



A Snapshot of Collegiate Leadership Programs

Data and Implications from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership Institutional Survey (MSL-IS)

Julie E. Owen

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Colleges and universities designate resources to the development of formal leadership programs based on the fundamental belief that leadership can be learned and refined through education, training, and development. These programs have proliferated to the extent that more than 1000 leadership development programs exist on U.S. college campuses today (Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt, & Arensdorf, 2006).

The growing popularity of programs aimed at developing college student leadership abilities gives rise to numerous questions. What elements of the design and delivery of leadership programs make the most difference to student leadership learning? What institutional factors shape student leadership experiences?

Although numerous efforts have been made to study the effects of college leadership development programs (see Chambers, 1992; Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999, among others), most literature that provides prescriptions as to what elements "quality" programs should include focus primarily on single institutions or small numbers of institutions, confound leadership

"Institutions are complementing leader-centric approaches with strategies that acknowledge the interdependent, networked, global nature of the world."

involvement with general campus involvement, or look predominantly at student outcomes without intentionally accounting for their relationship to leadership program inputs. Reinelt and Russon (2003) offer that "there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence about program impact, but few systemic studies that demonstrate impact across programs" (p.119). Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) add that "understanding how context affects leadership is per-

haps one of the most important areas of future research in this new area of non-leader centric models" (p. 174).

Study Overview

In 2006, the creation of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL), a 52-campus study with findings from 50,378 students, established a much needed set of national normative data tables related to student leadership outcomes (Dugan, Komives, & Associates, 2006). A companion survey, the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership – Institutional Survey (MSL-IS), gathered information and documents about institutional leadership-related practices from leadership educa-

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Connections From The Director

By Craig Slack

We are at the cusp of an identity crisis in leadership education. Leadership for what, is the perplexing question that seems to be that artificial ceiling holding us back from purposeful practice. The next decade needs to be focused on positioning our professional practice based on the answers to the following questions: How do we know our learning opportunities are advancing students knowledge, skills, abilities and efficacy to engage in positive leadership? What models, frameworks, and theories are the powerful pedagogies that serve as the foundation of a leadership education experience? How does context and identity influence our curriculum development and delivery? What resources and organizational structures are best suited to advance a best practice leadership education program? How will student affairs professionals find their place in advancing leadership scholarship, educational practice and academic legitimacy in concert with academic departments? To what degree does mission, vision, and values really matter in student leadership development? What should be the basic competencies of leadership educators to effectively teach leadership to college students?

The outstanding news about our future is the horizon is bright for leadership education. We have so much information at our finger tips to build the next layer of the leadership education scaffolding. The decade ahead is one that will provide us with unprecedented data and new national leadership education standards, such as the CAS student leadership program standards and the ILA leadership studies guidelines. We have a critical mass of alumni whom have experience with formal leadership education programs and are waiting to be engaged to provide information about the meaning of their leadership education in their current life. An example of what can come from alumni conversations took place at the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators 2006 national confer-

ence in Washington D.C. Paige Haber, a graduate student at the University of Maryland, and I convened a group of alumni from best practice leadership programs around the country. They shared a number of recommendations for future practice which I use as a focus for my practice. Their recommendations were:

- Promote academic affairs/student affairs partnerships whenever possible;
- Connect all concepts to theories and models;
- Wed learning opportunities to an experiential setting (service, internships, organizations...);
- Examine leadership from alternative perspectives such as bad leadership;
- Talk about leadership with purpose;
- Provide clear learning outcomes and share them with students;
- Develop a brand identity with broad appeal for your program;
- Always infuse reflection with all activities; and
- Identify the interdisciplinary / multi-disciplinary elements so that students can connect the concepts to their academic work and profession concentration.

These recommendations may seem simple at face value though in our fast-paced work environments we can find ourselves skimming over the obvious. This edition of *Concepts & Connections* is intended to take us to levels much more complex than the simplicity of the obvious.

This edition of *Concepts & Connections*, *Designing Highly Effective Leadership Programs*, is intended to begin the process to help us think more deeply about a new agenda for leadership education. Dr. Julie Owen brings to life the emerging findings from the Multi-Institution Study of Leadership-Institutional Study, which gives us focus and purpose about particular institutional factors that positively influence student learning. Dr.

Darin Eich, in his piece, "Using Leadership Education Research and Assessment to Positively Impact Leadership Program Outcomes," helps us understand what needs to be included in leadership programs to create powerful learning opportunities for students. Paige Haber shares perspectives from an alumni panel on powerful learning opportunities during their undergraduate experience that serves as a life-long impact for their leadership identity. Claudia Mercado, shares her reflections on Dr. Denny Roberts' book, *Deeper Meaning in Leadership* and we bring closure to this edition of *Concepts & Connections* with our Scholarship and Research updates by Justin Fincher and Dr. Susan Komives. We hope this edition of *Concepts & Connections* sparks your thinking about future of leadership education. We also hope that you share thoughts on the future of leadership education on the NCLP listserv to spark dialogue about a new agenda for our field.

Craig Slack



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A Snapshot of Collegiate Leadership Programs

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tors at each of the 52 participating MSL campuses. This article will present descriptive findings from this study and suggest implications for the design of highly effective leadership programs.

More detailed results from the MSL-IS, including the development of an emerging typology of collegiate leadership development programs and hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyses of how institutional factors related to student outcomes, are beyond the scope of this article but suggest the importance of pre-college experiences to collegiate student leadership development, reveal gender differences related to efficacy for leadership and actual leadership performance, and detail significant interaction effects among institutional control, race, and leadership outcomes (Owen, 2008, 2009).

