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The impact of Cumberland County College's Student Pathways Leadership Institute on selected participants

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THE IMPACT OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE'S STUDENT PATHWAYS

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE ON SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

by
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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the overall attitudes of Cumberland

County College's Student pathways Leadership Institute of 11 selected participants who

were all enrolled in the 2007-2008 Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland

County College, Vineland, NJ, in April, 2008. Attitude data were collected through a

survey consisting of 23 Likert scale items using a 5-point scale. Data analysis suggests

that the selected participants had a positive attitude towards the Student Pathways

Leadership Institute. Overall, 10 out of 11 participants reported that they agreed that

participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute increased their understanding

of leadership development. Moreover, participants reported on gaining concrete skills

through the institute and learning something about leadership in which they can apply to

real-life experiences. Despite the overall positive attitudes of the Student Pathways

Leadership Institute and how the program exposed them to people with life experiences

different than their own, participants did not report as strongly on how the Student

Pathways Leadership Institute helped them define their personal values. Yet, participants

still felt as though the Office of Student Life and Athletics was doing enough to engage

students in activities outside the classroom. All participants had suggestions on how to

improve the institute for future years.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks go to the following people: Cathy Briggs, Dr. James Coaxum, Dr. Cathy Mack, and Dr. Burton Sisco. Each of you deserves a special note because this project would not have come along without you.

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Dr. Coaxum, I am so thankful that you were one of the first people I met when I transferred to Rowan as an undergraduate. Because of you, I am much more knowledgeable in the field of leadership and also leadership education. Over the past four years our relationship has come full circle: I started off as your student, enthusiastic to learn about leadership, but now I am a colleague, and we are both spreading our knowledge of leadership to others also eager to learn about leadership. I hope there will be many opportunities in the future for us to work together again.

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much from learning from you. Your support is invaluable and I am thankful to have you as a confidante.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is no surprise that leadership development programs are a significant part of many

higher education institutions; after all they have been around since the time of Plato.

Currently, there are over 800 leadership development programs on college and university

campuses nation wide. Of particular interest to faculty, staff, and administrators on these

campuses are the numerous trends blossoming in higher education. For purposes of this

study, these trends include the importance of outside the classroom learning and student

and academic affairs collaboration. There is no denying that students spend a lot of time

outside the classroom, whether working, studying, becoming involved in campus life,

and/or participating in sport programs. While students learn educational lessons inside

the classroom, often they are learning life lessons in outside the classroom activities. It is

through programs like student leadership development programs where student and

academic affairs can collaborate, and where there are opportunities to blend what is

taught inside the classroom to what is being done in activities outside the classroom.

This study sought to investigate the impact of a non-academic, student leadership

development program at the community college level. Furthermore, an additional intent

of this research project was to determine whether students valued the out of classroom

experiences and the student and academic affairs collaboration efforts. The study

included surveys and interviews conducted at Cumberland County College (Vineland,

NJ), during the Spring 2008 semester.

Statement of the Problem

Though there is a wealth of knowledge in the databases on leadership development programs, student and academic affairs collaboration, and outside the classroom learning, there have been few studies that specifically look at the relationship between all three. By assessing the relationship of all three concepts under one program, student and academic affairs professionals will be better able to provide students with comprehensive educational opportunities, essentially developing the whole student.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to obtain feedback from current participants of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute on the impact and benefits of participating in the program. Additionally, through a survey, the study sought to determine whether students would benefit or take advantage of the program if it was credit based. Furthermore, of interest was to see what skills completers perceived themselves to have after participating in the program. Another goal was to obtain suggestions on how to enhance the program for future years. Additionally, through interviewing, the aim was to explicitly detail the programs' impact and the leadership development of a small number of participants. Also through interviewing, another goal was to determine what participants believe to be the benefits of participating in activities outside of the classroom. Of particular interest was the support received from the planning team of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

Significance of the Problem

This study focused on the impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute on current participants. The findings from this study can be used by the SPLI planning team

to help continually improve the program on campus.

Assumptions and Limitations

It is assumed that all of the participants surveyed and interviewed a part of the

Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College during the

2007/08 academic year. Additionally, it is assumed that the participants responded to

the data collection instruments truthfully and that all participants were cooperative.

Furthermore, this study was limited to Cumberland County College students who are

participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. Additionally, this study

was limited to the students, staff, faculty, and other presenters and members of the

planning team that were all involved with SPLI. There was a convenience sample of

11 student participants. Moreover, there was a convenience sample of 19 participants

who belonged to either the SPLI planning team or were presenters within the program.

Only those who returned the required materials within a timely fashion participated in

the study. Results from this study were limited to responses from interviews and the

self-reporting survey of the impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, in

April, 2008. Lastly, there may be researcher bias as the investigator is a participant

observer in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

Definition of Terms

1. Leadership Development Programs: Any non-academic training program that
   enhances one's leadership abilities.

2. Leadership Education and/or Leadership Studies: The academic study of leadership
   as determined by individual institutions, relating to one course or an entire major.

3. Outside the Classroom Experiences: Any activities that are not bound to the

classroom; examples include: community service, part-time/full-time jobs, involvement in campus club or organization, internships, service-learning and volunteerism.

4. Program Participants: Students who are currently participating in the 2007-2008 Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College.

5. Student Affairs Professionals: Individuals who work with students outside the classroom. Groups of these individuals include, but are not limited to, members of the Division of Student Affairs (which includes employees from Student Center, Academic Success Center, International Student Services, Multicultural Affairs, Career and Academic Planning Center, Office of Student Life and Athletics) office employees, and advisors to student groups at Cumberland County College.

6. Student Pathways Leadership Institute: Specific to Cumberland County College, this program is a non-academic leadership development program for current students. It is in its second year. Students must go through an application process in order to be admitted into the program. The program runs from October-May. The program features guest speakers, leadership development workshops, team building exercises, and hands-on experience in activities related to campus and the community.

7. Student Pathways Leadership Institute Planning Team and Presenters: Members of Cumberland County College which include the Director of Student Life and Athletics, the Executive Director of the University Center, past student program completers, and faculty and staff program completers from the Faculty and Staff Pathways Leadership Institute. The presenters included faculty, staff, and

administrative members of Cumberland County College as well as individuals in outside organizations that have a partnership with Cumberland County College.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. Why were participants interested in becoming part of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute?

2. How did the Student Pathways Leadership Institute impact participants?

3. According to participants, what are the perceived benefits in being involved in activities outside the classroom, such as the Student Pathways Leadership Institute?

4. What recommendations to the Student Pathways Leadership Institute would the planning team, participants, and presenters make to enhance the program?

Report Organization

A literature review relative to this study is presented in chapter two. The main goal of the literature review is to report what other scholars have found in the study of leadership development programs and leadership education and programs. Next, in chapter three, the methodology of the research paper is discussed. In chapter four, the results of the study are presented. Chapter five provides a summary of the study and offers conclusions in relation to the findings. Lastly, recommendations for practice and further research are suggested in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Community Colleges in the United States

Before the community college concept was introduced, junior colleges were developed in the early 1900s as a way to provide higher education to students who were in their first or second year of college. Junior colleges taught general education courses in hopes that the senior colleges could hone in on professional training for the upperclassmen. The other purpose of junior colleges was to prepare students well enough so they could transfer to the senior college. However, there were many problems with transferring, which left some students having to repeat all of their general education at the senior colleges. The idea of junior colleges was widely accepted and the concept continued to grow until 1947 when junior colleges became community colleges. Community college was the name most widely used by 1970. A Community college can be defined as an institution that is accredited to grant Associate Degrees in either the Arts or the Sciences as their highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, 1989).

Joliet Junior College was the first junior college which was established in 1901 in Illinois. The development of Joliet Junior college was important "because it demonstrated the feasibility and desirability of using tax dollars to establish institutions of higher education in the community, with the needs of the community helping to shape the courses and programs offered by those community-based institutions" (Boone, 1997, p.3). However, the concept of junior/community colleges was not widely accepted until the Commission of Higher Education was created in 1947 through President Harry

Truman. The commission believed that education was no longer just for the elite. Gustavo Mellander, author of *"The Community College Experience in the United States,"* states that, "Instead, the Commission believed that universal education was indispensable to the full and living realization of the democratic ideal" (1994, p.10). The new institutions that came from the commission had a community based, hence the name, community college. According to authors Cohen and Brawer (1989), the community college developed in response to a few social forces. The first being a way to train workers on how to operate growing industries; the second force included the extended period of adolescence and the last force believed that "Community colleges seemed also to reflect the growing power of external authority over everyone's life ..." (1989). This last force was most important because it believed that an individual could not be educated, healthy, ill, employed, or religiously observant without the permission of the institution. The community college served (and continues to serve) many people including American veterans and families who never had a chance to go to college before the introduction of community colleges. Indeed, the community college concept was an innovated, new advancement for the United States. Dr. Gail O. Mellow, President of La Guardia Community College sums up community colleges with a statement in which she suggests "that community colleges might very well be American higher education's best-kept secret" (2000, p.3).

