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MSL AND THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

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"Leadership Happens. Or Does It?"

Carney Strange, Ph.D., Bowling Green State University

Introduction

The question of how leadership happens is one that has long enthralled postsecondary researchers and practitioners. After all, the qualities of leadership entail the very gains associated most often with successful outcomes of the college experience – autonomy, increased capacity for critical thinking, a sense of purpose, commitment to social responsibility, and engaged citizenship - to name a few. These are some of the same measures embraced by the *Social Change Model* that informs the select results of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) reported on in this issue of *Concepts & Connections*. What do these data say to those charged with shaping effective learning environments on campus for purposes of developing leaders?

The MSL data thus far suggest that what students bring with them to the college experience is a significant predictor of what they will gain from it, in this case, the range of values understood collectively as the components of socially responsible leadership. These seven critical values, or "Seven Cs" of leadership development, include *Consciousness of Self, Congruence, Commitment, Collaboration, Common Purpose, Controversy with Civility, and*

"While leadership does indeed 'happen,' its probability is increased for a greater number of students if we include, secure, involve, and invite them into the learning community."

Citizenship. All of these apparently benefit from the college experience (Komives, Dugan, & Segar, 2006), inasmuch as students are predisposed to them upon entry to an institution. On the surface, then, it may seem that college does not make much of a difference in this regard. After all, the data generally indicate that graduating socially responsible leaders depends greatly on admitting the best of them in the first place. However, Dugan (2006) has found that the degree of gain in such values is enhanced through participation in positional leadership roles, involvement in student organizations, formal leadership programs, and especially community service opportunities. Thus, these data support the notion that, although leadership achievement is best predicted by lead-

ership potential, it is the shape of the learning environment and the various leadership opportunities it offers that ultimately turn potential into action when it comes to these values. This means that if we are to capitalize on the goals of leadership development we must approach the challenge with clear intention and design. What constitutes the components of such a design is the focus of my observations here.

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Connections From The Director

By Craig Slack

I am excited to share our final edition of *Concepts & Connections* on the outcomes of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL). Over the past year the research team has analyzed the national data centering on identity, teaching and interventions that matter in the leadership learning process. We've showcased findings from many of the participating institutions. There have been a number of dissertations and masters theses that used the MSL data to advance our thinking about how college students advance in their socially responsible leadership learning. The research team has traveled around the country and internationally presenting MSL findings at conferences, institutes, and symposia. The value of research is the opportunity to unlock the unknown and to make clear what seems blurred at best. The MSL research team and the 52 participating institutions have and continue to draw meaning from the data to advance our individual and collective practice.

This edition of *Concepts & Connections* features the work of John Dugan, MSL Co-Principal Investigator, looking at how student involvement in clubs and organizations influence leadership learning. Tom Segar, MSL Project Manager, in collaboration with Katherine Hershey, MSL research team member, and John Dugan, Co-Principal Investigator, examined how students' engagement in socio-cultural conversation influenced their leadership development. How mentoring affects student leadership development is a focus piece in this edition of *Concepts & Connections*. Ramsey Jabaji and Nathan Slife, MSL research team members, in partnership with Co-Principal Investigators Susan Komives and John Dugan, share national findings on the benefits of mentoring and college student leadership development. Kirsten Freeman Fox and Jennifer Smist, both MSL

research team members, along with Co-Principal Investigator Susan Komives, look at the significance community service learning plays in the development of the eight constructs of the Social Change Model of Leadership. The way we create educational environments does affect leadership learning. In *Leadership Happens. Or Does It?* Carney Strange shares his thoughts and research on how learning environments influence leadership development for college students. We are excited to share two participating campuses' accounts of lessons learned from their findings. Dennis Roberts and Andrew Beckett share findings from Miami University and Dhanfu Elston shares findings from the data collected at Georgia State University.

We are excited to share the series of MSL focused *Concepts & Connections* on the NCLP web site. We also have power point slides from presentations presented at national conferences. We will continue to add MSL resources to the web site as they become available. Please be on the look out for the newly published Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership-National Report funded by a grant from the C. Charles Jackson Foundation.

We encourage you to find application of the descriptive findings to your practice. Please become and or continue to be an active member of the NCLP list-serve and share your thoughts and questions about the MSL study and findings. 🏠



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NCLP CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS
A PUBLICATION FOR LEADERSHIP EDUCATORS
Volume 15 Issue 2 IDENTITY AND THE MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL STUDY OF LEADERSHIP 2007

"Know Thyself"
By Marisa N. Rademeyer and Vijayan Manuvasagam

These words of ancient wisdom are inscribed over the entrance to Apollo's temple at Delphi. Today, science and practice support this ancient insight. Students are often coached to enhance their self-awareness for purposes of developing leadership skills or career plans. Personality tests, vocational preference inventories, biographical questionnaires, and multi-rater instruments are all used to help students learn more about themselves. In this article, we'd like to argue that knowing oneself entails more than being able to catalog personality preferences, behavioral styles, motivations, values, and likes and dislikes. In today's rapidly changing world, "knowing yourself" must also embrace "knowing your social identity."

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In today's rapidly changing world, "knowing yourself" must also embrace "knowing your social identity."

ites and differences, and that groups of which the individual is a part are likely to be evaluated more positively than groups to which the individual does not belong. In other words, people are more likely to favor people who are like themselves. When meeting a new person, there is a natural tendency to evaluate whether the person is "like or unlike" me.

This categorization and evaluation process leads to two that "bond and bind." It is human nature to feel connected to others who are similar to seek out others and establish communal ties. Similarities on dimensions such as gender, ethnicity, or religion "bind" us to others. Universities and colleges have an abundance of groups such as fraternities, alliances, clubs, and centers that bring together students with common social identities. Social identity theory can also "bind" the student population. Social identity theories explain that people favor their own groups and are biased toward others. Self-identification with a particular group often translates into seeing the best in one's own ethnic, religious, or gender group and seeing the worst in others. Students can be so confident in the reality of their own experiences that they literally are able to see actions or comments that are offensive to other groups with little or no groups on the basis of similar-

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“Leadership Happens. Or Does It?”