Elements of Leadership Program Design

A scan of the leadership program evaluation literature revealed several common themes of elements of leadership program design that are suggested to make a difference in student leadership learning. These themes included program theoretical orientation; congruence between institutional and program mission; program delivery method, duration, and audience; strategic planning and evaluation; access to human and fiscal resources; and collaborative partnerships. Although these themes may be useful as planning tools or to guide the development of new leadership programs or refine existing programs, they must be approached with caution. Factors such as institutional differences and the kind of leadership a campus is trying to develop in students may affect how a campus approaches incorporating these elements. Each of these themes is briefly described below along with selected descriptive data from institutions participating in the 2006 iteration of the MSL-IS.

Theoretical Orientation

It has been argued that having a clear theoretical framework that intentionally incorporates leadership theory and literature, along with well-defined values and assumptions about leadership, make for more effective collegiate leadership programs

(Dugan & Owen, 2007; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). Involving key stakeholders in the development and articulation of these theoretical and definitional frames is also paramount to establishing buy-in (CAS, 2006; Chambers 1992; Roberts & Ullom, 1990).

MSL-IS results revealed the most popular framework for collegiate leadership programs are personal development heuristics. Many of these personal development tools are atheoretically designed, are based on contested empirical evidence, and focus solely on individual development. This finding reveals that the state of collegiate leadership programs retains its roots in individualistic leader development. However, the increasing popularity of collaborative and systems-level approaches to leadership, such as the Social Change Model (HERI, 1996) and the Relational Leadership Model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007), indicate that the tide may be turning. Institutions are complementing leader-centric approaches with strategies that acknowledge the interdependent, networked, global nature of the world.

See Table A

Mission Congruence

In a Kellogg Foundation study of 31 youth leadership development projects, Zimmerman-Oster and Burkhardt (1999) suggest that the most successful leadership programs are characterized by the presence of a strong connection between the mission of the institution and the mission of the leadership development program or center. The rationale for this is the idea that statements of institutional priorities are essential to guiding decisions about program creation and termination (Morphew & Hartley, 2006).

Given the importance of mission congruence, it is startling how few of the MSL-IS institutions (n=30) had any published

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“Diversity in the nature and type of co-curricular leadership programs offered also breeds challenges related to planning, advocacy, and assessment of learning. Such a plurality of program foci, duration, and delivery methods makes it difficult to identify high impact practices.”

A. Leadership Theories and Models (% used) by 2006 MSL-IS Participants

Covey/MBTI	73.1	Management Models.	23.1
Social Change Model	67.3	Org/System Theories	19.2
Relational Leadership.	63.5	Adaptive/Chaos Theories.	17.3
Behavioral/Situational.	61.5	Other (discipline specific models)	19.2
Servant Leadership	59.6	Great Man/Trait	13.5
Transformational	44.2	Influence/Charisma	9.6
Leadership Identity			
Development Model (LID)	36.5	None	3.8

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statement about the purpose, goals, or values of their co-curricular leadership programs, and how even fewer (n=4) had strong connections between their programmatic and institutional mission statements. This is echoed in the MSL-IS descriptive data where only 53.8 percent of respondents admitted to having a clearly articulated mission or vision for their leadership program. The results of this study indicate co-curricular leadership programs are not building their capacity in this important way. If, as Kezar and Kinzie (2006) note, individual campus missions seemed to have more impact on programmatic practices than institutional type, what does it mean if leadership programs are not aligning themselves with this powerful shaper of campus culture?

Program Delivery Methods, Duration, and Audience

Incorporating strategies of training, education, and development is part of many student leadership program models (CAS, 2006; Haber, 2006; Roberts & Ullom, 1990). Haber (2006) also recommends differentiating programs based on their intended audiences (open to all students, targeted to specific groups of students, and/or focused on positional student leaders) and their duration (short, moderate, and long-term programs).

MSL-IS participants offered a wide-range of co-curricular leadership programs over the course of the 2005-06 academic year. The number of leadership programs offered annually ranged from four to more than 50 leadership programs per year. As the table below reveals, short and moderate duration programs were more common than long-term programs. Short-term programs tended to focus on train-

ing, the delivering of specific skills, while moderate and long-term programs took an educative approach and were designed to improve the overall leadership knowledge of participants. Programs open to all students were the most common, followed closely by programs developed for positional leaders, and then leadership programs targeted at specific populations.

See Table B

Strategic Planning and Evaluation

Most leadership program models include reference to the importance of on-going strategic planning and goal-setting activities, as well as the presence of clear evaluation processes and measurable student learning outcomes (CAS, 2006; Chambers 1992; Cress et al., 2001; Roberts & Ullom, 1990; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). While many MSL-IS participating institutions have an institutional strategic plan (88%), only fifty percent (50%) of all respondents indicated that leadership is recognized as an essential goal by institutional policy-making groups. On the leadership program level, 57.7% have stated learning objectives for their leadership programs and 86.5% conduct some sort of data collection. Popular forms of data collection included tracking attendance (90%), satisfaction surveys (88%), and self-report outcomes assessment (68%). Only 35% of MSL-IS participants reported conducting pre/post assessments of learning outcomes in leadership program participants, 12% used raters or rubrics, and 25% used portfolios or other types of formative assessment.