Mellow went on to say that community colleges are definitely not static, instead they are always changing and evolving and trying to fit the needs of the individuals within the community. Dr. Joseph McCadden (personal communication, October 2006), English Professor at Burlington County College, agrees with Mellow echoing that community

colleges are always changing and offers a timeline on what community colleges focused on over the past 40 years. In the 1960s community colleges put a strong emphasis on transfer programs and making sure that students who completed courses at the community college level were able to transfer credits to another institution. Next, during the 1970s, community colleges focused a great deal on basic skills education. Basic skills focused on developmental reading, writing and mathematics. After students took these courses it usually meant they were ready for college-level courses. Additionally, new technology, like the computers, had a big impact on community colleges in the 1980s. Community colleges had to do something different to set them apart from the four year institutions. To do this, community colleges used technology and innovative methods to improve student performance; at this time Instructors at community colleges did not want to just lecture during the entire class period. Lastly, during the 1990s, community colleges focused on partnering with local businesses to aid in job training. To fully understand the community college movement Mellow asserts that the overall goal of community colleges is to have an open door policy, where education is accessible and affordable to everyone. The open door policy that Mellow wants individuals to recognize is exactly what many community colleges pride themselves on.

Community colleges have come a long way in a short period of time. It is hard to fathom that about a 100 years ago there were only a handful of community colleges, compared to the 1,400 today. It also is interesting to look at how many students are enrolled now in comparison to the students back in the early 1900s. Currently community colleges serve over 10 million people, which it is no wonder why they are constantly changing and adapting to students' needs and wants. Cohen and Brawer

(1989) said it best when they stated that community colleges are "Never satisfied with resting on what has been done before, they try new approaches to old problems" (p.37). Moreover, what is consider today to be new and innovative at community colleges, such as online courses, video courses, TV streaming courses, weekend courses, night courses, and condensed courses, might be the norm in another 40 years. In fact, because community colleges are constantly evolving it is difficult to predict where they will be within the next 40 years, but the overall understanding is that they will continue to adhere to their mission of providing accessible and affordable education to everyone in innovative and creative ways.

Community Colleges in New Jersey

New Jersey offers a wide range of institutions for students to choose from including community colleges. Currently, New Jersey has 19 community colleges in 21 counties with over 60 campuses. Recognized by the legislature in 1962 the development for community colleges came about in New Jersey. The first community college, Cumberland County College, opened its doors in the fall of 1966. Financial support for these community colleges comes from both the state and the counties in which the colleges are located. Within New Jersey, community colleges were put in place to meet the educational and community needs of each county. There are many different types of programs offered at community college. Coursework aimed at academics led students to receive their associate degree, which created opportunities to transfer or gain employment. Additionally, there were programs of certification including those of skill, broad interest, and community service.

Each New Jersey community college has two specific commonalities: first, they are all

open access institutions, which allow individuals over the age of 18 with a high school diploma or its equivalent to enroll in courses, and second, they offer relatively affordable tuition. While this is common at the community college level, it is not so wide-spread at other institutions. These two factors have opened many doors for students who may not have fit the traditional population of students. Students enrolled in community colleges in New Jersey are very diverse and include minority, women, part-time, and older students. Within the community colleges of New Jersey, faculty, staff, and administration prepare students for success to transfer to a four-year institution, or gain the appropriate skills necessary to enter the work force. Overall, community colleges represent an important part of the total higher education system within New Jersey.

Fast Facts about Cumberland County College

In 1966, Cumberland County College was the first community college in New Jersey to open its own campus. The campus is seated on 100 acres and features nine buildings including academic, administration, and student center buildings. Cumberland County College operates year round, mainly offering courses during the fall and spring semesters, with the opportunity for students to enroll in winter or summer sessions as well. Currently, there are over 3,500 students enrolled in classes, both part-time and full-time. Students have a wide variety of career and transfer programs to choose from, and the average class size is 23 students. Students have the option to obtain an associate degree in arts, fine arts, science and applied science. Additionally, partner programs with four-year institutions, allow students to stay at Cumberland County College and earn their bachelor degree, masters degree or even a certificate.

While staying at Cumberland County College is an option, more than 50% of students

do transfer to a four-year institution, with other graduates deciding to go right into the work force. In terms of transferring, Cumberland County College's students have one of the highest transfer success rates among the other community colleges in New Jersey. Interestingly, about 80% of Cumberland County College's graduates are the first in their families to achieve a degree. Lastly, alumni speak well of Cumberland County College. It has been noted that 96% of Cumberland County College's graduates would recommend the college to future students (http://www.cccnj.edu/aboutccc/).

Cumberland County College focuses on pride, service and excellence, which one could assume is their slogan. Additionally, Cumberland County College is committed to diversity. The college strives to hire faculty, staff, and administration that reflect diverse backgrounds. Moreover, Cumberland County College tries to promote and embrace diversity across the curriculum and through many of their campus programs. The vision for Cumberland County College is also clear; the college creates collaborative relationships between the campus and outside community, enhancing student's lives through excellence in the classroom, community, and economic growth. Finally, the mission statement of Cumberland County College is a strong statement that emphasizes all that the college stands for and aims to be. Located on the college's website, the mission statement is as follows: "Cumberland County College is a comprehensive community college that is accessible, learning-centered, and dedicated to serving a diverse community of learners and employers through quality innovative programs, services and the appropriate use of technology for life-long learning" (2006, p.1). Cumberland County College has flourished into a very successful institution within the last 40 years, and it is their commitment to students, collaboration efforts with the

community, and their continued efforts in developing and implementing innovative ideas that will allow them to prosper even further over the next 40 years.

An Overview of Leadership Development Programs and the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

Leadership development programs are not a new concept; in fact, these programs have been around since the time of Plato. "The development of leadership among college students is one of the goals often cited in the mission statements of higher education institutes" (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999, p. 51). Many leadership development programs have one of two purposes: to teach leadership theory or to assist leaders in developing skills; only a few programs have actually been designed to do both. Currently there are over 800 leadership development programs offered in institutions across the nation (Schwartz, Axtman, & Freeman, 1998). Moreover, according to Brungardt (1996), leadership development programs have been defined as "every form of growth or stage of development in the life-cycle that promotes, encourages, and assists the expansion of knowledge and expertise required to optimize one's leadership potential and performance" (p. 83).

The Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College is in its second year. Last year, during the 2006-2007 academic year, a pilot program was launched. While 15 students started the program in October, only 13 of them graduated at the program completion in May. For this year, a total of 15 students were selected and 11 were still enrolled as of April, 2008.

The reason behind creating a leadership development program was multi-faceted. According to Kellie Slade, the Director of Student Life and Athletics (personal

communication, October 2007), the program was created to be consistent with Cumberland County College's strategic plan and the Faculty and Staff Pathways Leadership Institute. It is important to note that the student program was based off of the Faculty and Staff Pathways Leadership Institute that was created by Dr. Cathy Mack, Executive Director of the University Center. The student program was designed to be a comprehensive program that focused on personal and professional development. Workshops are presented by campus faculty and staff, as well as community members.

Although the Director of Student Life came up with the idea for a Student Leadership Pathways Institute, help was given from a planning team. The planning team assisting the Director of Student Life and Athletics include members of the faculty, staff, and administrators. New to the planning team this year are past students who completed the pilot program. To formalize the process of selecting a planning team the Director of Student Life and Athletics distributed an email to the campus community asking if anyone would like to be part of the planning team and from the responses a natural group emerged. However, it should not go unnoticed that many of those individuals who responded to the email were past members of the Faculty and Staff Pathways Leadership Institute.

The Director of Student Life and Athletics, along with the planning team, decided that the student program should be a year long experience versus a one day workshop or one weekend program. The Student Pathways Leadership Institute is sequential in nature. Each session is built off of the previous one, therefore, lessons are tied together and students are encouraged to think about the previous lesson and how it fits into the current one. Additionally the program is organized into two parts. In the first half of the

program students learn about themselves and develop their own values and missions and leadership skills. During the second half of the program students learn about group and community leadership. It is designed this way because the Director of Student Life and Athletics feels that students cannot be good leaders of groups or in communities if they first do not discover their own leadership potential. The program meets once or twice a month on a Friday for three-four hours, each session with different topics to be discussed. In addition to these sessions, there is a team-building session (which is new this year), group projects, and a graduation ceremony. The Student Pathways Leadership Institute has sessions from October-May. Lastly, students are required to be in business casual attire for each session and are expected to be present at each session. It is reiterated to the students that they were selected from a group of applicants and that they must adhere to all of the rules, specifically ones pertaining to attendance and participation.