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Designing for Leadership

Whatever the size and mission, every institution contains myriad opportunities and challenges that shape a learner’s journey, including those seeking to become leaders. Some attract, some deter; some are bold and some benign. These are the many dimensions and influences that create the collage of learning called “going to college.” In essence, these comprise the components of a campus’s “institutional environment” (Strange & Banning, 2001). They include the collective characteristics of campus inhabitants, its physical features and layout, the organizational structures that support its goals, and the perceptions of those who participate in them. These components exert their impact through classrooms, residence halls, student organizations, department offices, commuter centers, and a whole variety of events and experiences, all of which hold potential for enhancing the learning, growth, and development of students. How that happens and what role campus leaders can play in effecting them is the focus of my claim. While leadership does indeed ‘happen,’ its probability is increased for a greater number of students if we include, secure, involve, and invite them into the learning community.

Community

(Citizenship)

Involvement

(Collaboration, Common Purpose,
Controversy with Civility)

Inclusion & Safety

(Consciousness of Self, Congruence, Commitment)

*A Hierarchy of Learning Environment
Purposes and Critical Values of Social Change*

Campus environment goals of inclusion, safety, involvement, and community identify not only the steps in any successful learning experience (in or out of the classroom), but also suggest a framework for understanding what we do (and must do) as leaders in the academy. Our call is to assist students to feel like they belong in our institutions, that they are safe there being themselves, that they have a significant role to play, and that they will gain much by immersing themselves in its communities of learning. Essentially this is a three-step process.

Step One

The beginning of any successful learning experience is a basic sense of *belonging*. Is this the right place to be? Is this the right moment? Is this the right occasion? To feel welcomed is to understand with confidence that this is the place, the right moment, and the right occasion to affirm and support who I am. This is where I fit. Absent a sense of place, the temptation is to put distance between self and setting, first psychologically and then physically. Related to this sense of belonging also is the understanding that who I am does not place me at risk in the setting. This is about a sense of *safety* and *security*. There are a variety of reasons for doubts in this domain. Am I only one among few here? Do others share my values and experiences? Are my expectations so different from those around me? Do my preferences, abilities, and style support or challenge me here? Questions such as these relate to the individual values of the Social Change Model that connect to *Consciousness of Self*, *Congruence*, and *Commitment*. Each of these values reflects personal qualities that must be affirmed by the environment before they can be put to use in the service of leadership. Commitment, consistency, and an awareness of self emanate from a basic sense of identity that is included and secured within the learning environment.

Successful learning environments recognize that individual differences are important and deserve attention. Although the goal may be singular (e.g., socially responsible leadership),

effective learning experiences include a variety of pathways to it. To feel welcome and secure in the learning environment is to experience one’s uniqueness as an asset rather than a liability in the learning process. Perhaps this explains in part the success of Dhanfu Elston’s leadership focus that reaches out to commuter students whose complex lives don’t ordinarily entail the opportunities more commonplace in the residential experience of an institution. Regardless, to feel unwelcome jeopardizes the learning experience and prevents the kind of investment required for the development of group values so important to social change. Moving forward requires the opportunity to be one’s self, and feeling welcome, secure, and safe can only encourage the next step in the learning process - getting involved.

Step Two

Involvement is the substance of any successful learning experience. Without it, quite simply, nothing is done; and when nothing is done, nothing is risked or learned. This is one of the surest-grounded principles of learning. To learn anything requires engagement, or the willingness and opportunity for the learner to take on a significant role within the setting (e.g., classroom, student organization, residence hall) that capitalizes on one’s potential and skills. Effective learning environments “run with the learner.” In settings intent on learning the ratio of learners and opportunities is such that “everyone has something to do.” If inclusion and safety serve as the requisite motivational platforms for learning, it is the act of involvement that capitalizes on learners’ capacities and skills so as to challenge them to new levels of achievement. The outcome is a sense of ownership and accomplishment that promotes a form of personal agency and self-authorship in the setting that cannot help but encourage the learner to do even more. Such positive reinforcement in turn energizes the learner to try new experiences and to benefit from new challenges that require the development of new skills. Undoubtedly, such a dynamic might underlie what Dennis Roberts

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and Andrew Beckett report on to be the power of *peer* mentoring in the development of leaders. This is also the step perhaps when practices of *Collaboration*, *Common Purpose*, and *Controversy with Civility*, the group values of the Social Change Model, come together with an effect that transforms the entire effort to a new level of learning we understand as communal.

Step Three

This final step recognizes that the benefits of involvement over time manifest most powerfully in the form of *community* - where goals, structures, values, people, and resources create a synergy of membership that sustains fulfillment and actualization. In effect, this is the moment when involvement of the learner translates into a broader sense of membership in the setting such that individual goals are connected to a broader purpose. In the Social Change Model this step is closest to the value placed on *Citizenship*. Thus, the student who passes the gavel following leadership of a campus organization; the student whose class engagement is recognized at the end of a term; and the service learner whose contributions are noted in lives being changed, all meet the standard that defines the ultimate goal of this sequence - to experience learning as a truly connective process. In such cases the learners have imprinted the environment with their own unique mark, in essence leaving a trail for others to see, such that when they are gone they are missed. This principle is surely a part of Chad Ellsworth's and Aaron Asmundson's observations here on the value of Greek involvement and the opportunities gained through living in a fraternity or sorority.