See Table C

Access to Resources

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) (2006) promotes Standards for Student Leadership Programs (SLPs), which state that programs must have adequate funding to accomplish their mission and goals and, where possible, "institutional funding should be allocated regularly for the operation of leadership programs" (p. 326). The definition of "adequate" depends on numerous factors. Budgets of MSL-IS

B. Mean Number of Leadership Programs Reported by Delivery Method, Duration, & Audience (Standard Deviation)

	Short	Moderate	Long
Open	2.19 (2.05)	2.35 (2.53)	1.08 (1.10)
Targeted	1.54 (1.98)	2.15 (2.95)	0.67 (1.15)
Positional	2.04 (2.43)	1.46 (3.11)	0.19 (0.49)
Training	3.00 (2.61)	2.56 (3.24)	1.04 (1.36)
Education	2.89 (2.81)	4.27 (5.31)	1.59 (1.49)
Development	2.90 (3.66)	4.09 (5.73)	1.50 (1.46)

C. Co-curricular Leadership Program Planning & Evaluation Efforts

	Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Does leadership program have stated learning objectives?	30	57.7	20	38.5
Does program have specific long-term outcomes in mind?	34	65.4	16	30.8
Do assessment efforts include gathering data?	45	86.5	5	9.6

participants dedicated to co-curricular leadership programming efforts (excluding salaries) ranged from zero dollars to \$500,000. The mean was \$53,333. Most institutions received funds from multiple sources including student fees, grants, endowments, self-support, and general institutional funding. Eighteen institutional participants are entirely fee-funded.

In addition to fiscal resources, the CAS SLP standards also offer recommendations for human resources, including suggested staffing qualifications. MSL-IS staffing patterns are presented in the table below. Note the wide range of types and amounts of staffing for collegiate leadership development programs.

See Table D

Collaborative Partnerships

Boatman (1997) states, “successful leadership development programs do not belong to a single office or department of a college, but rather are woven throughout the institution in a multidimensional web” (p.54). Partnerships that welcome student involvement, collaborations with other campus departments and divisions, value community members, and adopt local,

national, and global perspectives are paramount to meeting the leadership needs of diverse constituents. MSL-IS participants report collaborating with a wide range of campus constitutions. It is interesting to note that offices that are less frequent collaborators (disability services and learning assistance centers) may be a holdover from ‘leadership as excellence’ models popular in the 1980s and early 90s.

See Table E

Practical Implications

Descriptive statistics of institutional practices related to the design and delivery of collegiate leadership programs have practical significance to the development of leadership for social change. MSL-IS results show the highly heterogeneous nature of co-curricular leadership programs. Program variety in size, scope, theoretical orientation, staffing, resources, and collaborators makes it difficult to advocate for and make claims about the effects of such programs.

The practical implications of so few leadership programs having clear statements of mission, purpose, or theoretical orientation are numerous. If, as Rost (1991) states,

“the issue of defining leadership is central to the problems both scholars and practitioners have had with conceptualizing and practicing leadership” (p. 37), then programs who do not have such clear statements put their student leadership development efforts at risk. If an institution is unclear about what leadership means on that campus and to that co-curricular program, how can it make effective choices around program design? How can such a program define and assess outcomes if it has not articulated a clear statement of purpose? How can students make informed decisions about where to spend their co-curricular time and energy if they are unsure of the purpose or rationale of a program? How do possible funders know program goals?

Diversity in the nature and type of co-curricular leadership programs offered also breeds challenges related to planning, advocacy, and assessment of learning. Such a plurality of program foci, duration, and delivery methods makes it difficult to identify high impact practices. Wide-ranging budget and staffing patterns makes it challenging to identify peer institutions for benchmarking purposes becomes challenging. Questions of the appropriate balance between quantity and quality of programs abound.

The more that is known about how institutional environments shape the experience of student leadership development, the more leadership educators can seek to design environments that model the meaningful characteristics of those institutions. Future iterations of the MSL-IS will continue to explore the connections among institutional predictors and student outcomes. Additions to the MSL-IS for 2009 include: examining the level of experience of leadership educators associated with diverse types or programs; the role of transition and staff turnover in program theoretical orientation; looking at different types of institutions (such as community colleges, women’s colleges, HBCUs and HSIs) to see if they adopt unique approaches to leadership development; examining the effects of curricular leadership programs;

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**D. Leadership Program Staffing Patterns
(Dedicated Staff – Gray; Affiliated Staff- White)**

	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean
FT staff/fac	0	7	1.29	0	60	7.9
PT staff/fac	0	3	0.29	0	4	0.29
Graduate assts.	0	5	0.39	0	5	0.69
Student employees	0	20	1.85	0	50	3.60
Admin staff	0	2	0.27	0	5	0.85

**E. Frequency of Collaboration with Leadership Program
(% answering ‘often’ or ‘very often’)**

Student activities	82.7%	Alumni/parent affairs	19.2%
Orientation	71.2%	Institutional research	19.2%
Multicultural programs	67.3%	Counseling center	15.3%
Residence life	63.4%	Other	11.8%
Community service	57.5%	Health center	11.5%
Academic departments	41.8%	Career center	11.5%
Campus recreation	26.9%	Disability services	7.7%
Study abroad	21.2%	Learning assistance	5.8%

A Snapshot of Collegiate Leadership Programs

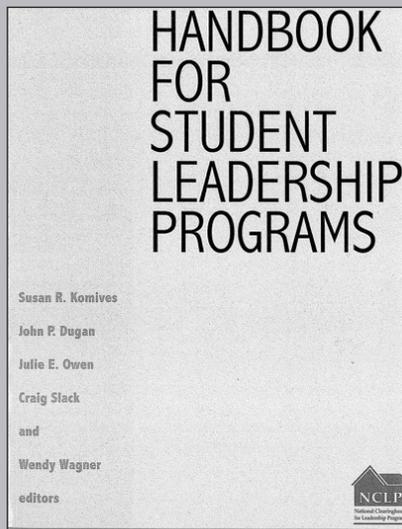
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gauging the role of institutional selectivity as a predictor of leadership; and conducting needed site visits and interviews to complement MSL-IS data with qualitative information. ■

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Using Leadership Education Research and Assessment To Positively Impact Leadership Program Outcomes

Darin Eich

Goals of leadership education include improving student learning and leadership development. Assessing leadership programs and student outcomes are key to achieving these goals. In order to better understand factors associated with strong leadership programs, I conducted a grounded theory of high quality leadership programs. I sought to assess a variety of programs for the purposes of supplying information to practitioners and improve leadership learning. The findings from my research yielded 40 actions that leadership program stakeholders identified as having the greatest impact on student outcomes.

