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Abstract

The purpose of this assessment was to determine how effective the leadership and identity development curriculum is in increasing the leadership capacity of 38 OMSS scholarship recipients. Through a series of workshops, students learned to demonstrate integrity, take seriously the perspectives of others, and contribute to positive social change. Students also learned to develop a strong sense of personal identity and develop relationships with others regardless of their identities or backgrounds. The workshop themes included identity development, code switching, group dynamics, and socially responsible leadership. Learning outcomes were assessed through a series of qualitative surveys along with quantitative pre-test and post-test administered to all 38 participants. The findings indicate that students who participated in the workshops developed a stronger sense of identity and relationship building, were more aware of their presence in various group settings, and had an increased willingness to have conversations with their peers on identity development and integrity. This study is the foundation for the future of the Leadership Curriculum and serves to inform how the program will be implemented in the next academic year.

Introduction and Context

The Leadership Curriculum is in its pilot year under the Academics, Leadership, and Identity Development area (ALI) within the Office of Multicultural Student Success. The program was put into place for the scholarship recipients housed in OMSS to assist with their holistic development throughout the academic year. ALI's mission seeks to cultivate success for students of color, low-income college students, or first generation college students through a sustained leadership and identity development curriculum, financial resources, and academic support. Through this program, ALI aims to touch on all of the aspects of the team's mission in ensuring that scholarship recipients are growing and able to translate their experiences to their everyday activities and actions. The learning outcomes for this program are as follows:

1. Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will, as leaders, demonstrate integrity, show that they take seriously the perspectives of others, and contribute to positive social change
2. Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will be able to participate thoughtfully and respectfully in cultural exploration, engagement, acceptance and collaboration as members of an inclusive community during and after their DePaul University experience.
3. Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will develop a strong sense of personal identity and form mature, respectful relationships with others.

Within the Office of Multicultural Student Success, our goal is to have a seamless engagement pipeline from the first year through graduation for first generation, low-income, and

students of color. This pipeline not only assists students in their transition from year to year but also contributes to the social and career capital that is needed as these higher risk students start preparing for life after DePaul. When students participate in OMSS sponsored programs, they are surrounded by peers who share similar identities, and engage in one-on-one interactions with OMSS staff.

Given their social and cultural context low income, first generation, and students of color experience unique challenges throughout their college tenure. Research has indicated that these students' identities also have an impact on their experiences surrounding leadership in college (Arminio, et.al., 2000; Dugan, 2006; Kezar & Moriart, 2000; Dugan, Kodama, & Gebhardt, 2012). Taking into consideration the perceptions traditionally marginalized students have of college and leadership, universities must demystify this involvement for these at-risk student populations. Through focused workshops tailored to their specific needs, leadership development for low-income, first generation, and students of color is one of many key experiences aiding in retention today (Dugan, et. al., 2012; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007).

Leadership development literature most pertinent to low-income, first generation, and students of color is often rooted in the Social Change Model of leadership. These studies and theories develop specific best practices for engaging traditionally marginalized students in leadership development and activities. Providing students the opportunity to engage with the Social Change Model, their own identities, and leadership development affords them the opportunity to develop into the kind of leaders they wish to be (Arminio, et.al., 2000). Conscious leadership development is essential in developing socially responsible leaders.

Contemporary research indicates that leadership experiences for college students are important for their engagement with their institution. However, for students from historically

marginalized groups, this involvement may prove more taxing. Providing identity conscious leadership development has proven effective for engaging with these student populations. Providing varying kinds of training to develop students' sense of self as well as what kind of leaders they want to be gives these students the tools needed for purposeful engagement during their college tenure.

Reframing what leadership development can be for students makes reaching a broader audience possible. This can ring true, especially when formulating training sessions for students who cannot commit to a time intensive leadership training or experience. For many students, long-term leadership experiences are not always possible. Practitioners cannot underestimate the impact of short-term leadership experiences and development (Rosch & Caza, 2012). Certain capacities of leadership within the Social Change Model can be taught in short-term training sessions. Although these trainings cannot be as comprehensive as long-term leadership experiences, they should not be overlooked as a valuable touch-point for many students. This is especially true for students who may feel they do not belong in traditional leadership realms, or are not involved on campus.

