



**MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL STUDY OF  
LEADERSHIP**



**Executive Summary**

**MSL 2011 School Report**

**University of California San Diego**

**2011**

A project of the National Clearinghouse for  
Leadership Programs, in conjunction with the  
Center for Student Studies

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# STUDY OVERVIEW

## Background & Rationale

The purpose of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is to examine influences of higher education on college student leadership development. The study also directs significant attention to the examination of college experiences and their influences on leadership-related outcomes (e.g., complex cognitive skills, social perspective-taking, leadership efficacy).

The first iteration of the MSL study was administered in the spring of 2006. Subsequent data collections have been conducted in 2009, 2010, and 2011. Over 150 institutions and 150,000 students have been part of the study to date. The study is led by Principal Investigator, Dr. John P. Dugan, at Loyola University Chicago, and co-PI Dr. Susan R. Komives, at the University of Maryland, College Park. The National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP - [www.nclp.umd.edu/](http://www.nclp.umd.edu/)) plays a central role as the sponsor of the MSL. The Center for Student Studies ([www.studentstudies.net](http://www.studentstudies.net)), a division of Survey Sciences Group, LLC, serves as the primary coordinators of the research. Further support for the MSL was provided by the C. Charles Jackson Foundation; ACPA: College Educators International Educational Leadership Foundation; National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and the National Association of Campus Activities.

The education and development of students as leaders has long served as a central purpose for institutions of higher education as evidenced in mission statements and the increased presence of both curricular and co-curricular leadership development programs on college and university campuses (Astin & Astin, 2000; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). Astin and Astin go as far as to suggest that, “higher education plays a major part in shaping the quality of leadership in modern society” (p. 1) and a growing number of scholars and professional associations have identified socially responsible leadership as a core college outcome (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2007; Astin & Astin, 2000; Hoy & Meisel, 2008; National Association of Student Personnel Administrators & American College Personnel Association, 2004). Yet, research on the topic continues to reflect an incomplete picture suffering from a lack of theoretical grounding consistent with contemporary conceptualizations (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Posner, 2004) as well as a lack of clarity regarding individual and institutional factors influencing leadership development (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). If higher education institutions could begin to address these issues, the ability to enhance leadership development and the preparation of civically engaged citizens would increase dramatically.

## Study Framework

The social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) provides the theoretical frame for this study. 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: consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, common purpose, collaboration, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change. These values function at the individual, group, and societal levels. For more information on the social change model consult: *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development: Guidebook Version III* (HERI, 1996) or *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development* (Komives, Wagner, & Associates, 2009).

The conceptual framework for the MSL is an adapted version of Astin’s (1993) inputs-environments-outcomes (I-E-O) college impact model. This model permits the researcher to “assess the impact of various environmental experiences by determining whether students grow or change differently under varying environmental conditions” (p. 7). The model was adapted in two ways. First, a cross-sectional design with retrospective questions was employed instead of the traditional time-elapsing pretest and posttest to address issues of response shift bias. Second, the influences of non-college reference groups posited in Weidman’s (1989) model of student socialization were integrated, which extended variable measurement beyond just elements of the collegiate environment to external environment as well.

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## Sample & Instrument

A total of 148 U.S. colleges and universities participated in the 2009, 2010, and 2011 MSL. The total sample size for the study was over 94,009 students. Schools were also invited to submit comparison samples of up to 1000 cases of their own choice. Data collected as part of comparison samples are not included in the national benchmark data.

