



SUNY

SUNY Leadership Institute

SUNY College Leaders Program Guide

Overview and Planning

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1. Nine Steps to Planning and Starting Your Program

As with any program at your college, careful planning is critical to the success of the SUNY College Leaders Program.

Below, we outline the nine steps to preparing to start your program. For many of the steps, additional details will be provided in the following chapters. But first, let's go through the nine steps.

1.1 *Assess Your College's Leadership Development Needs*

Prior to committing to a SUNY College Leaders Program, you will want to examine the specific needs of your college. This involves assessing the groups of faculty, administrators, and staff you wish to involve, and identifying specific leadership skill sets you'll want to develop. While many parts of the program will focus on individual development, it is helpful to integrate college needs within the overall program goals and align the program goals with the college's strategic plan and perhaps strategic plans of your county and state.

During this exercise, you will review and prioritize the content you wish to emphasize in the knowledge building components of the program. You will also want to have some initial discussion of the ways in which you will encourage, select, train, and engage mentors as appropriate during the planning stages (See mentor selection guidelines for more details).

Questions to help you target and prioritize the focus of your program

1. Where will future vacancies most likely occur in our leadership positions, both short term and long term?

While departures and retirements are often unplanned, it will be helpful to prepare a list of the people occupying key positions and consider possible successors whose skills may need to be developed to successfully assume broader leadership roles.

2. What specific skills may be needed to advance our college's strategic goals?

This list can be used to identify skill areas for inclusion in the program and groups of employees who could develop such skills. The list can also be referenced by participants during the program as they structure development projects that will build their professional skills while contributing to the overall goals of the college.

3. Are there individuals with strong potential for future leadership roles who would benefit from additional development support?

Would such individuals benefit from competency feedback, knowledge building, increased cross-college perspectives, and greater understanding of the college's mission and values?

1.2 *Set Program Goals*

After assessing the college's leadership development needs, you should determine how those needs will determine the goals of your program. Considerations might include whether to concentrate on senior level leadership succession by focusing on employees who are likely to be candidates for such roles, or to focus on faculty and staff associated with a new initiative such as becoming an entrepreneurial college.

The program allows the college to modify its content to meet targeted needs while still using the basic structure and most of the prepared materials. Without clear goals for your program, you will find it difficult to select the appropriate modifications.

List your program goals

1. Who are your target participants?
2. What specific needs should participants be ready to meet?
3. What individual goals will be met by this program?

1.3 Select Program Content

Research has shown that leaders develop most successfully in an environment that provides assessment, challenge and support. The SUNY College Leaders Program has been designed to provide all three. As you modify the program to meet your goals and use your available resources, you should select content to maintain all three aspects of the program.

Workshops can be added, substituted or recombined, based on your college's needs. Each workshop includes stand-alone activities that can be moved, rearranged, amplified, or eliminated.

For example, a college wishing to build entrepreneurial competencies might include additional items on the SUNY360 to address those competencies, or include a workshop targeted to the entrepreneurial skill set. Or, if strengthening departmental planning is a goal, then the college might focus on department chairs or department managers, adding SUNY360 items specific to managing academic or administrative departments. In addition, if your college has experience with a successful workshop on legal issues facing colleges like yours, then you may want to incorporate that workshop in the program.

We provide the following checklist for your initial work on customizing the program. Start by selecting the pieces you expect to use. Add additional workshops that are available. Later, you will create a schedule, at which time you may find that you have too many or too few pieces. Adjustments will be made at the time you create the schedule.

- Orientation Workshop
- SUNY360 Inventory
- SUNY360 Feedback Workshop
- Designing Development Projects Workshop
- Team Building Workshop
- Dealing with Change Workshop
- Mentoring Relationships
- Conflict Management Workshop
- Inclusion and Diversity Workshop
- Sharing Development Projects
- Graduation and Evaluation

Examples of other topics that can be developed on demand

- Governance: Processes and Understandings
- Community and Economic Development
- Legal Issues in Higher Education

- Leading Innovation and the Entrepreneurial College
- Strategies for Nontraditional and High-Risk Students
- Articulating a Shared Vision and Goals, Internally and Externally
- Building Partnerships, Relationships, and Networks
- Managing Stress
- Career Paths in the College
- College History, Mission and Culture, with Regional and National Issues
- Ethical Leadership
- Sustainability Leadership
- Budgeting: Alternative Approaches and Tools for Financial Planning
- Strategic Planning

1.4 *Selecting a Facilitator*

The SUNY College Leaders Program is administered and facilitated by a program facilitator chosen in advance by the college. The college should give careful attention to its choice of a facilitator. Ideally, the facilitator is chosen based on the characteristics of the participant cohort and is someone who can serve as a leadership role model for that group. For example, if the cohort group is drawn from the senior administrative staff, the facilitator would ideally be picked from this group. If the cohort group is drawn from the middle level management group, the facilitator might be someone from senior staff. It is essential that the facilitator have solid leadership competence and experience with group facilitation. For this reason, colleges frequently select two people to serve as co-facilitators.

What is the time commitment of the facilitator?

The facilitation of the program requires approximately 10% FTE, or four hours per week. This will vary depending on the ways in which the responsibilities are shared with others within the college. It will also vary depending on the prior experience of the facilitator and their administration and facilitation skills.

Facilitator support and training

SUNYLI offers coaching and other training support for the facilitator as they plan and implement the program. These support sessions focus on helping the facilitator work with the planning guides for each stage of the program and the workshop guidebooks and accompanying PowerPoint slide sets. SUNYLI will work with colleges to establish “facilitator cohorts” so facilitators can benefit from working with their peers at other colleges.

If sufficient demand exists, SUNYLI is prepared to offer an intensive workshop for “facilitator cohorts” or for several facilitators who wish to review the program together.

At the completion of this intensive training session, the program facilitator is prepared to plan and manage the program’s interactive workshops and supporting PowerPoint presentations on their own campus. They will become familiar with all aspects of the program, the guidebooks (see the appendix), their role in the program’s administration, and ways they can adapt the program to address the needs of their college.