Characteristics of an Effective Leadership Development Program

While it is known that what works on one campus does not always work on another, there have been some common "best practices" on leadership development programs that have been identified by Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt (2000). Listed below are descriptions of the 15 most common activities or methods, which are important features that make up a leadership development program. Self-assessment and reflection are first which allows students to explore their personal leadership skills by way of journal writing and other reflective activities. The next, skill building, is important because students have the opportunity to learn and put into practice personal and social skills through a variety of means, whether in an organization or in the classroom. Topics discussed at skill-building workshops include: conflict resolution, creative thinking,

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decision making, communication, and networking. Problem solving is also a common theme in leadership development programs. Problem-solving is usually taught through experimental and observed learning. Moreover, discussions of personal issues and role-playing activities are often used to help students learn to be more creative when solving their own and other's problems. Intercultural issues represents another practice as issues of gender, race, class and ethnicity are discussed and learned on both an individual and group level. Additionally, service learning and servant leadership are also characteristics of common practices. Here students learn leadership through helping others and by engaging in projects that benefit a needy community. Next, outdoor activities help students gain trust of other members, help manage group issues, and help foster creative thinking and sharing. These outdoor activities include retreats, team-building exercises, physical challenges, and time for reflection, both personal and group. Additionally, student leadership of programs allows students to gain hands on experience and model real-life settings. Students are able to develop their leadership skills as they develop, promote, implement and evaluate the programs they create. A mentoring program in which students have the chance to be paired up with an experienced leader allows both participants the opportunities to grow and develop their leadership skills while building their interpersonal relationship skills. Additionally, successful leadership development programs focus on community involvement, which is a two-way street where students participate in community events and people in the community often present at symposiums and workshops. Furthermore, public policy is a factor of an effective leadership development program. Public policy programs usually focus on selecting an issue (it can be health, scholastic, or community related) and then working towards

resolving a particular challenge related to that issue. Tailored trainings and development workshops are yet another effective element of a leadership development program. These trainings and workshops allow students to become specialized and learn leadership skills related to their position or related to the context of their own groups. In addition, faculty incentives also play a part in effective leadership programs. It is sometimes necessary to gain faculty buy in of these programs by offering them some type of reward, like some release time from their teaching load. It is also noted that successful leadership development programs offer recognition, awards and incentives for students who participate in these programs. Celebrating success is very important. Moreover, creating a co-curricular transcript service for students is another aspect of an effect leadership development program. A co-curricular transcript notes a student's involvement both on campus and off and can be used to enhance admission into graduate school and/or employment opportunities. Lastly, participating in a capstone experience is another component of a successful leadership development program. Capstone experiences take many forms, including coursework or projects, and are used to incorporate all the skills and theories students have learned during their years as a student leader. It is important to remember that successful programs will be found at many different institutions and that not all of these elements will be found, or will be applicable, in every situation. Every successful program has developed within its own framework and environment depending on the campus. With this in mind, it is imperative that each leadership development program develop its own goals and purpose of the program, reflect upon its place in the college or university, and then make plans with long-term significance impact in mind.

Another area of importance in regards to what makes a leadership development program effective is the presentation of materials to the students in the program. Students learn in an array of ways and it is critical that variety is key and that no one style is used more than others. McCauly, Moxley and Van Vilsor (1998) believe that it is crucial to match the delivery method to what activity is being planned and the theory being presented. According to McCauly et al., when theories and leadership skills are being taught, the lecture method works best. On the other hand, role-playing activities are ideal for working on interpersonal and behavior skills. When complex or difficult concepts and theories are being presented, working through case studies can be good examples to show how to work through levels of complexity or difficulty. Lastly, to work through areas of problem solving and critical thinking, simulations work best. Overall, it is imperative that during a leadership development program, information is offered in a multitude of ways.

Another component that is an important contributor in making a leadership development program effective is followership. It is true that leaders do not exist without followers and vice versa. Additionally, it is true that leaders and followers choose their respective, specific roles. Moreover, leadership and followership implies a give and take relationship between those who choose to lead and those who choose to follow. Noting this, it is important for leaders to understand what followers do, what they want, and what they expect from their leaders. On the other hand, leaders must also have expectations of the followers. Modern leaders realize that power and control is shared and that there are similar leader/follower roles. Capitalizing on the importance of teamwork, leaders and followers have redefined their relationship. Most importantly, there is hope that an

effective and successful leader will develop skills in leadership as well as followership, as each are as important as one another.

Learning Inside and Outside the Classroom

Another element that is part of an effective leadership development program is participation in outside the classroom activities, or learning outside the classroom. How students spend their time outside the classroom should be of high importance for faculty, staff and administrators on campus. Moreover, Astin (1984) contends that students will learn much more when the environment is conducive to active participation. An example of such is having students apply what they are learning inside the classroom to what they are engaging in outside the classroom, such as in an internship or campus involvement. Additionally, Astin (1984) suggests that the college years are a significant part of a students' personal, social, and professional development. Realizing how important this is, many colleges and universities have been implementing activities outside the classroom that help enrich the college experience and give students another outlet to learn in.

Furthermore, it was Astin (1984) that started the conversation on the importance of extracurricular activities and being an involved student on the college campus. In fact, it was Astin (1984) who came up with student involvement theory, which is the foundation for research on student involvement. Astin's (1984) theory is also based upon student satisfaction and retention. The focus of Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement is a call for educators to place more of an emphasis on students. The theory is also based upon determining how much energy and time students devote to learning, both inside and

outside the classroom. Listed below are the five principles that define involvement, which help make up Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement.

1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects.

2. Involvement occurs along a continuum, where the ultimate form of noninvolvement is the act of dropping out, and the ultimate form of involvement is the act of completion.

3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features.

4. The amount of learning is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of involvement.

5. Effectiveness of any policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy to increase student involvement. (Astin, 1984, p. 298)

In addition, Kuh (1995) suggests that while students do gain most of their knowledge inside the classroom, many students feel as though the experiences gained outside the classroom provides hands-on experience, which is needed for the real world. Additionally, Kuh (1995) mentioned that participation in outside classroom activities was more of a factor than grades in predicting competence in the work place. Kuh's findings reaffirm what leadership development programs already aim to do, which is a collaborative effort of many different types of activities and teaching methods to make the student well rounded. Furthermore, participation in leadership development programs help students learn a wide variety of skills. According to Kuh et al., (1994) and Kuh (1995) these skills include: leadership, teamwork, planning, budgeting, and decision making. Also, students who are leaders on campus tend to have higher grade point

averages, participate in community service events after graduation, give to their alma mater, and hold successful jobs after graduation. Furthermore, students develop important skills while following the rules associated with their particular organization. Moreover, learning how to energize and inspire different personality types was also a key point in workshops for a leadership development program.

Additionally, in a study done by Logue, Hutchens, and Hector (2005), participants noted the positive aspects of participating in a leadership development program. Overall, every participant expressed student leadership as being an extremely positive experience. Moreover, to describe characteristics of their positive experience, participants mentioned personal benefits, enjoyment and fulfillment. Also, according to Kuh (1995), many of the students he studied indicated that having leadership roles and responsibilities on campus was an important factor in their learning and personal development. It is evident, as seen here, that learning does in fact take place outside the classroom and sometimes what is being taught outside the classroom is just as significant as what is being taught inside the classroom.

Student and Academic Affairs Collaboration

The collaboration between student and academic affairs is another important characteristic that makes up an effective leadership development program. In recent years student learning has taken center-stage on campus. There is a growing trend that suggests student affairs professionals are major contributors to student learning. Traditionally, student affairs staff make up the financial aid office, residence life department, career and psychological counseling center, student activities and leadership offices as well as recreational centers, security offices, academic success centers and even

child care learning labs. Sandeen (2004) points out that within the past few years the partnership between faculty and student affairs professionals has been a "hot topic" in student affairs. An important point to consider is that outside classroom experiences are increasingly being led by student affairs professionals. Sandeen suggests that "student affairs staff must demonstrate with their knowledge, insight, and organizational skills that they have something real to contribute to the academic process" (2004, p. 33). Moreover, the collaboration between academic and student affairs needs to appear flawless in the students' eyes, which seems to support the views of Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (1991). Furthermore, in order for collaborative partnerships to be successful they need to include shared resources, power and talent. Decision making needs to be done as a group and all projects or end-products need to reflect an incorporation of all participants involved. Additionally, Kuh et al. point out that sometimes the boundaries perceived between both academic and student affairs are not as noticeable to students. However, what matters most at an institution is that students are encouraged to think about their in-class experiences and other life experiences and relate what is being learned to both (Kuh, Douglas, Lund, & Ramin-Gyurnek, 1994). In order for the best learning to occur an integrated mix must include faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Kuh et al. (1994) point out that faculty and staff should spend more time interacting with students. The purpose of classes are to foster learning communities, engage students in dialogue about their learning and how they can relate the learning to outside experiences, and support students' endeavors both inside and outside the classroom. In situations like these incentives are necessary for faculty and staff buy-in Successful collaboration between student and academic affairs should strive to enhance student learning and as an

institution advance towards a shared responsibility for student development and achievement (Fuller & Haugabrook, 2001).

