

Inside This Issue:

4 Profiles of Inclusive Leadership: How to Identify and Nurture the Leadership the World Needs

by Allan W. Bird, Ph.D, Chris T. Cartwright, Ed.D, Mark E. Mendenhall, Ph.D

10 Learning by Design: Connective Leadership - A Model for Learning Inclusive Leadership

by Chris T. Cartwright, Ed.D, Maura Harrington, Ph.D, Jill Robinson, Ph.D, Kevin Walsh, PsyD

15 Program Spotlight: Distinguished Gentleman's Club

by Tammie Preston-Cunningham, Ph.D, Tonya Driver, Ph.D

18 Program Spotlight: Modus Vivendi Society

by Carrie Grogan, M. Ed

NCLP Staff

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Profiles of Inclusive Leadership - How to Identify and Nurture the Leadership the World Needs

by Allan Bird, Ph.D, Chris Cartwright, Ed.D, and Mark E. Mendenhall, Ph.D

The challenges and opportunities that the global context provides leaders are complex and require unique mindsets, skillsets, and heart-sets in order to effectively navigate them. When a leader aspires to span cultural boundaries, this ability to accomplish goals with and for globally diverse populations becomes complex. Identifying and nurturing global leaders who have the essential competencies for inclusive leadership is the focus of this article.

Accreditation is often a driver of change in higher education program initiatives that have the goal of teaching global competencies to secondary school and university students, and the number of accrediting bodies (both general education and discipline-specific) that are requesting evidence of intercultural competence in students has increased tremendously over the past five years. For example, the US Department of Education recently issued a report, "Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence and Economic Competitiveness" (US DOE, 2017). There are many aspects of this framework that are of value to readers of this article; most germane to this article is the goal that graduates be able to demonstrate "advanced socio-emotional and leadership skills, [and the] ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in cross-cultural settings." (2017)

As leadership educators, our students might ask us, *'Why does inclusion matter?'* We then need to guide them to understand that in organizational life it is necessary to both work with – and through – people. Inclusive leadership gives people a purpose and environment around which they can "wrap their hearts, minds, and souls" (Stevens, 2016).

"Inclusive leadership is about bridge building. It involves careful listening, outreach to people with different perspectives, and persistent, stubborn efforts to find common ground. It is founded on mutual respect – a conscious display of trustworthy behaviors is key, as trust is the currency of inclusion."

(Gundling, 2017)

We recognize that building trust to enable inclusion is a principle that takes practice–practice in connecting with and motivating culturally-diverse followers. To make this point more concrete, please consider the following questions that our colleague, Michael J. Stevens, likes to ask managers:

True/false quiz:

- (A) People are our most important and valuable resource!
- (B) People are the main source of our headaches and hassles!

The answer to both questions is obviously true. To leverage the value that employees can offer while reducing the hassles that employees can create, leaders must motivate followers. Leaders need to learn how to cultivate their followers' emotions to accomplish the organization's goals. Enthusiastic, passionate, highly engaged responses from people will depend on whether they feel honored, respected, and treated with fairness. What leaders do and how they behave will determine whether their followers feel this way or not. Leaders' actions are driven by their character and competence (*including their intercultural competencies*) to effectively lead others in a global and diverse work environment.

Identifying Inclusive Leadership Competencies

Identifying the competencies that are essential for intercultural competence and that support inclusive leadership in a global context is the start of this process (Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010). A second perspective is added by identifying the culturally-bounded values and behavioral preferences that students have embraced throughout their lives (Gundling, Hogan, & Cvitkovich, 2011). We present these models together so readers can acquire insights that will aid them in helping people in their leadership when encountering cultural differences in a global context.

At the core of much leadership development and even personal development work is the concept of “self-to-other.” By learning about ourselves, we are in a better place to engage effectively with others (Gundling, et al., 2011). The definition of intercultural competence is “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p. 97). Understanding what is effective and appropriate in different cultural contexts is the fulcrum leaders use to leverage differences and create value. So, it is important to begin by guiding leaders to better understand their own perspectives, which in turn helps them understand the ways they currently engage, the tools they have to grow requisite intercultural competencies, and the unique sightlines they are accustomed to employ when interacting with and leading others. Further, as leadership educators, it is necessary to teach leaders how to recognize and then adapt to the cultural differences present in the situational context (human, organizational, and global), and ultimately, use new tools to gain a better perspective.