Conclusion

The development of socially responsible leaders is a challenge for all educators and one that promises much in the form of positive social change. The data presented here suggest that how well we do that depends greatly on our capacity to welcome, secure, involve, and invite students into the learning community we call college. ■

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Next Steps: On to MSL2

Susan R. Komives and John P. Dugan

What a saga this has been! These four issues of *Concepts & Connections* have chronicled the journey of this Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) from its inception in the summer of 2005 to data gathering with 52 campuses in the spring of 2006, detailed campus reports that were completed in summer 2006, and the analysis that began in fall 2006 and continues today! The MSL National Report, funded by a grant from the C. Charles Jackson Foundation, is now available on the NCLP website. We have learned a great deal about student leadership development, about web surveys, about the joys of an energetic research team, and about the critical partnerships between academic and student affairs to accomplish such an ambitious project with little external funding.

Now what?

We plan to do a call for participation in MSL2 during the spring of 2008 with a targeted web administration to students in spring 2009. We are now at two different universities (John has moved as an Assistant Professor to Loyola University Chicago and Susan remains at the University of Maryland), so we will learn to manage a multi-site team.

At this point we imagine such expanded features to MSL2 as:

- A longitudinal design option with the follow-up study occurring after four years
- Further exploration of pre-college factors that contribute to leadership development
- New sub-studies allowing us to explore diverse aspects of leadership. Such sub-studies might include examining spirituality, ethical behavior, contexts for discussion of socio-cultural issues, racial identity, leadership identity development, and more
- New scales in the core of MSL such as implementing social change, role of training/education, and assessing campus climate from a variety of perspectives

We invite you to stay posted on the project through the NCLP website and through inquiries that will go to NCLP members as MSL2 is designed. Sign up on the NCLP site if you would like specific information on applying to be a participating campus in MSL2. We welcome your comments on what needs to be studied anytime. ■

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Service Matters: Reviewing Gender Implications

Kirsten F. Fox, Jennifer A. Smist, and Susan R. Komives

Community service involvement is one aspect of the college experience that significantly contributes to student leadership development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Dugan, 2006). Many campuses incorporate elements of leadership development into community service programs and service experiences into leadership programs. Cress et al. (2001) found that leadership programs incorporating service opportunities demonstrated a direct impact on student development. Especially for students not involved in traditional student organizations, involvement in service functions as a strong avenue for leadership development (Delve & Rice, 1990).

“Involvement in service significantly and meaningfully contributed to the development of collaboration, controversy with civility, and citizenship for participating students.”

Additionally, colleges and universities are currently placing an increased focus on promoting civic participation. Knowing that students who participate in service are more likely to have civic gains (Astin & Sax, 1998), we believe it is especially important to look closely at the contributions of service participation on leadership ability.

The eight values within the social change model (SCM) (i.e., consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, common purpose, collaboration, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change) are associated with involvement in service through the connection among individual, group, and community values toward the core value of change (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996). Dugan (2006) found that students involved in service reported significantly higher scores across six of the eight scales of the Socially Responsible Leadership

Scale (SRLS) in comparison to students involved in other types of leadership experiences. Furthermore, students involved in service reported significantly higher scores than students not involved in service across all eight scales.

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) examined the influence of a variety of college environments on student leadership development (see Volume 15, Issue 1 of *Concepts & Connections* on The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership) including the relationship between involvement in service and leadership development.

General Findings

Over half (52%) of the students reported doing some amount of community service while enrolled in college. Community service participation includes service as part of a class, with a student organization, as part of a work-study experience, and individually. Specifically, 55% of women and 48% of men indicated participation in service in an average academic term.

Involvement in service significantly and meaningfully contributed to the development of collaboration, controversy with civility, and citizenship for participating students. For men, participating in community service was a significant contributor for all eight leadership outcomes. For women, service participation significantly contributed to the outcomes of commitment, congruence, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, and citizenship. The only leadership outcomes that involvement in service did not contribute to significantly for women were consciousness of self and change.

Implications

As leadership educators, it is imperative that we continue to develop community service opportunities on our campuses. While over 50% of students report participating in community service, the positive leadership outcomes garnered by service involvement provides rationale for why educators should try to involve even more students in service opportunities. This is particularly important for men who are less likely than women to participate in community service, but have more significant outcomes as a result of service participation. In an effort to target males, leadership educators should work both with other student affairs educators and their academic counterparts to create male-centered community service opportunities. Specifically, collaboration should occur with fraternities, men’s athletic teams, and male-dominated residence halls, student organizations, and academic programs.

As the data show, participating in community service was a significant contributor for women on all leadership outcomes except on consciousness of self and change. Both consciousness of self and change could be enhanced through more intentional reflective experiences. Knowing that reflection is fundamental to service involvement, leadership educators should be more intentional with the reflection component of the service opportunities provided especially for college women. In an effort to increase consciousness of self, college women should be encouraged to reflect on their service participation in ways that helps develop self-awareness in regards to personal beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions. To increase leadership development in terms of change, reflection can incorporate discussions on the ability for individuals, groups, and communities to work together to make a better society.

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Service Matters: Reviewing Gender Implications

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Conclusion

Lessons on leadership and service are especially timely as colleges and universities are turning their attention towards civic involvement and properly preparing students to become responsible citizens. It is our obligation as leadership educators to provide students with new opportunities for service participation and involvement in an effort to help our students become responsible and productive leaders. 🏠

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Are You Familiar with CAS?

NCLP is a member association of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. If you are looking for learning outcomes, assessment guides, or standards to direct practice, be sure to connect with this valuable tool.

Standards for leadership development programs can be viewed on the NCLP website courtesy of CAS. Just go to the following address:

http://www.nclp.umd.edu/sources/assessment_tools.asp



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Fraternity and Sorority Residents and the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership

Chad Ellsworth and Aaron Asmundson

The MSL instrument, administered by the University of Maryland, measured dimensions of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development on individuals associated with social fraternities and sororities.