<center>Barriers to Collaboration</center>

Problems tend to rise during collaboration because of historically different roles, different cultures, the lack of motivation to change, and an unclear mission statement between academic and student affairs divisions. Although student affairs staff has made significant strides in trying to hold their own in the classroom, there still seems to be two different views of student life: the academic side and the student life side. Moreover, while student affairs staff continually bring up the issue of collaboration, similar conversations are not being had on the academic affairs side. It should be noted that since conversations are lacking on the academic affairs side, it may be difficult for them to understand or relate to much of what student affairs is and does. Additionally, the collaboration gap widens when academic and student affairs administrators do not spend enough time communicating with each other on successful ways to build the bridge between what students experience outside the classroom to what students were taught inside the classroom.

Many of the reasons for barriers in collaboration come from faculty not having enough time, faculty hesitation and resistance, and making the relation to academic programs. To overcome these barriers, institutions can implement the following strategies. Gaining support from senior administrative staff is the first step, followed by addressing critical cultural elements of the college or university. According to Kezar (2001), institutions must create an atmosphere of support and teamwork, begin institution-wide conversations, develop a common vision and get everyone motivated for collaboration.

<center>22</center>

In order for collaboration to be successful it must be an on-going process; it must be institutionally accepted, and not seen as just limited to a few individuals. Change is unlikely to occur if the institution does not creative a supportive environment, complete with incentives and direction, for student and academic affairs. Lastly, although there may be skeptics and individuals in the academic realm who feel threatened by change, student affairs professionals seem to be here to stay. "Most importantly in the decade ahead, student affairs staff should be expected to contribute significantly to broadened student learning experiences on their campuses" (Sandeen, 2004, p.31).

<div align="center">Summary of the Literature Review</div>

Community colleges first came about in 1901 but were considered to be just junior colleges. It was not until the creation of the Commission of Higher Education in 1947 under President Harry Truman that community colleges gained acceptance. Community colleges pride themselves on offering relatively affordable tuition and on being open access institutions. Currently, the 19 New Jersey community colleges align their missions and goals to be congruent with what these national objectives are. The first community college in New Jersey was Cumberland County College which opened in October of 1966. Today, Cumberland County College enrolls over 3,500 students, encompassing a diverse body of students, faculty, staff and administration. In 2006, Cumberland County College celebrated its 40th anniversary and with a strong commitment to students, effective partnerships with the community and new and creative ideas, it is sure the campus will thrive for an additional 40 years. Now in its second year, the Student Pathways Leadership Institute (created by the Director of Student Life and Athletics) emerged from the Faculty and Staff Pathways Program that was created by the

Executive Director of the University Center at Cumberland County College. The Student

Pathways Leadership Institute is a comprehensive leadership development program that

focuses on building students' leadership skills all year long through workshops,

community projects and guest speakers.

Leadership development programs have been around since as early as Plato.

Currently, there are over 800 leadership development programs on college campuses

nation wide. Moreover, there are numerous activities and methods that make up an

effective leadership development program. A few of these characteristics include: "best

practices" like skill-building and outdoor activities, different learning styles and how to

present to those styles, and the importance of understanding followership. Additionally,

an aspect such as learning outside the classroom is also an effective element of a

leadership development program. Astin (1984) suggests that students will learn much

more in an environment conducive to active participation. Kuh (1995) echoes Astin's

idea of active participation, suggesting that while students do obtain most of their

knowledge inside the classroom, learning outside the classroom prepares them for real-

life experiences. These outside the classroom experiences are often led by student affairs

professionals. Student and academic affairs collaboration is another characteristic of a

successful leadership development program. In order for collaboration to be successful

both departments need to share responsibility as well as resources. However, barriers to

collaboration do exist and unless an institution is supportive it will be hard to strengthen

the gap between academic and student affairs. Lastly, despite the vast number of

leadership development programs available, there remains a gap in assessment of these

programs. Although assessment tends to be driven by the program goals in relation to the

institution's overall mission, more research assessment of such programs is needed to further understand how outside the classroom learning and student/academic affairs collaboration play an important part in leadership development programs. Additional research should also be included on the impact that leadership development programs are having on students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

Cumberland County College is a small sized community college located in southern New Jersey, a short distance from major shore points, including Atlantic City. Cumberland County College was the first community college to open in New Jersey back in October of 1966. Cumberland County College sits on a 100-acres and features nine buildings. Newest to the campus is the George Luciano Sr. Conference Center. Additionally, Cumberland County College is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and has new facilities, engaged faculty and staff, and provides an exceptional education at an affordable cost (http://www.cccnj.edu).

Cumberland County College enrolls approximately 3,500 students per semester and serves an additional 1,500 students who are enrolled in continuing education or contract training courses. Cumberland County College offers more than 90 career and transfer programs of study, and the average class size is 23 students. Additionally, Cumberland County College grants the following degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Fine Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science, and Certificates. At the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester, Cumberland County College opened its new University Center. This new center is home to many partner four-year schools allowing students to earn Bachelor of Arts and Sciences and Master of Arts and Sciences degrees all while staying at Cumberland County College.

More than 50% of Cumberland County College students continue their education at a four-year institution, while the remaining half are a vital part of the workforce. Cumberland County College has one of the highest transfer success rates among all of the 19 community colleges in New Jersey. And over 96% of Cumberland County College's graduates would recommend Cumberland County College to others. Lastly, when students are not in the classroom or working there are over 30 student clubs, sports programs, and organizations for them to participate in (http://ww.cccnj.edu).

Population and Sample Selection

Students who are currently enrolled in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute were asked to participate in a survey and interview. Furthermore, members of the SPLI planning team and presenters of sessions were asked to participate in a survey regarding recommendations of the program. Since the Student Pathways Leadership Institute started in 2006, 13 students have completed the program. Currently, there are 11 program participants, who are students that are enrolled in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute for the 2007-2008 academic year. For purposes of this study, the total population was asked to participate in both the survey and interviews; 11 surveys were distributed and the same amount of interviews were conducted. The SPLI planning team is made up of 7 individuals, which consists of students, staff, administrators, and faculty. The SPLI presenters consisted of 12 individuals who are members of Cumberland County College, whether faculty, administrators, or students, as well as individuals outside of the community.

Instrumentation

The survey (Appendix E) used in the study was a modified version of a previous survey that was designed by the researcher with input from Dr. James Coaxum, III, professor and head of the Leadership Studies Concentration at Rowan University. The original survey was organized around four factors dealing with a leadership studies concentration on Rowan University's campus. These factors included: learning, skills acquired, communication, and outcomes/impact. The original format of the survey consisted of a background information section, 29 items using a Likert scale to gauge attitudes towards the Leadership Studies Concentration and four open-ended questions.

The researcher chose to modify the survey slightly to adapt it to fit the current study regarding Cumberland County College's Student Pathways Leadership Institute. The modified survey consists of 23 items using a Likert scale to determine attitudes concerning the Student Pathways Leadership Institute and three open-ended questions. The survey asks participants to identify their gender, age, grade level, and grade point average. To determine content validity of the updated survey, the researcher had Dr. Cathy Mack and Kellie Slade examine the survey for its readability and efficacy. The researcher chose Dr. Cathy Mack and Kellie Slade based upon their knowledge with the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. Following institutional approval, a pilot test of the survey was conducted. Three students who were on the planning team, and who completed the program last year, were given the survey in order to test its validity and reliability. The average time it took the participants of the pilot study to take the survey was eight minutes. Additionally, none of the participants mentioned any problems understanding the survey statements, open-ended questions or interview questions.

While the survey provided a general overview of the attitudes of participants in regards to the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, a more in-depth look at the impact of the program and leadership development was inquired through a set of interview questions (Appendix F & G). The interviews consisted of 12 open-ended questions. The purpose of the end of program interview questions with all participants was to gain more details and insights with regards to the impact the Student Pathways Leadership Institute had on the participants.