Identifying the Dimensions of Intercultural Competence for Global Leadership

There have been exhaustive studies of the dimensions of intercultural competence

(Bird, 2012). Some scholars list as many as 160 different dimensions (Bird, 2012), but most can agree on the categories of perception management, relationship management, and self-management (Mendenhall, et. al., 2008). These factors are defined below with a select list of dimensions for each;

Perception Management consists of the cognitive processes by which new situations and events are perceived and judged, and influences one’s ability to effectively deal with ambiguous situations. Competencies associated with Perception Management include: Non-judgmentalness, Tolerance of Ambiguity, Inquisitiveness, Cosmopolitanism, and Interest Flexibility (for an in-depth analysis of each of these competencies, please see Bird, et. al., 2010).

Relationship Management consists of competencies associated with having an attentive disposition to build and maintain positive relationships with others who are culturally different from one’s self, and an awareness of how one’s behavior impacts others in intercultural interactions. It includes the competencies of Relationship Interest, Interpersonal Engagement, Self-Awareness, Emotional Sensitivity, and Social Flexibility (Bird, et. al., 2010).

“Further, as leadership educators, it is necessary to teach leaders how to recognize and then adapt to the cultural differences present in the situational context (human, organizational, and global), and ultimately, use new tools to gain a better perspective.”

Self-Management is the capacity to cope with adversity – to adapt and change in positive ways while retaining a stable self-identity and to care for oneself in a mentally and emotionally healthy way while operating in global or cross-cultural contexts.

Competencies associated with Self-Management include: Optimism, Self-Confidence, Self-Identity, Non-stress Tendency, Emotional Resilience, and Stress Management (see Bird, et. al., 2010).

This model of intercultural adaptability, first researched by Oddou and Mendenhall (1985) and then refined into a psychometric inventory (Stevens, et. al., 2014), provides leadership educators with valid and reliable data on the competencies their learners hold and where they need to grow in order to enact

inclusive leadership in situations where there is significant cultural difference.

Identifying Culturally-Bound Dimensions of Mindsets and Behaviors:

Equally germane to the cultivation of intercultural competencies associated with inclusive leadership in a global context is the understanding of students' culturally-bounded preferred mindsets and behaviors. The research on these types of cultural differences has been carried out for many years (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). The model Figure 1, to the left, created by Gundling, Hogan, and Cvitkovich (2011) with the aim of providing more cultural-specific knowledge to assist leadership educators in guiding their learners to adapt to cultural differences. The cultural dimensions employed in this model are described in Figure 1.

Leadership educators can nurture the development of inclusive leadership by helping learners identify their cultural derived patterns of values and behaviors. Specific to this model are the continuums associated with identity derivation (Independent-to-Interdependent); preferences in terms of the holding of power (Egalitarian-to-Status); decision making preferences (Risk-to-Certainty); communication style (Direct-to-Indirect); and workflow and orientation (Tasks-to-Relationship). As a result of utilizing this model, learners come not only to understand that they have culturally-bounded values and behavioral preferences (often a new insight for students), but that they may hold unconscious biases based on these preferences which may inhibit their ability engage effectively across cultural differences.

Nurturing Inclusive Leadership

The art and science of this form of leadership education lie in providing the dual perspectives of intercultural competencies and culturally-bounded preferences together. Then, leadership educators must carefully construct the developmental path for