Upon receiving the data and analysis for the MSL, a significant finding that emerged for respondents at the University of Minnesota was the difference between those individuals that lived in a sorority or fraternity house compared to those that did not. Of the eight outcome variables related to the "C's," those living in fraternity and sorority houses were higher on five including consciousness of self, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, and citizenship. The University of Minnesota conducts the "Greek Experience Survey" so the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life embarked on an effort to compare the results from that survey to the results of the MSL.

Living in the Chapter House and the Greek Experience

The Greek Experience Survey was administered to 74% of the Fraternity and Sorority population at the University of Minnesota in March, 2006. One of the questions on the survey asks members to indicate to what effect (from strong positive effect to strong negative effect) fraternity and sorority involvement has made on different aspects of personal development (e.g. sense of civic commitment and involvement, sense of identity, sense of purpose).

Given that the results were high for live-in members according to the MSL, we isolated those in the Greek Experience Survey who indicated they live in the chapter house to see how their results with regard to personal development compared to those who live elsewhere. With regard to each aspect of personal development, a higher percentage of students that lived in a sorority or fraternity house indicated that each value had either a positive effect or strong positive effect on their development. In some cases, the percentage was higher, i.e. 85.6% of those who live in a chapter house feel that their chapter has a positive or strong positive effect on their leader-

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Mentoring Relationships Matter in Developing Student Leadership

Ramsey Jabaji, Nathan Slife, Susan R. Komives, and John P. Dugan

Mentoring in higher education encourages student growth and development on many college outcomes (Kram, 1983; Rosser, 2006). Leadership is enhanced in students who have mentoring experiences with faculty, student affairs staff, and peers (Thompson, 2006). Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhart (2001) used longitudinal CIRP data from 1994-1998 and supplemental surveys to link leadership training, including mentoring, with leadership ability and leadership-related outcomes. This beneficial developmental relationship will be briefly examined and then analyzed in light of findings from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership.

Kram (1983) proposed two main functions of mentoring including career functions and psychosocial functions. The career function can be examined when mentoring helps students prepare to succeed in the workforce including such functions as sponsorship, exposure-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. The psychosocial function of mentoring focuses on personal development for students including such functions as role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counseling, and friendship. For more on mentoring in leadership see *Concepts & Connections* 14(3) and Collins-Shapiro's (2006) NCLP monograph, *Mentoring and Leadership Development*.

"MSL findings show that students who were mentored to any degree more than never by faculty, student affairs staff, employers, members of the community, or other students were significantly higher in their leadership efficacy than were students who were never mentored."

their leadership efficacy than were students who were never mentored. More mentoring is related positively to higher leadership efficacy. Peer mentoring was the most prevalent form of mentoring with 71.6% of students reporting being mentored by other students, 69.6% were mentored by faculty, 53.4% by student affairs professionals, 48% by an employer, and 36% by a member of the community. Mentoring by faculty mattered (that is, explained a significant amount of the variance) on all Social Change Model leader-

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) included items that asked students how frequently they were mentored by several categories of mentors: faculty, student affairs staff, community members, employers, and peers. Specifically, students were asked "how often have you been in mentoring relationships where another person intentionally assisted your growth or connected you to opportunities for career and personal development?" Their responses ranged from never (1) to many (4) times. Other information on the methods of the MSL can be found in *Concepts & Connections* 15 (1).

Mentoring and the MSL Findings

MSL findings show that students who were mentored to any degree more than never by faculty, student affairs staff, employers, members of the community, or other students were significantly higher in

ship outcomes for both men and women. Mentoring by other students mattered most to women (on four of the scales of the Social Change Model) and to men on collaboration. Mentoring mattered most on collaboration (i.e., it contributed to more of the variance); mentoring by students, faculty, and student affairs staff were all significant for women and mentoring by peers was significant for men. When generalizing these finding, it should be noted that the MSL sample is largely comprised of full time students who have increased opportunities to interact with faculty, staff, and peers.

Implications for Practice

Simply put, mentoring matters. Mentorship is clearly an important tool for developing leadership potential among students (Zackary, 2006). Leadership educators should capitalize on the mentoring relationships that contribute positively to students' leadership efficacy; particularly with their peers, faculty, and student affairs staff. Because faculty mentorship had a significant contribution to students' leadership efficacy, it is important for educators to create opportunities to connect students and faculty in meaningful ways particularly outside the classroom. Living-learning programs have been one excellent method for increasing student engagement with faculty outside the classroom for residential students (Inkelas, Vogt, Longerbeam, Owen, & Johnson, 2006). It is essential for leadership educators to add faculty mentorship components to a wide variety of co-curricular leadership offerings because of its substantial impact on one's leadership efficacy. It is also important to identify the students that do not have mentoring relationships with faculty and determine the factors that might contribute to developing such relationships.

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Mentoring Relationships Matter in Developing Student Leadership

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The prevalence of peer mentorship suggests that students desire peer mentoring relationships. It appears students would benefit from leadership educators expanding peer leadership programs as a delivery method for leadership development initiatives as well as better prepare students to be highly effective and positive mentors to their peers. The leadership identity development (LID) grounded theory (Komives, Owen, Longersbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005) established that being mentors is a developmental process for upper-class students as they develop generatively and teach and coach others.

Leadership educators need to understand the developmental processes in mentoring. Kram (1983) proposes that the developmental cycle of mentoring consists of four main phases including: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. The initiation phase of Kram's model is associated with establishing a deeper level of intimacy, trust, and affiliation. The cultivation stage is characterized by clearer boundaries and expectations within the relationship (Kram, 1988). The developmental relationship during this stage also takes on a stronger degree of mutuality and reciprocal learning. The third stage of the model is often the result of both structural and psychological changes to the relationship when both protégé and mentor typically deal with a sense of loss resulting in a longing for the dynamics of the developmental relationship as they previously existed. The redefinition phase occurs when both protégé and mentor recognize that the relationship is no longer successful nor needed in its existing form (Kram, 1988) and results in ending in the separation phase (Kram, 1988). During this phase both parties acknowledge that the relationship has changed and a peer status and friendship has been attained (Kram, 1983).