Data Collection Procedures

Following approval of the instruments from the Institutional Review Board of Rowan University (Appendix A) and the Research Review Board of Cumberland County College (Appendix B) to proceed, the impact survey was administered to all program participants of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College on Friday, April 18, 2008. An informational letter was attached to each survey and attached to that letter was an informed consent form (Appendix C & D). The surveys were addressed to each participant and distributed after a Student Pathways Leadership Institute session. This was the most effective way to distribute the surveys. Completed surveys and signed consent forms were dropped off to the researcher on the day of individual interviews. No identifiable information was collected on the survey itself. All program participants were given one week to return all materials and schedule an interview with the researcher. Data were collected, via interviewing, at individual interview times between the dates of April 23-28, 2008. To gather survey results from the SPLI planning team and presenters (Appendix H), an email was sent asking all participants to respond to the researcher by Monday, April 28, 2008.

Data Analysis

Independent variables in this study included gender, age, grade point average, and current grade level. Information for these variables was collected in the background information part of the survey. The dependent variables were the attitudes participants had on the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, and the skills they thought they learned as a result of the program. Variations in participants' attitudes were explored based on each of the independent variables using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to calculate frequencies, means, percentages and standard deviation. Analysis for the open-ended and interview questions consisted of content analysis procedures. Additionally, analysis for recommendations made by the SPLI planning team and presenters were analyzed using content analysis procedures (Appendix I).

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Profile of the Sample

The subjects for this study were selected from the Student Pathways Leadership

Institute, a non-credit bearing leadership development program, at Cumberland County

College in Vineland, NJ, in April 2008. Of the 11 surveys distributed, 11 completed

surveys were returned, yielding a 100% return rate. Additionally, all 11 participants

completed an interview, also yielding a 100% return rate. All respondents reported being

enrolled in the 2007-2008 Student Pathways Leadership Institute. There were seven

females (64%) and four males (36%). The participants were between the ages of 18 and

25, with the majority (45%) being either 18 or 19 years of age. Five subjects (45%)

reported they were freshmen, while the remaining subjects (55%) reported they were

sophomores. The majority of subjects (82%) noted their G.P.A.s to be over a 3.1, while

two subjects (18%) had G.P.A.s of less than a 3.0.

Table 4.1 contains data on the members of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

(SPLI) planning team and presenters. The total members of both the SPLI planning team

and presenters were 19. The majority (47%) of members were administrators of

Cumberland County College. A survey was sent out to the members of the SPLI

planning team and presenters regarding recommendations on how to improve the

program. Of the 19 surveys distributed, 14 surveys were returned, yielding a 74% return

rate. All respondents reported having some role and responsibility with the 2007-2008

Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

Table 4.1

2007-2008 Members of the SPLI Planning Team and Presenters

Member Type	Frequency	%
Administrative	9	47
Students	4	21
Outside Community Partner	4	21
Faculty	2	11
Total Frequency	19	

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: Why were participants interested in becoming part of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute?

Using content analysis, an overall look at the responses dealing with why participants were interested in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute indicated that there were many different reasons to join (See Table 4.2). More than half of the participants noted that they were interested in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute because someone from the planning team suggested it to them. Four participants joined the program to enhance their leadership skills, while three participants were interested in learning about leadership. Additionally, three participants participated in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute to gain social skills. Participant 4 noted, "It was a good experience for me to meet people since I am a naturally shy person." Two participants thought going through the institute would be useful to put on their resume. One participant entered the program for extrinsic reasons. Participant 10 believed that there was an IPOD involved and she joined in order to "win the IPOD for her daughter."

Table 4.2

Results of Content Analysis Describing Why Participants Became Part of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

Theme	*Frequency*	*Rank*
Planning Team Member suggested involvement	6	1
Enhance leadership skills	4	2
Interested in learning about leadership	3	3
Gain social skills	3	4
Useful to build resume	2	5
Believed there was extrinsic reward involved	1	6
Total Frequency	19	

Research Question 2: How did the Student Pathways Leadership Institute impact participants?

The impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute was measured using content and descriptive analysis. Overall, looking at the responses dealing with attitudes indicates that participants reported having a general positive attitude with the Student Pathways Leadership Institute (see Tables 4.3, 4.4, & 4.4.1). One hundred percent of participants agreed that they considered the Student Pathways Leadership Institute to be an educational learning experience.

In regards to the attitude on learning in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, 10 out of 11 participants agreed that the concentration increased their understanding of leadership development, with 55% strongly agreeing. Seventy-three percent of participants reported that they see value in learning about individual and group leadership, and responded that they know they have gained personal and professional leadership development skills. Seven participants noted that they know how leadership at Cumberland County College's campus functions, with 45% agreeing. In response to

whether the Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped participants create a personal definition of leadership and apply something about leadership to outside the classroom activities, nine out of 11 participants agreed, with over 55% strongly agreeing. Additionally, 73% of participants agreed that participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute challenged them.

Different networking and communication skills were also reported among participants. Eight out of 11 participants believed that the Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped create a network of friends that were also interested in leadership. Furthermore, 82% of participants agreed that the Student Pathways Leadership Institute allowed them to network with campus and community professionals they would not normally interact with. Over 90% of participants believed that participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute allowed them to be exposed to people with life experiences different than their own. Communications skills included being able to articulate their leadership style (91% agreed), being comfortable speaking in front of groups (91% agreed), and being able to articulate their thoughts to others (91% agreed).

Learning how to work in groups was another theme among participants in regards to how the Student Pathways Leadership Institute impacted them. Many participants (45%) agreed they gained a better understanding of working in a group. Furthermore, 73% of participants agreed that the Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped them feel more comfortable when working in groups. Eight participants noted that through participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute they are aware of how groups function, with 45% strongly agreeing.

Lastly, students reported on how the concentration impacted them. Sixty-four percent of participants agreed that they are conscious of their impact on others and felt that they connected to diverse students while going through the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. Participants also reported on reflecting about the similarities between their thoughts and actions, wanting to make a difference in their community, and noted that going through the Student Pathways Leadership Institute inspired them to be involved elsewhere on campus and within the community (82% agreed). Additionally, participants noted that the Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped them in regards to gaining stronger delegation skills, creating a business plan, and in enhancing one's own ability to have self-control. While participants did agree that the Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped them to define their personal values (36%), this response held a lower level of agreement in relevance to other responses. Finally, 82% of participants agreed that they thought participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute was beneficial.

Table 4.3

How the Student Pathways Leadership Institute Impacted Participants

Theme	Frequency	Rank
Understanding of working in a group	5	1
Improved leadership skills	4	2
Increased stress	4	3
Enhanced communication skills	3	4
Developed new friendships	2	5
Stronger delegation skills	2	6
Able to create a business plan	1	7
Enhanced ability to have self-control	1	8
Total frequency	22	

Table 4.4

Survey of Participants' Skills and Attitudes towards Cumberland County College's Student
Pathways Leadership Institute
Strongly Agree = 5, Somewhat Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Somewhat Disagree = 2, Strongly
Disagree =1

	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Undecided		Somewhat Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
The SPLI helped me define my personal values *n*=11 *M*=3.18 *SD*=1.250	2	18.2	2	18.2	4	36.3	2	18.2	1	9.1
The SPLI increased my understanding of leadership development *n*=11 *M*=4.36 *SD*=.924	6	54.6	4	36.3	-	-	1	9.1	-	-
After participating in SPLI, I feel comfortable when working in a group *n*=11 *M*=4.00 *SD*=1.265	5	45.4	3	27.3	2	18.2	-	-	1	9.1
I can apply what I have learned from my participation in SPLI to activities outside the classroom *n*=11 *M*=4.18 *SD*=1.401	7	63.7	2	18.2	-	-	1	9.1	1	9.1
The SPLI helped me to create a network of friends also interested in leadership *n*=11 *M*=4.09 *SD*=.831	4	36.3	4	36.3	3	27.3	-	-	-	-
Participating in SPLI challenged me *n*=11 *M*=4.18 *SD*=1.325	7	63.7	1	9.1	2	18.2	-	-	1	9.1
The SPLI allowed me to network with campus and community professionals I would not normally interact with *n*=11 *M*=4.45 *SD*=.820	7	63.7	2	18.2	2	18.2	-	-	-	-
I am much more able to articulate my leadership style *n*=11 *M*=4.09 *SD*=.831	3	27.3	7	63.7	-	-	-	-	1	9.1
I see value in learning about individual and group leadership *n*=11 *M*=4.18 *SD*=1.471	8	72.7	-	-	1	9.1	1	9.1	1	9.1
SPLI inspired me to be involved elsewhere on campus and in my community *n*=11 *M*=4.00 *SD*=1.342	5	45.4	4	36.3	-	-	1	9.1	1	9.1
I feel connected to diverse students *n*=11 *M*=3.82 *SD*=1.401	5	45.4	2	18.2	2	18.2	1	9.1	1	9.1

