outcomes.

The competencies were developed as a result of a research program, *Making the Match between University Graduates and Corporate Employers*. The initial study was designed to understand the technical skills employers were seeking in college graduates. The researchers discovered and identified gaps in key skill areas necessary for success in the workplace. Skills that were in highest demand by employers were the skills that were least developed in college graduates. Based on this study, four base

competencies were defined, which prepare students for life-

long employability and learning. Evers et al. (1998) state, "our model is unique in that it concentrates on generalist skills that higher education graduates need as a base supporting their specialist knowledge and skills" (p. xix). Rather than advocating for graduating generalists, the authors argue that a balance between the two is the key to being successful in the evolving workplace. Knowledge advances daily and employees must be able to adapt to their surroundings.

Part one, Understanding Competence, explains the need for competency-based approaches and describes the common language created by the competencies:

Today's college graduates need to possess specialized knowledge and skills plus general skills that will provide them with the ability to adapt to whatever changes come next. It is simply not good enough to be able to access information. Graduates must be able to apply the information to solve problems. (Evers, et al., 1998, p. 3)

The authors found that some of the competencies, Managing Self and Communicating, are well developed in college, but students must have a balance of all of the competencies and as a result of the imbalance, experience what the authors refer to as the humbling effect when they enter the workforce and realize their depth of knowledge in a specific discipline will not ensure success.

Part two, Essential Skills and Competencies, is an introduction of each of the four base competencies

"Based on this study, four base competencies were defined, which prepare students for lifelong employability and learning."

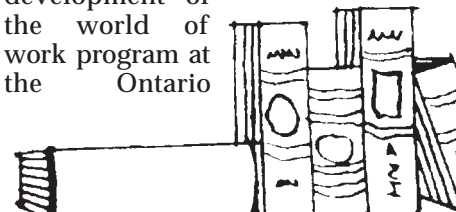
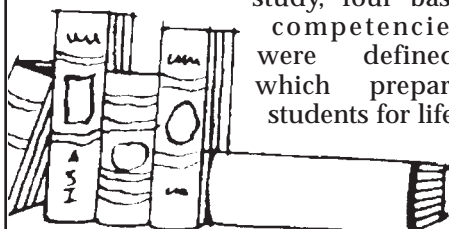
and the skills that comprise them. Evers, et al. (1998), describe the basic nature of the competency, the impact of the competency on lifelong learning and employability, implications for both higher education and the workplace and the research findings.

The table below defines the four base competencies and the specific skills sets of the individual competencies.

Part three, Developing Competence, moves the reader from theory to application and defines mechanisms for integration into the work of Student Affairs professionals. Infusing competency development into higher education will not require the creation of new programs, but a creative refocus with programs that are currently used. Evers, et. al. (1998) encourages educators to use the competencies with the following programs:

Skills portfolios, co-curricular transcripts, interdisciplinary courses and programs, experiential learning, college-to-work transition courses and programs, entrance and exit examinations using base competencies are all mechanisms for utilizing the base competencies. (p. 158-163)

Part Four, the final section of the book uses three case studies to illustrate the range of impact of the base competencies. Descriptions include the use of the competencies in the development of the world of work program at the Ontario



MANAGING SELF

Constantly developing practices and internalizing routines for maximizing one's ability to deal with the uncertainty of an ever-changing environment.

Learning: gaining knowledge from everyday experiences and keeping up-to-date on developments in the field.

Personal Organization and Time Management: managing several tasks at once, setting priorities and allocating time efficiently in order to meet deadlines.

Personal Strengths: comprises a variety of personal traits that assist individuals in dealing with day-to-day work situations — for example, maintaining a high energy level, motivating oneself to function at an optimal level of performance, functioning in stressful situations, maintaining a positive attitude, being able to work independently, and responding appropriately to constructive criticism.

Problem Solving and Analytic: identifying, prioritizing, and solving problems, individually or in groups. asking the right questions, sorting out the many facets of a problem, and contributing ideas as well as answers regarding the problem.

COMMUNICATING

Interacting effectively with a variety of individuals and groups to facilitate the gathering, integrating, and conveying of information in many forms (for example, verbal, written, visual).

Interpersonal: working well with others (supervisors, subordinates and peers), understanding their needs, and being sympathetic to them.

Listening: being attentive when others are speaking, and responding effectively to others' comments during a conversation.

Oral Communication: presenting information verbally to others, either one-to-one or in groups.

Written Communication: effectively transferring written information, either formally (through reports and business correspondence, for example) or informally (through notes and memos).

MANAGING PEOPLE AND TASKS

Accomplishing the tasks at hand by planning, organizing, coordinating, and guiding both resources and people.

Coordinating: coordinating the work of peers and subordinates and encouraging positive group relationships.

Decision Making: making timely decisions on the basis of a thorough assessment of the short- and long-term effects of decisions, recognizing the political and ethical implications, and being able to identify those who will be affected by the decisions made.