Although the workshops are designed to be led by the campus facilitator, the college may decide to engage an outside facilitator, arranged by SUNYLI, to conduct all or some of the workshops.

1.5 ***Naming Your Program***

Program names carry a message. You may want to provide a name for this program that targets your goals. Ideally, this title will appear on most of the program materials. You may choose to give your program a generic name and then allow the participants to choose a name for their particular cohort. For example, you might call the program, “Our College Leadership Advancement Program,” when you announce it and invite applicants and, later, the chosen group might adopt a name describing its goal, such as, “Learning Leadership in Place,” or something playful, such as, “The Onion Peelers.”

1.6 ***Setting a Schedule***

A successful program depends on full participation in the workshops. Hence you will want to plan the length and dates of your program before participants sign up, so they can allocate the time on their calendar and be assured they will not have schedule conflicts.

The program is constructed to build on prior workshops, so it is important to find a time that will work best on your campus, and then make the calendar available during the application process. You may need to reschedule one or two events, but having an initial plan will help ensure full participation.

Use the chart below to plan your schedule. For each activity, note the restrictions on your schedule. You need to provide enough time to plan the program, complete the SUNY360 and the Development Project, and provide sufficient opportunities for participants and mentors to work together. We have found that spacing the workshops about a month apart balances the program’s time requirements with other responsibilities of the participants.

We have included sample dates in this chart. These dates are based on the following recommended choices:

1. Allow time to plan the program and select the participants.
2. Schedule workshops once a month, on the same day of the week.
3. Schedule all workshops.
4. Introduce the Development Project early in the program. In this example, a full eight months are available for the Development Project.

Note: The sample calendar allots 11 months for the program’s implementation, preceded by 4 months of planning and selection time.

Program Calendar Worksheet

| Activity | Time Constraints | Sample Dates | Dates |
|---|--|---------------------|--------------|
| Program planning – the nine steps | Allow 4 to 8 weeks | June 1 – July 26 | |
| Register with SUNYLI | 1 day | July 27 | |
| Announce the program, solicit and select participants | Allow 2 to 6 weeks if selecting from a pool of participants | July 28 – Sept 7 | |
| Orientation Workshop | Allow 6 weeks from orientation through feedback workshop | Sept 20 | |
| SUNY360 Start | Can start the day after orientation | Sept 21 | |
| SUNY360 Report ready | 5 weeks gives nearly everyone time to complete the inventory | Oct 26 | |
| SUNY360 Feedback Workshop | Schedule within a week after the report date | Nov 2 | |
| Planning and Designing the Development Project Workshop | Allow 6 to 18 months to complete the Development Project | Dec 7 | |
| Teambuilding Workshop | Schedule a workshop each month | Jan 4 | |
| Mentorship Workshop | Should precede the Sharing Workshop | Feb 1 | |
| Conflict Management Workshop | | Mar 7 | |
| Sharing Development Project | Schedule for midpoint of project | Apr 4 | |
| Managing Change Workshop | Schedule a workshop each month. | May 2 | |
| Diversity and Inclusion Workshop | | Jun 6 | |
| Graduation and Reflections | Schedule after the Development Project | Aug 8 | |

Ways to vary the program sequence are discussed during the coaching or training sessions and in Section 3 of this document. Programs wishing to allocate more time to the development project would want to lengthen the overall time by adding 2 to 4 months at the end, during which participants can focus on the project without committing time to attending a workshop.

As you adjust the calendar for your program, you may want to begin the scheduling of the second round of the program. You might want to schedule a time when the new participants can meet with participants who have completed or are about to complete the program.

1.7 Announcing Your Program and Selecting Participants

Once you decide your program goals, what elements to include, and what the schedule will be, it is time to ensure that participants are informed. The extent to which announcements, applications,

and participant selection processes are required is dependent on your targeted program participants. For example:

1. Pre-selected groups, such as department chairs, do not require a public announcement of the program or a selection process.
2. When participants are determined by a panel of senior college leaders, the selection process occurs first, and then an invitation letter is sent to the participants selected.
3. Targeted participation of a broad category of individuals, such as the staff and faculty associated with the student advising process, might require a targeted announcement letter followed by a selection process.
4. An open application requires the most extensive announcement and application process simply because more people must be notified and kept informed.

In your announcement, you should share the following with potential participants:

- The goals of the program.
- The time commitment required of participants: seven to eight hours per month for attending workshops, meeting with their mentors and working on their projects.
- The proposed program schedule. The number of months allocated to the program will affect the number of hours per month that participants must commit, with a longer program generally being less intensive.

Your announcement letter should be sent to potential participants **and their supervisors**. The program will be more successful if the supervisors understand and support the time commitment required of participants.

The selection process

If your program will select participants through an application process, you should decide how you will select the participants prior to announcing the program. This will ensure a fair process which can be accomplished in the time you have budgeted.

In Section 4 (page 15) you will find additional assistance for the announcement and selection process. This section addresses the four types of targeted program participants listed above, and contains details about the sample letters included in Appendix F, a step-by-step process for identifying potential leaders, and suggestions for a response to applicants who are not selected.

1.8 Planning Your College's 9 Targeted Items for the SUNY360 Skills Inventory

The SUNY360 provides colleges with an option to select 9 targeted competency items to be highlighted in each participant's Individual Report. Each targeted item can come from the 45 standard SUNY360 items or can be selected from additional items that have been designed for specific needs. These items will be interspersed with the 45 standard SUNY360 items so observers will give them the same thoughtful and honest consideration as they give to all other items. You should take advantage of these items to establish a baseline on skills specifically important to your college or to the participants in the project.

Items may be selected by the college senior staff, by the project leader, or by the participants as a group. Whoever is selecting the items, SUNYLI recommends that you:

1. Consider and list the goals of this development project.
2. Select two or three goals for specific targeting.

3. Review the competency items in the *SUNY360 Usage Guide* and select those which match your goals.
4. Share with a SUNYLI consultant any of your goals for which no matching items are available. We may have additional items recommended for your goals or may be able to help create new items for you.
5. If more than nine (9) items have been selected, then you will need to reduce the number to just 9.

