NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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The Power of Peers: Exploring the Impact of Peer Leadership Experiences

Jennifer R. Keup, Director, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

Jodi Koslow Martin, Vice President for Student Engagement, North Park University

Common Purpose
2016 NASPA Annual Conference

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

March 15, 2016
www.sc.edu/fye

Session Learning Objectives

As a result of attending this session, participants will:

- …gain a greater understanding of the characteristics and outcomes of peer leadership experiences.
- …have the opportunity to compare features of their peer leadership programs to a national profile and other institutional examples.
- …be able to use empirical evidence to consider innovations or refinements to their programs.
- …advance their understanding of peer leadership as an emerging and innovative high-impact practice.

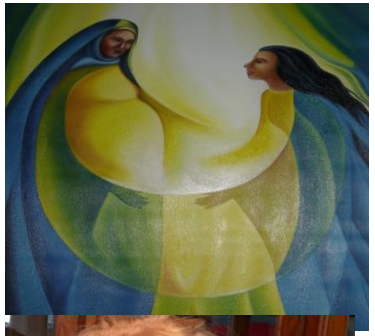
Jodi Koslow Martin: My Story

EDUCATION

- **Ph.D.** Loyola University Chicago, Higher Education, 2010 Dissertation: First-Year College Students and Faculty: A Comparison of Expectations for Success
- **M.Ed.** Ohio University, College Student Personnel, 1999
- **B.A.** St. Norbert College, Double Major in English and Communication, 1997

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Vice President for Student Engagement, North Park University: 2013 – present
- Interim Dean, College of Professional Studies; Assistant Provost; Dean of First-Year Students; Assistant Dean of Students; Director of Student Activities; Aurora University: 1999-2012
- NODA Summer Intern
- Higher Learning Commission Peer Reviewer



Lives of Significance and Service
NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

FAMILY

Michael, Spouse for 15 years
Lyla, Daughter, 5 years old

SNC

OHIO

1870 AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Jennifer R. Keup: My Story

JENNIFER RINELLA KEUP, Ph.D.

National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
1728 College Street, Columbia, SC 29208
keupj@mailbox.sc.edu (803) 777-2570

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, Higher Education and Organizational Change, UCLA	2002
Dissertation title: *Great Expectations and the Ultimate Reality Check: The Effect of Student Expectations on First-Year Adjustment*	
Graduate student distinctions: Honors pass on doctoral qualifying exam; ACPA Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals' Outstanding Doctoral Student Award, 2002	
Master of Arts, Higher Education and Organizational Change, UCLA	1998
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, UCLA	1993

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE & STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
Director 2008-present

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP & POLICIES, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
Affiliated Faculty Member 2010-present

STUDENT AFFAIRS INFORMATION AND RESEARCH OFFICE (SAIRO), UCLA
Director 2006-2008
Principal Research Analyst 2005-2006

HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE (HERI), UCLA
Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)
Director of Follow-Up Surveys 2003-2005
Project Director 2002-2003

FAMILY

PETER KEUP, ***Husband of 20+ years*** **(Attorney)**
AIDAN KEUP, ***14 year-old son*** **(high school, baseball team, piano, aspirant biomedical engineer)**
SHANE KEUP, ***11 year-old son*** **(middle school, baseball team, guitar, future architect & MLB star)**