In order to create a powerful application of leadership learning for students, a program can focus on three different areas: program outcomes, program activities, and the connection between those activities and outcomes. Many programs are focused on their outcomes and activities but the harder part is making the connection between the two. With a focus on leadership development outcomes, a program can assess those that they are currently affecting in a positive way, as well as those that they desire to impact but may not currently be able to significantly. The program can also focus on the activities of the program, those attributes, actions, or practices of the program that they are utilizing to try to impact stated outcomes. After clarifying the activities and outcomes, the program must also assess the connection between the two and see that the activities that they do relate to the outcomes and vice versa. Many pro-

grams start with identifying the activities but do not get specific thinking about outcomes. Other programs are very much focused on the outcomes but may not utilize activities that can correlate to achieving those outcomes. A truly high quality program is thoughtful about assessing not only the outcomes and program activities, but also the connection that exists between what they do in the program and how students are affected-the link between program activities and outcomes.

Leadership programs can have a tremendous impact on students. I interviewed over 60 students, alumni, teachers, and administrators from four excellent leadership programs. Students again and again referred to their participation in leadership programs as one of the most influential experiences in college. What were these programs doing to be able to achieve a number of important leadership development outcomes in students?

A program can have significant funding, a large amount of staff, and even a physical space on campus but what are the ways to leverage these for the sake of student learning and leadership development? What might a program implement if it does not have significant funding, staff, or office space that would matter most for student learning? One can still be highly intentional and use leadership program research and assessment for powerful application. Here are actions that emerged from those programs who place high value in planning and a clear theoretical approach. Individual programs can assess themselves on these actions and use them as an opportunity for program creation, development, and innovation.

Cluster I: Participants Engaged in Building and Sustaining a Learning Community

1. Utilize an application and selection procedure to select students who are invested in their own and others' development and are committed to engaging fully in the program.

"Leadership programs can have a tremendous impact on students. I interviewed over 60 students, alumni, teachers, and administrators from four excellent leadership programs. Students again and again referred to their participation in leadership programs as one of the most influential experiences in college."

Upcoming Conventions

Interested in learning more about student leadership? Join NASPA's Knowledge Community for Student Leadership Programs (www.naspa.org) and ACPA's Commission for Student Involvement (www.myacpa.org).

ACPA's Annual Convention is March 20-24, 2010 in Boston, MA and NASPA's Annual Conference is March 6-10, 2010 in Chicago, IL. NCLP will see you there!

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2. Recruit from many sources and bring together a mix of students from a variety of backgrounds to create a diverse learning community.
3. Hire student-centered educational practitioners as teachers and administrators to facilitate students' leadership development.
4. Create opportunities for leadership practitioners from a variety of fields and careers to serve as guest leaders, sharing their experiences through panels, discussions, and conversations with students.
5. Reduce status differences, be open and accessible, empower students, demonstrate integrity, care, and model exemplary leadership through interactions with students.
6. Tell personal stories, share real experiences, and ask thought-provoking questions.
7. Mentor and support students outside of program meetings.
8. Make the large learning community enrollment smaller through a structure that places students within smaller groups in the program.
9. Allow students to shape and share in a group identity and work together to develop the small group, cluster, or team to which they belong.
10. Utilize the small group as a laboratory to learn about leadership where students teach each other, engage in activities, work on projects, overcome challenges, and bond through developing as a team.
11. Challenge participants to risk and learn from mistakes, ask difficult questions, and think for themselves, all within a safe encouraging atmosphere.
12. Set community standards and

encourage participants to be approachable, encouraging, and willing to help fellow participants outside of the program as well as within.

13. Facilitate participants giving and receiving feedback to one another in critical instances after they have had time observing each others' leadership style.
14. Utilize a wide variety of team-building activities and structures at the beginning of the program and throughout to allow participants to meet and connect on an individual basis.

Cluster II: Student-Centered Experiential Learning Experiences

15. Engage students in practicing the leadership skills and concepts they are learning through group development processes within the program, in class projects, and with individual leadership plans.
16. Engage students in practicing leadership in various out of class projects in the community and on campus.

17. Engage students in practicing leadership through assuming positions and roles within the program to share responsibility in operating the program and teaching fellow students.
18. Create opportunities for students to become involved in tangible ways outside of the program in the community, campus, and within other organizations.
19. Engage students in written reflection activities in the form of journals, essays about readings, and other projects.
20. Engage students in verbal reflection in reaction to discussions, questions posed, and current events.
21. Formally engage students in completing vision and goal-setting activities and other projects to personalize the concepts to the individual.
22. Engage students in a variety of curricular activities designed to help them gain a greater understanding of themselves, including personality, strengths, style, skills, and values assessments.



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23. Engage students in simulations to give them practice with specific leadership skills, including strategic planning, ethics, and decision-making.
24. Engage students in group discussions, debriefings, and dialogues stimulated by events, activities, readings, and presentations.
25. Engage students in making meaning and connections to readings through discussing their out-of-program experiences.
26. Expose students to different situations, contexts, cultures, groups, and people through their stories and program activities.
27. Give students opportunities to practice different ways of leading, leadership roles, and engage with others with different leadership styles.
28. Provide opportunities for students to practice leadership and learn through service-learning in groups and individually.
29. Expose students early to a wide breadth of multiple service sites, people, and organizations.
30. Allow students to have increasing responsibility and devote significant time for in-depth service to the site in which they are most interested or the cause about which they are most passionate.
31. Bring groups of students away from the routine of the campus for an accelerated and in-depth exploration of themselves, their fellow participants and leadership.
32. Use alternative, group-based, and experiential teaching methods such as a ropes course, challenges, or intense exploration into a particular theme or issue.