1.9 Identifying Options for Mentor Recruitment and Selection

SUNYLI recommends that you consider the feasibility of recruiting sufficient numbers of suitable mentors before determining the number of participants. Most programs will rely on internal college mentors, but you can look for other mentors, too. Local mentors will bring insights into the local environment and will find more opportunities to interact with participants. Mentors from other environments will bring a fresh perspective and may benefit from viewing the participant from a distance. Some senior administrators might benefit from the support of a mentor in another college who has performed successfully at a more senior level and who can offer system-wide perspectives on skills and projects. While mentors from both inside and outside the college have forged successful relationships, it is important to remember that a key factor is the amount of time the mentee and mentor actually spend together.

We recommend that a mentor be assigned only after the participant has identified the skills they wish to develop and completed the first-draft design of a project to build those skills. In this way, the mentor's assignment can be based in part on the experience the mentor can bring to the project and to the participant's skill development.

An alternative to the assignment of mentors is to permit participants to choose their own. The advantage of this approach is that the participant will likely put more effort into making this relationship successful. The disadvantage is that the mentor may not be able to say no and thus be less involved in making the relationship work. It is also possible that the mentor will not have the aptitudes and experience necessary to support the project and skill development desired by the participant.

The guides to the Skills Development Project and the Mentoring component, provided with the program materials, outline other criteria used in matching participants with mentors. These criteria include both mentor and participant preferences, availability, temperament considerations, and time commitments. The Mentoring Guide also includes suggestions for administering the mentoring process, comments on the benefits of a mentoring program, and answers to common questions of mentors and mentees.

Mentors will normally continue the mentoring relationship over the course of a full year, and some may wish to continue longer. Mentoring pairs typically meet twice a month – perhaps one phone meeting and one face-to-face meeting – with ongoing email exchanges. Mentors generally work with just one participant and report that any more is an extremely demanding time commitment.

2. Consultation with SUNYLI Professional Staff

Now that you are aware of the steps needed to launch a successful program, it's time to work on the details. SUNYLI professional staff will consult with you to assist you through these steps.

Consultants are available to help your college define its objectives and fashion a plan that is appropriate to its needs and resources. In the course of that consultation, you'll learn that one of SUNY College Leaders Program's greatest virtues is its versatility.

Every workshop and tool in the program provides unique and important benefits. The workshops are organized to provide a natural progression of learning and skill acquisition, and apply lessons learned in successive workshops to reinforce the learning transfer. However, the college can choose to use the workshops most beneficial to its needs and incorporate the remaining portions at a later date, thus advancing its leadership development in more limited, but successive, stages.

The first and key tool in the program is the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory. The SUNY360 acquaints participants with key leadership competencies [1]; enables them to evaluate their own performance in these competencies and identify their strengths; assists them in gathering additional, high-value input from a circle of "observers," such as direct reports and colleagues in the participant's professional life; and provides guidance in using the results to create a personal skill development plan. Throughout the program, participants continue to evaluate and review their plans for skill development and, at graduation, they are able to recognize their successes in strengthening their skills.

The full program has three primary components that occur over a time period of 12 to 24 months, depending on the schedule chosen by the college:

1. A SUNY360 inventory of each participant's current leadership skills and competencies.
2. The construction of a plan to strengthen those competencies via targeted challenges and development projects related to the strategic plan of the college.
3. A formal support structure that provides personalized guidance through guided mentoring for individual developmental plans and knowledge building workshops for the program cohort.

SUNYLI will work with you to ensure that the program is customized to meet your needs and perform within your constraints, while providing participants with these three components: assessment, challenge and support.

3. Selecting Program Content

You should work closely with SUNYLI to customize your program to meet the needs and goals you have set. This section of the guide discusses some of the features you will want to include.

3.1 *Elements of a Successful Program*

The SUNYLI program is based on sound leadership development theory and practices that stress assessment, challenge, and support [2]. The complete program has been designed to encourage all three elements. As you customize the program, ensure that it incorporates opportunities for assessments, includes challenges to move participants beyond their comfort zone, and provides the support needed to ensure they can face and conquer the challenges.

Participants in the program will experience each of the three main elements of successful leadership skill development:

Assessment

- From the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory report
- Through ongoing personal feedback from the cohort during the program
- Through completion and feedback from multiple individual assessments of styles, preferences, and attitudes
- Through personal feedback on the project from cohort members and others across the college

Challenge

- By working through feedback from the SUNY360 and sharing it with the cohort
- By designing an individual project meeting multiple goals
- By implementing a project in a new environment while trying to strengthen skills
- By accepting additional small challenges suggested by the mentor

Support

- Through exercises within the SUNY360 Feedback Workshop
- Through close working relationships with a program cohort
- Through a mentoring relationship
- Through tools developed during the skill-building workshops

3.2 *The Orientation Workshop*

The Orientation Workshop is designed to kick off the full program, form a common understanding of leadership, and introduce the SUNY360. A successful Orientation Workshop will improve the chances for success of the entire program. Participants will learn that the college supports their program and that they can find immediate support among the other participants in the program.

3.3 *Baseline Inventory*

The SUNY360 Skills Inventory is included in the program to provide participants with a baseline inventory. The SUNY360 is completed in the weeks immediately after an orientation meeting

designed to establish a common cohort an understanding of leadership among members of the cohort and prepare the participants to take the inventory. As participants proceed through the program they will develop techniques for working with their current skills and with tools for developing new or stronger skills. Participants are challenged to think about their skill sets and make their own decisions about the ways in which they wish to further develop their skills.

It is the feedback from the SUNY360 inventory that allows the participant to fully reflect on their strengths while identifying skills that they may wish to improve during the program. The Feedback Workshop is designed to maximize individual reflection and identification of these skills in a safe and supportive environment. Many participants have not received direct feedback about their skills from other coworkers, not even their supervisors. The first experience can cause anxiety and discomfort which is usually resolved, first during the Orientation Workshop, and then during the Feedback Workshop as participants all share similar emotions as they learn what others have to say about their skills. Experience indicates that participants generally rate themselves lower than their chosen observers, another finding that tends to reduce the initial anxiety.

