

Leadership Competency Reflection

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HEA624: Supervised Practice I

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November 1, 2022

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The Leadership Competency Area (LEAD) defined by NASPA and ACPA includes a wide range of capabilities that describe how a practitioner can serve as a leader. The LEAD competency states “leadership involves both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad-based constituencies and issues” (NASPA & ACPA, 2015, p. 27). Leadership in a broad sense is not tied to a specific level or position, rather it is characterized by the actions that are performed in every aspect of life.

As a student affairs professional, I would self-assess my Leadership proficiency as intermediate. Looking through the LEAD outcomes, I found that many of the intermediate activities I have already or plan to incorporate into my professional praxis. My leadership development graduate assistant position has taught me a lot about leadership and has pushed me to assess the actions of leaders around me.

The first outcome that I chose to reflect on is “share data used to inform key decisions in transparent and accessible ways while using appropriate technology” (NASPA & ACPA, 2015, p. 28). I demonstrated this outcome in my role as First Year Experience Coordinator at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. During my first year in the position, I was tasked with creating a student engagement survey that would be distributed every fall and spring semester. I worked with campus partners to collect over 75 questions that would be distributed to students. After ensuring that the questions were specific and adequately covered student involvement and satisfaction, I distributed the survey and got 814 responses out of a total student population of around 6,500. After receiving the survey results, I generated reports that disaggregated the data based on many identity and involvement factors. These reports were shared with over 50 staff,

faculty, and administrators that make decision that impact students on a regular basis. By sharing this data with many shareholders, it created a better understanding of the student population and in turn impacted many services, resources, and programs.

The second intermediate outcome I selected was “identify and understand systemic and organizational constructs of ‘leader’ and ‘leadership’” (NASPA & ACPA, 2015, p. 28). This outcome I explored in-depth during my undergraduate career in a leadership theory and communication class. In my coursework, I explored 4 different leadership theories and after researching extensively, I created presentations and infographics that distilled the information and described how leadership traits can be used in effective communication. This research allowed me to better identify the constructs of “leadership” and helped me build my personal leadership philosophy.

Overall, I think the Leadership Competency is an area that I would like to focus on improving and further exploring during my graduate education. Leadership is something that has always fascinated me, and my defined personal leadership philosophy has guided my decision making for most of my professional career. I hope to learn more about the role of being an agent of change and leading from any position within an organization. By learning more about this aspect of leadership, I will be a better colleague and advocate for students.

References

American College Personnel Association & Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

(2015). Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators.

https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/ACPA_NASPA_Professional_Compencies_FINAL.pdf