

The Heart of University Leadership Development Programs

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Professional Biographical Profile

Mark Russell – Professor of Animal Sciences & Veterinary Clinical Sciences is known as the "student development" specialist in Animal Sciences at Purdue University. Improving the curriculum to develop the students' ability to utilize the knowledge gained in college is his passion. Dr. Russell grew up in rural Horseheads, New York just 50 miles from Cornell University where he received a BS in Animal Sciences. His interest in serving people with their animals led him to an Extension appointment at the University of Illinois where he completed his MS and Ph.D. With 29 years of Extension specialist experience in the horse industry he is now in the "people development" business. He has published over 15 abstracts and journal articles on employability skill, leadership development, multicultural skills, and international programming. He recently returned from a class trip with 24 students to Hungary and Romania.

Janet Ayres, Professor of Agricultural Economics, Leadership Development Specialist Masters of Urban Planning from Cornell University and PhD from Purdue in Sociology focusing on community leadership. Research and Extension experience in leadership development for 26 yrs.; worked in over 250 rural communities; developed 10 state-wide leadership development programs; developed over 30 leadership curricula; work with community leadership programs throughout state; conducted over 100 staff development programs in leadership development; teach undergraduate course in leadership development.

Pablo Malavenda, Associate Dean of Students is responsible for the Student

Activities Area of the Office of the Dean of Students, which includes all of the leadership programs and awards and over 670 clubs and organizations including the fraternities, sororities, and cooperative houses. Pablo is also the primary advisor to the Presidents Roundtable and the Barbara Cook Chapter of Mortar Board. He is the co-advisor to Purdue Student Government, serves as a faculty fellow in Hillenbrand Hall, and turned his office from a place students go for assistance to a center of leadership development. He teaches course in student leadership, designs and conduct many leadership retreats and institutes, and is a great role model for student leaders on campus.

Pamela Morris, Associate Professor of Youth Development & Agricultural Education has many experiences teaching diversity, leadership, service learning. She received her BS and MA degrees in Elementary Education from Ball State University, and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instructional Design from Purdue University. Her primary focus has been to inform youth and adults, on a national and local level, about the changing faces of a global society and to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups. Another endeavor for Dr. Morris has been to advance and deepen the theory and practice of service-learning which fosters youth development, in terms of important aspects of character and civic education. In November 2002, Dr. Morris received the annual National Award for Diversity from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the significant impact her programming has made on Indiana communities in the areas of multicultural education, international programs, and community service learning.

The Heart of University Leadership Development Programs

Abstract

Debate continues about the best curriculum for structuring leadership development programs. Most university programs designed to build leadership competencies contain both academic classroom teaching and experiential learning opportunities. However it seems that many students are missing an essential element - the desire to serve others and make a difference in non-for profit organizations and communities. University teachers will interact in discussions and help the authors explore whether this psychological aspect can be fostered and nurtured within the university context.

Introduction

As Purdue University School of Agriculture embarks on a planning effort to create a meaningful leadership and citizenship program, stakeholders are being invited to define learning outcomes and then the real challenge begins. Like all campuses, we have great undergraduate student leaders who are very active on campus, but we seek to increase the percentage of students with these experiences and we cause student leaders to experientially learn more from their leadership experiences that will prepare them to transfer these skills to life-long, community roles. This paper will 1) review nationally recognized minors and certificate leadership programs to increase their understanding of program structure; 2) discuss how models of leadership development programs involve experiences in a way that builds leadership capacities and competencies; and 3) debate methods to instill an internal motivational drive to affect change, serve others and make a difference in nonprofits and communities.

Background

There are many excellent models of leadership development that exist for adult community leadership: Indiana Ag Leadership Program and "Take Charge", community leadership programs and Leadership Development through community Action, and the use of service learning. Currently the 16 Precepts of National FFA learning categorizes the stages of development into "Me, We, Do, and Serve", so the concept on curriculum design around leadership activities and service are not new. As we review Purdue's "organizational, Supervision, and Leadership curriculum we find that it is excellent for the leadership needed in the business and management sector. Purdue University has succeeded in preparing "society-ready graduates" that are employable and marketable in their careers but now we seek to increase education and learning curriculum that will prepare graduates to desire to contribute beyond self and career to make a difference in their non-for profit organizations and communities. Can this psychological desire and drive be created and nurtured in university-aged youth by our efforts like service learning and leadership experiences? Or is motivation to make a difference to community beyond one's career something that comes after career and family are established??

How It works

The administration of the School of Agriculture at Purdue University regularly interacts with advisory committees, industry employers, alumni, and community leaders. They are hearing that our graduates are very technically competent but often lack the leadership skills to solve problems and contribute beyond their career job. Unlike other universities, we have responded with courses on leadership in a changing world, decision making and problem solving methods, career leaders, contemporary issues analysis, student leadership etc. A small group of faculty and staff were formed to design a certificate or minors in leadership and citizenship primarily for our undergraduate students. This presentation will share the results of our reviews of other university course-based programs like Auburn University and industry leadership programs like the Leadership Academy of the Society of American Foresters. There's a lot known about building leadership capacities and competencies but what we seek to better understand is how best to do this with college students. We must find a balance between creating students who are employable "society-ready graduates" and those that believe that professional education is "self contained and inward looking" as Henry Rosovsky states in his book "The University: A Owner's Manual. Having said this, the next step in this process was to invite 25 stakeholders from all aspects of Indiana communities and industry to a one-day planning retreat to identify the characteristics and outcomes they believe would result from our leadership and citizen program. These outcomes will be shared in the session, but the real challenge is how to create a balanced program within the lives of undergraduates that will result in these competencies.

Results to date

It appears that a minimum level of experiences is necessary before a student can reflect on these issues and this must be the foundation of the program. Experiences can range from athletic or judging teams, extracurricular club, housing unit leadership, work experience, but the important element is the reflection of why were you in that position, what did you do that was successful and why, and how can you take what you learned and apply to a broader need? Certainly there can be academic courses, credit, and

theory involved in the learning processes around leadership but we believe it has to follow meaningful experiences. Additionally we believe that the program should cause the student additional out-of- the comfort zone experiences that can be internships away from home, international study, service learning projects across cultures, and direct community involvement – still with intentional follow-up and experiential reflection around leadership. Stakeholders are very supportive and excited to be involved in the process and serve as potential donors of needed human and financial resources for the program. We are at the beginning of this developmental process and seek others' perspective and shared experiences.

Conclusions and future impacts

There should always be a healthy tension between the professional education and a liberal education and for us that means finding an educational balance between the academic theory of leadership models and the experience of serving others and making a difference in communities. Even if this balance can be found in a university education, we may need to complete a significant portion of the life-long psychological changes that come with family, employment, life education of “hard knocks” to develop leaders who have an inner motivation and desire to make a difference unselfishly. Curriculum review and revising will never be complete as long as your program is attempting to meet the needs of a constantly changing society. It is the true educators of university students that will join us in the tension of this discussion.