The SUNY College Leaders Program is a skills development program that uses the SUNY360 Skills Inventory as the basis for development. It also incorporates proven elements of other respected programs that focus on leadership styles, positive attitudes, leadership temperaments, or leadership strengths, and use other tools as the basis for development. Examples of such tools and programs include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator© [3], Strengths Quest [4], Positive Inquiry [5], and the DISC behavior assessment tool [6] (See Appendix G for links to more information). The workshops include additional assessments of styles such as communication styles, conflict management styles, and learning styles. It also includes many tools and exercises that enable participants to identify and build on their strengths as well as others' strengths. Thus, SUNY College Leaders Program can be considered a comprehensive skill-based development program.

3.4 *The SUNY360 Feedback Workshop*

Some participants in a SUNY360 inventory say they were anxious about receiving the feedback, comparing it to opening a report card or SAT scores, or receiving a decision on an employment application. Most of us care about how others see us, so such feelings are entirely understandable. The SUNY360 Feedback Workshop is designed to help participants go beyond the initial anxiety and understand the SUNY360 Report; learn ways to request additional feedback to improve their understanding; and select specific competencies to focus on during the program.

Much of the value of the SUNY360 is lost if a feedback session is not included in the program and scheduled soon after the SUNY360 is completed.

3.5 *The Skills Development Project*

The most effective learning environment occurs during work on a challenging task. In the Skills Development Project, participants will conceive and design a project of interest to them that will challenge their leadership skills. Three of the program workshops stress the Skills Development Project.

Planning and Designing the Skills Development Project Workshop

This workshop introduces the Skills Development Project and contains exercises focused on selecting and planning the participants' projects.

The Mentor Program Workshop

A mentor relationship is often cited as a key source of leadership development. The mentor assignment is designed to allow a successful relationship to grow, while also improving the success of the Skills Development Project. The Mentoring Workshop provides structured time for the mentee and the mentor to construct understandings about their relationship, and provides tools and support, all known to be a strong factor in successful mentoring relationships [7], [8], [9].

Project Sharing Workshop

This workshop is devoted to presentations by each participant and work by the group to move each project forward and to solve the challenges encountered by each participant.

3.6 *The Skills Workshops*

The Change Management, Conflict Management, Inclusion and Diversity, and Teambuilding workshops are each designed to focus on one specific area and provide strategies for improving skills in that area. Your college may wish to target other areas of concern or interest, such as “Customer Service” or “Entrepreneurial Leadership Tools,” by developing your own workshops or working with SUNYLI to construct workshops that will address your needs.

3.7 *Graduation and Evaluation*

During this workshop, the participants will learn the final status of each project and will have an opportunity to evaluate the impact of the entire program on their projects and skills.

3.8 *Your Program Content*

Start with the goals of your program. Your customization of the program content should always focus on meeting those goals.

Time frame

Consider the time available to complete this program. A one-year program has the advantage of compactness and is less likely to suffer from attrition. A two-year program allows for fuller development of a challenging project and a less hurried assimilation of the program content; hence, the learning transfer may be greater.

Resources

Are there specific resources at your college that this program can access? If one of your colleagues has presented a seminar on high risk students, you may want to adapt that seminar to a program workshop. Use the list of topics on pages 4 and 5 to build your own list of workshops appropriate to your program.

| Potential Workshops |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUNY360 Inventory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUNY360 Feedback Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning and Designing the Skills Development Project Workshop |

| |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team Building Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with Change Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring Relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion and Diversity Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing Development Projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation and Evaluation |

4. Soliciting Participants

The solicitation process depends on the goals of your program and especially the individuals you have targeted for attendance. We will address three separate situations

- A pre-selected group of participants
- A targeted category of participants
- An open application process

4.1 *Pre-selected Participants*

Your college needs and your program goals may indicate a pre-selected list of participants. Examples of pre-selected participants are:

- All members of the senior administrative staff
- All first- and second-year department chairs
- All admissions personnel

Although advertising is not needed for this group, you will want to ensure that all participants know the goals of the program and details including starting date and location. The program can be announced in a letter or at a regularly scheduled meeting.

4.2 *Identifying Potential Leaders for Participation in the Program*

The following suggestions for identifying potential leaders for a program are intended to assist you in envisioning your own selection process. Identification of potential leaders is a topic that fills books and semester-long courses. Many consulting firms exist simply to help organizations identify talent. Our suggestions are based on our review of commonly used best practices and on three widely held beliefs based on research findings:

1. The best predictor of future performance is prior performance.
2. There are shared traits among good leaders.
3. A well selected panel of experts can reliably identify criteria and potential leaders for participation in your program.

Below, we've outlined a set of short-term strategies for use in initiating your program and a list of longer-term strategies that would support ongoing leadership identification for effective succession planning. If you would like other related information, such as the cost effectiveness of succession planning, alternative approaches to succession planning, or facing the barriers to succession planning, we can suggest people to contact and other available resources.

Short-Term Strategy: A Process for Identifying Potential Leaders for Your Program

1. Identify a panel of respected leaders from within your organization, leaders who embody successful leadership skills, attitudes, and performance that resembles the kind of future leaders envisioned at your college. You will not have all the quantitative data at this point to select these leaders, hence, we suggest that you base your choices on a simple list such factors as wide respect, future thinker, diverse perspectives, and embodiment of desired attributes.

2. Quickly develop your criteria for selection. You may use the sequence outlined in Appendix A for rapid development of the criteria if you do not already have criteria in place. Or you can start with the following list of factors:
 - Persons currently working in functional areas deemed critical to future college mission
 - Persons with skills or experience deemed critical to targeted program development
 - Persons deemed to be performing at high levels by their supervisors
 - Persons who have previously demonstrated to a capacity for leadership development and devoted time to that endeavor
 - Persons deemed to have potential to demonstrate the 16 competencies identified as key college leadership competencies [1], [10], [2] (See Appendix B.)
 - Persons deemed to have competencies in other general leadership skill areas
 - Persons with adequate time to attend the program, design and complete a project, and work with a mentor
 - Persons who will bring cross-college perspectives to the group
 - Persons who will be able to relate to the facilitator and see them as a leadership role model (See section 1.4, Selecting a Facilitator.)
 - Persons who will be able to relate to each other, understand each other's perspectives, and provide mutual support during the program

3. **The panel must then develop a process** for soliciting nominations or hand-picking persons based on prior knowledge or lists supplied by the human resources office.

