The Undergraduate Leadership Mosaic:
A Challenge of Shared Purpose

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Abstract

Leadership educators must decide upon the theoretical paradigms and curricular approaches in which to locate their leadership programs and inform their practice. This application article features the mosaic approach adopted by Bradley University which places many and divergent pieces together to allow students to experience different conceptual frames and curricular or co-curricular elements. While this approach provides varied leadership opportunities for students to mix and match, the authors acknowledge the critical challenge which is to confirm whether they are indeed achieving a shared purpose.

Introduction

The growth in university leadership education programs suggests that educating and developing leaders has become an important postsecondary outcome. However, where those leadership development programs belong within the

university is often at issue. In a study of leadership degree programs Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt, & Arensdorf (2006) found "very little consistency in which academic department housed the leadership major" (p. 9) and great diversity in the ultimate careers of the program's graduates. Pennington (2005) noted that leadership coursework may be evident across many courses and majors, and throughout these divisions some territorialism can emerge. This presents a challenge to leadership educators to integrate the varied disciplines, perspectives, and literature into a holistic curriculum with a shared purpose.

In this article we explore how a metaphorical mosaic illustrates the conceptual framework, curricular and co-curricular elements, and desired outcomes of an undergraduate leadership development program. At Bradley University we have assembled the components of leadership on campus over time to create this mosaic. The mosaic metaphor is used because "it is impossible to see and therefore appreciate the mosaic…by looking at a single tile. In a similar way, you will not come to understand leadership by reading the work of a single author, or by becoming familiar with a single concept" (Pierce & Newstrom, 2008, p. xi). Leadership education must also look beyond a single theory, discipline, or instructional hierarchy to effectively develop student leaders.

The design process for leadership development at Bradley University might be likened to the way an artist creates a mosaic. The term mosaic refers to both the product and the process of purposefully placing small pieces into stone or mortar to create an overall design (Berube, et al., 2006, p. 1146). Many of the pieces in leadership development at Bradley had been in place for a long time. New leadership initiatives added pieces of different color (or perspective) to the picture ideally to enrich the overall design.

To reconcile the varied pieces into a coherent and collective vision, we needed to align with the appropriate leadership definition – one that was more distributed. Gronn (2002) described distributed leadership as a social form of the division of labor, in which leaders are designated not by position, but by influence within the team and the organization. Such an approach would endorse leadership as collective action of many, rather than the single actions of one identified leader (Gronn, 2002; Yukl, 1999). This definition seemed relevant to the division of leadership education across campus.

To approach a shared purpose within this distributed mosaic approach required an understanding of the framework that guides leadership education, as well as the varied elements that leadership training, education, and development contain. Because leadership programming is apparent in many different areas on the Bradley campus, we felt we needed to first categorize them by conceptual framework and then inventory both the academic and co-curricular elements. We also wanted to determine what the intended outcomes are to see if our varied

pieces approach a shared purpose, or serve multiple or even conflicting purposes. In this way we could see the overall picture and ascertain what was missing to complete our design. We began by asking three fundamental questions:

- What are the guiding conceptual frames?
- What are the prioritized curricular or co-curricular elements?
- What are the desired outcomes?

Conceptual Frames

The broader conceptual frames that guide the development of leadership programs and curricula comprise many distinctions. For example, the leadership literature differentiated between leadership education, training, and development, noting that each includes distinctive activities and commands distinctive outcomes (Stech, 2008). While the desired outcome for leadership education is to cognitively differentiate theories and models, the desired outcome for training is skill proficiency. Leadership development encompasses learning not only about oneself, but also how one is experienced by others. Ideally, the ultimate leadership program would encompass each of these outcomes: education, training, and development (Stech, 2008).

In his description of conceptual context, Day (2001) referred to the distinction between leader development, an individual and human capital-focused effort, and leadership development, a collective, social capital-focused effort. Roberts (2003) likewise called for leadership programs to move from leader development to leadership development. He further championed the accessibility of leadership development for all students as a way to achieve a "culture of shared learning" (p. 6). Astin and Astin (2000) acknowledged that the organizational hierarchy of academe can make such a collaborative culture difficult; however, they asserted that students can be the link between various stakeholder groups involved in leadership on the campus.

Curricular and Co-Curricular Elements

Leadership educators represent a variety of disciplines and worldviews that inform both their co-curricular development efforts and instructional approaches. Huber (2002) suggested that "the focus of each educator's work draws on his or her personal beliefs and assumptions about leadership, as well as about education" (p. 25). Based upon their varied backgrounds and philosophies, leadership educators have advocated for curricular linkages, cultural and international opportunities, and specific instructional practices.