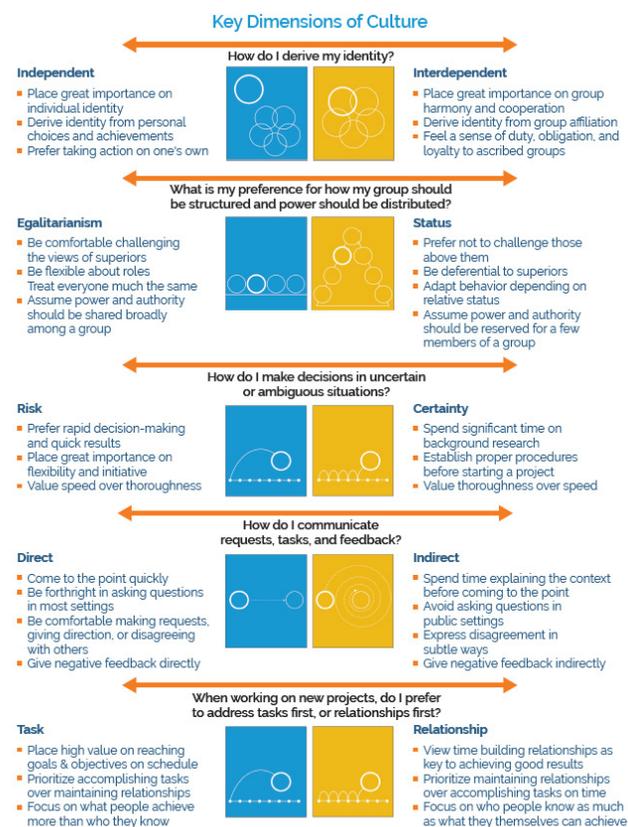


Figure 1. Key dimensions of culture. Reprinted from *What is Global Leadership? 10 Key Behaviors that Define Great Global Leaders* (p. 38), by E. Gundling, T. Hogan, & K. Cvitkovich, 2011, Boston: Nicholas Bealey Publishing. Copyright 2015 by Aperian Global. Reprinted with permission.

“We must first facilitate self-awareness in students in relation to their existing level of intercultural competencies and individual cultural preferences, and then we must carefully craft pedagogy that facilitates personal intercultural competency development.”

students to embrace their new-found self-knowledge and set attainable goals to grow the needed competencies.

Developmental paths can be constructed in a variety of ways – there is no royal road from the self-awareness of intercultural competencies and cultural preferences to the development of weaker competencies into strong competencies. Some educators have had success applying cognitive-behavior therapy principles in university courses to aid students in developing intercultural competencies (Mendenhall, et al., 2013), while others have seen success using service-learning assignments, internships, skill-portfolio processes, and other approaches with university students (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017; Van Cleave & Cartwright, 2017). Whichever path is chosen, it must be individualized in nature; that is, a student must work on strengthening a competency that applies to that student’s personal areas of growth. For example, creating a class-wide developmental assignment around the competency of say, tolerance of ambiguity, may be useful for 50% of the class who are currently low in that competency, but is redundant for the other 50% who are either currently high or medium in their proficiency levels for that competency (Mendenhall, et al., 2013).

Understanding the need for an individualized approach to learning, a thought-provoking question then arises: do we care enough about creating global leadership competencies in our students that we are willing to transform our pedagogical methods in a way that promotes inclusive leadership across cultural difference? Simply giving students information through passive approaches such as lectures, textbooks, videos, and case studies is necessary, but not sufficient for intercultural competency development. We must first facilitate self-awareness in students in relation to their existing level of intercultural competencies and individual cultural preferences, and then we must carefully craft pedagogy that facilitates personal intercultural competency development. This approach requires educators to care enough about inclusive leadership to model it to students by shifting their preferred educational methods and adopt approaches that will help students grow competencies instead of just *learning about* competencies.

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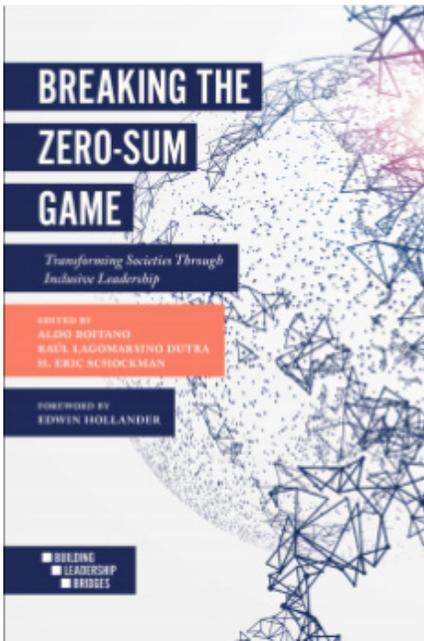
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New Directions for Student Leadership

Issue editor Corey Seemiller and series editors Susan R. Komives and Kathy L. Guthrie are excited to release the Winter 2017 announcement for New Directions for Student Leadership, No. 156, A Competency-Based Approach for Student Leadership Development. The New Directions for Student Leadership series explores leadership conceptual and pedagogical topics of interest to high school and college leadership educators. To view sample chapters, sign up for free content e-alerts, view free editor notes for all issues, and to learn more, visit wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/nds or follow us on Twitter at @NDStuLead.