"Leadership educators need to understand the developmental processes in mentoring."

Mentoring is potentially a transformative process that warrants intentional development for many student outcomes, including leadership. Leadership educators should encourage and support a campus-wide mentoring mind-set that includes a peer component. Mentoring expert, Lois Zachary, wrote in a 2006 *Concepts & Connections* article that "A mentoring culture

enriches all mentoring that goes on within an institution. Leadership educators need to continuously create readiness, provide multiple opportunities for mentoring and offer support to enhance mentoring" (p. 6). 🏠

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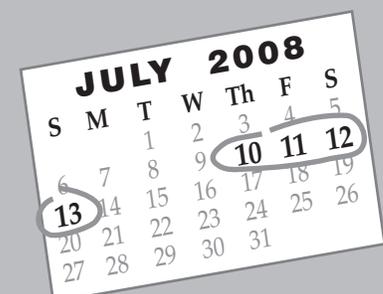
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Socio-Cultural Conversations: The Power of Engagement across Difference

Thomas C. Segar, Katherine Hershey, and John P. Dugan

College students may participate in several different co-curricular experiences that contribute to their leadership development. Leadership training and courses, service learning, student organizations, campus employment, and other activities may be used to foster student leadership. Discussion-based formats are often used in connection with these activities as an effective strategy for supporting student engagement and learning of complex issues. This article explores the role socio-cultural conversations (i.e., engagement with others in conversation across difference) in particular may play in the leadership development process of college students using data from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL).

Socio-Cultural Conversations in the Literature

Significant learning occurs through students' interactions with one another (Astin, 1993b). Discussions can be used with an infinite number of topics and provide an opportunity for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. This encourages students to explore multiple and divergent perspectives about a particular issue. Specifically related to leadership, socio-cultural discussions can serve as a powerful tool for facilitating overall leadership development and efficacy. Socio-cultural discussions can be defined as those discussions that focus on topics of diversity, multiculturalism, political views, lifestyles, religion, and social

“Creating a space for students to talk about different lifestyles and major social issues such as justice, human rights, and peace may go a long way in promoting positive leadership outcomes.”

justice issues such as peace and human rights.

Research over the past decade has substantiated the positive effects of socio-cultural discussions among college students (Astin, 1993a, 1993b; Chang, 1999; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001; Zúñiga, Williams, & Berger, 2005). Among these studies, which outline many outcomes to which diverse interactions have been proven to make meaningful contributions, several have established important links between diverse interactions and leadership ability in students.

Astin (1993b) used leadership as one of the outcome measures in his widely known study of college students, and found it to be significantly affected

by cross-racial interaction and conversations about racial/ethnic issues. He noted that “emphasizing diversity and intergroup interaction is positively associated with leadership,” among other outcomes (1993a, p. 48). Of further importance is the role that peer interaction plays as a key predictor. Astin (1999) cited peer groups as an influence on positive outcomes, contending, “the greater the interaction with peers, the more favorable the outcome” (p. 490). More recently, Antonio (2001) examined intergroup interaction and its relationship to the development of leadership skills. He found intergroup interaction to have a significant and positive relationship with leadership ability, even after controlling for pre-college character-

istics and institutional variables. Hurtado (2005) also found intergroup contact to have a positive relationship with leadership abilities, corroborating Antonio's data. However, studies have yet to examine this concept using a theoretically-grounded measure of leadership.

Socio-Cultural Discussions and MSL

The MSL is a national research project designed to examine influences of the college environment on leadership development. Data from the study represent 52 institutions of higher education and more than 50,000 cases. The study measured socio-cultural discussions through students' self-reported frequency of engagement across six items using a Likert-type scale ranging from never (1) to very often (4). Sample items included the degree to which students held discussions with others whose personal values were different than their own and how often they discussed views about diversity and multiculturalism. This measure was designed and validated as part of the National Study of Living Learning Programs (Inkelas, 2004).

Multiple hierarchical regressions were run on each of the eight leadership outcomes (i.e., consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change), which are theoretically grounded using the social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Results indicated that socio-cultural discussions were the single strongest, positive predictor from the college environment of student gains across all eight leadership measures. In other words, the more students engaged in conversations across difference, the more likely they were to demonstrate a higher capacity for leadership.

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Socio-Cultural Conversations: The Power of Engagement Across Difference

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Implications for Practice

Any leadership development experience can infuse socio-cultural discussions. Creating a space for students to talk about different lifestyles and major social issues such as justice, human rights, and peace may go a long way in promoting positive leadership outcomes. When students have their views confirmed and challenged by their peers through reflective and constructive dialogue they can begin to understand the complexities of the world from various perspectives and critically assess their own and others' points of view. These interactions provide opportunities to learn and understand more about themselves, their peers, and become more open-minded.

Socio-cultural discussions can be initiated by inviting participants to establish discussion ground rules for a productive conversation (Zúñiga & Sevig, 1997). This step may be followed with a facilitator posing a set of questions. For example, meaningful interaction may begin by asking participants to share their responses to questions about their personal values, views about multiculturalism and diversity, religious beliefs, and political opinions. Participants start the process by talking in groups of two to four. After participants have responded to questions in small groups, the conversation can continue in a larger group. This is just one example of how to facilitate this intervention, which can be an effective means for encouraging the democratic outcomes and social change we seek to cultivate in students.

"Findings suggest that students would be well-served by leadership program designs that include opportunities for engagement across difference."

Findings suggest that students would be well-served by leadership program designs that include opportunities for engagement across difference. Leadership educators should consider how existing programs support this or can be restructured to make room for meaningful dialogue among students. Often times, content on diversity become one day or one segment of leadership programs. Findings from the MSL would suggest a need to integrate these conversations throughout the experience to increase the likelihood of student educational gains.