Methodology

The students who participated in this assessment were a controlled group of 38 current DePaul students who are also OMSS scholarship recipients. These 38 students were selected due to their affiliation with the department. The sample size was sufficient enough to analyze and use as a pilot group in how the program/curriculum should improve for scholarship recipients and the greater OMSS population. Participation in the workshops was part of the scholarship requirements which ensured students' consistent participation.

To assess the success of the leadership curriculum, students were asked to fill out a pre-test at the beginning of the academic year, individual surveys following each workshop, a post-test, and focus group. The pre-test was a self-evaluation of students' leadership skills and development through a Likert-scale model. Through this pre-test, we were able to compile quantitative data that would assist in the overall assessment and give a better foundation for the qualitative portion of the assessment. The post-test asked the same questions to assess students' growth and development throughout the year. The individual workshop surveys qualitatively assessed what was learned from each workshop, along with the professional and personal applications of the skills learned. The major themes for each workshop were identified by having at least two students mention that theme in their response.

Students were asked to complete the pre-test, workshop surveys (Appendix B), and post-test via Qualtrics in order to ensure that all of the information was confidential and only those working directly with this assessment would have access to those responses. After compiling the responses, major themes from each workshop were identified and will be discussed further throughout this assessment report under its corresponding workshop title. The pre and post test questions and chart can be found in Appendix A.

The purpose of the focus group was to improve logistics, presentation, and execution of the workshops along with the curricular content and assessment strategies. The focus group questions can be found in Appendix C. The focus group consisted of 25 students, all of which have participated in the curriculum for the academic year.

Findings and Discussion

Participant Response Rate

Participant response rate for the pre-test and post-test was 80% and the individual surveys had an overall response rate of 50%. While our participation rates were above 90% for each workshop in the curriculum, achieving the same response for each follow-up survey proved taxing.

Participant Demographics

The breakdown of the participants is as follows:

Year in School

12 First Year
10 Sophomore
7 Junior
7 Senior
1 Graduate

Gender

15 men
22 women

Race/Ethnicity

18 African American/Black
2 White
15 Latino/Hispanic
2 Bi/Multi-Racial

Key Findings

Through the surveys administered, students reported they learned the following from these workshops:

- Leadership as an experience rather than a title is important to their development.

- Re-thinking one size fits all leadership models and discerning what leadership style best fits them.
- 5 tenets of Socially Responsible Leadership as a foundation for inclusive and ethical leadership practices.
- Awareness of self in privilege, communication, professional practices, conflict resolution, and social change.

The results of this assessment were beneficial in reviewing what works for students and what does not. Students overwhelmingly reported experiencing the most growth in their communication skills and overall discernment as leaders. Establishing a common language and skill set for their self-efficacy as leaders in OMSS was important to the students. This skill development and capacity building was especially important for these students as mission students of OMSS.

This assessment project helps contribute to the field of higher education as well as to the Division of Student Affairs at DePaul due to its identity-conscious framework for leadership. In our research we found that most of the student leadership canon does not have much identity consciousness. As we move forward in rethinking how we build socially responsible leaders in the Division of Student Affairs, reimagining how identity intersects with leadership skill building will be especially effective for our low-income, first generation, and students of color. Working within a success framework with an identity lens has proven effective in OMSS' leadership development curriculum.

With this assessment came some limitations. While we were able to have a captive audience and required attendance for these workshops, our ability to garner above 50% response rate for individual workshops proved difficult. This response rate will impact our ability to

review and adjust the curriculum model for individual workshops, however our higher response rate of 80% for the pre-test and post-test shows us what skill sets students felt the most growth was needed, and how much growth they experienced from the Fall Quarter to the Spring Quarter.