Table 4.4.1

Continuation of Survey of Participants' Skills and Attitudes towards Cumberland County College's Student Pathways Leadership Institute
Strongly Agree = 5, Somewhat Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Somewhat Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree =1

	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Undecided		Somewhat Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
I am conscious of my impact on others *n*=11 *M*=3.91 *SD*=1.375	5	45.4	3	27.3	1	9.1	1	9.1	1	9.1
I am aware of how groups function *n*=11 *M*=4.09 *SD*=1.044	5	45.4	3	27.3	2	18.2	1	9.1	-	-
I want to make a difference in my community *n*=11 *M*=4.55 *SD*=1.036	9	81.8	-	-	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
I am comfortable speaking in front of groups *n*=11 *M*=4.27 *SD*=1.191	6	54.6	4	36.3	-	-	-	-	1	9.1
I know how leadership on CCC's campus functions *n*=11 *M*=3.82 *SD*=.751	2	18.2	5	45.4	4	36.3	-	-	-	-
I have reflected about the similarities between my thoughts and actions *n*=11 *M*=4.00 *SD*=1.183	4	36.3	5	45.4	1	9.1	-	-	1	9.1
Through SPLI, I have been exposed to people with life experiences different than mine *n*=11 *M*=4.64 *SD*=1.206	10	90.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9.1
The SPLI helped me to create a personal definition of leadership *n*=11 *M*=4.36 *SD*=.809	6	54.6	3	27.3	2	18.2	-	-	-	-
I am more able to articulate my thoughts to others *n*=11 *M*=4.00 *SD*=1.095	3	27.3	7	63.7	-	-	-	-	1	9.1
From being in SPLI, I know I have gained personal & professional leadership development skills *n*=11 *M*=4.00 *SD*=1.265	5	45.4	3	27.3	2	18.2	-	-	1	9.1
I would consider the SPLI to be an educational learning experience *n*=11 *M*=4.45 *SD*=1.214	8	72.7	3	27.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall, participating in SPLI was beneficial *n*=11 *M*=4.36 *SD*=1.027	7	63.7	2	18.2	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-

Research Question 3: According to participants, what are the perceived benefits in being involved in activities outside the classroom, such as the Student Pathways Leadership Institute?

To gauge what participants noted about the benefits of being involved in activities outside the classroom, a content analysis procedure was used. An overall look at the responses indicated that participants had a general positive attitude towards the benefits of participating in activities outside the classroom (see Table 4.5). Most participants attributed meeting new people as a noted benefit of partaking in activities outside of the classroom. Interacting with students, faculty, and staff outside of the normal classroom setting was of noted value for one participant. Another participant commented on the fact that "Their group functioned like the Brady Bunch," and that they will all stay friends. Gaining real life experiences was another noted benefit; "You can't just learn everything through textbooks," as one participant pointed out. Four participants noted that in participating in activities outside of the classroom, one can enhance his/her social skills. Joining clubs and being involved with the Office of Student Life and Athletics helped one participant "Come out of her shell." Partaking in outside the classroom programs can provide a balance to school and can also take participant's minds off of stress. Other benefits of participating included the opportunity to step out of one's comfort zone, and also gaining a sense of belonging. Gaining a sense of belonging was especially important to one participant since she feels that "There seems to be a lot of gang activity in South Jersey."

Table 4.5

Results of Content Analysis Noting Perceived Benefits of Participating in Activities Outside of the Classroom

Theme	Frequency	Rank
Opportunity to meet new people	6	1
Gain real life experiences	5	2
Enhance social skills	4	3
Gives a balance to school	3	4
Takes your mind off of stress	3	5
Stepping out of one's comfort zone	1	6
Gain a sense of belonging	1	7
Total Frequency	18	

Research Question 4: What recommendations to the Student Pathways Leadership Institute would the planning team, participants, and presenters make to enhance the program?

Content analysis was used to explore how presenters, the planning team, and participants would enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. Overall, all of the respondents made suggestions for how to improve the Student Pathways Leadership Institute (see Tables 4.6, 4.7, & 4.8). A major theme that was apparent in each group's recommendations was to do a better job of advertising for the program. Another similarity was that all respondents wanted to see an increase in the number of sessions. The presenters just wanted to see an increase of sessions; the planning team and participants were a little more specific in regards to their recommendations. Planning team participants wished to see more sessions on individual leadership development, while program participants wished to see more sessions off campus. As one participant noted, "It is boring always sitting in the board room."

Table 4.6 notes the recommendations that presenters made in regards to enhancing the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. For the presenters it was difficult to make a lot of recommendations as many of the presenters only work with the program once a year and are not involved as much. As one presenter mentioned, "My limited interaction and knowledge of the program does not put me in a very good position to make suggestions or comment on recommendations." Two presenters recommended that traveling to off-site locations could enhance students' experiences. One presenter thought that students "need to recognize and truly learn what real, everyday life is like in Cumberland County." Another presenter proposed using the program as a retention tool for "low, socio-economic students who are most likely to drop out of college."

Table 4.6

Results of Content Analysis Describing the Ways Presenters Would Enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

Theme	*Frequency*	*Rank*
Difficult to comment	4	1
Increase the number of sessions	2	2
Publicize the program better	2	3
Travel offsite more for different presentations	2	4
Use program as a retention tool	1	5
Total Frequency	11	

Table 4.7 gives the results of the planning team recommendations for improving the institute. The most noted recommendation from the planning team was that there needs to be more time devoted to group dynamics. "Spending more time on group dynamics may have been more helpful earlier on in the program and may have avoided some of the team conflicts," commented one member of the planning team. Two planning team members commented on the fact that they wished students could earn academic credit for

participating in the institute. One member comments, "There is a great deal of work that these students have to perform in order to successfully complete the program." Other suggestions to enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute included conducting entrance interviews, obtain more funding, increase diversity amongst program participants, and have the planning team assign group projects.

Table 4.7

Results of Content Analysis Describing the Ways the Planning Team Would Enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

Theme	Frequency	Rank
Devote more time to group dynamics	6	1
Have program gain academic credit	2	2
Include more session on individual leadership development	1	3
Have planning team assign group projects	1	4
Conduct entrance interviews	1	5
Increase diversity amongst students admitted	1	6
Do a better job of advertising the program	1	7
Obtain more funding	1	8
Total Frequency	14	

Table 4.8 offers the recommendations of the student participants on ways to advance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. The recommendation that ranked highest among the participants was to announce the groups at the beginning of the program not towards the end of the first semester. Two participants noted that they would like to see harder entrance criteria even if it means fewer participants enrolled in the program. Participants were also interested in having more sessions off campus and having the institute carry academic credit. One participant noted that having the program be for credit would definitely have been more incentive for him to participate. Starting the application process in the spring and starting the program right in the fall semester was

suggested from one participant. Other recommendations included having the

presentation on learning styles in the first semester, increasing the number of program

participants, and providing a clear definition of appropriate business casual attire.

Table 4.8

Results of Content Analysis Describing the Ways the Participants Would Enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

Theme	Frequency	Rank
Announce groups at the beginning of the program	3	1
Have a harder entrance criteria	2	2
Implement the program into a credit course	2	3
Include more sessions off campus	2	4
Eliminate the guessing game involved in the program	2	5
Start the program from the beginning of the semester	1	6
Offer more hands on activities	1	7
Do a better job of advertising the institute	1	8
Have the session on learning styles in the first semester	1	9
Increase number of program participants	1	10
Provide a clear definition of appropriate attire	1	11
Total Frequency	17	

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study investigated the impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute on

participants at Cumberland County College in Vineland, NJ, in April 2008. Furthermore,

the study aimed to gauge what recommendations participants, planning team members,

and presenters had to enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. The

participants of this study were all enrolled in the 2007-2008 Student Pathways Leadership

Institute. Planning team members involved with this study were participants involved in

creating, developing, and implementing the 2007-2008 Student Pathways Leadership

Institute. Student Pathways Leadership Institute presenters were all participants who

presented at sessions during the 2007-2008 institute.