UCLA

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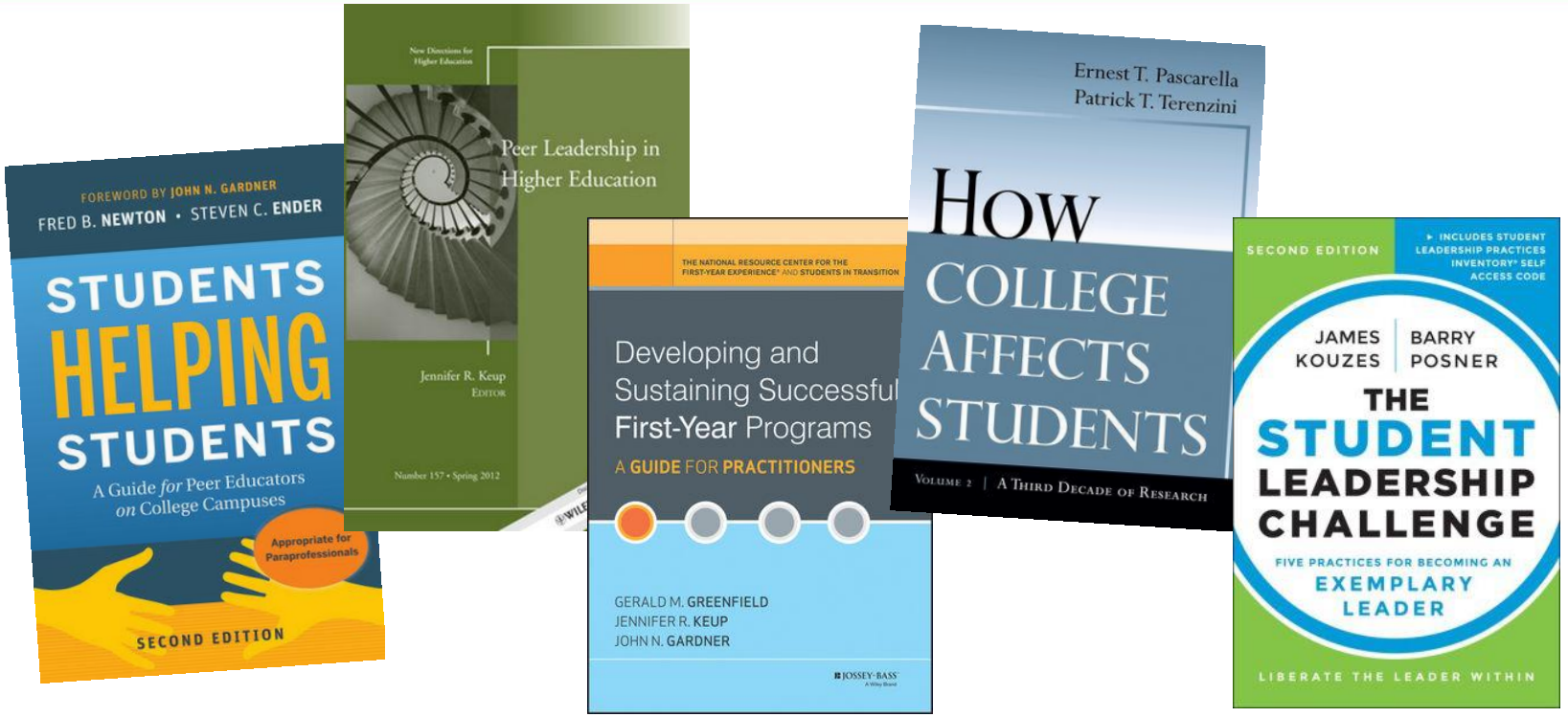
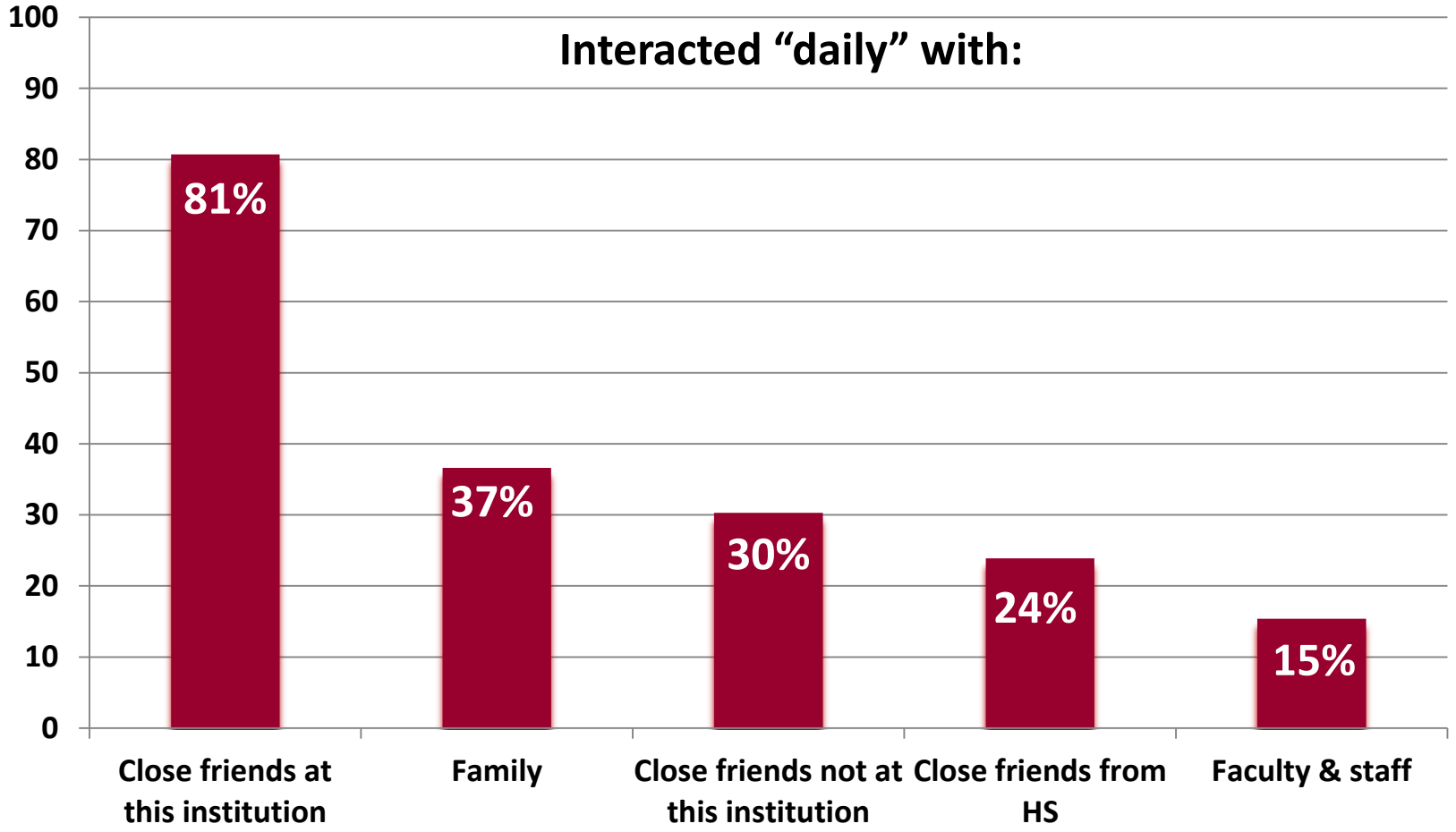


Introduction

BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

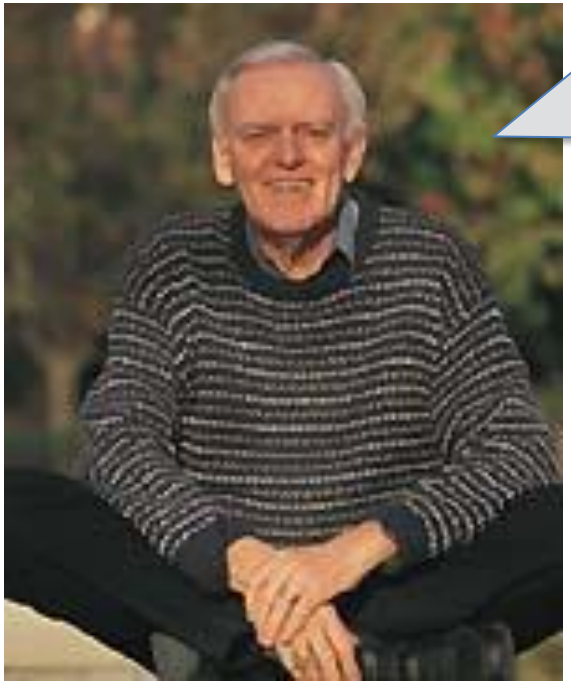
Support Networks in the First Year

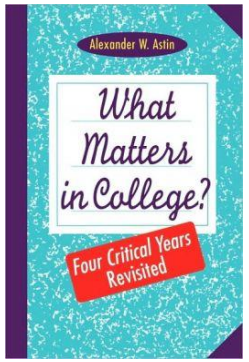


*2009 YFYC Survey

Peer Pressure

"The student's peer group is the **single most potent source of influence** on growth and development during the undergraduate years"
(*Astin, 1993, p. 398*)