Cluster III: Research Grounded Continuous Program Development

33. Offer a variety of themes, service sites, group and individual project choices, and team memberships to allow students to choose their leadership context and skills to develop.
34. Incorporate a wide variety of delivery methods to appeal to different student learning styles.

35. Integrate the various components students can choose into a common, coherent, larger whole curriculum that students experience in unique ways.
36. Develop and offer program content based on previously established desired leadership development outcomes for the students.
37. Explicitly state the mission and values of the program and model the values through the curriculum and participant action.
38. Develop content that infuses student leadership and college student specific issues to make the curriculum real and have utility for the individual student.
39. Create programs utilizing current leadership, student development, leadership development, curriculum, teaching and learning, quality program development, and education research and models.
40. Improve programs continually led by both practitioners and students, involving multiple assessment and feedback systems.

The 40 actions presented above represent those actions from research that programs were taking to impact student learning and leadership development in specific ways. In an article in the *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* (Eich, 2008), I identify the grounded theory of high quality leadership programs in more detail including which actions contribute to which specific student learning and leadership development outcomes. A starting point for program developers is to utilize the list of 40 actions and determine which ones are a fit for their own program and work towards implementation.

“By understanding the attributes and actions of high quality leadership programs and combining this with being alert to opportunities that usually arise through your social or professional network and experience you can create new innovative leadership educational interventions.”

For leadership education as a whole and for individual programs to grow, new activities that positively impact outcomes will need to be created and assessed. I recommend creating activities based on the fundamentals of what works for leadership learning in programs. To do this, start generating ideas inspired by specific actions of high quality leadership programs. To illustrate, I will create activity ideas from the action of “expose students to different situations, contexts, cultures, groups, and people through their stories and program activities” (Action 26).

The best new activity idea would be to bring students to a different situation, context, culture, and group, and interact for a leadership purpose directly with different people. This is not easily done though. I was able to do this myself on a recent trip to

India where I had the opportunity to speak to students at four different colleges about leadership. This is the ultimate leadership development experience because it leveraged all of those factors. Though they did not make the trip, students at a leadership program in the US can still benefit from having an episode of difference even without traveling to India due to this connection. Because of technology the relationships between people and groups can now be made.

After developing a relationship with a school leader and speaking at four colleges in India, I created a leadership metaphor project at the schools on behalf of my leadership program in the US. The students heard my own story and mango tree metaphor for leadership. This project would involve students in India

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Using Leadership Education Research and Assessment To Positively Impact Leadership Program Outcomes

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telling their own story and creating a metaphor for what becoming a successful leader means to them. I volunteered to review the submissions and sponsor awards for the top stories. This project takes the visit I made and stories I told to the next level, allowing the students to make meaning of what leadership means to them in a formal project.

Another idea for a project could happen next. It would involve connecting students from US leadership programs to these schools in India to help the students learn about American culture, language, leadership, and prepare for their careers working in customer service capacities with American organizations in India. The American students could learn about a culture different from their own as well, so the cultural and leadership teaching and learning could be reciprocal. Both could develop their communication skills through free email or voiceover internet conversations.

By making a bridge between India and the US, this is a matter of innovating and developing a new activity to implement and assess inspired by a research-based action of high quality leadership programs. By understanding the attributes and actions of high quality leadership programs and combining this with being alert to opportunities that usually arise through your social or professional network and experience you can create new innovative leadership educational interventions. ■

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Learning by Design

What Matters in Leadership Programs? Alumni Speak.

Paige Haber

College student leadership programs are becoming increasingly more developed and complex. Accordingly, the discussions around college student leadership have become more prevalent and leadership educators continue to ask how they can enhance their programs and further students' learning. If one of the ultimate purposes of higher education is to educate students and prepare them to be leaders in an increasingly complex society, we should concern ourselves with what the alumni of these programs are saying. What did they gain from their involvement in a student leadership program that helps them professionally and personally today? What were the important experiences that contributed to their learning and development? What do they wish they would have learned that could have better prepared them for life after college? These are precisely the questions asked to alumni of over ten notable curricular and co-curricular leadership programs in an effort to help guide the practice of leadership educators.

Eight themes emerged from panel-format discussions at national conventions with alumni from different established leadership programs in 2006 and 2009. Additionally, these themes are incorporated with findings from an assessment of alumni from a Leadership Minor at a single university. When asked what alumni think leadership educators today should know, this is what they said:

Reflection Matters.

The act of reflection was a key vehicle in helping students recognize and process their learning. Incorporating reflection into a program allows students the time to slow down their fast-paced

lives and actually think. Written reflections seemed to be particularly salient, but students also thought that group reflection in a discussion-format was valuable. Although reflection may seem at times tedious, it is in fact a tool that solidifies learning and helps students critically examine who they are and who they want to be.

Real World Examples and Applications Are Key.

Learning about or experiencing leadership in the "real world" was engaging for the students and helped the leadership ideas or concepts come alive. Students are better able to see and understand leadership "in action." Guest speakers, observing and shadowing leaders in their desired fields, case studies, and having mentors in the real world were key to the students' leadership development.

Experience Makes it Real.

