The Multi Institutional Study of Leadership
University of San Diego
Student Life Findings

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Background of the Study

The purpose of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is to examine influences of higher education on college student leadership development.   USD was selected as one of the 101 participating institutions of MSL in 2009. Data were collected at USD in Spring 2009.

Theoretical Frame
The social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) provides the theoretical frame for this study as it was created specifically for college students, is typically cited as one of the most influential leadership models used in practice with college students and is consistent with the emerging leadership paradigm. This perspective, also referred to as the post-industrial paradigm, suggests that leadership is a relational, transformative, process-oriented, learned, and change-directed phenomenon. Similarly, the central principles associated with the social change model involve social responsibility and change for the common good. These are achieved through the development of eight core values targeted at enhancing students' levels of self-awareness and abilities to work with others. The values include: consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, common purpose, collaboration, controversy with civility, and citizenship. These values function at the individual (i.e., consciousness of self, congruence commitment), group (i.e., common purpose, collaboration, and controversy with civility), and societal (i.e., citizenship) levels. The dynamic interaction across levels and between values contributes to social change for the common good, the eighth critical value associated with this model.

Social Change Model Value Definitions
- **Consciousness of self:** Awareness of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to take action.
- **Congruence:** Thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, genuineness, authenticity, and honesty towards others; actions are consistent with most deeply-held beliefs and convictions.
- **Commitment:** The psychic energy that motivates the individual to serve and that drives the collective effort; implies passion, intensity, and duration, and is directed toward both the group activity as well as its intended outcomes.
- **Collaboration:** Ability to work with others in a common effort; constitutes the cornerstone value of the group leadership effort because it empowers self and others through trust.
- **Common purpose:** Ability to work with shared aims and values; facilitates the group's ability to engage in collective analysis of issues at hand and the task to be undertaken.
- **Controversy with civility:** Recognizes two fundamental realities of any creative group effort: that differences in viewpoint are inevitable, and that such differences must be aired openly, but with civility. Civility implies respect for others, a willingness to hear each others' views, and the exercise of restraint in criticizing the views and actions of others.
- **Citizenship:** The process whereby an individual and the collaborative group become responsibly connected to the community and the society through the leadership development activity. To be a good citizen is to work for positive change on the behalf of others and the community.
- **Change:** The ability to adapt to environments and situations that are constantly evolving, while maintaining the core functions of the group.

Source: Higher Education Research Institute. (1996). *A social change model of leadership development: Guidebook version III.* College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.

Participants

Random Sample
A total of 4000 undergraduate students at USD were randomly selected for participation in the study. A total of 928 students responded to the survey in full (24 partial completions), resulting in a 23.8% response rate and 97% completion rate. The demographic breakdown of the respondents is:

Gender
Male: 28% (n=263)
Female: 72% (n=668)

Race
White: 63% (n=581)
Asian American: 8% (n=71)
Latino: 14% (n=128)
Multiracial: 12% (n=111)
*Not enough respondents to report for African American,
Middle Eastern, and American Indian Students*

Class Standing
First-Year: 30% (n=283)
Sophomore: 19% (n=180)
Junior: 22% (n=205)
Senior: 29% (n=277)

The demographic breakdown of the random sample of 4000 surveyed was as follows. Note that the responses are more heavily skewed toward female students.

Gender
Male: 41%
Female: 59%

Race
White: 69%
Asian American: 12%
Latino: 15%
Black: 2.4%
American Indian: 1.5%
(race response categories on the survey and at USD were different)

Class Standing
First-Year: 29%
Sophomore: 24%
Junior: 22%
Senior: 25%

Comparative Sample (Student Leaders)
A total of 371 undergraduate students at USD were identified by administrators on campus as *student leaders* (those who held a formal leadership role on campus) for a comparative sample. The purpose of selecting this sample is to understand the experiences of the student leaders as well as compare their outcomes to those of the random sample. A total of 163 of these student leaders responded to the survey, resulting in a 44% response rate. The demographic breakdown of the respondents is:

Gender
Male: 25% (n=41)
Female: 75% (n=122)

Race
White: 61% (n=99)
Latino: 14% (n=22)
Multiracial: 13% (n=21)
*Not enough respondents to report for
African American, Asian American,
Middle Eastern, and American Indian Students*

Class Standing
First-Year: not enough
Sophomore: 23% (n=37)
Junior: 32% (n=53)
Senior: 42% (n=69)

Findings from the Study

Note that this survey collected students' <u>self-reported</u> perceptions of their leadership perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors. In examining self-reported leadership scores, it is important to note that with more exposure to leadership and involvement experiences, students may have a more realistic self-appraisal of their leadership capacity than those with less exposure (Rohs, 2002).