Colvin (2003) described the renewed interest among scholars to reactivate the goal for graduates in the liberal studies to become informed and active citizens,

which provides a niche for leadership studies to serve "as a complementary and integrating discipline in undergraduate liberal education curricula" (p. 35). Similarly, Ciulla (2008) characterized leadership as "a human phenomenon that is embedded in culture, which includes art, literature, religion, philosophy, language, history" (p. 393). Whether in research or practice, Ciulla recommended that scholars should be "bringing humanities research into leadership studies" (p. 395).

Kelling and Hoover (2005) compared student co-curricular leadership programs in the United States and the Ukraine. Their research revealed cultural differences in leadership outcomes specifically, evidence of collectivist student leadership development in the Ukraine contrasted with individual student leadership development outcomes in the United States. Because learning and understanding cultural differences is so vital, Robinson (2005) endorsed international education opportunities as essential to leadership studies degree programs as a way to foster students' "worldmindedness" (pp. 78-88).

The Bradley University Mosaic

To build the leadership mosaic, leadership educators at Bradley University began the process at the classroom level and introduced an activity or project. If the activity elicits student interest and promotes student learning, that project may expand to become a topics class, or an area of focus for students involved in Student Affairs' Center for Student Leadership. Finally, that topic can be aligned with the initiatives of the Institute for Public Leadership, leading to an expanded role and expanded worldview for our students.

Bradley University developed the Minor in Leadership Studies in fall 2004. However, the university's commitment to effective student leadership existed long before. In 1996, Bradley created the Lewis J. Burger Center for Student Leadership (LJB Center), named after the long time Board of Trustees member and chair. Housed in Student Affairs, the LJB Center offers a selective, four-year leadership and service Fellows program, a LiNCS (Leaders Instilling kNowledge through Cooperative Service) capstone program for Seniors, a TEAM Bradley leadership retreat weekend, and a multifaceted multi-semester BUILD leadership development program (Bradley University, 2007, 2009). Most recently, a new "Leadership Lifestyles" floor in the residence halls brings leadership development home, literally (Bradley University "Leadership Lifestyle Floor", n.d.). Table 1 includes the academic and co-curricular elements devoted to leadership education and training.

Table 1. The Bradley University Leadership Mosaic: Leadership Education and
         Training

Bradley University Mosaic "Pieces"	Conceptual Frames	Curricular / Co-curricular Elements	Description
			Outcomes
Interdisciplinary Minor in Leadership Studies	Leadership Education	*Intro to Leadership Studies* course	First course in minor compares theories and requires reflection through Success Journals and Leadership Inventories
			Leader ship Theory Reflection Critical Thinking
		Coaching and Mentoring course	Topical seminar course offered in Summer features application through student facilitation of campus-based high school leadership camp
			Awareness/experience coaching & mentoring models
		Social Change Model course	Topical course featuring application through student-designed campus change project
			Awareness/experience social change model
Interdisciplinary Minor in Leadership Studies	Leadership Training	*Experiential Leadership* and *Leading Without Authority* courses	Topical seminar courses offered in weekend format
			Team leadership skills Individual leadership skills
Center for Student Leadership and Public Service	Leadership Training	BUILD	Bradley Univ. Integrated Leadership Development – 1st tier dedicated to skill training
			Skills Teamwork
		Team Bradley	Leadership weekend retreat open to all
			Role definition Networking Team skills
		Leadership Lifestyles Floor	Application based residential opportunity for freshmen women
			Leadership Potential Involvement

In addition to the commitment to leadership in the Student Affairs area, many courses and programs across the university's five colleges included elements of leadership education or development, including the College of Education and Health Science's Department of Educational Leadership and Human Development, where the Minor in Leadership Studies was housed. The decision to offer the Minor in Leadership Studies grew from the recognition of the importance of credit-based leadership education for Bradley students, and from a desire to both aggregate and formalize leadership development. The initiating committee insisted that the Minor be interdisciplinary and collaborative. The impetus for this interdisciplinary and collaborative approach was trifold: to bring the best expertise together for students to gain multiple perspectives; to provide a fairly distinctive program for undergraduates; and to bring the silos that exist in higher education together. Table 2 includes the academic and co-curricular elements devoted to leadership development. Notably, through the BUILD program and the sequence of courses in the Minor in Leadership Studies student can experience leadership training, education, and development.