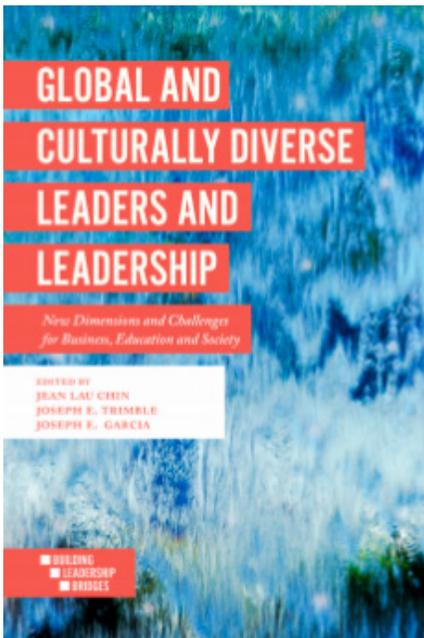
International Leadership Association Presents



Breaking the Zero-Sum Game: Transforming Societies Through Inclusive Leadership

Edited by Aldo Boitano, Raúl Lagomarsino Dutra, and H. Eric Schockman
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Globally and Culturally Diverse Leaders and Leadership: New Dimensions and Challenges for Business, Education and Society

Edited by Jean Lau Chin, Joseph E. Trimble, and Joseph E. Garcia

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Program Spotlight: African American Male Leadership - Texas A&M's Distinguished Gentlemen's Club

by Tammie Preston-Cunningham, Ph.D. and Tonya Driver, Ph.D.

Leadership Educators are often called upon to be innovative when ensuring students understand and embrace leadership theory and reach their full potential to become leaders and lifelong learners. Much of the research on African American college males and leadership has examined the impact of one or two variables, but has seldom accounted for the intersectionality of race, masculinity, student involvement, and leadership (Brown, 2006).

Research pertaining to African American undergraduate males in education has been approached from a deficit-oriented narrative and primarily focused on academic achievement or lack of involvement, with minimal attention paid to African American males demonstrating leadership as a counter narrative and method to address persistence (Harper & Harris, 2010). In 2009, African American males comprised only 5.7% of the students enrolled in institutions of higher education. Only 17.8% of African American males age 25 and over were awarded a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009, compared to 30.6% of White males (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2010). Meanwhile, enrollment and matriculation rates of African American male students in Texas has shown a slow increase of about 5% since 2003 (Texas Trends, 2014). When considering a Predominately White Institution (PWI) in the south, a review of Texas A&M University College Metrics, indicates the six-year graduation rates of African American males to be nearly 10% lower than the overall six-year graduation rate for males and roughly 11% lower than the rates of White males (Undergraduate Student Retention & Graduation, n.d.).

While graduation rates are an indicator of student success, they only report one

dimension of a student and do not explore the intricacies of the college experience for African American males as they matriculate.

Program Justification and Significance

Several researchers have noted the influence of student involvement and integration in African American student matriculation and retention (Cuyjet, 2006; Guiffrida, 2003; Haber, 2011). Student affairs professionals must address the growing concern of African American males as they persist in higher education by engaging in multiple identity layers of students in this population (Harper, 2014). Students who were involved in leadership activities where race was a focus experienced positive development in leadership or activism and in personal identity (Renn & Ozaki, 2010). The study by Sutton and Terrell (1997) indicated African American males were more willing to perceive themselves as leaders among African American students on campus, but the majority did not consider themselves leaders in campus-wide groups. It is important to explore African American undergraduate male leadership as a viable method to engage and influence graduation and attendance. There has been an observed link between African American males' self-perception as leaders and their self-concept, which may positively influence persistence (Harper, 2004).

The needed partnership of both student affairs professionals and faculty in engaging African American male students cannot be overlooked in developing solutions to address concerns about matriculation of African American male college students (Frazier, 2009). Many minority students stated they encountered microaggressions in

the classroom and in student organizations, which led to feelings of hopelessness, exhaustion, discouragement, disengagement from the university, and a decrease in academic performance. The microaggressions ranged from behaviors such as peers not selecting them for study groups and organizations based on race to comments such as, "I don't want to work with you because you're Black." Student affairs professionals, as well as faculty, play intricate roles in creating environments that aid in engagement by African American male college students. Student affairs professionals and faculty should attempt to create counter spaces for learning, as well as model appropriate methods to address these microaggressions (Solórzano et al., 2010).

As other researchers have addressed the influence of involvement and leadership on African American male college students, the need has emerged to evaluate the impact of multiple layers of identity and how students become prepared to lead (Griffin, Jayakumar, Jones, & Allen, 2010; Hammond & Mattis; 2005; Majors & Billson, 1992). In order to identify the tools needed to empower future African American male leaders, there is a need to evaluate the collegiate experience of African American males as it relates to the intertwined impact of race, gender, and leader capacity while using the classroom as the venue for identity exploration and improvement of self-concept.