Leadership and Influence: giving directions and guidance to others and delegating work tasks to peers and subordinates in an effective manner that motivates others to do their best.

Managing Conflict: identifying sources of conflict between oneself and others, or between other people, and taking steps to overcome disharmony.

Planning and Organizing: determining the tasks needed to meet objectives (strategic and tactical), perhaps assigning some of the tasks to others, monitoring the progress against the plan, and revising the plan to include new information.

MOBILIZING INNOVATION AND CHANGE

Conceptualizing as well as setting in motion ways of initiating and managing change that involve significant departures from the current mode.

Ability to Conceptualize: combining relevant information from a number of sources, integrating information into more general frameworks, and applying information to new or broader contexts.

Creativity, Innovation, Change: adapting to situations of change, and re-conceptualizing roles in response to changing demands related to success.. At times it involved the ability to initiate change and provide novel solutions to problems.

Risk Taking: taking reasonable job-related risks by recognizing alternative or different ways of meeting objectives while recognizing the potential negative outcomes and monitoring progress toward the set objectives.

Visioning: conceptualizing the future of the company and providing innovative paths for the company to follow.

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Agricultural College and the Institute for Learning at the Bank of Montreal, as well as the competencies that were developed through the Babson College External Assessment Program.

The competencies can be used as a framework for developing collaborations across campus to ensure academic integration between academic affairs and student affairs. The competencies align with many of the skills leadership educators are creating learning experiences to develop. Overall, *The Bases of Competence: Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employ-ability* is thought provoking and intellectually stimulating. The competencies described in this book may be a powerful resource as student affairs moves forward in developing stronger partnerships with our colleagues in academic affairs and seeks true academic integration between the two areas of higher education. 🏠

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Scholarship and Research Updates

Leadership Learning Outcomes

By Susan R. Komives and Sarah Schoper

One product of the assessment and accountability movement in higher education has been elevating the role of designating intentional student outcomes of the college experience. Regional accreditation associations now consistently expect institutions to specify what outcomes they are developing in students and what evidence they can provide to document student growth. National research projects like the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE at www.indiana.edu/~nsse/), and specific instruments such as the College Student Survey (CSS at www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/css.html) and the College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ at www.indiana.edu/~cseq/) provide ready ways to assess outcomes and the college experiences that contribute to student development.

Only recently have colleges started focusing on the types of learning outcomes they seek to develop. Documents like *The Student Learning Imperative* (American College Personnel Association, 1996), *Powerful Partnerships* (American Association for Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1998), and *Greater Expectations* (American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2002) provide some guidance. With this increased focus on learning, campus educators are being asked to establish and assess learning outcomes in their daily practice. This article will define the role of learning outcomes for leadership development, briefly discuss how learning outcomes can be assessed, share select research on outcomes, and provide resources for examples of good practice.

The Role of Learning Outcomes

Learning Reconsidered (2004) (a project of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators & the American College Personnel

Association) defines learning as, “a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development” (p. 4). Thus, creating a learning-centered environment should be the focus of any experience within higher education and establishing such an environment begins by asking the question—what do we want students to learn? Answering this question defines our learning outcomes and begins the process of creating an experience that reaches those learning outcomes.

Often we can easily articulate what we want students to learn from participating in a leadership experience—a solid understanding of leadership theory, a better understanding of one’s value system, etc. If learning is defined as an, “activity that integrates academic learning and student development” then it is important that the learning outcomes established for leadership development connect to both academic learning and student development. In most leadership experiences the connection to academic learning and student development can be easily made; however, the assumption that the connection is obvious should not be made hastily. The following sources can be used as a guide for developing learning outcomes for leadership experiences that integrate both academic learning and student development: *Learning Reconsidered* (www.myacpa.org/pub_othermedia.cfm); classic sources like Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956); and outcomes for

topics such as Civic Engagement (www.aacu-edu.org/issues/civicingagement/index.cfm).

Once learning outcomes are established it is important to shape the leadership development experience to enable the achievement of such learning. Baxter Magolda (2003) offers three principles of learning which articulate a challenge and support process around which a learning environment can be established. The

three principles are: validate the learner as knower, situate learning in the learner’s experiences, and mutually construct meaning with the learner (Baxter Magolda, p. 237). Not only do these principles allow for learning, they leave room for creativity and inclusion of difference in the leadership experience. After all, one can fulfill these principles in almost any context—classroom, retreat, program, conference, etc.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

Assessing the progress made toward achieving the learning outcomes, so that future experiences can be shaped by the feedback is essential. “Assessment is about learning—and it is about improvement” (Love & Estanek, 2004, p. 83). Komives and Vogt (2003) outline a variety of longitudinal assessment tools that are available for assessing leadership outcomes development. The

learning outcomes provided in

Thus, creating a learning-centered environment should be the focus of any experience within higher education and establishing such an environment begins by asking the question—what do we want students to learn?