Peer Pressure

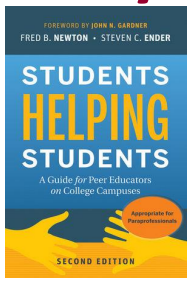
- Peers have a significant and profound impact on the undergraduate experience:
  - Intellectual development
  - Academic Engagement
  - Moral Development
  - Clarification of Political and Social Values
  - Determination of Academic and Social Self-Concept
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Critical Thinking Skills
  - Positive Gains in Writing and Reading Comprehension

(*Greenfield, Keup, & Gardner, 2013; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Skipper, 2005)*

Defining Peer Educators

"Students who have been **selected and trained** to offer educational services to their peers. These services are **intentionally designed** to assist in the adjustment, satisfaction, and persistence of students toward attainment of their educational goals. Students performing in [*these*] paraprofessional roles **are usually compensated** in some manner for their services and are **supervised by qualified professionals**."

(*Newton & Ender, 2010, p. 6*)

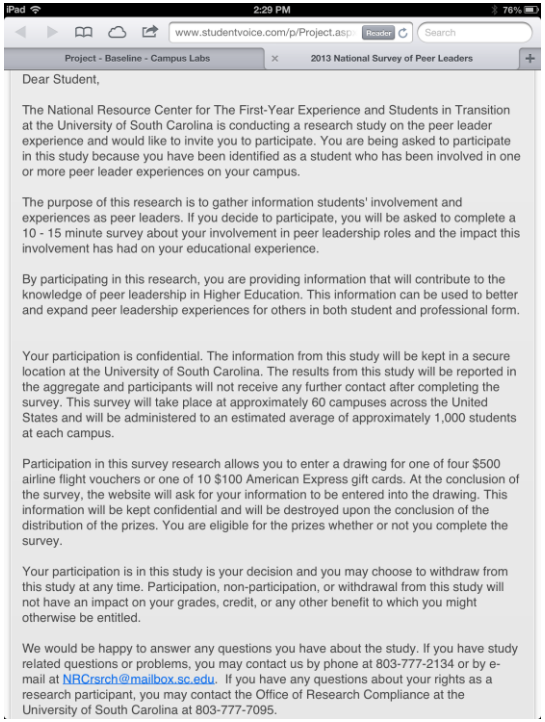


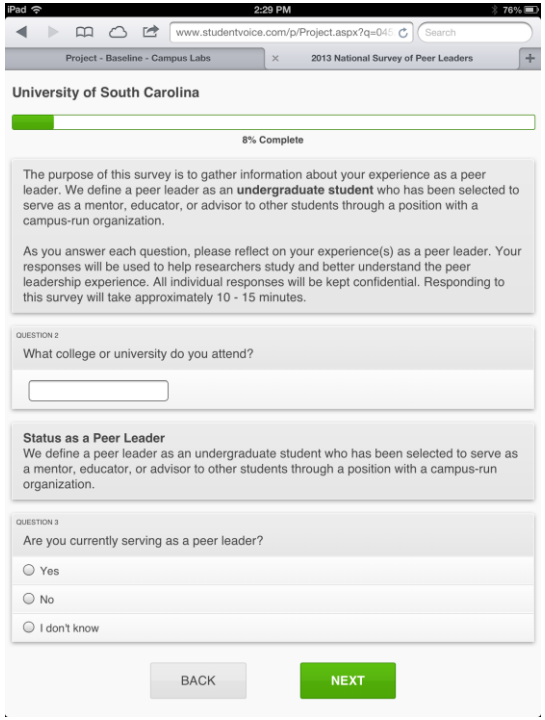
Background on Peer Leaders

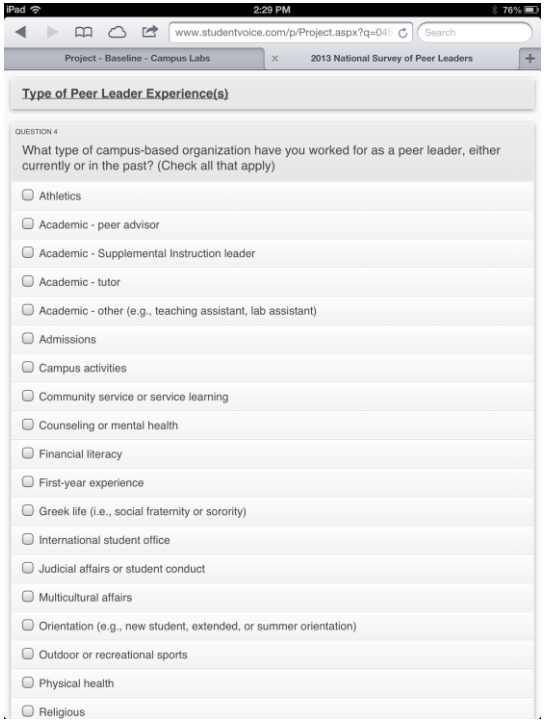
- Historically, Peer Leaders were situated in co-curricular roles in orientation or residence life (*Ender & Kay, 2001*)
- Recently, the use of Peer Leaders in the classroom and academic realm has become more widespread (*Greenfield, et al., 2013; Shook & Keup, 2012*)
  - Roles: tutors, Supplemental Instruction leaders, and peer advisors
  - Courses: English composition, introductory mathematics, gateway courses, and first-year seminars

Background on Peer Leaders

- Peer leaders are empowered to exert influence in a less intimidating way than staff or faculty (*Cuseo, 1991; Hart, 1995*)
- Student paraprofessionals are an effective and efficient resource
- The use of peer leaders provides benefit to:
  - Programs: improved student outcomes, stronger bridge between faculty/staff and students
  - Students: more opportunities for student interventions
  - Peer leaders: engagement with faculty & staff, leadership training







Methodology

2013 NATIONAL SURVEY OF PEER LEADERS

Method: Data Source

2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders

- 2013 survey was a partnership with 5 leading educational organizations involved with peer leaders:
  - ACUHO-I
  - International Center for Supplemental Instruction
  - NACA
  - National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
  - NODA
- Institutional recruitment took place first