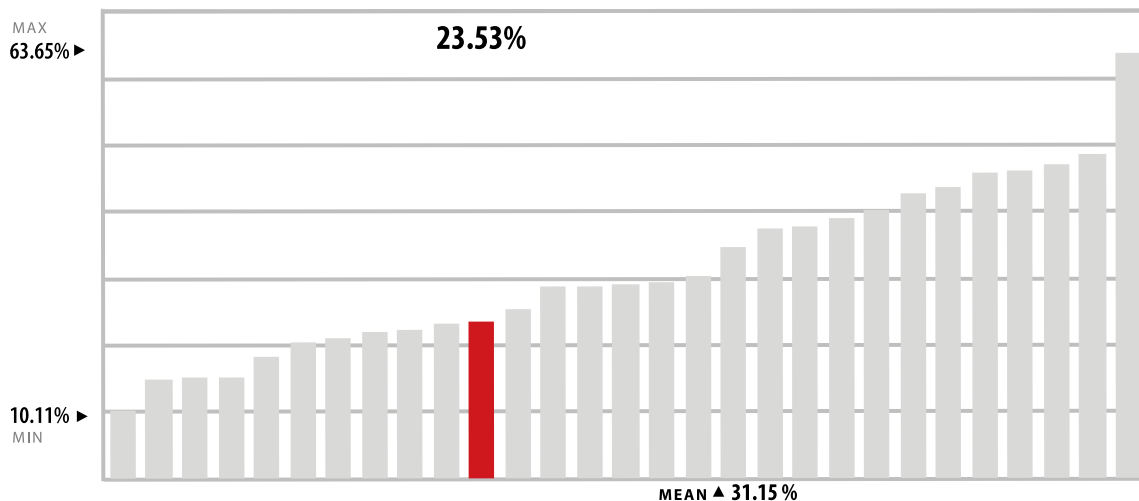
The questionnaire was developed with a core set of measures adapted from the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS) (Tyree, 1998), which measures the eight core values of the social change model (HERI, 1996). The MSL is comprised of over 400 variables, scales, and composite measures representing students' demographics and pre-college experiences, experiences during college, and key outcome measures. Other leadership-related outcomes studied in the MSL include complex cognitive skills, leadership efficacy, social change behaviors, seeing alternative social perspectives, outcomes of mentoring relationships, spiritual development, and racial identity.

The MSL Codebook provides information on scaling and value labels for all variables in the study. The complete report provides an overview of the reliability and validity of key outcome variables.

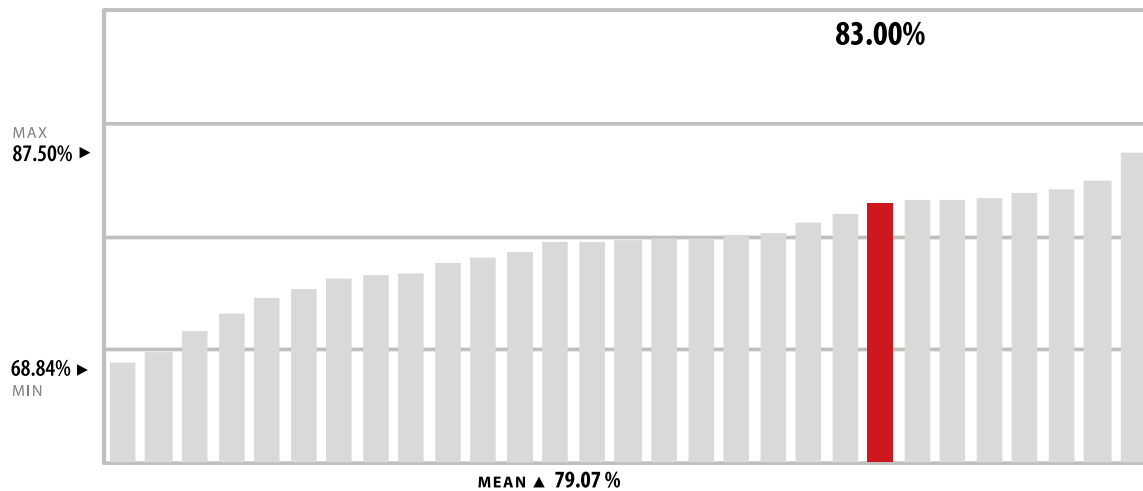
## Data Collection

The MSL was administered between January and April, 2011. Data collection was conducted entirely via the Internet. Each student received an invitation email and up to three reminder emails, if they had not responded to the initial request. Overall, the response rate for all schools combined in this study was 29.09% and the total number of completed cases was 21,705. Any requests not to participate were noted and further contacts with the refusing respondent were cancelled.

### Response Rate: University of California San Diego ■



## Completion Rate: University of California San Diego ■



Given the scope of the MSL, number of funding partners, and requirements associated with Institutional Review Board (IRB) policy, it is important to review issues related to using MSL data. Please keep in mind the following considerations as you move forward with using results on your campus.

## STUDY DESIGN & PSYCHOMETRICS

The Socially Responsible Leadership Scales (SRLS), which comprise the core of the MSL survey instrument, have undergone extensive psychometric work. Rigorous methods were used in the creation of the original SRLS to establish content validity of the measures. This process is explained in detail in the original dissertation from which the instrument is derived (Tyree, 1998). Construct validity was examined for the SRLS in early pilot studies of the MSL instrument as well as with the 2006 iteration of the study and demonstrated appropriate and consistent relationships amongst outcomes variables and other theoretically supported measures.