Nominations can be solicited as part of the program announcement process. For example, after announcing your program, you can send a letter to supervisors requesting nominations. The letter will be signed either by the administrator of the program (president or other senior administrator) or by the entire panel. It will include a nomination form that addresses the criteria for nominations, an indication of the number of nominees who will be selected, and the likely timeframe for deciding selections.

Nominations can also be solicited in the program announcement by asking interested employees to inform their supervisors. If employees are asked to submit their interest directly, then it is best to provide a format in which they will address the criteria you've set for your program cohort.

4. **Once nominations have been received, the panel should rate each nomination** using one or more scales. We don't recommend using more than three scales, as it is unlikely that the result would be different. Rating scales might include:
 - Level to which skills and performance match desired criteria
 - Likelihood that the candidate will have the time and commitment to complete program
 - Overall potential for leadership development success

5. **Finally, the panel would combine and summarize the ratings** and discuss the overall results, making adjustments as necessary to fit program goals. It is important to note that this final meeting, the talent review, is considered by some to be "the key tool for identifying high-potential leaders." [10]

Longer-term Strategies for Identifying Potential Leaders

The following list of suggestions, taken from other organizations, colleges and corporations, is intended to stimulate reflection on other considerations. Every college has a unique culture, philosophy, and mission, and will need to choose strategies that best address such particulars.

- Create a mentoring program to develop employees throughout the organization and to identify potential leaders [11].
- Incorporate employee development criteria in management and supervisory job descriptions, and include review of this element in annual performance reviews.
- Request an annual summary of demonstrated leadership growth among employees in each department.
- Use key competencies from the SUNY360 in your college's annual performance reviews and self-assessments.
- Encourage individual initiatives that demonstrate leadership capacity, accompanied by specified oversight and outcome reviews. This strategy permits self-identification and self-testing for leadership roles.
- Ask employees to self-identify skills, talents and specific experiences required for leadership in their domains, then, create a talent database from which employees learn about organizational talent needs and from which current leaders can identify potential leaders.
- Permit one or more program participants to design a talent database or a potential leader selection process for the college.
- Develop and utilize rating systems that combine past performance, past experience and a skill set that best matches college needs.
- Employ panel assessment of criteria known to be important to leadership success in your college environment. Panel members could include most respected leaders, most senior leaders, leaders who embody the college's vision.
- Use an evaluation system that examines targeted college criteria for identification of potential leaders.
- Use a quantitative review with numeric summaries of performance reviews and potential ratings that lead to lists for immediate inclusion in a special program, or inclusion in the next two years, next four years, or not at all.
- Create a talent matrix using the top 16 skills, with an option for the college to add more.
- Adopt an ongoing formal interview process to supplement other methods.
- Allow employees to use a SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory to judge their own potential and as a basis for submission of their interest in further leadership development. We DO NOT recommend forcing a 360 assessment for purposes of picking top-rated employees.

4.3 Targeted Category of Participants

Program planning commonly involves targeting a particular audience from which to solicit participants. Examples of targeted audiences:

- The staff and faculty associated with the student advising process
- Administrators above a target grade level
- Department chairs
- Staff and faculty in a targeted department

Sending a Solicitation Letter

Because your program has a limited audience, you likely will combine the announcement of the program with your request for applications. Start with the targeted solicitation letter in Appendix F. As you customize this letter, include:

1. The name of the person announcing the program – the college president or another appropriate individual
2. The name of the program
3. The length of the program
4. All eligibility requirements
5. The application process, including where to submit the application
6. The application deadline

The sample letter incorporates the key information that we have found potential participants need. You should copy the letter into your standard format or letterhead, and then modify it to meet your needs.

Include the application form as an attachment to the solicitation letter.

Customizing the Application Form

Consider your process for accepting applications prior to customizing the application form in Appendix F. A designated person should collect the applications and verify that they are complete.

Copy the sample application form onto your standard form and customize it as needed. Save the application form in PDF format so applicants can print it for signature and submission.

4.4 An Open Application Process

When your targeted audience is large, you need to make an effort to ensure that potential applicants know about the program and are encouraged to apply. We recommend a three-step process, which you should customize to your college.

The Program Announcement

A sample announcement letter is provided in Appendix F. You may start by customizing a web page on your college internal website to include most of the information in the letter. The web page should contain a brief description of the program and its timetable, and an application form that site visitors can download.

Copy the sample announcement letter onto your standard form, include the name of your college and the time and location of your Q&A Session in the letter, and also include a link to the web page describing the program.

The announcement letter should be sent to everyone in the intended audience. It is also helpful to send a modified announcement to selected supervisors, asking them to nominate candidates who fit the program's recruitment criteria.

Q&A Session

At the Q&A Session, address the following four questions:

- What will I learn in this program?
- How much time will this take?

- Do you have a schedule of all of the activities?
- How will you select the participants?

Also ask for additional questions.

Solicitation Email Message

Follow up the Q&A Session with a solicitation email. This email should be sent to the attendees of the Q&A Session and to supervisors of your intended audience. The solicitation email can be forwarded to participants as appropriate.

The message should focus on the application process and refer the reader to the web page for details about the program. Copy the sample solicitation letter in Appendix F to your standard letter form and add details about your program. Include the application form as an attachment to the solicitation email.

Customizing the Application Form

Consider your process for accepting applications prior to customizing the application form in Appendix F. A designated person should collect the applications and verify that they are complete.

Copy the sample application form onto your standard form and customize it as needed. Save the application form in PDF format so applicants can print it for signature and submission.

4.5 Informing Selected Participants

Appendix F contains a sample letter to be sent to participants in your program once the selection process has been completed. In addition to announcing the participants' selection, the letter will serve as the participants' introduction to the program. It should include a date for the Orientation Workshop and sufficient details to answer likely questions and encourage more questions at the Orientation session.