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General Outcome Measure Scores and Comparisons
Student leaders have significantly higher levels of *common purpose*, *citizenship*, *leadership efficacy*, and *complex cognitive skills* as compared to the random sample.

Outcome Measure	USD Random	USD Student Leaders
Consciousness of Self*	3.98	4.14
Congruence*	4.16	4.25
Commitment*	4.27	4.42
Collaboration*	4.02	4.21
Common Purpose*	4.00	4.19^
Controversy with Civility *	3.79	3.91
Citizenship*	3.86	4.18^
Change*	3.78	3.93
Omnibus SRLS*	3.95	4.13
Leadership Efficacy**	3.12	3.41^
Complex Cognitive Skills***	3.12	3.31^

^Significant difference at the p<.01 level between the *student leaders* and *random sample*
* Scored on a 5-point likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)
** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not at all Confident (1) to Very Confident (4)
*** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not Grown at All (1) to Grown Very Much (4)

Change in Outcome Measures Over Time
Random Sample
In examining perceived changes in outcome scores during college for the random sample, there were significant changes reported by seniors on the outcomes of *consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy,* and *complex cognitive skills*. Since this study had a cross-sectional design, this statistic was measured by examining seniors' self-reported scores on the outcome measures along with how they believed they measured on these outcomes prior to beginning college.

Findings from the National and Catholic Consortium samples indicate similar findings in addition to perceived significant change (with trivial to small effect sizes) in the additional four outcomes that did not emerge as significant for USD (*collaboration, common purpose, and controversy with civility*).

Comparative Sample (Student Leaders)
For the comparative sample of student leaders, there were significant change over time reported by seniors on the outcomes of *consciousness of self, citizenship, omnibus SRLS*, and *leadership efficacy*. Since this study had a cross-sectional design, this statistic was measured by examining seniors' self-reported scores on the outcome measures along with how they believed they measured on these outcomes prior to beginning college.

Outcome Measure	Random Sample: Prior to College	Random Sample: Seniors	Student Leaders: Prior to College	Student Leaders: Seniors
Consciousness of Self*	3.65	4.03^	3.66	4.14^
Congruence*	4.01	4.19^	3.94	4.19
Commitment*	4.16	4.29^	4.31	4.42
Collaboration*	3.95	4.06	4.08	4.21
Common Purpose*	3.95	4.01	4.01	4.20
Controversy with Civility*	3.96	3.85	3.99	3.94
Citizenship*	3.80	3.82	3.76	4.13^

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Change*	3.65	3.83^		3.83	3.93
Omnibus SRLS *	3.89	3.98^		3.95	4.12^
Leadership Efficacy **	2.96	3.21^		3.03	3.41^
Complex Cognitive Skills ***	3.10	3.33^		3.10	3.32

^ Significant at p<.05 level within the groups of *random sample* and *student leaders*, with *seniors* higher than *prior to college*
* Scored on a 5-point likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)
** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not at all Confident (1) to Very Confident (4)
*** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not Grown at All (1) to Grown Very Much (4)

Gender Differences
For the random sample, women have significantly higher levels of *congruence*, *commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, and omnibus SRLS* as compared men. For the comparative sample of student leaders, there were no significant gender differences for any of the social change model outcomes, leadership efficacy, or complex cognitive skills.

Outcome Measure	Random Sample: Female	Random Sample: Male		Student Leaders: Female	Student Leaders: Male
Consciousness of Self*	4.01	3.93		4.11	4.20
Congruence*	4.22^	4.06		4.26	4.22
Commitment*	4.34^	4.15		4.41	4.46
Collaboration*	4.08^	3.92		4.19	4.23
Common Purpose*	4.05^	3.91		4.19	4.19
Controversy with Civility*	3.82^	3.73		3.89	3.98
Citizenship*	3.95^	3.70		4.21	4.12
Change*	3.80	3.73		3.90	4.04
Omnibus SRLS*	4.00^	3.86		4.12	4.16
Leadership Efficacy**	3.12	3.11		3.35	3.56
Complex Cognitive Skills***	3.15	3.06		3.27	3.41

^Significant difference at the p<.01 level with USD Random Sample Females higher than USD Random Sample Males.
* Scored on a 5-point likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)
** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not at all Confident (1) to Very Confident (4)
*** Scored on a 4-point likert scale from Not Grown at All (1) to Grown Very Much (4)

Student Involvement Experiences (Random Sample)
For each of the student involvement experiences reported in this section, significant findings are reported for the outcome measures of *consciousnesses of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills.* The term *socially responsible leadership* is used to capture all of the 8 outcomes of the social change model. Only significant findings are reported.