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Involvement in Student Clubs and Organizations Matters

John P. Dugan

Researchers have long been interested in the unique contributions of college student involvement in clubs and organizations on educational gains (Astin, 1984; Pace, 1984). This interest comes in large part from the degree to which these experiences increase the quantity and quality of peer interactions, which are identified among the strongest predictors of student outcomes (Astin, 1996). Research on this topic that explores the key college outcome of leadership development (Astin & Astin, 2000), however, suffers from limitations associated with atheoretical definitions of leadership that are either inconsistent with current conceptualizations or make transferability to practice difficult. This article draws on data from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) to examine the influences of student involvement in co-curricular clubs and organizations on theoretically grounded measures of leadership.

“General membership in co-curricular groups is one of the strongest predictors of leadership development even beyond gains associated with positional role attainment.”

Past Research

The vast majority of research examining the influence of student involvement in clubs and organizations on leadership development is derived from data collected as part of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program. Findings from this longitudinal research project identified participation in student clubs and organizations as a positive predictor of overall leadership development (Astin, 1993; Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Smart, Ethington, Riggs, & Thompson, 2002). However, all of the studies are limited by how the researchers chose to define and measure leadership with many studies using indicators that are inconsis-

tent with contemporary conceptualizations of the phenomenon (e.g., positional role attainment, popularity, social self-confidence, drive to achieve). This results in findings that may or may not be consistent with current practice and educational goals. More recent research has attempted to examine the influence of involvement in clubs and organizations using more theoretically grounded measures of leadership (Dugan, 2006; Thompson, 2006), but were only single-institution studies.

This again draws into question the generalizability of findings to the broader higher education landscape.

MSL Design

The MSL was designed specifically to address concerns regarding the use of theoretically grounded measures as well as samples that represent the diverse array of institutions in the U.S. higher education system. Theoretical grounding for the study is derived using the social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996) with separate measures for each of the eight core values in the model (i.e., consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change). The study also employed a composite variable designed to measure participants' self-efficacy for leadership. Data

were collected from 52 campuses across the U.S. and the sample in this analysis is comprised of 50,378 cases. For more information about the MSL research design and sample please see *Concepts & Connections* volume 15, issue 1.

Key Findings

Findings are organized into three key areas: the role of general involvement in clubs and organizations, the influence of positional leadership roles, and considerations associated with breadth of involvement.

General Involvement

Interestingly, 78% of students in this sample report having had at least one experience in a college organization (See Table 1). This number exceeds those reported by other national studies, which suggest about half of college students participate at some point in college clubs (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2006). Furthermore, hierarchical multiple regression analyses identified general involvement in student clubs and organizations as one of the three most significant, positive predictors of leadership for all of the outcome variables except controversy with civility.

Positional Leadership Roles

Almost a third of the participants in the MSL sample reported that they had never held a positional leadership role in a student club or organization (See Table 1). Positional leadership roles were described broadly to include positions such as president, treasurer, committee chair, captain, and others. Involvement in positional leadership roles

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TABLE 1. Percentage of participants reporting involvement in clubs and organizations.

Variable	Never	One	Some	Many
Involvement in College Organizations	22%	13%	30%	35%
Leadership Positions in College Organizations	57%	10%	14%	19%

Involvement in Student Clubs and Organizations Matters

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did not emerge among the top three predictors of leadership across the measures associated with the social change model. However, it did emerge as the second strongest, positive predictor of student self-efficacy for leadership.

Breadth of Involvement

Breadth of involvement in this study was constructed by examining student involvement across 21 types of co-curricular group experiences (e.g., student government, fraternities and sororities, academic clubs, intramurals, etc.). Responses were summed to create a range in terms of breadth or variety of types of involvement running from 0 (i.e., no involvement) to 21 (i.e., involvement in every type of group experience). Participants in this study reported an average participation in approximately three student groups. Additionally, breadth of involvement emerged as a negative predictor of leadership development with varying degrees of significance across each of the outcome variables measured in this study. In other words, the greater the variety of experiences students were involved in, the lower their reported development across the theoretically-derived leadership outcomes.

Implications for Practice

These findings support previous research indicating that involvement in clubs and organizations contributes significantly to the leadership development of college students. Additionally, general membership in co-curricular groups is one of the strongest predictors of leadership development even beyond gains associated with positional role attainment. This is good news considering so many students (78%) report having

“Leadership educators should work with students to help them think critically about why they choose to join particular organizations and how it advances personal goals.”

these experiences at some point in their college career. Leadership educators should encourage students not involved in clubs or organizations that even through general membership important skills are developed. Based on this data, one need not hold a positional role to benefit. This is an important finding given the number of non-traditionally aged students and students working off-campus who report difficulty in prioritizing time for involvement experiences that require a significant commitment (Chronicle Almanac, 2006).

That so many students in this sample report never holding a positional leadership role is concerning. What is

not known is whether this is a result of student aversion to positional roles, the lack of availability of positional roles, or changing perceptions regarding what constitutes a positional role. However, taken in the context of the above findings, the degree of concern is lessened some. Involvement in positional leadership roles emerges only as a top predictor for the outcome variable measuring self-efficacy for leadership. Intuitively, this makes sense as the positional role provides a platform for students to test knowledge and skills and build a sense of confidence for the leadership process. Practitioners should consider how they can create opportunities for participation in positional roles particularly for student populations that score lower on the self-efficacy measure (See *Concepts & Connections* volume 15, issue 2 for more details on scores based on various identities).

Findings related to breadth of involvement are consistent with previous research identifying it as a negative contributor (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006). These findings likely relate to both the pressures associated with over-involvement as well as student prioritization of values and interests. Involvement in too wide a

range of experiences does not allow students to go deeply into work within a given area, nor does it assist in the process of clarifying a sense of purpose (Komives et al., 2006). Leadership educators should work with students to help them think critically about why they choose to join particular organizations and how it advances personal goals.