49 Participating Institutions:

2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders

Angelo State University
Appalachian State University
Bethany College
Brigham Young University
Campbell University
Cedar Crest College
Colorado State University
East Carolina University
Eastern Illinois University
Fort Hays State University
Framingham State University
Furman University
Georgia Southern University
Hofstra University
Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne
Indiana University East
Kennesaw State University
Lesley University
Lyndon State College
Madonna University
Minot State University
Missouri State University
Montclair State University
Morgan State University
Northern Illinois University
Ohio University
Oklahoma State University - Main Campus
Oregon State University
San Jose State University
South Dakota State University
Southern Arkansas University
Southern Illinois University
Stetson University
Temple University
The College at Brockport
The University of Maryland - College Park
The University of New Orleans
The University of South Florida
The University of Tampa
University of Central Florida
University of Florida
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
University of Maryland Baltimore County
University of South Carolina Columbia
University of South Carolina Upstate
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Wayne State University
Wells College
Wittenberg University

Method: Data Source

2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders

- Student survey administered from 3/26/2013-6/1/2013
- 4,932 student peer leaders responded to the survey (28.6% response rate)
- Student sample over-represents women and high academic performers
- Student sample has adequate representation by race/ethnicity, class standing, & Pell Grant eligibility

Findings

TYPE AND NUMBER OF PEER LEADER EXPERIENCES

How are peer leaders being used on your campus?

Most Common PL Sponsors

What type of campus-based organization have you worked for as a peer leader, either currently or in the past? (n = 4,016)

Peer Leader Experience	%
Student clubs and organization(s)	44.5
Residence Hall	28.9
First-Year Experience	28.6
Campus activities	28.5
Orientation	24.6
Academic - peer advisor	24.5
Community service or service learning	23.8
Academic - Tutor	23.4

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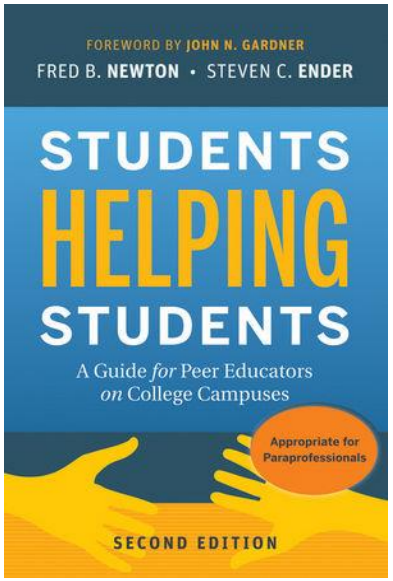
Academic - Tutor	**23.4**

Least Common PL Sponsors

What type of campus-based organization have you worked for as a peer leader, either currently or in the past? (n = 4,016)

Peer Leader Experience	%
Athletics	9.5
Admissions	9.3
Religious	8.9
Academic-Supplemental Instruction leader	8.7
Multicultural affairs	5.4
Study abroad	5.2
Outdoor or recreational sports	4.3
Counseling or mental health	3.1
Student productions or media	2.8
Judicial affairs or student conduct	2.6
Physical health	2.6
International student office	2.2
Financial literacy	.8



"Students who have been **selected and trained** to offer educational services to their peers. These services are intentionally designed to assist in the adjustment, satisfaction, and persistence of students toward attainment of their educational goals, Students performing in [*these*] paraprofessional roles are **usually compensated in some manner for their services** and are supervised by qualified professionals."

Results

PEER LEADER SELECTION, TRAINING, & COMPENSATION

PL Selection Process

Which of the following best describes the peer leader selection process you went through (n = 3,942)

Application: (86.4%)

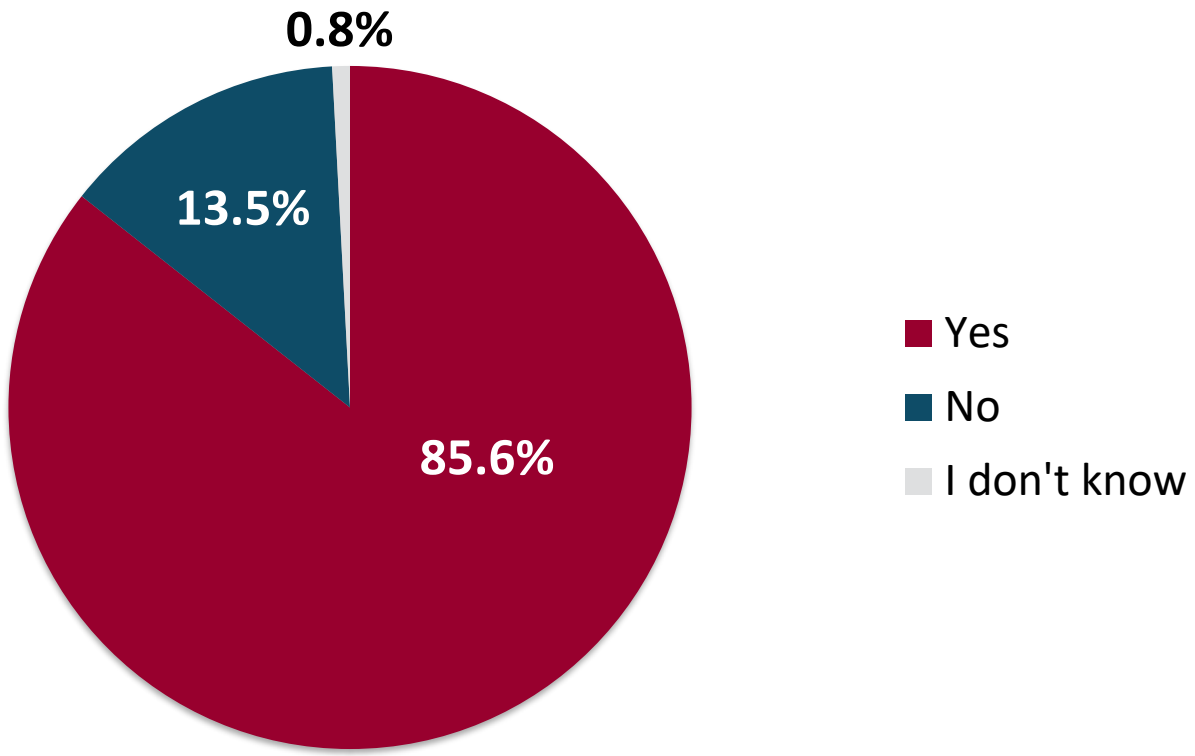
Election: (38.8%)