Off-Campus Job
For the random sample, students with an off-campus job have significantly higher levels of *consciousness of self, commitment, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills* than students without an off-campus job.
    Note: On-Campus Job was not a significant experience for any of the outcomes.

Community Service
For the random sample, students who participate in community service have significantly higher levels of all of the *social change model outcomes* as well as *leadership efficacy and complex cognitive skills* as compared to those students who did not participate in community service.

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Involvement in College Organizations
For the random sample, an overall pattern is students who are involved in college organizations 'much of the time' have significantly higher levels of *socially responsible leadership* as well as *leadership efficacy and complex cognitive skills* as compared to students who participate in college organizations less frequently.

Leadership Positions in College Organizations
For the random sample, an overall pattern is students who have leadership positions in college organizations 'much of the time' have significantly higher levels of *socially responsible leadership* as well as *leadership efficacy and complex cognitive skills* as compared to students who hold leadership positions in college organizations less frequently.

Involvement in Off-Campus Organizations
For the random sample, an overall pattern is students who are involved in off-campus organizations 'much of the time' have significantly higher levels of *socially responsible leadership* as well as *leadership efficacy and complex cognitive skills* as compared to students who participate in college organizations less frequently with the exception of change.

Leadership Positions in Off-Campus Organizations
For the random sample, an overall pattern is students who have leadership positions in off-campus organizations 'much of the time' have significantly higher levels of *consciousness of self, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, citizenship, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills* as compared to students who hold leadership positions in off-campus college organizations less frequently.

Student Group Participation (Random Sample)
For each of the different student groups reported in this section, significant findings are reported for the outcome measures of *consciousnesses of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills.* The term *socially responsible leadership (SRLS)* is used to capture all of the 8 outcomes of the social change model. Only significant findings are reported.

Participation in Student Groups: Academic /Professional
For the random sample, students who participate in academic or professional student groups have a significantly higher level of *change*, (3.85 as compared to 3.74) and a significantly higher level of *leadership efficacy* (3.20 as compared to 3.06) as compared to students who do not participate in academic or professional student groups.

Participation in Student Groups: Campus- Wide Programming
For the random sample, students who participate in campus-wide programming student groups have significantly higher levels of *common purpose* (4.11 as compared to 3.98), *citizenship* (4.09 as compared to 3.83), *leadership efficacy* (3.29 as compared to 3.09), and *complex cognitive skills* (3.25 as compared to 3.10) as compared to students who do not participate in campus-wide programming student groups.

Participation in Student Groups: Identity Based
For the random sample, the only significant difference with students who participate in identity based student groups as compared to those who did not is *omnibus SRLS*, whereby students participating in these organizations have higher levels (4.05 as compared to 3.94).

Participation in Student Groups: International Interest
For the random sample, the only significant difference with students who participate in international interest student groups as compared to those who did not is *omnibus SRLS*, whereby students participating in these organizations have higher levels (4.07 as compared to 3.94).

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Participation in Student Groups: Honor Societies
For the random sample, students who participate in honor societies have significantly higher levels of *omnibus SRLS* (4.02 as compared to 3.93), *leadership efficacy* (3.24 as compared to 3.08), and *complex cognitive skills* (3.29 as compared to 3.07) as compared to students who do not participate in honor societies.

Participation in Student Groups: Religious
For the random sample, the only significant difference with students who participate in religious groups as compared to those who did not is *omnibus SRLS*, whereby students participating in these organizations have higher levels (4.05 as compared to 3.93).

Participation in Student Groups: Service
For the random sample, students who participate in service groups have significantly higher levels of *omnibus SRLS* (4.03 as compared to 3.93), and *complex cognitive skills* (3.23 as compared to 3.09) as compared to students who do not participate in service groups.

Participation in Student Groups: Sports Intramural
For the random sample, the only significant difference with students who participate in intramural sports as compared to those who did not is *commitment*, whereby students participating in these organizations have <u>lower</u> levels (4.20 as compared to 4.30)

Participation in Student Groups: Student Governance
For the random sample, students who participate in student governance groups have significantly higher levels of *omnibus SRLS* (4.06 as compared to 3.94), and *leadership efficacy* (3.34 as compared to 3.09) as compared to students who do not participate in student governance groups.