Advancement Toward Learning Outcome:

Learning Outcome	Number of Students Assessed	Number of Students with Acceptable or Better Performance
Students who participate in Student Affairs programs and activities will develop a strong sense of personal identity and form mature, respectful relationships with others.	22	18

Implications

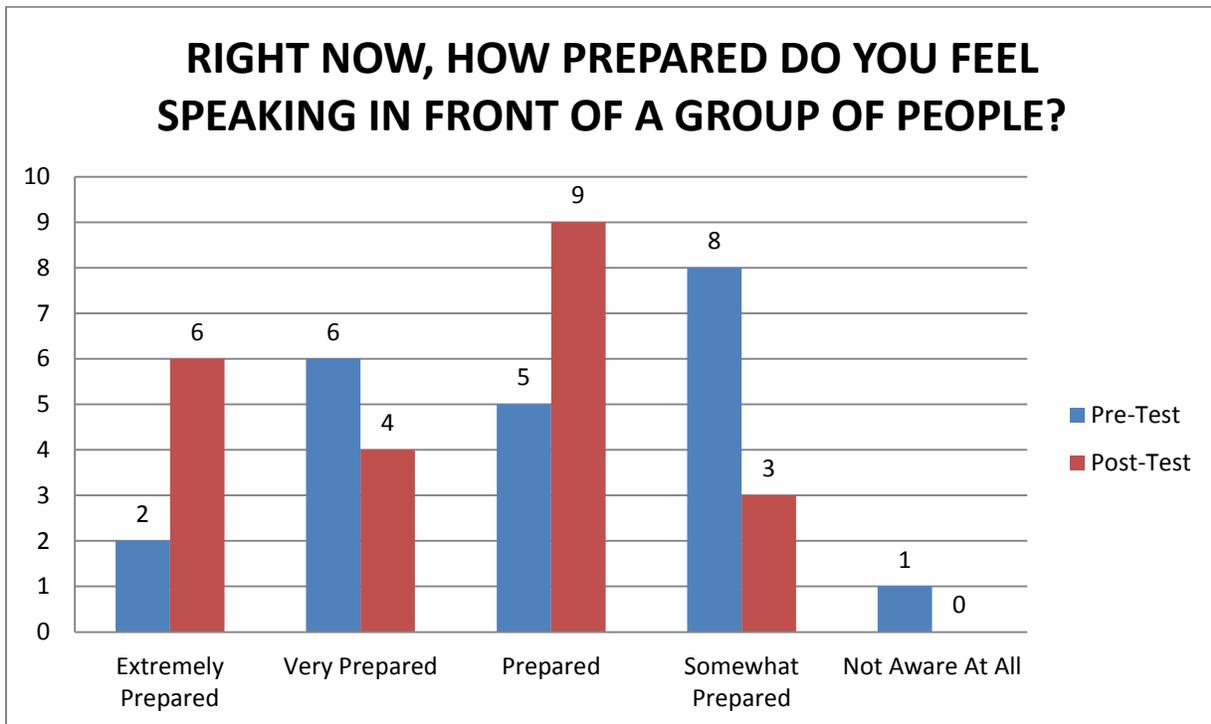
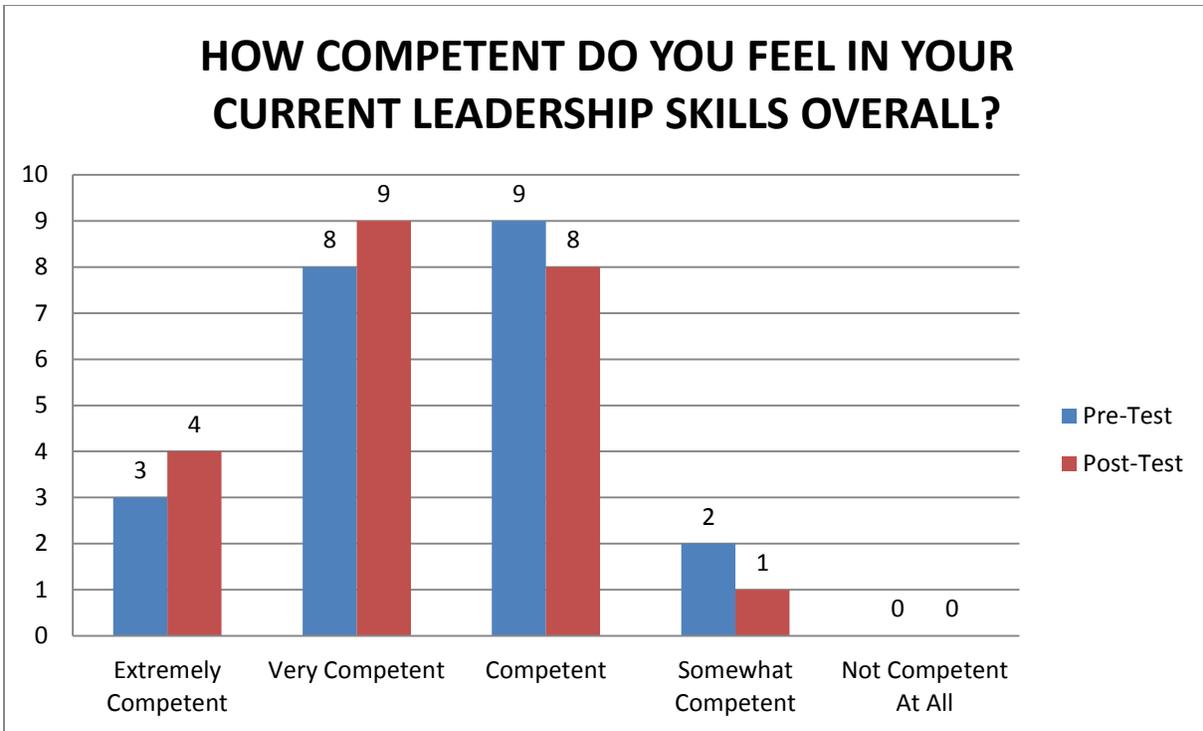
Through this assessment, we were able to learn how students are engaging with the workshop material and how to improve content areas for further student development. The department will take these considerations in improving the curriculum along with providing more opportunities for student engagement throughout the year. Student feedback indicated a need for various presentation styles; for example, students felt they would be better engaged through case studies, more small group activities, and interactive workshops. Along with presentation style students also gave feedback regarding the physical space for the workshops, indicating that a traditional classroom setting is not the most conducive to their engagement. The