Along with learning about and observing leadership in the real world, their own experiences in leadership roles and in groups on and off campus were very valuable. Being an active member or officer in a student organization or other student leadership role, such as being an RA, was a great learning experience for these students; they found ways to connect what they were learning to their practical experiences. Additionally, they emphasize the value of making mistakes and testing different theories in these arenas. Similarly, internships were found to be valuable venues that combine the experiential learning component with real-world application.

Feedback is Valuable.

Receiving feedback from advisors, professors, and fellow peers was an incredibly valuable experience. It allowed students to understand the value of differing

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perspectives, recognize their blind spots, and gain an honest self-understanding of their strengths and limitations. This feedback happened through conversations, written feedback, evaluations, and 360-degree feedback instruments. From this feedback students felt motivated to continually enhance their leadership effectiveness. It was also valuable learning how to provide feedback to others.

Group Experiences Enhance Learning.

Working with other students in a variety of environments was an enriching experience that allowed students to learn a great deal about themselves, others, groups, and leadership. This was particularly the case when interacting with people who are different from them. Students learned about the complexity of groups and leadership due to differences in personalities, skills, opinions, backgrounds, and leadership styles. While at times group work and group projects were frustrating, they often resulted in the most learning and greater appreciation for difference. Many of the alumni work in a variety of group environments in their careers and feel that they can effectively operate in these groups due to their positive and

“College student leadership programs are becoming increasingly more developed and complex. Accordingly, the discussions around college student leadership have become more prevalent and leadership educators continue to ask how they can enhance their programs and further students’ learning.”

negative experiences of working in groups through their leadership programs. They are better able to work with differences, value others’ perspectives, understand group dynamics, and interact effectively in group environments.

Capstone Projects Solidify Learning.

Drawing together many of the components already discussed, capstone and portfolio projects were key in solidifying students’ personal philosophy and understanding of leadership. Capstone projects also helped students continue to make sense of their learning and experiences. Allowing flexibility for students to connect this to their passions and areas of interests not only got students excited about the experience, it also helped them feel more prepared to enter the workforce.

Conflict Is A Real Issue.

When asked what leadership challenges they have faced in the real world that they did not feel as prepared for, dealing with conflict was the most salient. The students felt that their programs did not have a strong enough focus on conflict management. Their experiences of conflict in their personal and professional lives with individuals, groups, and within organizations were a challenge that they see will only become more prevalent. A greater emphasis on understanding and addressing conflict is an area of need in leadership programs.

Leadership and Organizations Are Not Always So Neat and Pretty.

Alumni felt that their understandings of leadership were in some ways flipped upside down through their experiences in a variety of organiza-

tions post-college. Once in the real world, they learned that leadership is not the pretty concept that is often wrapped up with a nice little bow that they were exposed to in the safe and welcoming college environment. They found that their coworkers and supervisors were not as open and understanding as their advisors and peers in college. They often did not feel as empowered and felt like their hands were tied to make change and operate outside of the scope of their position. More real-world experience and exposure to the messiness of leadership in our programs could help students better transition to the real world and not feel as paralyzed or discouraged.

While there were many different experiences and leadership concepts that resonated with these alumni that impact the work they do today, these eight themes emerged as most prevalent. There is much to be learned from further research on alumni of the outcomes the leadership programs. This is a start at examining how leadership programs play a role in their participants’ lives post-college. The alumni experiences included in this article suggest that leadership programs today should include intentional reflection, real-world examples and connections, structured ways to give and receive feedback, group experiences, and capstone projects. Gaining experience through active engagement in groups and taking on leadership roles should also be incorporated in a program or encouraged outside of the program. Last, programs should include a stronger focus on conflict management and preparing students for the complexity and muddiness of leadership in the real world. ■

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The Leadership Bookshelf

Deeper Learning in Leadership: Helping College Students Find the Potential Within (review)

Roberts, D.C.

San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007, \$40.00 (hardcover)

Reviewed by: Claudia Mercado, Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago

Capturing the breadth of knowledge of over thirty years of any higher education practitioner is a gem. Dennis C. Roberts, creator of various extensive leadership programs and scholar of leadership theories has masterfully shaped his own definition of leadership in *Deeper Learning in Leadership: Helping College Students Find the Potential Within*.

Utilizing a historical context in which the student affairs profession began developing leadership as a 'must have' within higher education,

Roberts informs the reader of our past and future within leadership education. He reminds us of the origins of student affairs and how it has always been the role of both students and staff to grow through deeper learning. "In relatively simple language, relying on both historical and contemporary views, and informed by our most compelling learning experiences, deeper learning might then be defined as a commitment to foster a level of learning that pushes us so deeply into our own questions that the conclusions are unforgettable," (Roberts, 2007, p. 17).

However, no leadership model stands alone and Roberts provides the reader with a brief overview of well known leadership theories and practices including, but not limited to the Leadership Challenge by Kouzes and Posner, Transforming Leadership by Burns, Servant Leadership by Greenleaf, and the Social Change Model of Leadership Development by an ensemble of educators. This overview provides any leadership educator, even the most seasoned, with a great refresher to help bring into focus Roberts own work.

After being teased with the knowledge of a something new coming throughout half the book, Roberts (2007) finally illuminates the reader by providing simplicity in his own definition of leadership as "Leadership=Conviction in Action" (p. 96). Never before have we seen such a short, simple and yet compelling definition of the word that drives our passions in leadership education. It is so brief that it bears repeating each key word yet again: leadership, conviction, and action. Even though we originally view this simplicity as too basic, Roberts provides much depth in his definition to help us understand how this defini-

tion connects multiple theories and provides the opportunity for deepened leadership. For the purpose of this review, I will share in greater depth Roberts' definition of leadership.