Table 2. The Bradley University Leadership Mosaic: Leadership Development

Bradley University Mosaic "Pieces"	Conceptual Frames	Curricular / Co-curricular Elements	Description
			Outcomes
Interdisciplinary Minor in Leadership Studies	Leadership Development	*Intro* and *Advanced Leadership Studies* courses	Advanced students mentor Intro students on team projects featuring leadership theories and service projects
			Mentoring experience Social capital
		Leadership Studies Practicum course	Students design, develop, and implement team leadership service project
			Service learning Teamwork Project development
Center for Student Leadership & Public Service	Leadership Development	Fellows	Selective 4-year co-curricular leadership program
			Leader development Service Collaboration
		BUILD	Bradley Univ. Integrated Leadership Development
			Team Leadership
		LiNCS	Capstone senior year leadership development activities
			Volunteerism Community Involvement
Institute for Principled Leadership	Leadership Development	Public Policy Symposia	Discussion/debate of worldwide issues
			Critical Issue Awareness Critical Thinking
		Visiting Speakers Program	Policymakers address community and student body
			International Policy Awareness
		Congress in the Classroom	Collaboration with Dirksen Center to facilitate K-12 teachers discussion of Congress/governance
			National legislative policy awareness
		Student Advisory Group	Students design internships or experiential learning opportunities
			National/international exposure and application

Most recently Bradley University expanded the reach of leadership studies from campus and community-based to national and international reach through the Institute for Principled Leadership in Public Service (IPL). The IPL emerged as a

collaborative partnership between Bradley University and The Dirksen Congressional Center with the mission of "educating and training collaborative, bipartisan and ethical leaders for successful careers in public service" (Bradley University, IPL, 2008). IPL was created as a free floating multidisciplinary Institute with ties to all of the colleges on Bradley's campus realizing that public service careers and the need to develop strong leaders in this arena touched on a wide variety of professional fields (e.g., government, education, civil engineering, etc.)

Each semester IPL hosts a national public policy symposium on a critical issue (i.e., healthcare, energy, environment) and brings in national experts to help develop bipartisan and collaborative solutions to these pressing problems. Additionally, IPL brings in national and state speakers to address and interact with Bradley students each semester.

The Challenge of Shared Purpose

Desired Outcomes

Descriptions of undergraduate leadership education outcomes in the literature abound, and are described at classroom, group/team, and programmatic levels. Within leadership classrooms or student groups and teams, desired outcomes range from becoming active citizens (Colvin, 2003) and critical thinkers (Stedman & Andenoro, 2007) to becoming culturally aware (Kelling & Hoover, 2005; Robinson, 2005), reflective (Roberts, 2008) or emotionally intelligent leaders (Stedman & Andenoro, 2007). However, program impact features the aggregate of these desired student learning outcomes not just additively, but synergistically (Gronn, 2002). Synergy requires collaboration across the campus, despite the potential barriers or silos in academic divisions or disciplines (Astin & Astin, 2000). Roberts (2003) suggested that leadership educators must engage stakeholders across the faculty, student affairs, or disciplinary boundaries to discuss and prioritize leadership literature, approach a common language, and evaluate student learning. This is the ongoing challenge: bringing people and programs together across logistical and theoretical divides toward a shared purpose of leadership development.

The mosaic approach has allowed us to conceptualize our leadership framework and identify and inventory the curricular and co-curricular elements. By understanding whether our initiatives aim for leadership training, education or development, we have begun to define a shared purpose. The next steps for us are to come together to describe our individual program goals and find more common ground. By coming together toward a shared purpose, we can work together to collaborate through ideas and resources rather than working at cross purposes.

Conclusion

With so many components to and perspectives on leadership education, it is difficult to distill them within a shared purpose. By assuming a mosaic approach educators cast undergraduate leadership education and leadership development as an artistic endeavor, but it is time for the science—collaborative planning, common language, and shared purpose (Astin & Astin, 2000; Roberts, 2003).

At Bradley University we have assembled a distributed leadership approach (Gronn, 2002) that is framed by leadership training, education, and both leader and leadership development. Within these frames are curricular and co-curricular elements provided collaboratively through the academic and student affairs divisions of the university. The greatest challenge that remains is confirmation of our shared purpose. This must be our next step, followed by systematic assessment of our progress toward that purpose.

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