Nomination: (35.9%)

Other: (2.8%)

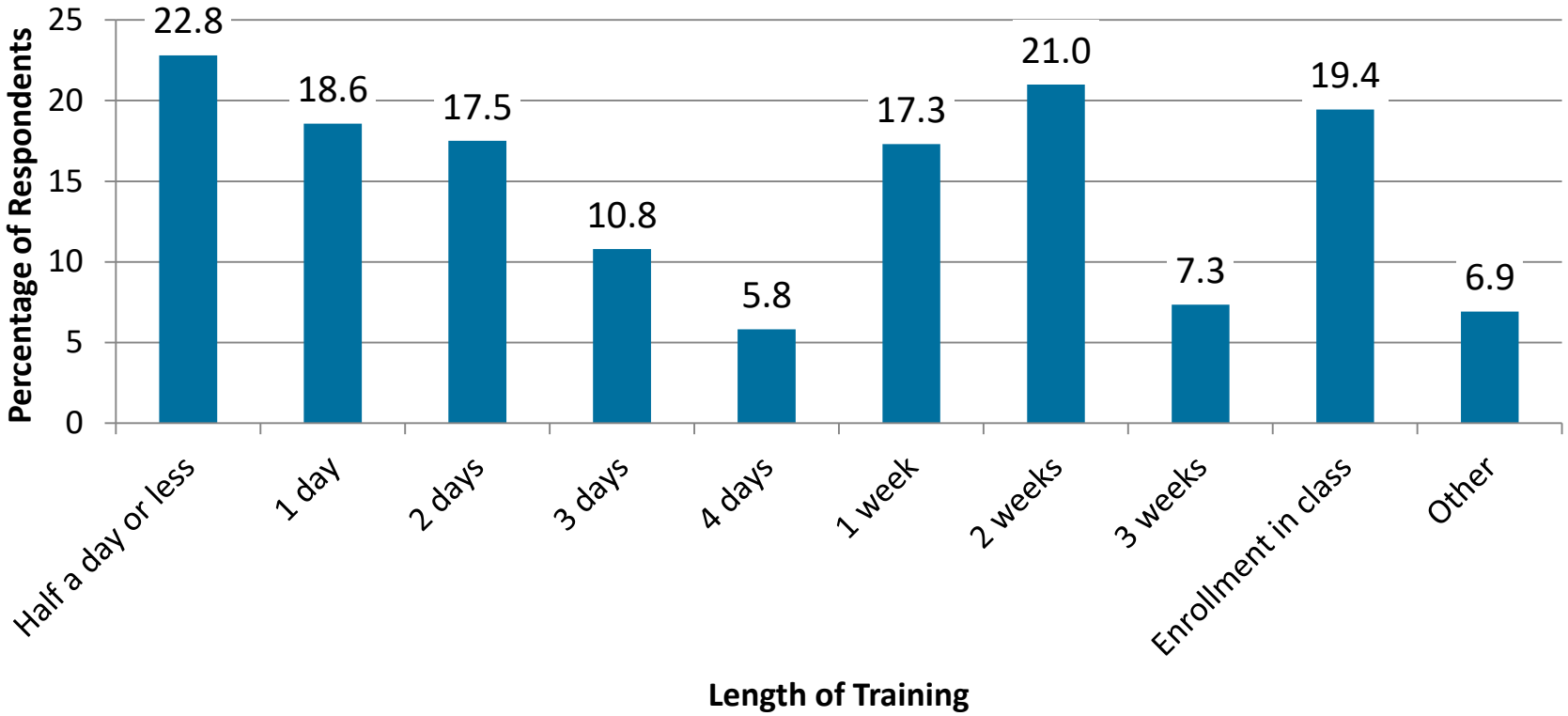
Training

Were you trained for your peer leader position(s)?
(n = 3,942)



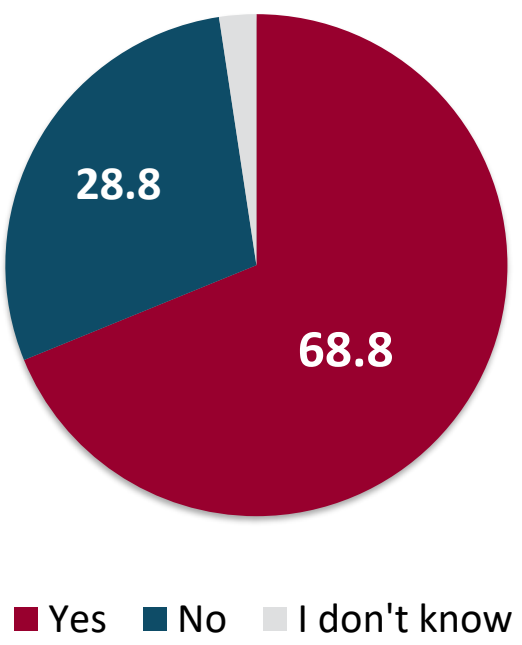
Training

How long was the initial formal training for your current and/or previous peer leader position(s)? (n = 3,353)