A two-part survey, including a cover letter, and an informed consent form, was

distributed to 11 participants. Part one of the survey dealt with demographic information,

which was followed by 23 Likert-style items regarding the attitudes toward the Student

Pathways Leadership Institute, and three open-ended questions. Eleven completed

surveys were returned, providing a 100% return rate. Additionally, a survey regarding

recommendations to the program was sent out to the Student Pathways Leadership

Institute planning team and presenters. A total of 19 surveys were distributed, while 14

surveys were returned, yielding a 74% return rate.

Descriptive statistics and content analysis were used to analyze the data from all completed surveys as well as the interview data. Participants' attitudes were explored using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software.

Discussion of the Findings

The majority of participants reported an overall positive attitude towards the Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College (Vineland, NJ). Participants joined the institute for different reasons, including wanting to enhance their leadership skills and because they were interested in learning about leadership. Furthermore, over 90% of participants agreed that participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute increased their understanding of leadership development. There are a few areas within the literature on leadership that support these findings. First, Brungardt (1996) defines leadership development programs as "every form of growth or stage of development in the life-cycle that promotes, encourages, and assists the expansion of knowledge and expertise required to optimize one's leadership potential and performance" (p. 83). Zimmerman-Oster and Burkhardt (1999) believe that leadership development is important among college students and most college's recognize this and leadership development is almost often cited in mission statements within institutions. Kuh (1995) also notes the value of leadership development among college students. In Kuh's (1995) study, 85% of his participants noted that leadership was an important skill to develop. Furthermore, Kuh (1995) stated that leadership plays an important role in student's personal and academic development.

Networking and communication were also skills reported among participants. Over 70% of participants agreed that participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

helped them create a network of friends also interested in leadership. Similarly, over 80% of participants agreed that they were able to network with individuals of the campus community that they normally would not have just by participating in the institute. These results echo the literature which states that interactions with peers and campus community are benefits of being an involved student (Kuh, 1995). Kuh (1995) also reports that being involved with peers has many other benefits, including building interpersonal skills, teamwork, and decision making skills.

One aspect that is important in an effective leadership development program is participating in activities outside of the classroom. Findings from this study indicate that participants believed that the Office of Student Life and Athletics are providing students with adequate outside the classroom learning activities. One student noted that there are always activities and ways to get involved and she hopes to continue to stay involved even after the leadership program is finished. Noting that the participant hopes to stay involved reiterates a theory developed by Alexander Astin (1984). Astin's theory of student involvement is directly related to student satisfaction and retention. Other participants' responses resemble those of current researcher Sandeen (2004), who believes student affairs professionals are major contributors to student learning and in the future they will be the ones most responsible for student learning. As one participant commented, "I am involved to learn and to grow and to better myself. These are skills I can't learn in the classroom."

Noting that participants identified gaining real life experiences as a benefit of participating in activities outside of the classroom responds to the importance of learning inside and outside the classroom. Kuh (1995) suggests that students feel as though

outside the classroom experiences provide hands-on experience, which is necessary for the real world. Two participants noted that joining the Student Pathways Leadership Institute would be useful to put on resumes. When one participant was asked to explain her answer further she noted that hopefully this program will help her when she gets a job. This thought echoes that of Kuh (1995) who noted that participating in outside the classroom activities was more of a factor than grades in predicting competence in the work place.

Finally, session presenters, planning team members, and program participants made suggestions on ways to enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute. Recommendations included offering more sessions, including more hands on activities, and turning the program into a credit-bearing course. These important recommendations reiterate what Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt (2000) consider to be characteristics of an effective leadership development program. These researchers suggest that when students have the opportunity to build their skill sets they are able to put into practice personal and social skills that they have learned. McCauly, Moxley, and Van Vilsor (1998) recognize the importance of presentation in regards to leadership development program effectiveness. The researchers go on to say that students learn in many different ways and presenting the materials in an array of ways is critical and variety is key. Participants, presenters and members of the planning team who wish to offer a credit-bearing piece to this program are ahead of their game in this thought. According to Schwartz, Axtman & Freeman (1996) many leadership development programs have one of two purposes: to teach leadership theory or to assist leaders in developing skills; while only a few programs are deisgned with both aspects in mind.

Astin (1984) suggested that students will learn much more when the environment is conducive to active participation. Additionally, Astin believes that being involved while in college is linked to a higher amount of personal development and student learning. Furthermore, Astin suggests there are three ways to do this: honing in on academic work, having continuous interactions with faculty and staff, and participating in extracurricular activities. A combination of all three of these aspects should be embedded into a leadership development program in order to educate the whole student.

Conclusions

The Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College joins the already large (over 800 programs) pool of leadership development programs that are offered in higher education institutions nation-wide. The institute is also no exception to possessing certain characteristics that make the program effective. The program is effective two-fold in that it trains student leaders as well as brings together the campus community. There have been many researchers, from Alexander Astin to Arthur Sandeen, who have studied student involvement, outside the classroom learning, and the significance of why students participate in leadership development programs.

The results of this study generally confirmed that participants benefited from participating in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute at Cumberland County College. The results also suggest that through programs like the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, the Office of Student Life and Athletics is doing a good job at providing outside the classroom activities for students. As Sandeen (2004) pointed out, in the future, student affairs professionals are going to be required to contribute to students' learning experiences. Lastly, participants' attitudes and recommendations, in

conjunction with current research, must be considered to help make the Student Pathways Leadership Institute continue to be successful in future years.

Developing student leaders is a responsibility that all institutions must take on and carry-out successfully. Participating in student leadership development programs gives students the ability to not only gain leadership competencies, but also social, academic and real-world skills. Moreover, with a program like the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, it can help bring the campus and community together, allowing all partners of the institution and community to contribute to developing the whole student. With all of the perceived benefits, from both students and the research, of becoming involved in activities outside the classroom, like the Student Pathways Leadership Institute, it is clearly evident why Cumberland County College decided to implement a leadership development program to their institution.

Recommendations for Practice

Based upon current research, and the findings from this study, suggestions are as follows:

1. Much more emphasis needs to be placed on working in groups, being part of a team and group dynamics; these aspects need to be established from the beginning.

2. Collaboration between academic affairs, student affairs, and the outside community should be occurring to create successful programs, which includes the Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

3. Based upon participants' suggestions, start implementing changes regarding program entrance criteria, start date, session topics, and number of sessions to enhance the Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

4. Consider new ways to advertise the Student Pathways Leadership Institute to students who would not already be considered student leaders on campus.

5. The members of the planning team should look into ways of incorporating the Office of Student Life and Athletics' Co-Curricular Transcript Program into the Student Pathways Leadership Institute

6. A proposal should be developed on ways to obtain funding for the institute to use to travel to off-site locations, or bring in nationally recognized speakers.

7. Consider making an aspect of the institute for academic credit.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon current research, and the findings from this study, suggestions are as follows:

1. This study was solely focused on Cumberland County College. Therefore, recommendations and suggestions on ways to enhance the program that were made by the planning team, presenters, and participants are considered only suitable for this particular institution.

2. Further studies should be done with a larger population, including different institutions that offer a similar leadership development program.

3. An assessment where the impact and learning outcomes were measured at different points over the course of the program would better help to describe the outcomes and impact of participating in the program.

4. A study could be done focusing on the similarities and differences between the first cohort of participants and the current group of participants.

5. Interviews should be conducted with planning team members.

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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

Rowan University

November 30, 2007

Anjelica Leonard
111 Patricia Avenue
Delran, NJ 8075

Dear Anjelica Leonard:

In accordance with the University's IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your project:

IRB application number: 2008-034

Project Title: The Impact of Cumberland County College's Student Pathways Leadership Institute (SPLI) on Selected Participants

In accordance with federal law, this approval is effective for **one calendar year** from the date of this letter. If your research project extends beyond that date or if you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Please retain copies of consent forms for this research for three years after completion of the research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to the Associate Provost for Research (856-256-4053).

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-4167).

Sincerely,

Roberta Dihoff, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Sisco, Burton, Psychology, Robinson Hall

APPENDIX B

Cumberland County College Research Approval Form

CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE
P.O. BOX 1500 - COLLEGE DRIVE
VINELAND, NEW JERSEY 08362-1500
Phone: 856/691-8600 - Fax: 856/691-5023

Academic Affairs and
Enrollment Services

October 29, 2007

Office of the Associate Provost for Research
Rowan University
Memorial Hall
201 Mullica Hill Rd.
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Dear Dr. Kuder:

With this letter, Cumberland County College gives its permission for Angelica Leonard to conduct a research study concerning the Impact of Student Pathways Leadership Institute.

A letter describing the research and a research proposal have been reviewed. I have been assured that all requirements for our institution's procedure have been met, and that the research will be conducted accordingly.

