Assistant Deans for Student Affairs

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http://www.fullerton.edu/assistantdeans/

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DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:
The Assistant Deans for Student Affairs assist students in their matriculation at the university by providing an environment conducive to academic and personal growth. The Assistant Deans serve a vital role representing the division of Student Affairs within the academic colleges. Actively working with students, faculty and staff, the Assistant Deans integrate the holistic developmental philosophy of student affairs within the academic setting and engage the entire university community in academic and co-curricular learning.

PROGRAM/SERVICE OVERVIEW:
College Interclub Council (ICC) Leadership Development
Leadership Development was selected from the five domains developed by the Student Affairs Assessment Committee on campus. As a team, we identified student leaders who are active participants in co-curricular learning within each college. Using a model from the University of Minnesota, the assessment project was designed to determine to what extent the student leader demonstrates skills/competencies in seven areas in his/her leadership role/experience.

TYPE OF ASSESSMENT:
☐ External Reports
☐ Needs Assessment
☐ Program Evaluation
☒ Student Learning Outcomes
☐ Student Satisfaction Assessment
☐ Student Success
☐ Utilization Data

LEARNING DOMAIN:
Leadership Development

LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Understand and articulate their leadership style, and how to maximize their strengths and address areas for improvement.
2. Demonstrate the ability to facilitate effective group development and collaboration with others.
3. Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and effective, appropriate use of resources.

PROJECT SAMPLE:
36 respondents to pre-test
24 respondents to post-test

DATA COLLECTION TIMEFRAME:
Pre-test data collected September, 2012
Post-test data collected June, 2013

DATA COLLECTION METHODS:
Online survey administered through StudentVoice.

LIMITATIONS
There were two limitations to this project: 1) some student leaders were not able to participate in all interventions; and 2) student leader attrition.
SUMMARY OF RESULTS:
The students who participated in the program were initially motivated to become involved in the ICC’s particularly for leadership and professional development. The results of the pre-test showed that they already felt at least moderately competent in all seven leadership competencies, with a few exceptions. In fact, when asked to define each of the leadership competencies at pre-test, most of the students gave wonderful definitions and examples for each. Nevertheless, the post-test results confirmed that participation in the ICC and the program interventions improved their ability to articulate their leadership style and learn how to maximize their strengths and address areas for improvement. While many improvements were noted, specifically with the Responsibility and Accountability and Tolerance of Ambiguity competencies, some areas showed no significant changes. Leadership competencies that had little change in proficiency may represent a more realistic self-evaluation of leadership skills on the student’s part. Also noteworthy, students responded very positively at the pre-test and equally high at the post-test that being involved with the ICC contributed to their educational experience by helping to define their values and apply them in all situations. Over 85% of the students believe that their involvement with the ICC opened doors for other opportunities on campus and beyond, as the following statements show: “It created connections with faculty and staff that I would not have made otherwise;” and “The other members of my council helped me find other clubs to get involved with.” Finally, and most importantly, the new skills students reported gaining as a result of their participation in this program very closely reflect the learning outcomes associated with the leadership development learning domain.

KEY FINDINGS

- Leadership development and professional development were the top 2 reasons students were initially motivated to get involved in the ICC’s (approximately 33% and 28% respectively).
- Student leader’s level of competence related to Responsibility and Accountability increased overall from pre-test to post-test:
  - Nearly 31% increase in ability to balance responsibilities;
  - Twenty-three percent more competent regarding making appropriate decision to handle various responsibilities;
  - Fifteen percent increase regarding accepting consequences of actions taken; and
  - Nearly 10% improvement regarding following through on commitments.
- Student leader’s level of competence related to Independence and Interdependence showed no significant changes from pre-test to post-test, with the exception of an 18% increase in competency taking initiative in obtaining skills necessary for the position.
- Student leader’s level of competence related to Goal Orientation increased overall from pre-test to post-test:
  - Sixteen percent related to sustaining a motivational level to accomplish goals;
  - Increase of 25% related to prioritizing responsibilities;
  - Nearly 40% increase related to not allowing distractions to prevent timely completion of work.
- Student leader’s level of competence related to Self Confidence and Humility showed significant increases in the following areas:
  - Nearly 15% increase in displaying poise and self assurance without seeming egotistical;
• Over 10% increase in expecting the best from self and others.

• Student leader’s level of competence in relation to Resilience increased nearly 22%, as related to seeking to understand the cause of a negative experience and learn how to prevent it from recurring and over 25% as related to recovering quickly from a challenging experience and continuing to work successfully.

• Student leader’s level of competence related to Appreciation of Differences did not show significant changes, with the exception of a 14% increase in seeking out others with different backgrounds/perspectives in decision making process.

• Student leader’s level of competence in relation to Tolerance of Ambiguity increased overall, with the largest improvement at 12% regarding the ability to make a decision when policy and guidelines do not exist.

• Student leaders felt significantly more competent from pre-test to post-test regarding interpreting fiscal policies and procedures, managing budgets for an organization, identifying the strengths of their leadership abilities and identifying areas of their leadership abilities where improvement is needed.

• Student leaders were asked to share two new skills they had learned or improved from their participation in the ICC. Responses to this question varied, but the most common responses included: improved communication skills, improved self-awareness, ability to lead a group, and more effective time management skills.

• After one year of participating in the leadership development program, students reported that they were 13% more capable of defining their values and applying them in various situations.

• Approximately 20% of the participants were returning student leaders. When asked if their leadership skills have changed as a result of their involvement with the ICC, all reported that they believe their skills have improved. One student reported, “I think I have become more reflective and therefore more refined as a leader.”

• Half of the students agreed that their ICC leadership position enhanced their career readiness (i.e.: career goals, confidence level regarding work, continuing education, etc.).
APPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS:

1. The data from this assessment project will be used to develop richer leadership development training during the academic year, including improvements to the Student Leader Retreat, the Leadership Competency podcasts and individual advisor-to-student trainings. This data will also be used to improve the assessment tools that will be used for the 2013-2014 Leadership Development project.

2. The data from the 2012-2013 assessment project was very similar to the 2011-2012 assessment project data. Most interesting was the fact that students rate themselves at least “moderately competent” to “very competent” on the pre-test in most of the leadership competencies. However, after a year of leadership development training and reflection most students more accurately express their skills in each leadership competency. We also added more open-ended questions to this year’s assessment survey in order to collect more self-reported data in relation to student learning and academic and personal success.

3. Student feedback regarding their experience in their leadership role has been positive and indirectly supports the idea that co-curricular activities can lead to student success (in the general and specific terms). Additional assessment tools and/or activities will be considered for the 2013-2014 project so that a direct link to student success can be evaluated.

Pictured: Student Leader participants and Advisors from the 2012-2013 College Interclub Council Leadership Development assessment project.