The Orientation Workshop should be scheduled as soon as possible after the application process is completed and the participants are selected. Copy the letter in Appendix F to your standard form and customize it to include the date of the Orientation Workshop.

4.6 Responses to Those Not Selected as Participants

The college may wish to consider options for responding to those who are not selected to participate in the program. Examples include:

- Offer an option for online, self-directed leadership seminars. These can be scheduled in advance for group participation or provided on an individual, asynchronous basis. (Group participation offers the advantage of shared perspectives and mutual support.)
- Offer a single workshop on self-directed leadership development, accompanied by one or two of the Center for Creative Leadership guidebooks¹ on the topic.
- Offer a single SUNYLI workshop such as the Teambuilding workshop.
- Offer the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory and Feedback Workshop plus the Self-Directed Leadership Development Workshop.

¹ Ideas Into Action Guidebooks are available from the Center for Creative Leadership at <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/publications/guidebooks.aspx>.

- Offer an opportunity to apply next year.
- Point out other development opportunities such as credit and non-credit courses, local professional meetings, and perhaps a reading list.

Appendix A. A process for selecting criteria for potential leader identification

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Step 1 Assemble group and orient</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble a group of well-respected leaders (a minimum of 3, more if desired, 5 are recommended.) Explain the goals of the program, the role of this group, and the task of developing criteria for the selection of potential leaders to become program participants. Briefly describe the process to be used. |
| <p>Step 2 Provide context</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share examples of criteria, mission and strategic goals of college, mission of the program, the SUNY360's 16 critical competencies, and job descriptions of leaders in areas the program will target for leadership development. |
| <p>Step 3 Generate ideas</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate as many ideas as possible that fit the program goals. Using post-it notes, ask the group to list their statements of the criteria that should be used. Display the post-its on a flip chart, discourage discussion, and defer judgment until a later step. Continue for the allowed time or until no more ideas are forthcoming. |
| <p>Step 4 Converge ideas</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the group to sort the post-its into categories. While refraining from talking, each person will move the post-its between categories as they see fit, until the group is satisfied with the resulting arrangement. Ask each person to put a label on each category, again without talking. Then ask each person to put a star on the best label, and on the best statements within each group. |
| <p>Step 5 Improve best ideas</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the group if the top ideas need to be reworded and allow revisions. |
| <p>Step 6 Assemble final list</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble items to make a final list of criteria that will be used for nominations or self-identification process |
| <p>Step 7 Create nomination template</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create questions for the nomination process that capture nominations based on selected criteria and coordinate with the program announcement letter. |

Appendix B. Leadership Competencies

B.1 SUNY360 Critical Leadership Competencies

The following competencies were assembled using research based on the AACCC competencies (AACCC, Schmitz) that identified the most important competencies as judged by a panel of 400 college presidents. This was combined with similar information from the Center for Creative Leadership on key career competencies to form SUNYLI's 360 report on the 16 key leadership competencies in the college sector.

- Works effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, and accrediting associations.
- Manages conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships.
- Develops, enhances, and sustains teamwork and cooperation.
- Facilitates shared problem-solving and decision-making.
- Invites faculty, staff, students, and the community to work for the common good.
- Effectively conveys ideas and information to all constituents.
- Effectively communicates college mission and values to varied audiences.
- Creates and maintains open communications about priorities, resources, and expectations.
- Listens actively to understand, comprehend, analyze, engage, and act.
- Projects confidence and responds responsibly and tactfully.
- Promotes and maintains high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people.
- Demonstrates the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility.
- Manages conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the college.
- Encourages a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes.
- Uses data and best practices to solve problems and to plan strategically.
- Aligns organizational mission, structures and resources with the college master plan.

B.2 IBM Leadership Competencies

Leadership competencies vary widely among employment sectors and can even vary over time. Here is an example of competencies deemed most important by IBM [11]

- **Focus To Win.** Customer Insight, Breakthrough Thinking, Drive to Achieve
- **Mobilize To Execute.** Team Leadership, Straight Talk, Teamwork, Decisiveness
- **Sustain Momentum.** Building Organizational Capability, Coaching, Personal Dedication
- **At the Core.** Passion for the Business

Appendix C. Sustainable Leadership

Below, we outline the 5 basic principles of sustainable leadership as developed by Hargreaves and Fink in their 2003 book, *The Seven Principles of Sustainable Leadership* [12]. Following each principle are some ways in which the principles are integrated in SUNYLI's program design.

C.1 Sustainable leadership creates and preserves sustaining learning

It develops something that is itself self-sustaining

The SUNY College Leaders Program is designed to enable the college facilitator to conduct the program with minimal support from SUNYLI in the following years.

It is designed so that each college can benefit from the contributions from other colleges year after year, without having to pay for the entire program again.

It is designed so that the mentees will learn to become mentors for others in successive years.

It involves learning that is intellectually, socially, and emotionally engaging

The program is designed to provide solid intellectual engagement for each individual as they tackle their own self-assessment.

Using a cohort design provides the social connection that reinforces the many learning opportunities along the way.

Each individual is challenged emotionally as they engage in self-assessment and then share their goals and plans with their mentor in a safe and trusting environment where they can recognize their own emotional input to their developmental tasks.

It is focused on learning outcomes rather than just an achievement

The program's development project focuses on ways in which the individual can learn the needed skills for increased leadership capacity. Only secondarily does the project involve achieving goals for the college.

C.2 Sustainable leadership secures success over time

It supports a succession of leaders

The mentorship component of the program contributes to the creation of a leadership succession.

It involves creating a culture of leadership support

Mentors report their own "wise leader" development as they mature in their mentoring role and enjoy passing the torch to those who will assume their positions.

C.3 Sustainable leadership sustains the leadership of others

It is co-developed, co-executed, and co-evaluated

The program is co-developed with NYS colleges. The facilitators from each college participate in the design, execution and evaluation of each component of the program.

It is distributed throughout the organization

The program is designed to incorporate a diverse cohort of managers and senior managers, and cross-college learning is a key capability of the program.