Should you have questions, please feel free to call me at 856-691-8600 Ext. 340 or to e-mail my office at thomasi@cccnj.edu. I look forward to the results of this important study.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Isekenegbe, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
and Enrollment Services

c: Dr. Kenneth Ender, President

/ml

APPENDIX C

Letter to Participants

April 2008

Dear Participant,

I am a graduate student in the Higher Education Administration program at Rowan University and would like to ask for your assistance with a research study I am conducting as part of my thesis. The study I am conducting involves the impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute on participants at Cumberland County College.

Attached you will find a letter of consent along with a survey. **Please take the time to fill out both forms in their entirety.** Once you have completed the survey, please return it (along with the consent form) to me by **snail mail** or by dropping it off in the **Office of Student Life** (Kellie Slade's Office), located in the Student Center.

You can address it to: **Anjelica Leonard**
111 Patricia Avenue
Delran, NJ 08075

Please return both the survey and the signed consent form to me no later than April 18, 2008.

Additionally, I am requesting your participation in an end-of-program interview that will be conducted the week of **April 21, 2008.** Also attached to this letter are the interview questions, which I implore you to look over ahead of time. If you are interested in participating in the interview as well as the survey, it is imperative that you return the attached consent form.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Anjelica Leonard

Anjelica Leonard
Graduate Student of Higher Education Administration
609-923-4158 (cell)
leonar48@students.rowan.edu

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

   By signing the form below, I agree to participate in a research study entitled "The Impact of Cumberland County College's Student Pathways Leadership Institute on Selected Participants", which is being done by Anjelica Leonard as an assignment for a thesis. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute on selected participants. Additionally, participants are asked to give their input for future recommendations of the program. The data collected in this study will be submitted in partial fulfillment of a research study.

   I understand that my responses will be anonymous and that all the data gathered will be kept confidential. I agree that any information gathered from this study may be used in any way thought best for publication or education on the basis that I am in no way identified and my name is not used.

   Additionally, I understand that there are no physical or psychological risks involved in this study, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without hesitation.

   Also, I understand that my participation does not imply employment with the state of New Jersey, Cumberland County College, the principal investigator, or any other project facilitator.

   If I have any questions or problems concerning my participation in this study I may contact Anjelica Leonard at (609) 923-4158 or Dr. Burton Sisco at (856) 256-4500 x3717.

_____   _____
(Signature of Participant)   (Date)

_____   _____
(Signature of Investigator)   (Date)

APPENDIX E

Survey Instrument

STUDENT IMPACT SURVEY

This survey is being administered as part of graduate course research project at Rowan University. While your participation is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested. Moreover, whether you agree to participate or not, your decision will have no effect on your grades, your standing in class, or any other status.

The purpose of this study is to gauge what type of impact the Student Pathways Leadership Institute (here on after, SPLI) has/had on selected participants.

Demographic Information:

Gender: ___ M   ___ F   Age: ___

Year Classification: ___Freshman   ___Sophomore   ___Junior   ___Senior   ___Other

If "other," please list highest grade level completed: _____

Current G.P.A. (if known): _____

Using the Likert Scale below, please describe the level to which each of these statements you either agree or disagree with, in regards to the impact the Student Pathways Leadership Institute had on you:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

1. The Student Pathways Leadership Institute helped me define
   my personal values   1 2 3 4 5

2. The SPLI increased my understanding of leadership development   1 2 3 4 5

3. After participating in SPLI, I feel comfortable when working
   in a group   1 2 3 4 5

4. I can apply what I have learned from my participation
   in the SPLI to activities outside the classroom   1 2 3 4 5

5. The SPLI helped me to create a network of
   friends also interested in leadership   1 2 3 4 5

6. Participating in SPLI challenged me   1 2 3 4 5

7. The SPLI allowed me to network with campus and community
    professionals I would not have normally interacted with   1 2 3 4 5

8. I am much more able to articulate my leadership style   1 2 3 4 5

9. I see value in learning about individual and group leadership   1 2 3 4 5

10. SPLI inspired me to be involved elsewhere on campus and in
    my community   1 2 3 4 5

11. I feel connected to diverse students   1 2 3 4 5

12. I am conscious of my impact on others   1 2 3 4 5

13. I am aware of how groups functions   1 2 3 4 5

14. I want to make a difference in my community   1 2 3 4 5

15. I am comfortable speaking in front of groups   1 2 3 4 5

16. I know how leadership on Cumberland County College's campus
    functions   1 2 3 4 5

17. I have reflected about the similarities between my
    thoughts and actions   1 2 3 4 5

18. Through the SPLI, I have been exposed to people
    with life experiences different than mine   1 2 3 4 5

19. The SPLI helped me to create a personal definition
    of leadership   1 2 3 4 5

20. I am more able to articulate my thoughts to others   1 2 3 4 5

21. From being in SPLI, I know I have gained personal and professional
    leadership development skills   1 2 3 4 5

22. I would consider the SPLI to be an educational learning experience 1 2 3 4 5

23. Overall, participating in SPLI was beneficial   1 2 3 4 5

Additionally, please answer the following open-ended questions:

1. Would you have participated in the Student Pathways Leadership Institute if it was a credit-bearing program? Why or why not?

2. What was the greatest lesson you learned from participating in the SPLI?

3. In regards to the overall SPLI, what recommendations would you make for future programs?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your assistance with this study is greatly appreciated.

Please return the survey to Anjelica Leonard either by dropping it off in the Office of Student Life, located in the Student Center, or by mailing the forms back to:

**Anjelica Leonard
111 Patricia Avenue
Delran, NJ 08075**

APPENDIX F

Interview Questions

Student Impact Study

Interview Questions

1. Why were you interested in becoming part of the Student Pathways Leadership Institute (SPLI)?

2. How did the SPLI impact you?

3. What was one thing that you learned about yourself from participating in the SPLI?

4. In what ways did going through SPLI help with the development of your leadership skills?

5. How will you implement the information from SPLI sessions in activities either inside or outside the classroom?

6. Do you feel, through the SPLI, that the Office of Student Life and Athletics is providing students with adequate outside the classroom learning activities?

APPENDIX G

Supplemental Interview Questions

Supplemental Interview Questions

1. Please give me a background of yourself and why you decided to enroll at CCC

2. What is your definition of a leader?

3. Before enrolling in SPLI, did you feel that you were already a leader?

4. If no, after going through SPLI, do you feel you are more of a leader / If yes, do you feel you enhanced yourself as a leader during this program?

5. What concrete skills do you feel you learned while participating in SPLI?

6. Would you recommend this program to CCC students interested in enhancing their leadership skills? Why or why not?

APPENDIX H

Survey to SPLI Planning Team and Presenters

April 23, 2008

Attention SPLI Planning Team and Presenters:

As many of you know, part of my work as the intern for Student Life and Athletics at CCC has been to work with the SPLI program. For my thesis I am looking to gauge the impact SPLI has on selected participants. As a valued member to SPLI, whether by serving on the planning team or being a presenter, I am looking to see what recommendations all of you have from an outsider perspective. Any recommendations you provide will be taken into consideration in order to enhance the program for future participants.

In the space below, if you are willing, please take a few minutes to write down your perspectives on how the SPLI program could benefit from any recommendations:

I am looking for all responses to be emailed to me no later than April 28th. Thank you for your time and consideration with this matter. I look forward to hearing from you all.

Sincerely,
Anjelica Leonard
CCC Intern, Office of Student Life and Athletics
Jel83083@comcast.net

APPENDIX I

Rules and Procedures for Logical Analysis of Written Data

RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR LOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN DATA

The following decisions were made regarding what was to be the unit of data analysis (Sisco, 1981):

1. A phrase or clause will be the basic unit of analysis

2. Verbiage not considered essential to the phrase or clause will be edited out- e.g., articles of speech, possessives, some adjectives, elaborate examples.

3. Where there is violation of convention syntax in the data it will be corrected.

4. Where there are compound thoughts in a phrase or clause, each unit of thought will be represented separately (unless one was an elaboration of another.)

5. Where information seems important to add to the statement in order to clarify it in a context, this information will be added to the unit by parentheses.

The following decisions were made regarding the procedures for the categorization of content units.

1. After several units are listed on a sheet of paper, they will be scanned in order to determine differences and similarities.

2. From this tentative analysis, logical categories will be derived from the units.

3. When additional units of data suggest further categories, they will be added to the classification scheme.

4. After all the units from a particular question responses are thus classified, the categories are further reduced to broader clusters (collapsing of categories.)

5. Frequencies of the units in each cluster category are determined and further analysis steps are undertaken, depending on the nature of the data-i.e., ranking of categories with verbatim quotes which represent the range of ideas or opinions (p.177).