First Year Students and Leadership Development

Anne McDaniel, PhD      Benjamin D. Andrews, MA
Center for the Study of Student Life
Why Leadership?

“Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth.”

- Burns (1978)

“Higher education plays a major part in shaping the quality of leadership in modern American society.”

- Astin & Astin (2000)
Leadership is a process, not a position
Social Change Model

- Group Values
- Collaboration, Common Purpose, Controversy with Civility
- Consciousness of Self, Congruence, Commitment
- Citizenship
- Societal / Community Values
- Individual Values

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Conceptual Framework

Adapted version of Astin’s (1993) “input-environment-outcome” (I-E-O) model
Leadership Development

Questions we will answer:

1. What leadership experiences do first year students bring to Ohio State?
2. How are first year students getting involved in leadership opportunities?
3. How do first year students score on leadership scales?
Data & Methods
Methods

Web-based survey administered during February & March 2015

Students asked questions on values, beliefs and pre-college and college experiences
Sample

Random Sample:

- Emailed 4,000 Ohio State undergraduate students
- 1,224 responded for a 30.6% response rate
- 214 first year students
- 991 second year or higher students
Measures

Key Scales from the MSL

- The *6* C’s
- Leadership Capacity
- Leadership Efficacy
- Social Change Behaviors
- Social Perspective Taking & Socio-Cultural Conversations
- Resiliency
- Hope
Findings
What leadership experiences do Ohio State students bring?
Prior to Coming to College...

93.5% of first year students have performed community service.

79.4% of first year students participated in training or education that developed their leadership skills.
Prior to Coming to College...

- 80.4% participated in community or work-related organizations
- 96.0% participated in student clubs and organizations
- 60.8% took leadership positions in community or work-related organizations
- 87.1% took leadership positions in student clubs and organizations
Prior to Coming to College...

48.7% of first year students have worked with others for change to address societal problems.

51.3% of first year students have not worked with others for change to address societal problems.
How are first year students getting involved?
“Since starting college, how often have you…”
“...been an involved member in college organizations?”**

*First Year Students*

*All Other Students*

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
“…held a leadership position in a college organization?”***

* *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
“…been an involved member in an off-campus community or work-based organization?”***

*Never*  
First Year Students: 60%  
All Other Students: 60%

*Once*  
First Year Students: 10%  
All Other Students: 10%

*Sometimes*  
First Year Students: 20%  
All Other Students: 10%

*Many Times*  
First Year Students: 30%  
All Other Students: 5%

*Much of the Time*  
First Year Students: 10%  
All Other Students: 10%

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
“…held a leadership position in an off-campus community or work-based organization?”**
How do first year students score on leadership scales?
Leadership Scale Comparison

Scales range from 1-5

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Leadership Scale Comparison

- Leadership Efficacy: 2.97 (First Year Students) vs. 3.18 (All Other Students)
- Complex Cognitive Skills: 2.89 (First Year Students) vs. 3.21 (All Other Students)

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 Scales range from 1-4
Hope Scale Comparison

First Year Students

All Other Students

*Hope Scale: Agency*
- First Year: 6.42
- All Other Students: 6.58

*Hope Scale: Pathways**
- First Year: 6.30
- All Other Students: 6.50

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001* Scales range from 1-8
Social Interaction Comparison

- Social Change Behaviors***: 0.77 (First Year Students) vs. 1.00 (All Other Students)
- Socio-Cultural Conversations: 1.65 (First Year Students) vs. 1.59 (All Other Students)

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Scales range from 0-3
Conclusion
Leadership Development

Questions we will answer:

1. What leadership experiences do first year students bring to Ohio State?
2. How are first year students getting involved in leadership opportunities?
3. How do first year students score on leadership scales?
Leadership Development

1. What leadership experiences do first year students bring to Ohio State? Most have done community service, joined student orgs

2. How are first year students getting involved in leadership opportunities? Similar, but less than other students

3. How do first year students score on leadership scales? Lower, except for citizenship and social perspective taking
How to support leadership development
Leadership Development

How to Support Leadership Development

• Socio-cultural conversations with peers
• Get involved in 1 organization
• Attend 1 leadership program
• Discourage too much breadth in involvement
• Develop mentoring relationships

(Dugan & Correia, 2014)
Leadership Development

How to Support Leadership Development

• Diffuse leadership across campus
• Focus on members, not just “leaders”
• Design distinct programs for specific groups
• Build bridges outside of campus

(Dugan & Correia, 2014)
Discussion

• What messages are we giving students about leadership?
• What opportunities for leadership development are available to first year students? Are they available to all students?
• How can we connect students with the broader community?