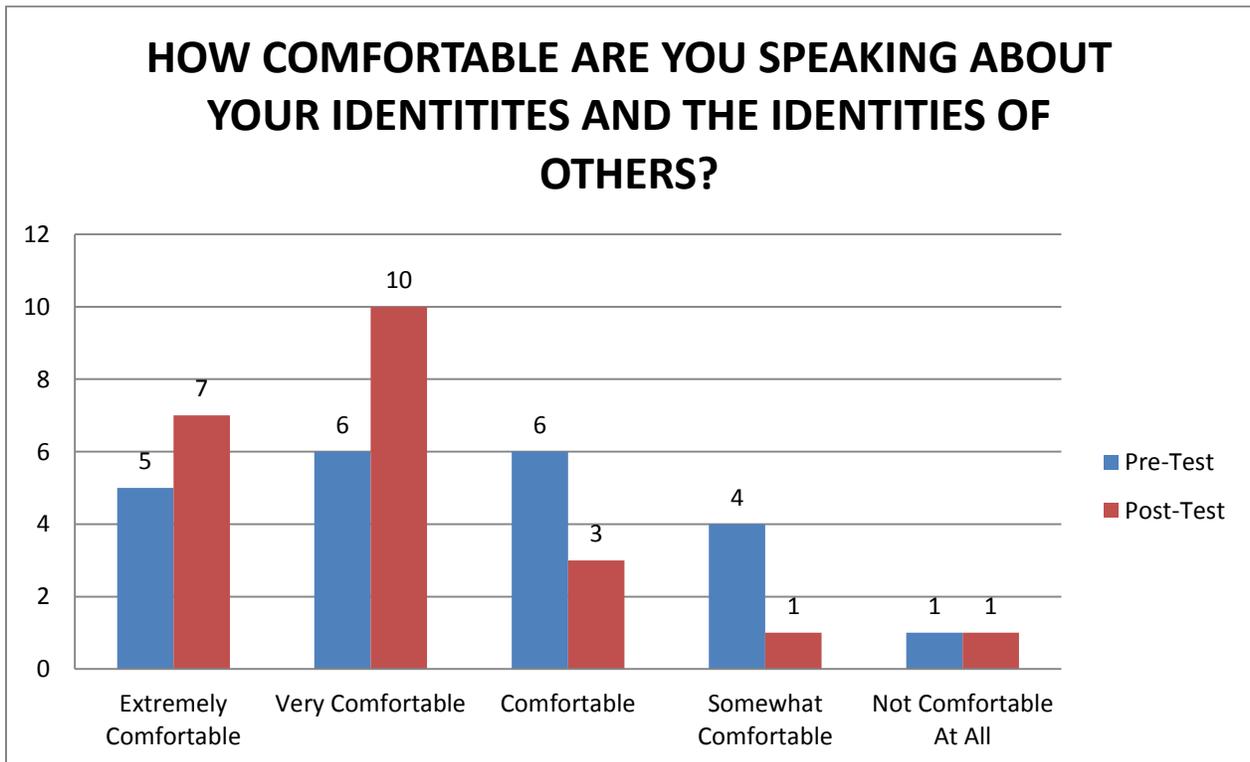
following topics were suggested for future consideration by students: interviewing skills, public speaking, mental/physical/emotional health and how it can be applied to being a leader, as well as topics pertaining to specific majors. In continuing to improve this leadership curriculum as well as other OMSS programs, annual assessments will be conducted to reveal ways to improve the program and provide students with a rich experience that will impact their overall development.

