

**Cornell College**  
**Departmental / Program Assessment Project**  
Progress Report

Department / Program:	Division of Student Affairs
Person Submitting this Form:	Heidi Levine
Date:	May 29, 2012

Brief Overview of the Assessment Project: (refer to original Assessment Project Outline)

- Outcomes you're assessing.
- Questions your project is attempting to answer.

**Engage in leadership opportunities; develop effective leadership skills/traits**

- Through what experiences (both intentional & unintentional) and in what ways do students develop leadership skills?
- Among students who feel a strong sense of connection/engagement, what experiences and conditions have contributed to/helped foster their engagement?
- How can we more intentionally foster leadership development opportunities for Cornell students?

Brief Project Update:

- What have you accomplished on your assessment project this year?

The project involved two data gathering/review components: review of results from 2009 administration of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) and structured interviews with student leadership. These activities helped identify high- and low-impact campus involvements, and facets of leadership development (based on the Social Change model of leadership) with relatively many or few pathways to development on Cornell's campus. These data were used to help frame the development of a new leadership development program (to be implemented during AY 2012-13) designed to more intentionally provide opportunities for students to develop instrumental and Social Change-related leadership skills.

Evidence Gathered:

- *Please outline in detail the information gathered for your assessment project.*
  - *This information may include student work, surveys, focus groups, existing enrollment information, etc. Include any information gathered that will inform your assessment work.*
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A. Retrospective MSL analysis

1. Identified high-impact involvements, including
  - Being an RA
  - Leader of student organization
  - Community service
  - Student government
  - Internships
  - Participation in student organizations, honor societies, political organizations and service organizations
2. Linked components of the Social Change model of leadership with paths to development among Cornell students
  - a. Areas with multiple paths to development:
    - Citizenship
    - Congruence
    - Consciousness of self
    - Common purpose
    - Commitment
  - b. Areas with few paths to development:
    - Controversy with civility
    - Collaboration
    - Change

B. Conducted structured interviews with current student leaders to learn about experiences that have contributed to leadership development and perceived relevance of components of Social Change model

1. Experiences that contributed to learning/development
  - a. Residence life – FY living learning communities
  - b. Student organizations
  - c. Intentional developmental programs (e.g., organization retreats)
  - d. Activities beyond campus
2. Relevance of specific skills
  - a. "Administrative" skills
    - Relates to organizational functioning
    - Management & accountability skills

- Challenges in organizational functioning without planning
  - b. Self-understanding
    - Awareness of strengths/weaknesses
    - Understanding why involved – importance of intentional commitment, passion fueling motivation
    - Conscious leader vs. “just an over-involved student”
  - c. Working with groups
    - The stronger the group’s shared purpose the stronger the organization
    - Managing times when people in group have differing opinions
      - Re-focus on organization’s mission, why we’re here
    - Situations w/conflict have offered some of the most learning
    - Need more training on how to handle situations w/conflict
      - Need more resources to turn to for help/support
    - Seen positive changes in intergroup collaboration over past few years, more collaboration across areas of the college
  - d. Connection to broader community
    - One of the most powerful/meaningful aspects of leadership experiences
    - Power of seeing impacts beyond campus
    - Bring experiences/learning from off-campus back to Cornell community
    - Campus leadership experiences/external connections create opportunities beyond/after college
  - 3. Initiatives/programs that would help foster leadership skill development
    - a. Skills-based programs
    - b. FY program preparing for leadership
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Year Three - Interpreting Evidence / Crafting a Plan:

*The goal for Year Three of the College’s assessment cycle is to analyze and interpret the evidence gathered for purposes of enhancing educational practice. What are your plans for the coming year? Please include plans for ongoing data collection as well as analysis, interpretation, and plans for using your assessment results.*

- A. Implementation of new leadership development program  
 During AY 2011-12 the format for a new leadership development program was developed and piloted. This program incorporates both basic “administrative” leadership skills and opportunities to develop skills consistent with the Social Change model of leadership development. The program has 2 components: a bi-annual leadership skills conference (“H20: How to Organize”) and a certificate program. The certificate program offers tracks linked to each of the “7 Cs” of the Social Change model, and offers a culminating capstone experience in which students design a leadership project. Assessment of this program will occur through student evaluations and review of student reflections utilizing a common rubric.
- B. Reassess broad student leadership development based on the Social Change model during the 2015 MSL research cycle.

Involvement:

- *Who has been involved in this project?*
- *How well informed and involved are members of the department/office?*

The initiative has been led by Heidi Levine, Dean of Students. Vice President for Student Affairs, John Harp, was involved in helping shape the assessment focus and questions. Several other Division of Student Affairs staff (e.g., Gwen Schimek, Tera Kringle, Kara Trebil) assessed aspects of leadership development among their student leaders and helped to frame the assessment questions and process.

The leadership development program has been conceptualized and developed by a team of DSA staff members comprised of Heidi Levine, RJ Holmes-Leopold, Gwen Schimek, Tera Kringle, Kara Trebil, Justin Gohdes and Collin Paschall. Members of this team developed and implemented a pilot during the spring 2012 semester, and the team is responsible for coordinating the full implementation starting in fall 2012. Other members of the DSA have been made aware of the program model, and will be solicited to contribute programmatic offerings/components. As the program is developed personnel beyond the DSA will be encouraged to provide information about events that contribute to program goals.

Challenges / Assistance:

- *What challenges has your department/office encountered to date with your assessment project?*
- *What assistance/support do you need? From whom?*

- The greatest challenge with this project involved setting aside time to manage project components.
- We had adequate support from the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment and from related departments within the Division of Student Affairs to accomplish the initial project components. As we move into implementing the new leadership development program we will continue to need the active engagement of the planning committee and other DSA departments.

Feel free to add additional comments or supporting documents to this report. Upon completion, please submit the report to Becki Elkins, Box 2628.



5/29/12

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Your Signature

Date



5/29/12

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Department Chair Signature

Date