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Learning Reconsidered (2004) and Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) can be used to shape assessment of the learning outcomes of leadership experiences, and to conduct an audit of current leadership experiences.

Smith (2003) provides a detailed example of how one institution, Longwood University, created learning outcomes around a mission statement and has proceeded to assess those outcomes. Longwood University's mission focuses on developing citizen leaders, and five learning outcomes were identified to indicate progress toward this mission. The College Student Experiences Questionnaire, the National Survey of Student Engagement, and an alumni survey were then used to assess progress toward these learning outcomes.

Blackwell (2003) offers another example that illustrates the importance of establishing learning outcomes. Blackwell studied the impact of The Eisenhower Leadership Development program (ELDP) at Texas A&M University on student leadership skill development by surveying former ELDP students and their perceptions of their skill development prior to and after their participation in the program. The specific leadership skills that students were supposed to develop through participation in the program served as the learning outcomes that shaped the ELDP and were a focal point of the study.

Finally, both the Maryland Leadership Development Program in the Office of Campus Programs and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life at the University of Maryland have audited the leadership develop-

“In most leadership experiences the connection to academic learning and student development can be easily made; however, the assumption that the connection is obvious should not be made hastily.”

ment experiences they are offering students using the learning outcomes identified in *Learning Reconsidered* (2004). By conducting such an audit, each office is able to identify the experiences they are currently providing that reach some of the learning outcomes. For those learning outcomes not being reached, discussion has ensued as to why not and what type of leadership development experience might reach such outcomes.

Student leadership research is still not a well-developed field of inquiry. In 1991 when Pascarella and Terenzini did a twenty-year review of student affairs scholarship, leadership was not even mentioned in the index of that 894 page tome. In their 2005 volume looking at the last 10 years of research, the authors make frequent mention of “Interpersonal Relations and Leadership Skills.” Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) indicate the picture is fairly clear that students report consistent improvement in leadership skills while in college. Citing such studies as Astin's (1993) longitudinal research of 25,000 first year students, leadership does increase even when controlling for such pre-college characteristics as race, gender, SES, or pre-college level of leadership. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) further observe few if any effects by institutional type, indeed “dimensions of a campus environment and the kinds of experiences students have there are more powerful determinants of student leadership development than are expenditures” (p. 237). Specific experiences like leadership classes were positively related to leadership outcomes development.

In *Leadership in the Making*, Zimmerman and Burkhardt (1999a,

1999b) studied leadership program participants and non-participants at 31 Kellogg Foundation funded colleges. Findings consistently showed desirable leadership outcomes for program participants when compared to non-participants. In addition Zimmerman and Burkhardt (1999a, 1999b) report desirable outcomes for institutions and for communities involved with those programs. Of particular note is that even non-leadership program participants at the Kellogg program schools had significantly higher gains in leadership outcomes than students at a matched set of schools without comprehensive leadership programs. This halo effect of having a leadership program is compelling support for the design of such programs. *Leadership in the Making* (1999) and a related study, *Evaluating Outcomes and Impacts: A Scan of 55 Leadership Development Programs*, are available free or as downloadable pdfs from the Kellogg Foundation www.wkkf.org

Most of the studies with large data sets use the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) or College Student Survey (CSS) data from the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (2001) used CIRP and CSS longitudinal data from 10 institutions and 875 students. “Results indicate that leadership participants showed growth in civic responsibility, leadership skills, multicultural awareness, understanding of leadership theories, and personal and societal values” (p. 15). Cress et al. conclude that “as opposed to older notions of leadership as ‘positional’ or ‘an inherent characteristic,’ all students who involve themselves in leadership training and education programs can increase their skills and knowledge” (p. 23). Readers might consider using the Cress et al. items of understanding of self, conflict resolution skills, clarify of personal values, ability to set goals, ability to deal with complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity, decision-making abilities, ability to plan and implement programs and activities, sense of personal ethics, willingness to take risks, understanding of leadership theories, interest in developing leadership in others, commitment to civic responsibility, held

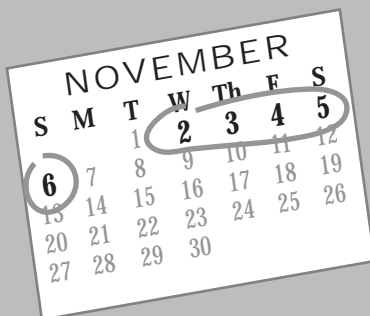
elected or appointed leadership position, and level of co-curricular involvement along with the CSS scales on civic responsibility and multicultural awareness and community orientation to have some comparison ability with that large data set.

We challenge leadership educators to designate specific leadership outcomes based on the good scholarship that exists and shape your program to deliver those outcomes. Longitudinal assessments using one's own measures, adapting those from the Cress et al. study (2001) or using composite variables from other institutional data are a good place to start. ■

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American Association for Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, & National Association of Student

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