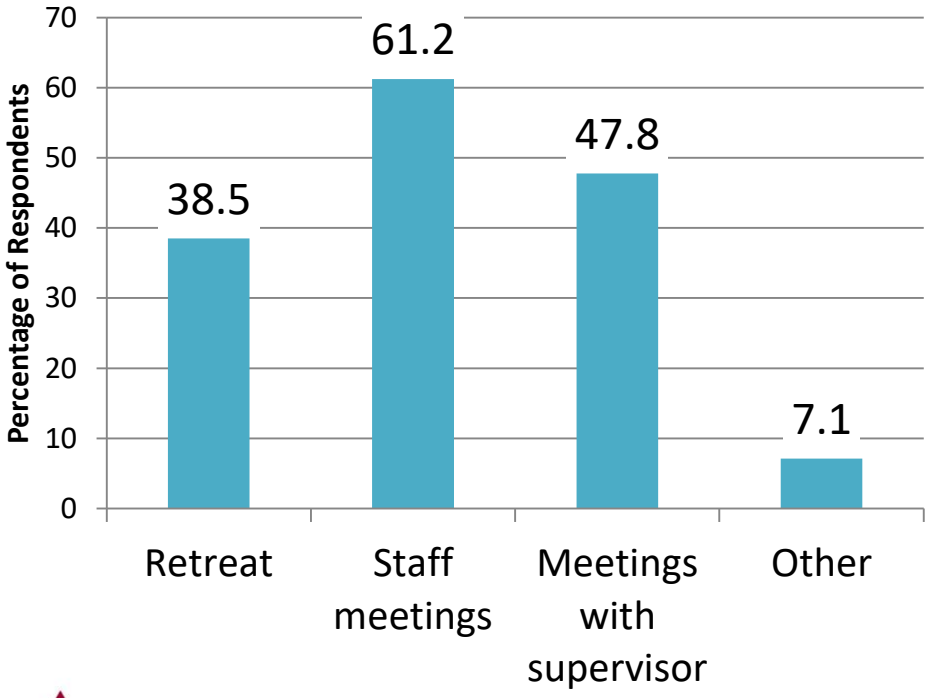


Training

Did you receive any additional ongoing formal training after the initial training? (n = 3,353)



What type of additional ongoing formal training did you receive? (n = 2,303)