Data from the MSL support previous research on the positive influence of student involvement in clubs and organizations on leadership development. It also situates clubs and organizations as a particularly potent predictor of leadership capacity. This information provides justification for leadership educators to encourage student participation in these experiences as well as help them intentionally connect their experiences to knowledge, skills, and attitudes about leadership. ■

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Georgia State University's Experience with the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership

Dhanfu E. Elston, Georgia State University

Leadership can be an integral part of every person's experience in life, whether through a helpful act for a friend, volunteering for a task, or changing the world. No matter how small or how great, leadership acts occur with great frequency. Many students do not consider themselves leaders, yet believe that such individuals are people with important titles, enormous power, and an obvious ability to influence. As a member institution of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, Georgia State University was afforded an opportunity to critically analyze our leadership efforts.

Campus Environment

Georgia State University is a doctoral-granting urban institution with a student population of 27,000 located in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Of the 19,000 undergraduate students, less than 15% reside in campus housing, providing a unique set of challenges and opportunities related to leadership development for commuter students (Jacoby, 1989).

Program Description/ Leadership Development Model

Leadership at Georgia State is a component of the Office of Student Life and Leadership within the Division of Student Affairs at Georgia State University. Students are offered a variety of ways to learn and grow through leadership development experiences. Philosophically, the programs are based in the belief that all students possess the capacity for leadership at some level. The programs are grounded in the Georgia Statement on Leadership, which is a theoretical model derived from the Social Change Model for Leadership Development (HERI, 1996), and provides the following definition of leadership that is future-oriented and identifies personal and community values to foster this type of leadership:

Leadership is a visionary, values-driven, collaborative learning process that creates change for the greater good.

This occurs within an individual's relationships, organizations, and local and global communities.

Programs are implemented through a variety of formats, including one-time events and ongoing workshops, geared towards both individuals and groups. The model and related programs are developmental in nature, but not necessarily sequential. Students may begin their exploration of leadership development at any time during their college careers.

Institutional Findings

Our participation in the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership yielded a plethora of results that have aided in the evaluation and further development of our leadership programs. We anticipated consistency in our campus data compared to the national data provided by the MSL team, especially in the areas of gender, class standing, leadership experience, and involvement in college organizations. Although this finding remained true, we gained a more in-depth understanding of the differences between our residential and commuter student populations. Our most surprising result was that the mean scores in all outcome categories for off-campus students were higher than those in on-campus residence halls.

Much of our previous efforts toward commuter students were focused on the importance of incorporating support systems into their collegiate world and creating a sense of belonging on the campus (Jacoby, 2000). The multiple life roles exhibited by this student demographic were reflected in the data. Long-term leadership development experiences, such as internships, off-campus employment, Study Abroad, and learning communities provided higher value scores for the off-campus students. Participants in the Emerging Leaders learning communities, a collaborative effort between the Divisions of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (Undergraduate Studies) for incoming freshman, received higher values for all outcomes.

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GSU's Experience with the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership

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Interventions/Implications/ Future Efforts

To bolster the leadership skills of both residential and commuter students, Georgia State University has utilized the Council for the Advancement of Standards' *Professional Standards for Higher Education Handbook* to create realistic learning outcomes for our leadership programs. The Division of Student Affairs has focused on the identification of developmental opportunities within the institution and highlighting them for our student body. Collaborative relationships between the offices of Residence Life, Undergraduate Studies, Civic Engagement, and Student Life and Leadership have yielded new ideas for a consistent long-term curricular approach to leadership development for all students. An ongoing tracking plan has been created to monitor and evaluate the skill development for each of the eight MSL Social Change model outcomes.

Conclusions

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership has been an exemplary tool in the enhancement and evaluation of our leadership programs. As we prepare our students to be active global citizens and visionary change agents, we must continue to provide a foundation for understanding future-oriented leadership that is attainable by anyone with the desire to achieve it. ■

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Understanding the Role of Mentors in Leadership Learning

Dr. Dennis C. Roberts and Dr. Andrew Beckett, Miami University

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is a gold mine of opportunity. The challenge is figuring out how to use it to engage colleagues in discussion of the enhancement of leadership learning. This article provides a brief and anecdotal account of how we at Miami University began to dig into our MSL data, who we involved, the areas we explored, and what we see down the road as we continue to use this treasure-chest of data.

Getting Started – Denny's Perspective

I can remember the day our MSL data arrived. I was so excited to dig into the summaries to figure out where Miami had achieved its goals in leadership learning and where we had gaps that we could now more effectively address. I suspect that I was like any number of participants in the national MSL study who jumped at the opportunity to participate, but didn't consider carefully enough how I would use the data once it arrived and more importantly who I would involve in exploring the implications.

Luckily enough, I had the great fortune of reconnecting with a colleague whom I met only briefly a couple of years before he arrived on Miami's campus during the summer of 2006. I am speaking, of course, of the colleague who is co-author on this piece, Dr. Andrew Beckett. Andrew arrived as a newly anointed Ph.D. with considerable quantitative study interest and even more expertise. The core principle I am advocating from the top is that any of us who seek to understand and use the MSL data have to start with col-

leagues who have both enthusiasm for research and the requisite computational and statistics skills to work side-by-side with those of us who define ourselves as leadership educators.

Andrew and I began to look at the MSL study at a relatively surface level, but it didn't take long until even the gems that floated on the surface drew us deeper into more sophisticated analyses. When this began to happen, we convened a team of other leadership educator colleagues who were willing to share the journey of discovery with us. The team included graduate students, young and seasoned professionals from a variety of departments in student affairs. Each had a particular intellectual or programmatic interest in being at the table and we approached the task of discovery as an opportunity for mutual learning.