No significant differences emerged for any of the outcomes based on involvement in the following types of organizations:
- *Advocacy*
- *Art/Theatre/Music*
- *Media*
- *Military*
- *Peer Helper*
- *Political*
- *Recreational*
- *Resident Assistants*
- *Social Fraternities or Sororities*
- *Social/Special Interest*
- *Sports-Club*
- *Sports-Intercollegiate or Varsity*

Additional Experiences (Random Sample)
For each of the additional experiences reported in this section, significant findings are reported for the outcome measures of *consciousnesses of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills.* The term *socially responsible leadership (SRLS)* is used to capture all of the 8 outcomes of the social change model. Only significant findings are reported.

Social Change Behaviors (See Appendix A for the 10 measures of social change behaviors)
For the random sample, students who participate in social change behaviors 'often' have significantly higher levels of all of *SRLS outcomes* as well as *leadership efficacy* and *complex cognitive skills* than students who participate in social change behavior less frequently.

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Socio-Cultural Discussions (See Appendix A for the 6 measures of socio-cultural discussions)
For the random sample, students who participate in socio-cultural discussions 'very often' have significantly higher levels of all of *SRLS outcomes* as well as *leadership efficacy* and *complex cognitive skills* than students who participate in socio-cultural discussions less frequently.

Additional Experiences (Student Leader Comparative Sample)
For each of the additional experiences reported in this section, significant findings are reported for the outcome measures of *consciousnesses of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills.* The term *socially responsible leadership (SRLS)* is used to capture all of the 8 outcomes of the social change model. Only significant findings are reported.

Social Change Behaviors (See Appendix A for the 10 measures of social change behaviors)
 For the comparative sample, students who are involved in social change behaviors 'often' have significantly higher levels in all *SRLS outcomes* except *commitment* as compared to students who are involved in social change behaviors less frequently.

Socio-Cultural Discussions (See Appendix A for the 6 measures of socio-cultural discussions)
For the comparative sample, students who are involved in socio-cultural discussion groups 'very often' have significantly higher levels of all *SRLS outcomes* except *common purpose* and significantly higher levels of *complex cognitive skills* as compared to students who are involved in socio-cultural discussion groups less frequently.

Formal Leadership Programs and Experiences (Student Leader Comparative Sample)
For each of the formal leadership programs and experiences reported in this section, significant findings are reported for the outcome measures of *consciousnesses of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, change, omnibus SRLS, leadership efficacy, and complex cognitive skills.* The term *socially responsible leadership (SRLS)* is used to capture all of the 8 outcomes of the social change model. Only significant findings are reported.

Leadership Conference
For the comparative sample, students who are 'sometimes' involved in leadership conferences have a significantly higher level of *change* (4.09 as compared to 3.85) as compared to students who have 'never' been involved in leadership conferences. Students who are 'often' involved in leadership conferences have significantly higher levels of *leadership efficacy* (3.71 as compared to 3.33) and *complex cognitive skills* (3.59 as compared to 3.25) as compared to students who have 'never' been involved in leadership conferences.

Leadership Retreat
For the comparative sample, students who are 'often' involved in leadership retreats have a significantly higher level of *citizenship* (4.49 as compared to 4.11) as compared to students who have 'never' been involved in leadership retreats.

Short-Term Service Immersion
For the comparative sample, there are no significant differences in any of the *SRLS outcomes* between students who have been involved in short-term service immersion 'once' as compared to students who have 'never' been involved in short-term service immersion.

Emerging or New Leaders Program
For the comparative sample, there are no significant differences in any of the *SRLS outcomes* between students who have been involved in emerging or new leaders programs 'once' as compared to students who have 'never' been involved in emerging or new leaders programs.

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Appendix A

Measures of the Social Change Behaviors and Socio-cultural Conversations Scales

Social Change Behaviors Scale

The 10 measures that make up the *Social Change Behaviors* Scale are:

1. Performed community service
2. Acted to benefit the common good or protect the environment
3. Been actively involved with an organization that addresses a social or environmental problem
4. Been actively involved with an organization that addresses the concerns of a specific community (ex. academic council, neighborhood association)
5. Communicated with campus or community leaders about a pressing concern
6. Took action in the community to try to address a social or environmental problem
7. Worked with others to make the campus or community a better place
8. Acted to raise awareness about a campus, community, or global problem
9. Took part in a protest, rally, march, or demonstration
10. Worked with others to address social inequality

Socio-cultural Discussions Scale

The 6 measures that make up the *Sociocultural Conversations Scale* are:

1. Talked about different lifestyles/ customs
2. Held discussions with students whose personal values were very different from your own
3. Discussed major social issues such as peace, human rights, and justice
4. Held discussions with students whose religious beliefs were very different from your own
5. Discussed your views about multiculturalism and diversity
6. Held discussions with students whose political opinions were very different from your own

References

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