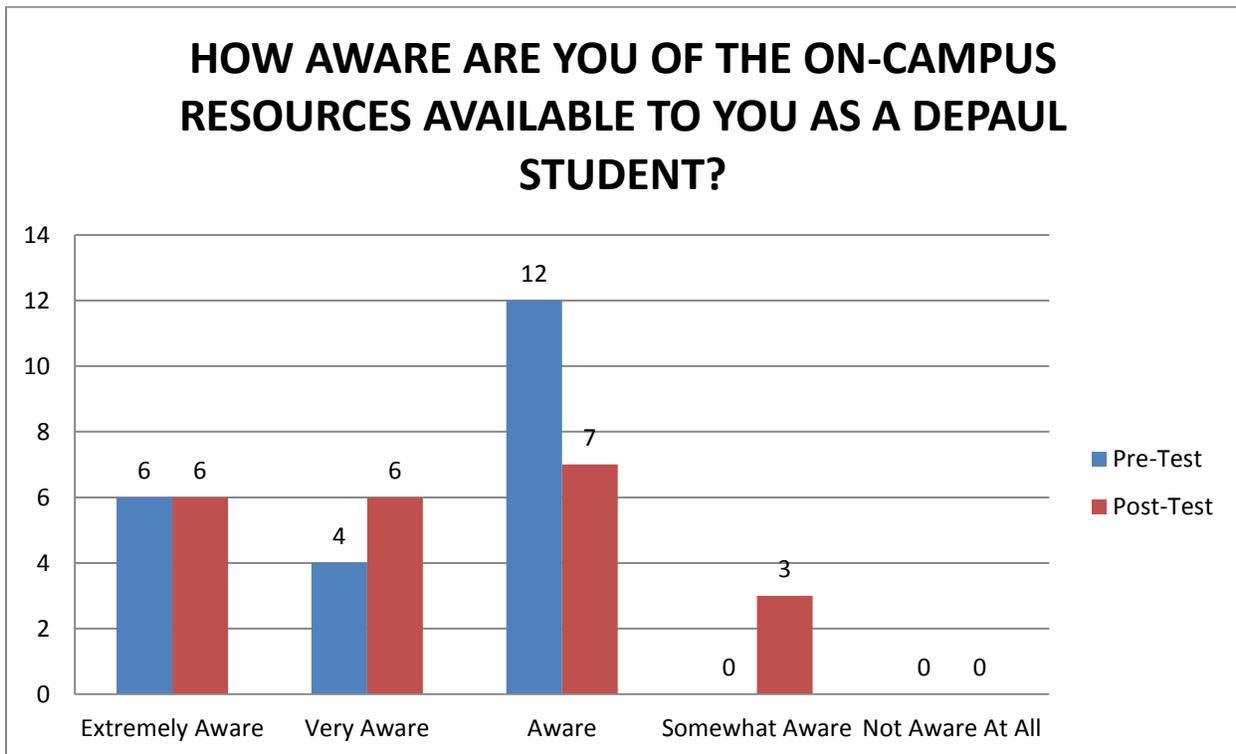
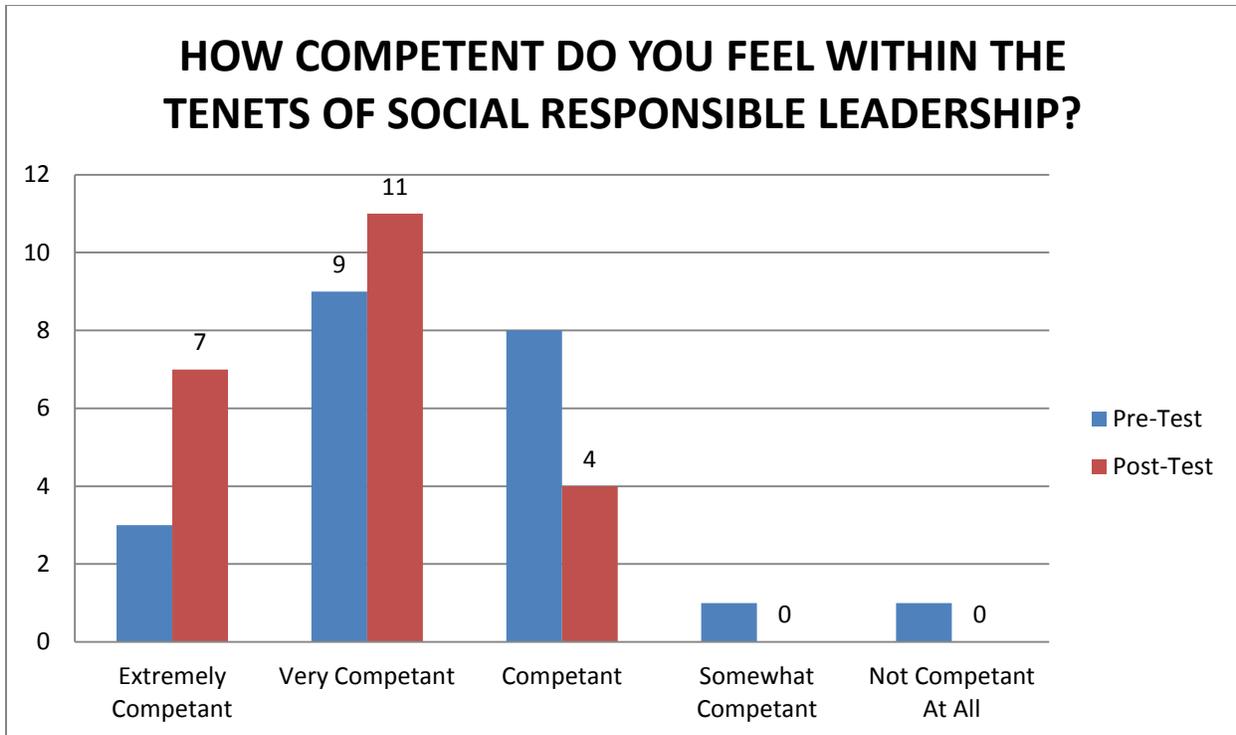
Moving forward OMSS staff will continue to deliver this curriculum to our leadership scholar population with the intention of making the workshops open to more students in the future. This assessment has allowed us to engage with students in a way that intentionally focuses on skill building while still keeping an identity framework. As we move into Vision 2018 OMSS' leadership curriculum will seek to focus on academic success, improve graduation rates, and foster diversity and inclusion within the Division of Student Affairs.