This study employs a cross-sectional research design in which students were asked to reflect retrospectively on past knowledge and experiences as a means to capture input data. Researchers indicate that when measuring leadership development as an educational outcome, retrospective questions may provide a stronger indication of student gains due to concerns associated with response-shift bias that emerge in traditional time elapsed studies (Howard, 1980; Howard & Dailey, 1979; Rohs, 1999, 2002; Rohs & Langone, 1997). Researchers suggest cognitive dimensions associated with understanding leadership may cause a shift in the standards of measurement and as such cross-sectional designs offer an appropriate approach in addressing the effect (Howard; Howard & Dailey; Rohs, 1999, 2002; Rohs & Langone).

When surveying any population it is not uncommon to have a less than a perfect response rate. A given response rate value is not in itself a concern. Rather, it is the situation where respondents differ systematically in one way or another from non-respondents which poses a risk. When such differences occur, biases may result when drawing conclusions from the data. To minimize this potential for bias, a non-response weight was constructed. A national weight was also created to allow the benchmark data to accurately reflect the population of students at all participating schools.

## BENCHMARKING

Within the report each school is benchmarked to the National Sample which includes 148 collegiate campuses throughout the United States. The National Sample includes schools who participated in the MSL from 2009, 2010, and 2011. Schools

were classified into the following categories as gathered from IPEDS: Campus Size, Control, Carnegie Class, Religious Affiliation, and Campus Setting. Schools were also classified into a Selectivity category gathered from Barron's Profiles of American Colleges. Along with the National Sample statistics, each institution was able to select four other benchmark groups from the classifications above that their institution was compared against. Each school contact filled out an online form that allowed them to select the categories for their school. This form also gave them the option of creating Custom Benchmark Groups that allowed them to create their own comparison groups with the schools of their choice.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Executive Summary Key Findings

While the full MSL 2011 report provides a wealth of usable statistics and findings for your school that spans nearly all of the measures collected, we have summarized some key findings for your institution here that we think may be of interest to you. These are key measures that the research team has selected as important for a great majority of MSL schools.

The primary measures for the study, the SRLS, as described in the Study Design section, are reported as mean composite scores that range from 1 to 5. Your school's SRLS measures, side-by-side with the national benchmark measures, are reported below. For significance and effect size results, please see the table "General Outcome Measure Scores and Comparison" in the full report.

<b>OVERALL SCORES</b>	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Common Purpose	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Change	Omnibus SRLS
Your Institutions Scores	3.86	4.08	4.22	3.98	3.95	3.76	3.76	3.77	3.89
National Benchmark	3.98	4.15	4.30	4.04	4.00	3.81	3.79	3.82	3.96

The conceptual design of the MSL, using the IOE model, provides you with valuable information on how your students' characteristics and the environmental experiences with which they engage have an impact on the SRLS outcome measures. The following table shows how several input measures may be related to the SRLS outcome measures. If there is a relationship, then you will see an "X" in the cell for each measure. If you do not see an "X" then there were no significant differences. For more about these findings, you may find the detailed results in the table "Inputs by Outcome Measures" in the full report.

<b>KEY INPUT MEASURES</b>	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Common Purpose	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Change	Omnibus SRLS
Gender							<b>X</b>		
Race	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Class Standing	<b>X</b>					<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	

Environmental experiences can influence these outcomes as well. In the following table, you can find where several key environmental variables influence the SRLS outcome measures. You may find the detailed results in the table "Environments by Outcome Measures" in the full report.

<b>Environmental Measures</b>	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Common Purpose	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Change	Omnibus SRLS
Community Service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential Setting									
Involvement in College Organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership Positions in College Organizations	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Socio-Cultural Discussions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mentor Relationships (Faculty/Instructor)	X			X	X			X	X

Because of the IEO quasi-experimental design, your MSL results are able to give you a picture of students' change over time across the outcome measures. Looking at seniors at your school, we have developed the MSL Delta Measure - a quasi experimental analysis that gives you a look at change over time to calculate this. The following chart identifies the outcomes in which students report a significant difference between pre-college and senior year. Significant changes are identified by the X. Please refer to your complete report to view the direction, scale, and effect size for these measures.

<b>Overall Scores</b>	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Common Purpose	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Change	Omnibus SRLS
MSL Delta Measure-Change Over Time	X	X						X	X

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