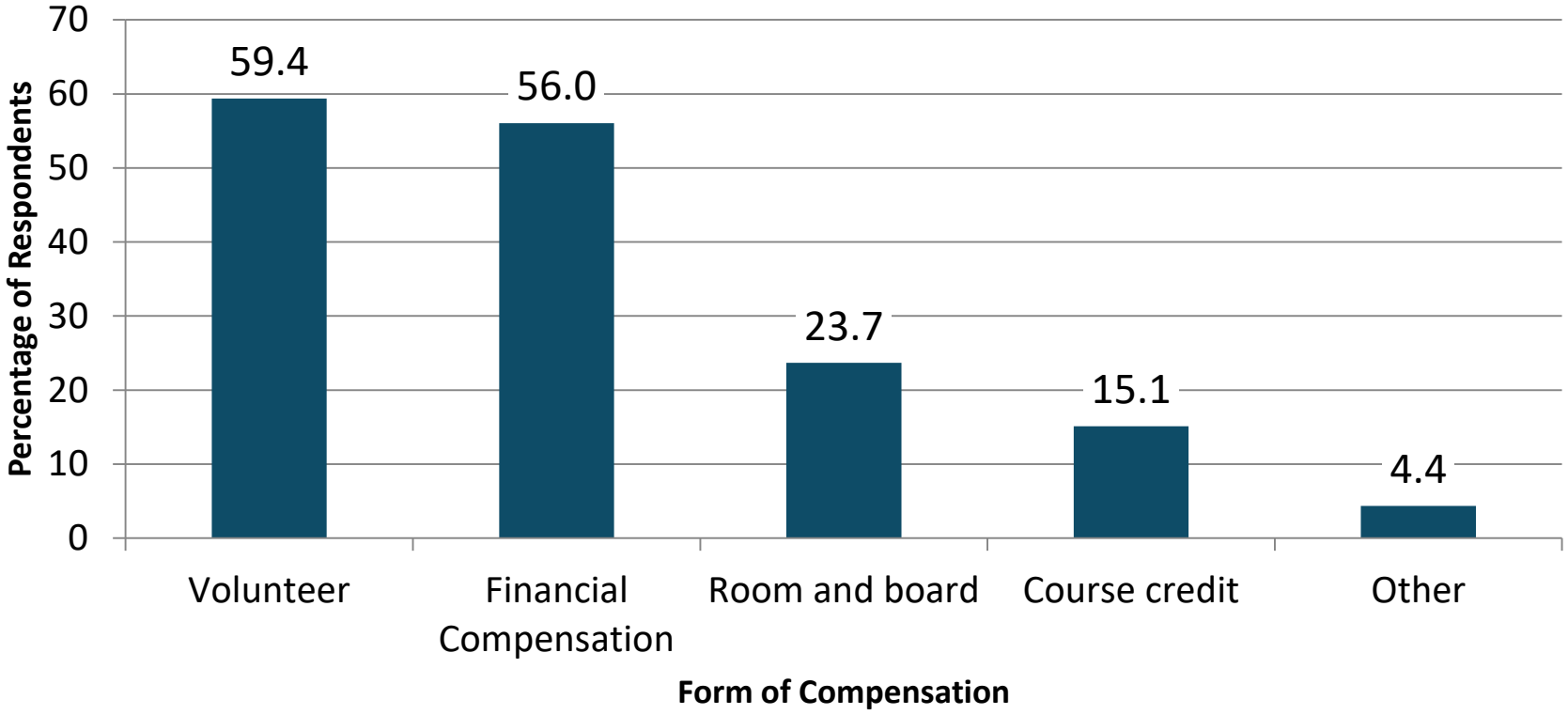


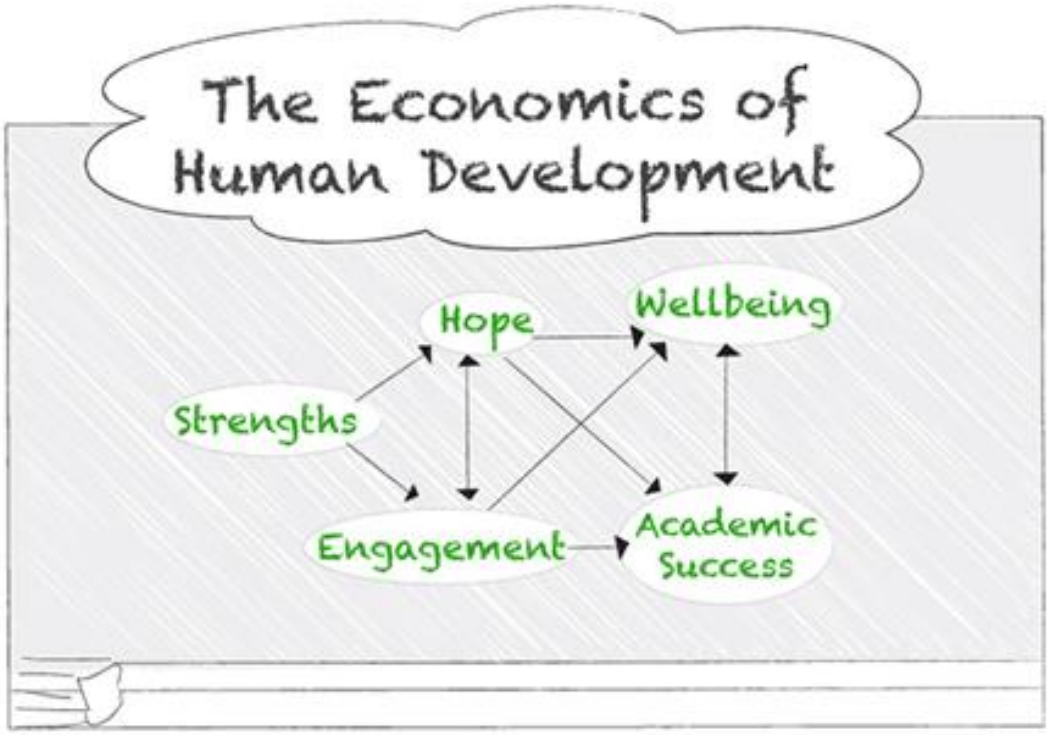
Trends in Peer Leader Training

- Longer training modules
- Ongoing support & professional development
- Curricular components
- Outcomes focused
- Focus on supervision as part of training
- Peer leadership & training among peer leaders
- Integrated across campus and across PLE

Compensation

What compensation did or do you receive for your work as a peer leader? (n = 3,942)





Findings

PEER LEADER OUTCOMES

What are the stated outcomes for peer leaders at your institution?

Outcomes of Peer Leader Experiences

- Student peer leaders were asked to report their growth in four outcome areas:
  - "To what degree has the following (outcome) changed as a direct result of your peer leadership experiences?"
- Outcome areas
  - Skills
  - Undergraduate Experiences
  - Employability Outcomes
  - Academic Performance

Outcomes of PLEs

Skill Development	% Increased
Leadership	87.3
Interpersonal communication	82.5
Teamwork	77.5
Time management	73.6
Project management	72.9
Organization	71.5
Presentation	67.5
Critical thinking	65.8
Written communication	53.4

Outcomes of PLEs

Undergraduate Experience	% Increased
Knowledge of campus resources	83.6
Meaningful interaction with peers	81.2
Feeling of belonging at institution	76.6
Meaningful interaction with staff members	75.9
Interaction with people from different backgrounds	75.6
Meaningful interaction with faculty	73.3
Understanding people from different backgrounds	72.9
Desire to engage in continuous learning	71.8
Desire to persist at institution	68.9

Outcomes of PLEs

Employability Outcomes	% Increased
Building professional interpersonal relationships	77.9
Applying knowledge to a real-world setting	72.7
Bringing together info from different places	71.2
Providing direction through persuasion	67.8
Analyzing a problem from new perspectives	65.8
Expectations for success in a FT job after grad	65.5
Creating innovative approaches to a task	65.4
Engaging in ethical decision-making	64.5
Sharing ideas with others in writing	46.2

Outcomes of PLEs

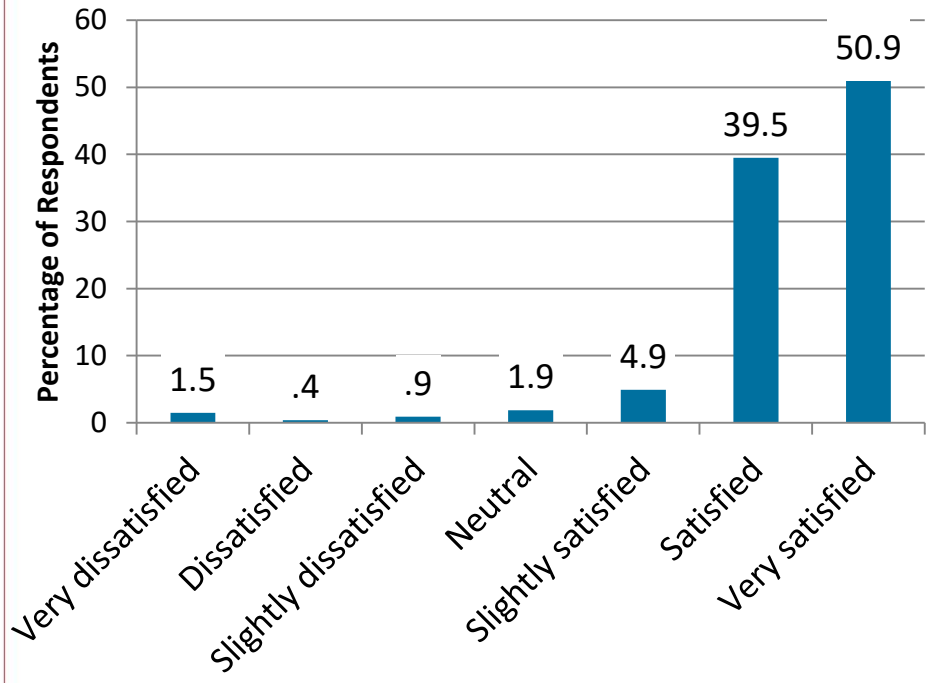
Academic Performance	% Increased
Academic skill development	39.9
Overall academic performance	23.8
Grade point average	19.0
# of credit hours completed each term	15.1
Facilitate timely graduation	1.8