C.4 Sustainable leadership addresses issues of social justice

It is inclusive and refrains from lavishing resources on just the few

The program is designed so that the funds spent to send just one or two people to a weeklong program can instead be devoted to developing up to 15 new leaders and 15 senior mentors.

It is sensitive to partnerships that utilize the talents and wisdom of diverse groups

Because the program involves a cohort of participants, there is a built-in process for diverse members of the college to learn from each other and share their wisdom.

C.5 Sustainable leadership develops rather than depletes human and material resources

It provides intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and incentives to attract and retain the best and the brightest

The program is based on the principles of self-determination theory, a theory founded on the basic motivators of autonomy, relatedness and competence. Learning theory incorporates the basic principles of self-determination as is evidenced throughout the literature and research on adult learning. (E. Deci & Ryan, 1985; E. L. Deci & with Flaste, 1995)

It provides time to network, learn from each other, coach, and mentor

The program is constructed to extend over 1.5 to 2 years so key activities, such as networking, have time to occur. Research shows that longer mentoring relationships are more successful; hence, the program allows sufficient time for effective mentoring to occur.

It is thrifty without being cheap

The program makes leadership training cost-effective by providing a quality experience on campus. In this way, the expenses of transportation, food, and lodging, can be redirected to the learning time and resources in the program. In addition, the program enables colleges to share the expense involved in the guided knowledge-building workshops.

Appendix D. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is an approach to leadership that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers, with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership **enhances the motivation, morale and performance** of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership of their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance.

Appendix E. Program Background

This appendix contains additional material about the SUNY College Leaders Program.

E.1 Participant statements about program outcomes

Following are responses received from program participants when asked how they benefitted from the program, specifically what skill development occurred?

In what ways did you benefit from the program?

- I became more effective at delegation and thinking globally.
- I gained better insight into resolving conflicts with other departments.
- I became more assertive with competing priorities and getting things done.
- I became more persuasive about the benefits of my project and its contributions.
- I developed abilities to compromise.
- I became more comfortable interacting with diverse administrators.
- I learned to stop and view the entire picture before reacting.
- I learned the value of a good sounding board.
- I learned how to help others see differing perspectives in non-threatening ways.
- I learned more ways to network.
- I learned a lot about project management.
- I learned how to lead a college-wide project.
- I learned new ways to get funding for projects at the college.
- I learned ways to collaborate with other units.
- I learned ways to learn from situational leadership dilemmas.
- I learned more about meeting facilitation.
- I learned how to make presentations to senior leadership group.
- I learned how to construct a community partnership project.
- I improved my organization skills.
- I improved my presentation skills.
- I gained a more global perspective of college operations.
- I gained confidence working with faculty on my project goals.
- I became more aware of the big picture beyond my department.
- I learned how decisions impacted other areas.

E.2 Support materials available from SUNYLI

The following materials are available to the college facilitator(s) as they plan their program:

- Overview and planning guide for the SUNY College Leaders Program (this guide)
- Orientation for the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory – a workshop
- Guide to the SUNY360
- SUNY360 Feedback Workshop
- Guide to the Skills Development Project and the Mentoring Program
- Planning and Designing the Skills Development Project – a workshop
- Sharing Development Projects Workshop
- Mentoring Relationships Workshop
- Teambuilding Workshop
- Managing Change Workshop
- Conflict Management Workshop
- Diversity and Inclusion Workshop
- Graduation and Reflections Workshop

Materials for each of the workshops include a facilitator’s guide, a complete set of presentation slides in PowerPoint format, and a set of handouts in Word format. The slides and handouts may be customized to the needs of your program.

Appendix F. Sample letters and attachments

This appendix contains the following letters. These letters must be completed with your specific information and can be customized to your situation. Key fields that you must complete are provided in brackets ([]). When you finish editing your letter, you should search for any square brackets that have not been replaced. As you edit these letters, watch for grammatical errors such as mismatches between your new subject and the verb, or changing “a” to “an” before a vowel.

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F.1 Sample Program Announcement Letter

Dear Colleagues,

[**Xxx College**] is working with the SUNY Leadership Institute to provide a leadership development program on our campus, which we are calling “[**title**].”

The program is designed to cultivate leaders from within the college by providing skill and knowledge development opportunities across the college over a [**xx-month**] period. Our goal is to prepare professionals now for possible leadership roles in the future, and develop a pool of candidates for interim and permanent assignments as well as special projects.

The first half of the program will be focused on an individual skill inventory and development planning. Participants will attend workshops designed to support these activities. The individual planning phases of the program will be followed by activities and workshops that will focus on key leadership skills and knowledge such as [**teambuilding, managing change and dealing with conflict**]. The seminars will be supplemented with reading materials and guided exercises.

All participants will undertake a project in which they can develop and practice their own skills in the workplace while gaining exposure to multiple areas of the college. Participants will be guided to construct projects that address their own interests while incorporating strategic needs of the college. As additional support, each participant will be paired with a more senior person who will serve as a mentor as they participate in the program.

Professional staff and faculty who demonstrate a passion for excellence and a commitment to professional growth are ideal candidates for the program. Up to 15 participants will be selected. Eligibility requirements include: full-time faculty or professional staff and an earned master's degree or higher with a minimum of five years' experience in higher education, or an earned bachelor's degree with a minimum of ten years' experience in higher education.

I urge you to consider faculty and staff who you believe would be appropriate candidates for this program. As you do, think about yourself, those to whom you report, those who report to you, and your peers. Applicants may nominate themselves or be nominated by others.

Attached is an application form so that you might know what information we are seeking from applicants. The same application form and a copy of this letter are posted on our website at [URL here]. A calendar is included on the website so you can review the approximate time commitments for participants. We anticipate some adjustments in the dates and times to accommodate the group selected for participation. Also posted on this link is a broader description of the program and its benefits.

[**Optional**] A meeting to review the program, discuss participation commitments and benefits, and respond to questions will be held on [**month, day**] in [**room**] at [**time**].

[**Names**] will be at this meeting, and we look forward to a conversation about this exciting new program.

