Assessing the Benefits of Undergraduate Leadership

Evidence from the SERU Survey

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June Nobbe
maximizer relator learner individualization connectedness

Krista Soria
intellection input ideation learner achiever
Who participates in co-curricular leadership positions?

How is leadership in co-curricular activities associated with students’ development?

How is participation in curricular leadership associated with students’ development?
The Role of Student Leadership Development in Public Research Universities
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AT LARGE RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

- Decentralized culture
- Large class sizes
- Competing demands
  - Undergrad v. Grad/Professional
  - Support for undergraduate research
  - Less support/understanding of role of co-curricular experiences
Civic Mission

Higher Education Organization Agendas

Crucible Report
ANECDOOTAL BENEFITS

Development of civic knowledge, skills, attitudes

Development of skills employers seek

Contribution to institutional outcomes

Overall enhancement of the student experience
MSL
CIRP Surveys
NSSE
INSTITUTION-SPECIFIC SURVEYS
What are some of the challenges you face in regard to leadership development education on your campuses?

Do you have support from academic areas? If so, what areas?

Who are your advocates? Critics?
What are employers seeking?

- Critical thinking/analytical reasoning
- Knowledge/skills applied to real-world settings
- Ability to analyze/solve complex problems
- Connect choices and actions to ethical decisions
- Teamwork skills/ability to collaborate
- Ability to innovate and be creative
Undergraduate Leadership Positions

Who Participates?
SERU Survey

6 large, public research universities

33% response rate in 2012

n = 39,777

20% randomly assigned to CE module (n = 8,601)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>5965</td>
<td>69.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>60.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>First-Generation</td>
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<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working-Class</td>
<td>1133</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Indicate the way in which you have been involved in the following activities or organizations this academic year. (participant, officer/leader, neither)
27.9% of students indicated serving as a leader in at least one organization

n = 1695
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Category</th>
<th>n</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>449</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek fraternity/sorority</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>6.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>4.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governing bodies</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus sports clubs</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing group</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor society</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus varsity team</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do We Observe Differences in Participation Between Groups?
GENDER

28.3%  Males
27.6%  Females

students indicated serving as a leader in at least one club or organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing bodies</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports clubs</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL CLASS

24.0% Low-Income
22.6% Working-Class
26.0% Middle-Class
32.9% Upper-Middle
37.9% Wealthy

students indicated serving as a leader in at least one organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Middle/Upper Class</th>
<th>Lower/Working Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports clubs</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19.8% First-Generation
30.4% Non-First-Generation

students indicated serving as a leader in at least one organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-First-Generation</th>
<th>First-Generation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
30.3% Students of Color
27.5% White Students

students indicated serving as a leader in at least one organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE/ETHNICITY</th>
<th>White Students</th>
<th>Students of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What stood out to you in those findings?

What patterns do you see on your campus?

What strategies are you using to encourage leadership participation from underrepresented groups on your campus?
How is Leadership in Co-curricular Activities Associated with Students’ Development?
PROCEDURES

Factor analysis

t-tests

Regressions
Factors

1. Academic & Communication Skills $\alpha = .81$
2. Diversity & Self-Awareness $\alpha = .83$
3. Research Skills $\alpha = .78$
4. Leadership & Interpersonal Skills $\alpha = .77$

...17 survey items
• Academic & Communication Skills
  • Ability to be clear and effective in writing
  • Ability to read and comprehend academic material
  • Analytical and critical thinking skills
  • Understanding of a specific field of study
  • Ability to speak clearly and effectively in English

• Leadership and Interpersonal Skills
  • Ability to lead
  • Ability to prepare and make a presentation
  • Interpersonal (social) skills
- Research Skills
  - Library research skills
  - Internet skills
  - Computer skills
  - Other research skills

- Diversity and Self-Awareness
  - Ability to appreciate cultural/global diversity
  - Understanding the importance of personal social responsibility
  - Self-awareness and understanding
  - Ability to appreciate, tolerate, and understand racial/ethnic diversity
Scholarship $\alpha = .85$:
Frequency with which students
- Judge the value of information, ideas, conclusions…based on the soundness of sources, methods, and reasoning
- Examined how others gathered and interpreted data and assessed the soundness of their conclusions
- Incorporated ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments
- Reconsidered their own position on a topic after assessing the arguments of others
- Used facts/examples to support viewpoints
• Gender
• Race/Ethnicity
• Level
• Social Class
• Academic Major
• GPA

• Student’s evaluation of their abilities when they arrived on campus
• Scholarship
Serving as a leader in a student organization at least once
RESULTS
Multi-institutional
Students who participated in positional leadership positions reported stronger abilities* in all 4 factors

*these differences were statistically significant
• Leadership & Interpersonal Skills: $d = .50$
• Academic & Communication Skills: $d = .22$
• Research Skills: $d = .14$
• Diversity & Self-Awareness Skills: $d = .07$
Controlling for demographics, college experiences, and students’ skills when they started college, serving as a leader in a student organization was positively associated with all four outcomes:

- Academic & Communication Skills
- Research Skills
- Diversity & Self-awareness Skills
- Leadership & Interpersonal Skills
How is Participation in **Curricular Leadership** Associated with **Students’ Development**?
UM Leadership Minor Program

Partnership with student affairs & academic affairs

Program development process - getting faculty buy-in

Social Change Model is theoretical framework
Leadership

Intercultural/global/international

Public engagement

Domestic diversity
Pedagogy
(based on Heifetz “Case in Point”)

**Intentional** class topic/theme

**Context** the classroom and student experiences are the laboratory to examine leadership

**Emergent** interplay between the topic and what emerges as the class progresses
Want to learn more about this approach?

Attend the 2013 “Leadership Can Be Taught” symposium (featuring the University of San Diego)

June 26-28, Minneapolis, MN

http://lcbtsymposium.com/
Leadership Minor RESULTS
Students who enrolled in a Leadership Minor course reported **greater growth** in all 4 factors

*these differences were statistically significant

Note: 291 LM students compared with 7,100 UMNTC students
EFFECT SIZES

- Leadership & Interpersonal Skills: $d = 0.43$
- Diversity & Self-Awareness Skills: $d = 0.39$
- Academic & Communication Skills: $d = 0.23$
- Research Skills: $d = 0.21$
Controlling for demographics, college experiences, and students’ skills when they started college, enrollment in a leadership minor class was positively associated with three outcomes:

- Academic & Communication Skills
- Research Skills
- Diversity & Self-awareness Skills
- Leadership & Interpersonal Skills

Note: factors and models changed slightly from full multi-institutional sample
What are some additional developmental areas in which you believe students in co-curricular or curricular leadership programs might experience significant gains?
Create a committee with key stakeholders and individuals with research/assessment expertise

Connect to institutional outcomes or language in mission statements, strategic plans, President/Provost annual reports
Establish relationships with your Office of Institutional Research or research analysts in individual colleges.

Meet with faculty who teach program evaluation and assessment—possible class projects or independent study.
QUESTIONS