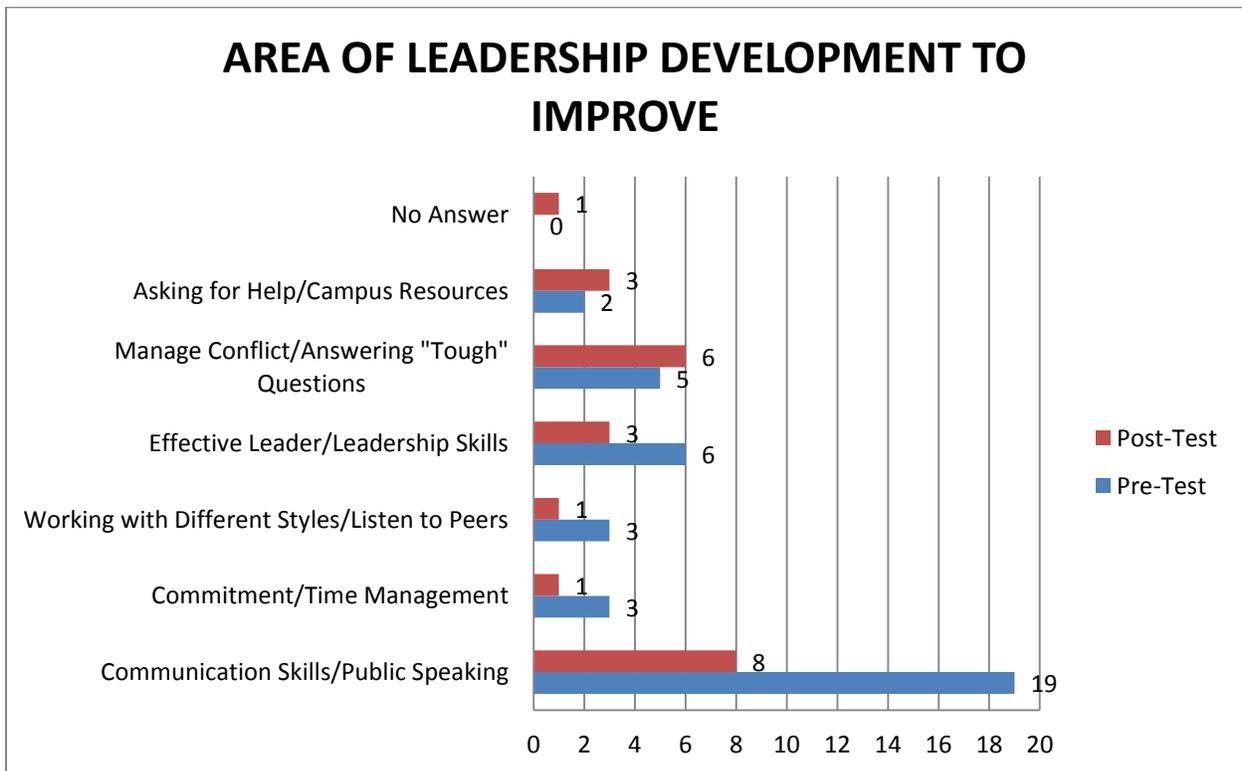
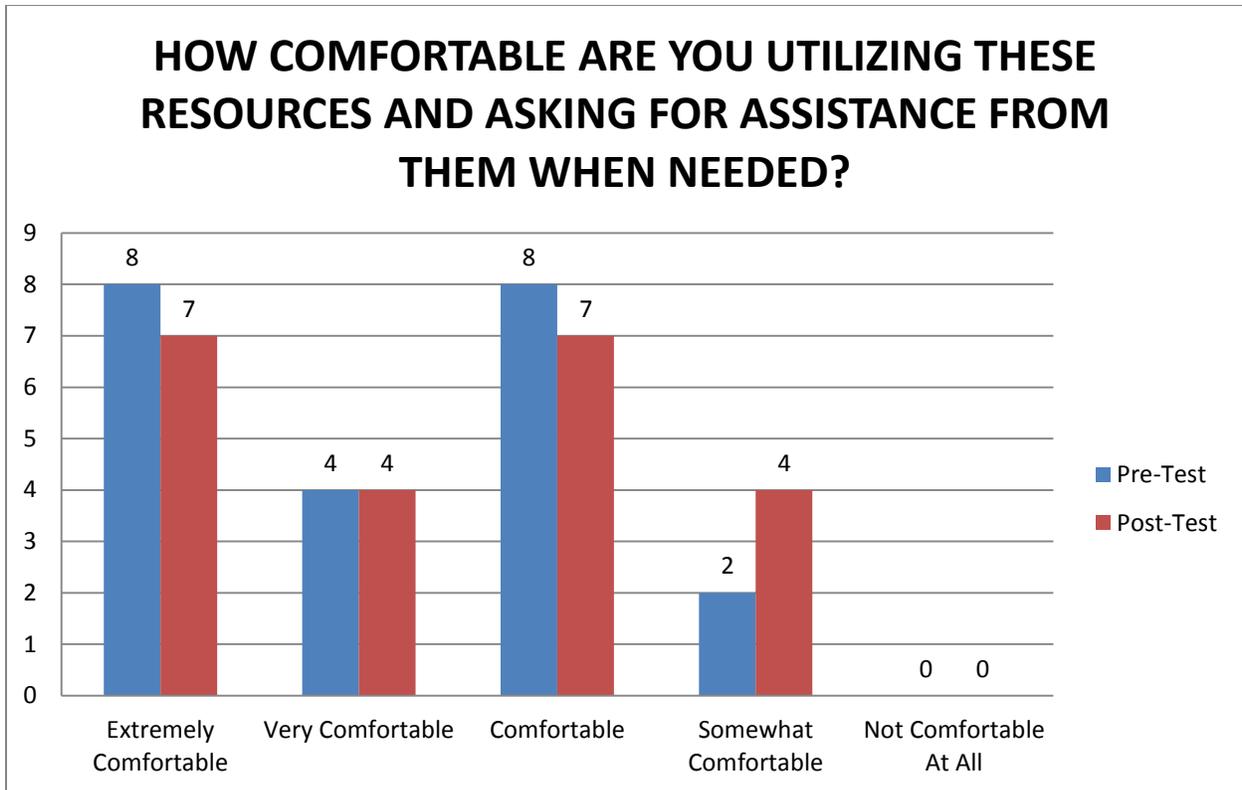
In the future this leadership curriculum will become an offered touch point for all students involved in OMSS programs and initiatives. A follow-up study for this topic could include an analysis of the value students without monetary incentives see in the development curricula offered by OMSS across the board. We will continue to assess these workshops via Qualtrics and apply the feedback as we expand this curriculum's target audience.

Appendix A: Pre and Post Test Responses









Appendix B: Workshop Survey Questions

1. Workshop Facilitator
2. Workshop Title
3. Learning Points (skills and knowledge gained) - Please list at least 3 things you learned from this workshop
4. Personal Reflection (thoughts and feelings about what you learned) - Please list at least 3 reflective statements about what you learned in this workshop
5. Personal Application (related to attitudes, interactions with others) - Please list at least 3 ways you can apply what you've learned from this workshop
6. Professional Application (related to my role as a scholar) - Please list at least 3 ways you can apply what you've learned from this workshop
7. Today's workshop will help me achieve my goal in the following way

Appendix C: Focus Group Questions

1. What leadership skills did you gain from participating in these workshops?
2. What skills do you believe still need to be addressed throughout these workshops?
3. What improvements, if any, do you believe will make the workshops and program better for future students?
4. What other topics would you like to see addressed in the future?
5. How did the workshops prepare you for your future/pre-professional path? Were there certain transferrable skills that you learned?
6. What would you like to change/improve for the next workshops?

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