Sincerely,

[**President's name**]

F.2 Solicitation Letter

We [or name] are now accepting nominations and applications for the [year] [program name]. We are partnering with the SUNY Leadership Institute to develop our own college leadership development program, a program that will help us to build our internal leadership capacity and offer a significant professional development opportunity to members of our college community.

The [program name] is a [xxx – length of program] program designed to enhance leadership potential through a self-administered 360-degree skills inventory, half-day workshops, and other group activities. The program will include completion of a short-term skill development project designed by the participant and supported by a mentor who can help nourish the desired skill growth.

Employees who demonstrate a passion for excellence and a commitment to professional growth and development are ideal candidates for the program. Eligibility requirements include: full-time employee and an earned master's degree or higher with a minimum of five years' experience in higher education, or an earned bachelor's degree with a minimum of ten years' experience in higher education.

To apply, complete the attached form and attach a current resume. Please have your immediate supervisor or vice president sign the form as an endorsement of your application. Submit all application materials to [Name of liaison], [title of liaison], no later than [time], [day], [month and date]. You may also encourage others to apply or submit a nomination.

I encourage you to consider this valuable opportunity for professional development.

[President]

F.3 Application form

[Name of Program]

Application for **[program date]** **[Program Name]**

To apply for the **[Program Name]** Program, complete this form and submit it with a current resume to **[program liaison]**, **[title of liaison]**. You should discuss this program with your supervisor to ensure that you will have time to complete the program. Ask your supervisor to sign this form to indicate support for your application. Completed applications must be received by **[day]**, **[month and date]**. For further information, contact **[Name of program liaison]** at **[telephone #]** or **[email address]** or **[office #]**.

Name _____ Title _____

Department _____ Division _____

Campus _____ Phone Number _____ Email _____

Please discuss your interest in **[Program Name]** and how you hope it will contribute to your goals.

If selected, I understand that I will be expected to participate in all **[Program Name]** activities, including the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory, workshops, development project, and mentoring program. **[Optional: Most of the workshops and meetings will be held on Friday afternoons from 12 noon-4:30 p.m.] [will be held according to the attached program schedule]**.

Signature _____ Date _____

Approval by Immediate Supervisor:

Signature _____ Date _____

Title _____

Required support document: ____Resume

F.4 Acceptance Letter

[Opening salutation and dates, etc]

We're glad you are participating in the **[Program name]**. The purpose of this letter is to provide more detail about the program and outline topics you will want to consider prior to our orientation meeting on **[date]**. We have included the names of all the participants in case you would like to share your thoughts with others prior to the orientation.

The meeting will include the following topics:

- Program overview and schedule: dates, times, and locations
- Shared meanings of leadership and initial thoughts about a program name
- The SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory: goals, benefits, preparation, questions
- The role of the supervisor
- Participant questions and concerns

About the SUNY360 Leadership Skills Inventory

During the orientation, you will have an opportunity to become more familiar with the SUNY360 inventory tool and ways it can facilitate your professional growth. This tool will provide you with an initial inventory and ratings of your leadership skills. You will be able to refer to this inventory throughout the program as you work on specific leadership skills.

The SUNY360 provides you with ratings from your colleagues so that you have a more complete picture of your skills. To create this inventory, the SUNY360 requires that you identify and contact approximately 10 to 12 people – up to a maximum of 20 – who have had an opportunity to observe you at work and can complete the inventory, providing ratings of your leadership skills. The inventory will be administered online to each observer you choose.

You will be the only person who knows who you have asked to complete the inventory, and you will be the only party who receives the summary report of their responses. With the exception of your supervisor's responses, individual observer ratings are not shown on the summary report. If you list more than one supervisor, their scores will be averaged.

Prior to the orientation meeting, we suggest that you consider who you will ask to be your observers. This will allow you to contact them in a timely manner. You will want your observers to give you honest, accurate, and up-to-date ratings from a variety of perspectives. Ideally, you should include peers, people who report to you, people senior to you, external colleagues, and your supervisor. It is best if you consider the kind of feedback that would be helpful to your growth and identify people most likely to give you accurate ratings. You will want to consider the various perspectives your associates can contribute, and attempt to assemble multiple viewpoints, not just positive or critical ones. Most of us perform differently in different contexts, and you will want to choose people who have witnessed your behavior and accomplishments in many ways.

At the orientation meeting, you can pick up copies of *Q & A for Observers in the SUNY360* that you can share with your observers.

The Role of Your Boss

This program is designed to develop your leadership skills. Your college will benefit from your enhanced skills and the skills that your colleagues learn from you.

Feedback from your supervisor is a valuable part of your skills inventory. The SUNY360 is designed to accept feedback from your supervisor and to provide those ratings separately from the other ratings. You will want to ask your supervisor to take part in your SUNY360, and your invitation should explicitly mention that supervisor ratings will be shown separately and identified in your report. You will be asking for honest, objective feedback which will not be anonymous and will be shown side-by-side with the aggregate feedback from other observers.

Experience tells us that many supervisors appreciate knowing about the program and hearing your observations on a periodic basis. You are not required to share the summary feedback from the SUNY360 with your supervisor although you will likely want to share some aspects of your responses and observations. It is a good opportunity to gather additional views regarding your results.

Your SUNY360 Inventory Report

Some who have participated in a SUNY360-style inventory say they were anxious about receiving the feedback, comparing it to opening a report card or SAT scores, or receiving a decision on an employment application. Most of us care about how others see us, so such feelings are entirely understandable. In the orientation meeting, we will discuss ways to ease these anxieties and manage your SUNY360 experience to best effect.

In the Feedback Workshop, scheduled immediately following receipt of your Individual Report, you will acquire strategies for evaluating and optimizing the information contained in the SUNY360's summary reports, relating the findings to your professional goals, and crafting personalized development plans.

About Other Aspects of the program

You likely have other questions about future aspects of the program. We will take time to discuss your questions at the orientation, so we encourage you to keep track of your concerns as they arise and, if you have time, send us a note so that we can make sure to incorporate them in the orientation.

[closing]

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