According to Butler (2005), apart from churches, fraternal (historically Black Greek Lettered-Organizations) and benevolent

societies have long been the largest and most durable organizations in Black communities. The founders and leaders of these organizations were in the vanguard of social change and made significant contributions to the widespread liberation, political, moral, temperance, and social reform movements that characterized the nineteenth century United States (p. 67).

In response to this research, the fraternities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council at Texas A&M developed a leadership and social support opportunity, the Distinguished Gentlemen's Club (DGC). The aim of the course/program is to introduce freshmen and sophomore African American men to the complex nuances associated with Black identity, male identity, and leadership approaches while integrating theoretical frameworks to aid in their efficient navigation of the social and academic integration at a PWI. The program attempts to address the growing decline in academic achievement, issues of community and identity, and overall cultural incongruence viewed by African American males, as it relates to the university. The interwoven academic course and practical application has served over 250 men within the last nine years and a graduation rate exceeding 88%.

The development of DGC as both an academic course and leadership training program is grounded in African American student integration, experiential learning, servant leadership, and student development theoretical frameworks. DGC focuses on integrating, transitioning, and coping with multiple identities, all while assuming leadership roles in and out of the classroom.

“The needed partnership of both student affairs professionals and faculty in engaging African American male students cannot be overlooked in developing solutions to address concerns about matriculation of African American male college students (Frazier, 2009).”

Program overview

DGC curriculum focuses on practical application of learned theory and research. The leadership development program is offered as a three-hour leadership course through a partnership with the Department of Agricultural Leadership Education and Communication. The course/program is recognized as a high impact practice incorporating transformative student learning and infusing the practical application of leadership, identity, and gender.

DGC is a twelve-week program, which focuses on six of eight variables identified by the Non-cognitive Questionnaire developed by White and Sedlacek (1986). The program addresses positive self-concept/confidence, realistic self-appraisal, community service, development of a support system, positive leadership experience, and various methods of dealing with and processing racism and microaggressions. The young men are recruited from the entering freshmen class through social media, personal contact, and recommendation by former members to enroll in the course/program. The young men meet weekly for three-hour lectures led by former Texas A&M students and faculty, guest expert scholars, and also attend weekly academic study sessions. The weekly sessions discuss a myriad of subjects such as Black identity, leadership theory and approaches, social responsibility, civic engagement, coping skills, and methods for navigating the university student leadership process. DGC members are encouraged to practice inclusive leadership during and after the program through involvement with non-cultural and major-affiliated organizations.

The students are divided into sub-groups and charged with implementing a capstone research project, which utilizes information they gather from a three-day leadership excursion. The leadership excursion sites include Memphis, Tennessee's National Civil Rights Museum and Little Rock, Arkansas' Central High School Museum. Excursion participants maintain written and photo journals during the

excursion to support their capstone research presentation to the university community during the Black Male Think Tank. The Black Male Think Tank, also planned and organized by DGC, serves to educate the Texas A&M community about the nuisances and intricacies of matriculating at the university as an African American male. The students who participate in the DGC program/course are taught leadership skills (i.e. time-management, meeting and project management, effective written and oral communication, etc.) which are transferable to other organizations and increase their sense of self-confidence in their leadership skills, thus increasing their desire to engage in non-culture based organizations.

Program Outcomes

Harper (2014) recommended several intervention programs for African American male college students; however, most have focused on persistence, mentors, integration, or academic success with leadership being ancillary. This project indicates the need for development and implementation of programs for African American college males, which include leadership development and training as the focus. From this focus, academic success, persistence, and effective mentoring can occur organically alongside other desired outcomes. Students who participate in the DGC program/course have shown positive development in self-concept, peer support systems, and a responsibility to improve self and others through inclusive leadership. Numerous studies (Becker & Becker, 2003; Brookover & Erickson, 1969; Maxwell, 2004; Morrow & Torres, 1995) have identified the influence of positive self-concept on long-term persistence in college. Students who have a positive self-concept perform better than their counterparts in classrooms, in academic aspirations, and in degree attainment (Haber & Komives, 2009). Based on the outcomes of this project, development and incorporation of identity-specific leadership development programs on college campuses are critical to the development of African American undergraduate males' leader identity.

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Future C&C Topics

Critical Leadership Education
Courageous Leadership
Student Agency
Mindfulness
Design Thinking