During the early analysis phase, we primarily looked at the measures of central tendency in our data to see if we could discern anything that confirmed our views of our work or departed from what we expected. The initial look raised additional questions that drew us deeper and required other types of data manipulation and statistical analyses. The beauty of this process was that it was iterative, informing all of us as we moved along. A particular connection that attracted Andrew was that our data provided information about the role of mentors in students' experiences, a topic that related directly to questions he was exploring as he sought to further enhance the impact of our first-year student programs as well as dig into new work with our second-year students. The particular questions were who served as mentors, which students sought and secured

them, and what impact these relationships had on leadership learning as measured by the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS) as well as measures of leadership efficacy and identity included in the MSL.

The question of the influence of mentor relationships was addressed most recently in Volume 14, Issue 3, 2006, of *Concepts & Connections*. As Sharon Daloz Parks (2000) indicates and is reinforced in the *Concepts & Connections* summary, mentor relationships can be formal or informal, but those environments where they are most effective tend to be where a culture is cultivated that values and provides opportunities for protégés to find individuals who are willing and skilled in stimulating big questions and worthy dreams. Our question at Miami was how prevalent mentor and protégé relationships were and how these influenced students' learning in leadership.

Mentor and Protégé Relationships – Andrew's Perspective

Being new to Miami, I was elated when asked to work with the MSL data. Knowing little about our student body or the Social Change Model of Leadership, I viewed this work as both a way of learning about our student experiences as well as exposing myself to an emerging theory in leadership. As Denny and I began to explore the data, several findings immediately surprised us regarding students' views of mentors.

First and foremost, we were surprised to find that the most common form of mentoring was student to student. Nearly 57% of our students indicated that either "several times" or "many times" they had been mentored by another student. In contrast, only 52% similarly answered with regard to faculty mentoring and 33% similarly answered with regard to

student affairs mentoring. Further analysis indicated that students had at least one mentoring experience from two or more of the identified groups (students, faculty, student affairs, employers, or community members). Women were more likely to have mentors than men. However, the correlation between mentoring and the Social Change constructs was stronger for men than for women. While correlations should not be interpreted as causal in nature, this finding raised questions with our team as to the quality and nature of mentoring relationships on our campus. It has also helped us realize that in order to truly understand students' experiences, we need to con-

tinue to "drill down" into the data to identify attributes that would be meaningful. We have also begun to look at a variety of different subgroups including athletes, Greek students, and sophomores. The data regarding sophomores has been particularly helpful in our planning for a more intentional second-year experience, especially since most of our ongoing assessments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) are administered to only first-year students or seniors.

Now what?

This is but one example of how our campus has begun to use the MSL data to enhance the impact of comprehensive leadership initiatives. We assumed at the outset of our analyses that students would be more deeply influenced in leadership learning if they had mentors available to them and we were pleased to find that this was true. However, we didn't realize that peers were our greatest ready source of natural and pre-existing mentor relationships. Further, we were quite surprised by the differences in

women's and men's experiences with mentors. As we forge ahead, we will focus on helping students understand what a substantive mentor-protégé relationship involves and how they can most effectively seek a mentor to work with them. We will also pay close attention to the differences in how mentor relationships will unfold for the diversity of students with whom we work.

Other topics that we have started to explore include analyzing the difference between students affiliated with fraternal organizations versus those who are not, political orientation and its relationship to socially responsible leadership, and service engagement and its impact on students. Graduate students on our team recently assembled summaries that were then distributed to all our staff and became the stimulus for discussion at a planning retreat. The graduate students had the opportunity to work with Andrew in data analysis and they worked with Denny in drafting interpretive reports for the use of others. Everyone in this case benefited – graduate and undergraduate students, leadership educators, assessment experts, and ultimately the institution itself. We have much left to analyze and we hope that the momentum will continue to build as we explore the questions that will allow us to become more effective in our work. ■

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Fraternity and Sorority Residents and the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership

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ship abilities as opposed to 75.1% of those who do not live in.

Initiatives and Programs

The fraternity and sorority community at the University of Minnesota has a number of initiatives and programs that may contribute to the positive outcomes for students living in fraternity and sorority houses.

The New Member Seminar is a day-long presentation and workshop where incoming members are given opportunities to confront issues facing the community, including alcohol abuse, community service, hazing, leadership opportunities, neighborhood relations, and risk management. This event encourages incoming members to work together in addressing common concerns, as well as building a sense of common purpose and community.

In 2005, the University signed the Greek Community Partnership with

"Of the eight outcome variables related to the 'C's,' those living in fraternity and sorority houses were higher on five including consciousness of self, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, and citizenship."

the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. The Partnership Statement outlines common values in academics, student development, leadership, community service, safe housing, and continuing recruitment of outstanding students. The University Greek Partnership Board (UGPB), a group comprising alumni, faculty and staff, and students, meets monthly and is charged with implementing the standards and values of the Partnership Statement. Together, they encourage members to collaborate around shared concerns and values.

The fraternity and sorority community gathers together in sponsoring a number of service events. For example, the Interfraternity and Panhellenic

governing councils bring hundreds of grade school-aged children to a nearby park each year for a day of activities and games, which gives members an opportunity to interact with and mentor children from urban schools. Likewise, the councils have adopted an ongoing service project, for which they package thousands of meals every month to be distributed to impoverished

countries. As a whole, the community's focus on service may be promoting citizenship among its members.

Discussion, Limitations, and Implications

These initiatives and programs may contribute to the findings provided by the combined data of these two studies. In addition, the results of the two studies raise future research questions for the Office for Fraternity & Sorority Life and the Office for Student Engagement & Leadership. Specifically, is there a significant difference for personal development between those who live in fraternity and sorority houses and those who do not? If so, what aspects of fraternity and sorority life can be attributed to these results? With regard to leadership development programming, what leadership topics are promoted within fraternity and sorority life and what topics are not implicitly valued? Finally, it will be beneficial to explore additional leadership programs to compliment the other proactive initiatives and programs described in this abbreviated article. ■

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