

# 2018 MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL STUDY OF LEADERSHIP

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL)?

- An international research program focused on understanding the influences of higher education in shaping socially responsible leadership capacity and other leadership-related outcomes.
- MSL triennial survey provides a psychometrically validated way to measure how student educational experiences influence leadership outcomes. In 2018, seventy-two institutions administered the survey.
- Administered to undergraduate students at UW–Madison in 2009, 2015 and in 2018. Doctor of Pharmacy students also participated in 2018.

### What was the purpose of the study?

- To understand which student experiences are associated with leadership development.
- To understand whether students have equitable access to these experiences.

### Who helped administer the survey and develop the full report?

- A group of campus stakeholders made up of representatives from the following departments and schools and colleges: Center for Leadership & Involvement, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Letters & Science, Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement (DDEEA), School of Pharmacy, Student Affairs, Wisconsin School of Business and Wisconsin Union.
- Dr. Greg Harrington, Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Pieper Foundation Servant Leadership Chair and Mark Kueppers, Assistant Dean/Director, Center for Leadership & Involvement (CfLI) served as Co-Principal Investigators of the study.

### Why is it important for UW-Students to develop their leadership skills?

- [National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\) Job Outlook Survey](#) consistently lists leadership as one of the highest career readiness competencies (2017, 2018 and 2019).
- Leadership skills are noted as important outcomes of a college education in [Association of American Colleges & Universities \(AAC&U\) Essential Learning Outcomes](#) and the [Wisconsin Experience](#) Core Concepts.

### Who took the survey?

- In February and March 2018, 3,071 undergraduate and 171 pharmacy professional students completed the MSL survey. Survey invitations were sent in February 2018 to 13,555 students; 4,224 students started the survey (32%) and 3,242 students completed the survey (24%).
- Demographic characteristics of students who completed the survey were generally similar to the eligible UW–Madison student population.

### How do UW students fare in comparison to students at other institutions?

- UW students score as high or higher on leadership outcome attainment than students at our peer institutions.
- UW students' scores have stayed consistent over time.

### What leadership outcomes were assessed?

- Leadership capacity\* (the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with socially responsible leadership)
- Leadership efficacy (internal belief about ability to lead)
- Leadership behaviors (enactment of leadership capacity)
- Complex cognitive skills
- Developmental outcomes (related to resilience, racial identity and spiritual development)
- Sense of belonging (on campus)

*\*Scales based on the Social Change Model of Leadership*

### Which student experiences are associated with leadership outcomes?

- Socio-cultural discussions (outside of class)
- Community service
- Advocacy, service and student governance group participation
- Mentoring



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### Any significant demographic differences seen in students?

- No significant differences were seen in terms of race, gender, socio-economic status or school/college affiliation.
- Transfer students had less participation in mentoring, organizations and student groups.
- Students with lower GPAs had less participation in community service, organizations, student groups and high impact learning experiences.
- Domestic students scored higher on leadership outcome attainment than international students.

	# of student participants	% of participating students
<b>Students of Color</b>	840	26
<b>International Students</b>	199	6
<b>Women</b>	2,067	64
<b>Men</b>	1,039	35
<b>Transgender/Non-Binary</b>	21	1

## KEY FINDINGS

### The MSL survey revealed the following key findings:

1. UW–Madison students scored as high or higher on leadership outcomes as students at other institutions.
2. Leadership outcome scores for UW–Madison students have been stable over time.
3. UW–Madison School/College differences in leadership outcome scores were infrequent.
4. Leadership outcome scores were not consistently associated with demographics except for international status and GPA.
5. Socio-Cultural Discussions, Social Change Behaviors, Organizations and Mentoring some college experiences were strongly associated with leadership outcome scores.
6. Participation in those experiences strongly associated with leadership outcome scores (Key Finding 5) was not consistently associated with student demographics.
7. Participation in credentialed Leadership Training activities was only modestly associated with leadership outcomes.
8. Working for pay, either on or off campus, and most high-impact learning experiences were not strongly associated with leadership outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### These findings led to the following recommendations:

1. Identify aspirational institutional benchmarks for student leadership outcomes.
2. Ensure curricular and co-curricular leadership education programs are grounded in theoretical and conceptual leadership models.
3. Develop and/or connect complementary curricular and co-curricular leadership education programs.
4. Incorporate experiences that are strongly associated with attainment of leadership outcomes (Key Finding 5) into high impact learning experiences and leadership programs.
5. Establish infrastructure that supports educators in effectively integrating evidence-based leadership education interventions.
6. Engage in on-going leadership research and assessment.
7. Further assess and evaluate international students' concept of leadership, its value, and incentives and barriers to participation and outcome attainment.

## WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- The MSL Survey data will be shared with a wide variety of audiences throughout UW's campus in order to create partnerships in developing and strengthening educational practices that yield leadership outcome attainment.
- The MSL survey is planned to reoccur in 2021. On-going assessment efforts provide an opportunity for coordinated, intentional interventions to improve leadership education for all students.

*To become involved in these intentional educational efforts or the next iteration of the MSL Survey, please visit: [leadership.wisc.edu/research](http://leadership.wisc.edu/research) or contact Mark Kueppers, [mark.kueppers@wisc.edu](mailto:mark.kueppers@wisc.edu).*