Roberts' (2007) new definition is better described within seven assumptions. The first assumption, *It is inclusive*, bears to mind that regardless of title or position, anyone is able to serve as leader (p. 96). This relates back to the origins of leadership theory and that only a person that holds a powerful position can be a leader. Current philosophies in the leadership paradigm state that any person, regardless of title, position or economic status, can be a leader.

His second assumption, *It involves inner and outer work*, incorporates the need for self-reflection to better serve others. This assumption can also be seen in works such as the Social Change Model and the Leadership Challenge where individuals are challenged to learn more about themselves in order to learn what their passions are and how they can better serve others. Third, *It results in action*, pushes us to remember that leadership goes beyond thinking but also includes acting on convictions. Leaders are sometimes viewed as those we see talking on television or making a speech, but the speech itself does not make the person a leader according to Roberts' definition, it is the action that follows that makes the difference.

Fourth, Roberts (2007) states "*It is based on honesty and openness*" so that one can share his or her views without worry of manipulation (p. 97). This conviction allows a person to truly stand behind his or her passions and beliefs without becoming



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Visit www.cas.edu for more information.

engrossed in fears that could cause people to be dishonest with themselves. Fifth, conviction in action fosters courage. It gives one the ability to hope, dream, and aspire to reach their beliefs. Many times I find that we live in a cynical world and that this cynicism is taught to us at an early age. But Roberts counters that belief by stating that we must have the courage to accept our beliefs and passions as a potential future.

Sixth, *it sows seeds*. A relevant example of conviction sowing seeds is our current political climate. For the first time in history, an African American is President of the United States. The conviction of Barack Obama to seek and win the presidency is providing hope to other children who could have never imagined themselves as a future President or even a future leader of people. His dedication to achieving his dream has created ripples of hope to many. Lastly, conviction in action creates connections. By sharing our beliefs with others, we grow as individuals by gaining greater insight from opposing or supporting views. Roberts (2007) states "The process of exchanging and incorporating conviction then allows the synergies of purpose to unfold and thus enables me to achieve my goals while others achieve theirs" (p. 97). These connections become a vital resource to achieving our goals and developing the support needed to continue when faced with adversity.

Despite the initial simplicity of Roberts' (2007) definition, this approach to leadership turned out to be increasingly complex and interrelated to previous leadership theories. Roberts provides a simplicity to allow for many of us critical thinkers

"In Deeper Learning in Leadership, Roberts challenges leadership educators to utilize a historical context of the creation of leadership programs and analyze the application of the various ideas to fit their campus."

a chance to agree before the complex definition allows us to disagree. Roberts then moves us beyond his definition of leadership into learning how college students can deepen their leadership learning. He helps us understand that conviction has to be discovered through the human experience (p. 165). Roberts challenges us to consider causes that are worthy through experiencing the Presence model. As we begin to experience life, we realize areas that become more and more passionate to us. We then deepen our commitments and our path becomes clearer when this occurs (p. 166). Presence then enables us to discover our reason for being, also known as our vocation. Roberts then utilizes flow to help us remain constant with our vision (p. 195). Flow allows the students to provide the level of attention needed to achieve peak performance. When presence and flow are combined with oscillation, the process of moving back and forth between acting and reflecting, students will be able to create a deepened understanding of their purpose (p. 198). Students who are provided opportunities to move through presence, flow and oscillation are more likely to deepen their understanding of leadership.

In *Deeper Learning in Leadership*, Roberts challenges leadership educators to utilize a historical context of the creation of leadership programs and analyze the application of the various ideas to fit their campus. He provides us with a refreshing definition of leadership that encompasses his vast experiences as a leadership educator and thus provides us with relevant and useful resources to provide a climate which supports leadership education. Roberts thoughtfully reminds us to include all constituents such as stu-

dents, faculty and staff in order to create collaborative efforts. Only through these collaborative efforts, knowledge of the various leadership theories, campus leadership programs, and commitment from the institution, can we develop a climate of deeper learning in the canon of leadership and thanks to Roberts, leadership educators now have another helpful resource in enhancing our own passion, leadership.

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MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL STUDY OF LEADERSHIP

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—SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE—

Scholarship and Research Updates

Utilizing Research and Resources to Structure Leadership Programs

Justin Fincher and Susan R. Komives

Over the last few decades, there has been a measurable expansion of research and scholarship focused on leadership outcomes for college students (Dugan & Komives, 2007). In the last ten years, researchers like Julie Owen (2008) and Darin Eich (2008), authors of in this issue, have begun to evaluate campus leadership programs and how those program's missions, theoretical frameworks, and resources influence leadership outcomes (Reinelt, Sullivan, & Foster, 2003). Explaining the professionalization of the leadership educator role, Dugan and Komives note that "the assessment of leadership outcomes followed the proliferation of programs and integration of theoretical influences. Building on a growing body of generic leadership research, scholars became interested in student leadership outcomes." (p. 7). This article highlights useful resources across the landscape of leadership studies that prove to be valuable for college leadership educators.

As the body of research regarding leadership development for college students grows, so do the resources available for practitioners to effectively evaluate campus programs against desired leadership outcomes. Several foundations and organizations are intently focused on advancing knowledge and improving the practice of leadership educators on college campuses, including the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2009), W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, the Center for Creative Leadership, and various professional associations including the Association of Leadership Educators and leadership interest groups in ACPA: College Student Educators International, the International Leadership Association, and NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education among others.

Building on the work from *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA/ACPA, 2004; download the pdf from either association), the 2003 CAS learning outcomes were re-organized into a taxonomy representing six domains of learning and development. All of these domains have implications for student leadership outcomes: knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application; cognitive complexity; intrapersonal development; interpersonal competence (including outcomes on meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, and effective leadership); humanitarianism and civic engagement (including understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, social responsibility, global perspective, and sense of civic responsibility); and practical competence (CAS, 2009; see also www.cas.edu). A method for mapping leadership learning outcomes was featured in *Learning Reconsidered 2* (Komives & Schoper, 2006).