Self-Rated Impact on Undergraduate Experience

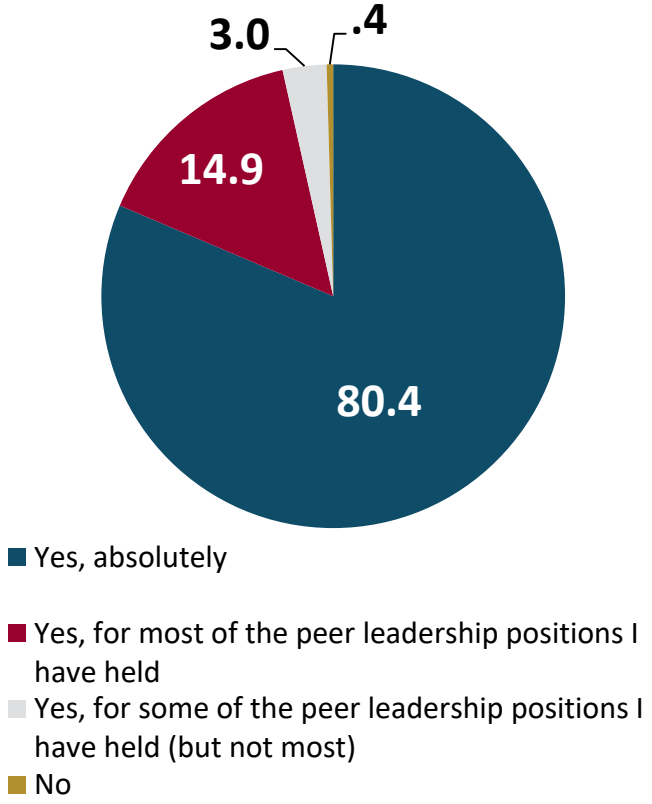
"When I first got the job I was shy and unsure of myself a lot of the times but over the past almost two years I have grown and become more confident. I have learned to communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds. I have also had the opportunity to become close to faculty and staff that I work with. I feel more connected to campus and have enjoyed being there for freshmen students that are struggling with the college transition."

Satisfaction with PLEs

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your peer leadership experiences?



Would you recommend being a peer leader to other students?



Institutional Practice

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

North Park University

- Traditional Peer Leadership Opportunities

  - Crew Leaders, Student Ambassadors, Student Organization Leaders

- New Traditional Peer Opportunities
  - Writing Advisors linked to Cornerstone (FYE) Courses
  - Faith and Justice Group in Urban Outreach
  - Student Mentors in Bridge Programs beyond Welcome Week
  - Music and Worship Leaders

University of South Carolina

University 101
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA Programs

- Three-credit, extended orientation course
- 80% of first-year class enrolls annually
- 220 sections offered during fall 2015
  - 204 faculty and staff instructors
  - 214 peer and graduate leaders
  - 4 senior peer leaders

University 101

Peer Leaders

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Peer Leaders: The University 101 Peer Leader Program at the University of South Carolina has been an important component of the University 101 course since 1993. Outstanding rising junior and senior students are recruited to serve as role models and mentors for incoming first-year students. Peer leaders must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and also must demonstrate leadership/ involvement in other substantive areas of university life. It is the goal of the University 101 staff to recruit a quality cohort of peer leaders that will allow for each section of the course to be co-taught by an instructor and undergraduate or graduate student.

High-Impact Educational Practices

First-Year Seminars and Experiences
Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

Common Intellectual Experiences
The older idea of a "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

Learning Communities
The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses
These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice "across the curriculum" has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects
Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

Undergraduate Research
Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning
Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore "difficult differences" such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
In these programs, field-based "experiential learning" with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both *apply* what they are learning in real-world settings and *reflect* in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Internships
Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects
Whether they're called "senior capstones" or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

LEAP

Conclusions

PEER LEADERSHIP AS A HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICE

Definition of High-Impact Practices

"Teaching and learning practices that have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. These practices take many different forms, depending upon learner characteristics and on institutional priorities and contexts. [*HIPs are*] practices that educational research suggest increase rates of retention and student engagement."

(*Kuh, 2010*)

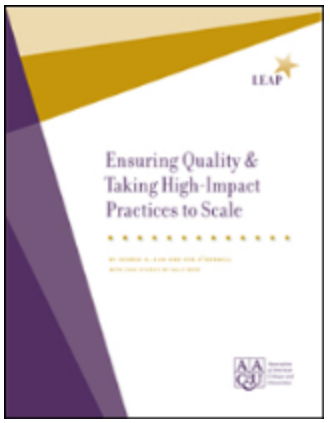
10 High-Impact Practices

- ☑ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- ☑ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ☑ Learning Communities
- ☑ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ☑ Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- ☑ Undergraduate Research
- ☑ Diversity/Global Learning
- ☑ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ☑ Internships
- ☑ Capstone Courses and Projects

What does it mean to be HIP?

Characteristics of HIPs

- Creates an investment of time and energy
- Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters
- Real-world applications
- High expectations
- Includes frequent feedback
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Demands reflection and integrated learning
- Accountability



Consider Adaptability of HIPs

"[*HIP*] key conditions can be adapted and incorporated into any teaching and learning situation inside or outside the classroom to promote higher levels of student performance. There are doubtless other high-impact activities…in which large number of students participate."

Kuh in Brownell & Swaner, 2010

High-Impact Practices

- ☑ First-Year Seminars & Experiences
- ☑ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ☑ Learning Communities
- ☑ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ☑ Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- ☑ Internships
- ☑ Undergraduate Research
- ☑ Diversity/Global Learning
- ☑ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ☑ Capstone Courses & Projects
- ☑ **Peer Leadership**

Conclusions

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS & TAKEAWAYS

Applications and Implications

- Talk about Peer Leadership as a High Impact Practice with Senior Student Affairs Leaders
- Specifically for retention – Link Peer Leadership to Early Warning System
- Financial Literacy Education Peer Leadership Potential

Takeaways - Overall

- Peer leaders report engagement in experiences
  - Largest concentration of respondents reported spending between 6 and 15 hours per week on PL responsibilities
  - Most report active involvement in selection process
  - Many have training experiences of a week or longer
  - Majority report ongoing training
  - Many do not receive compensation (i.e., volunteer)
- Peer leaders report satisfaction with the experience
  - Nearly all respondents (96%) would recommend at least some peer leadership positions to other students

Takeaways - Overall

- Insight into common and potential selection, training, and compensation models
- Peer leaders report growth due to experiences
  - Overall majority report gains on nearly all outcomes in skills, undergraduate experiences, and employability outcomes
  - Academic outcomes not as strongly affected by PLEs
  - Method of advancing intercultural competency
  - Highly transferable to career
- Peer leadership as an emergent HIP

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