Program Design Resources

Programs should be designed to feature experiences that matter in developing leadership outcomes. The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, the largest national study of college student leadership outcomes, has documented the importance of college experiences on leadership outcomes (Dugan & Komives, 2007). The 2006 data highlighted four key factors that mattered when measuring change in leadership outcomes: (1) frequency of discussions about socio-cultural issues; (2) mentoring from faculty, student affairs professionals, employers or peers; (3) campus involvement; and, (4) community service. These experiences, whether situated within a leadership program or other campus opportunity, prove to be a positive experience that enhances leadership development. Therefore, leadership pro-

grams that do integrate these types of experiences within their programs would likely have an impact on the development of students' leadership development.

Zimmerman-Oster and Burkhardt's (1999a) *Leadership in the Making: Impact and Insights from Leadership Development Programs in U.S. Colleges and Universities* captured the trends and exemplary leadership programs occurring across the country in the 1990s. At that time they reported a wide range of common activities including seminars and workshops, mentors, guest speakers, and community service involvement (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999b). This study was one of the first to examine structural program elements that contribute to successful outcomes finding that "hallmarks center on issues of the context of the program, program philosophies, program sustainability, and common practices" (p. 59).

Since then, researchers and authors have continued to evaluate successful structures and assessment strategies for campus leadership development. *The Handbook for Student Leadership Programs*, published by the NCLP in 2006, offers chapters that focus on elements of campus leadership programs, teaching and developing leadership, and how to assess and evaluate those programs. Of particular note, Page and Owen's (2006) chapter identifies existing literature and considerations when developing an assessment strategy for a leadership program and Haber's (2006) chapter examines structural elements of leadership programs. Similarly published in 2007, *The Handbook of Leadership Development Evaluation* (Hannum, Martineau, & Reinelt) also compiles tools and models to evaluate leadership programs' effectiveness. Owen's (2008) research with the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership- Institutional Survey examines numerous factors that promote leadership outcomes (See her article in this issue).

The CAS standards provide a framework for program assessment. In 2008, CAS revised the general standards used in each area standard. The 14 elements essential to all standards including the Student

Leadership Programs Standard include (1) mission, (2) program, (3) leadership, (4) human resources, (5) ethics, (6) legal responsibilities, (7) equity and access, (8) diversity, (9) organization and management, (10) campus and external relations, (11) financial resources, (12) technology, (13) facilities and equipment, and (14) assessment and evaluation. The newly revised CAS standard is available at www.nclp.umd.edu or in the 2009 *CAS Book of Standards*. For more information on CAS and the Self-Assessment Guide for this Student Leadership Programs Standard, go to www.cas.edu.

There are also several web sites filled with helpful resources. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation (www.wkcf.org) provides a broad range of information available for download on their site. With a focus on leadership for community change, the foundation offers numerous downloadable documents that highlight promising programs and the value of collective leadership in a complex society. The Center for Creative Leadership (www.ccl.org) is an international center focused on solving leadership challenges for individuals and organizations. Their free newsletters and publications emphasize innovative applications of leadership in a variety of settings.

Programmatic Assessment Resources

Since most college mission statements address the importance of leadership development as an outcome (Boatman, 1999; Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt & Arensdorf, 2006), there is a clear need to evaluate effectively how leadership outcomes are changing as a result of specific campus programs and experiences. Using appropriate resources and assessment strategies, leadership educators can improve their practice and, in turn, positively influence students' leadership development during college. Readers will want to explore the vast assessment resources site at North Carolina State University <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm>. Recent handbooks on assessment have invaluable information on good practices in assessment and program evaluation design. See Banta, Jones, and Black, (2009), Bresciani (2006,

In Press), Bresciani, Zelna, and Anderson (2004), Maki (2004), Schuh & Associates (2009), Suskie (2009), Hannum, Martineau, and Reinelt (2007) and the classic by Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer (1994).

NCLP also has several useful resources on quality program design and assessment in past issues of *Concepts & Connections*. In a 2003 issue of *Concepts & Connections*, Zimmerman-Oster outlines ten strategies for assessing leadership programs. Also, check out these theme issues: Developing a Leadership Program (5:2), Leadership Assessment (9:1), Longitudinal Studies of Leadership Outcomes (11:3), Learning Outcomes for Leadership (12:3), and all four issues of Vol. 15 that report on findings from the Multi-institutional Study of Leadership (MSL-IS). These are available on the NCLP web site for free download for members or for purchase by non-members.

Summary and Future Directions

With the professionalization of leadership educators on college campuses, greater resources and broader scholarship are needed to provide current, useful information that can inform practice. Future research should explore what leadership program factors facilitate the development of leadership in underrepresented groups of students. Resources that highlight exemplary targeted leadership programs (e.g., Women's leadership, LGBT leadership...) would be useful to practitioners establishing new programs for their campus's unique student populations. Research that investigates the relationship between curricular and co-curricular leadership experiences and how the two collectively influence the development of leadership outcomes would be a powerful next step in understanding the student's development during college. Finally, additional research (through MSL-IS and other venues) will develop taxonomies of program elements (e.g. structure, budget, staffing) that create optimum conditions for leadership outcomes.

Leadership educators have a vast array of resources available to them as they start new programs, restructure current programs, or evaluate

and assess what they should do next. A growing number of professional organizations offer useful tools and opportunities to network with other leadership educators as a way to inform better practice. Institutions that take advantage of these resources can create sustainable leadership programs that positively influence leadership outcomes for their students. Ultimately, highly effective leadership programs benefit the students who participate and the broader society in which they interact. ■

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