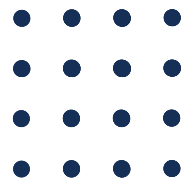


IMPACT OF SUNY SAIL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

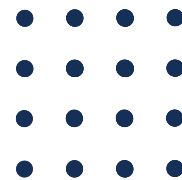


Amanda J. Harding

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Leadership and Learning in Organizations
Department of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations

Advisor: Marisa Cannata

DEDICATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



I started this journey in August 2017. I chose a different path than most, but finally, I made it. The number of times I regretted that path is too many to count, but now that I have reached the end, I am so thankful it was my path. Not only was I fortunate enough to be accepted in as a student for the very first cohort, but I witnessed the program evolve for the better, and had the unique opportunity to be connected with so many others on this journey. For that I am forever thankful.

First, to my parents, Elaine and Graham, you have supported me in every decision I've made. Not only have you supported me, but you've pushed me and contributed to my success. As your only child, we have a bond that will never be broken. Thank you for raising me to be determined to succeed, no matter what.

To my husband, Brett, thank you for strolling along this path with me. You've seen me at my worst and saved the day when I thought I lost all of my work (and sanity). I look forward to whatever our next path is to walk along together.

To my cat, Chloe, it wouldn't be a dedication page without you. My sweet class companion, you deserve this degree as well. You snuggled on my lap and made it bearable for all of the hard days and times I didn't want to sit down in front of the computer for class or homework.

To my partner organization, SUNY SAIL, thank you for allowing me to give back and to dig in to a topic that I feel passionately about.

To my advisor, Marisa, thank you for your guidance and encouragement throughout this process. And to the LLO students before me... thank you for always welcoming the girl with no cohort. Your kindness and help have been unmatched.

To my ODE team, thank you for cheering me on from the sidelines, and allowing me the space to focus on the final push. I am so lucky to work with you all. And a special shout out to Jeanine, who inspires me in ways she doesn't even know.

To Dr. Klein, I'll never forget when you asked if I'd ever considered a doctorate back in 2012 as I wrapped up my MS degree. I'm not sure I'd be writing this page if it wasn't for your encouragement.

And last, but not least, to myself... you did it... and you are amazing.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMPACT OF SUNY SAIL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS



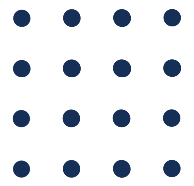
Leadership development programs train individuals to effectively lead departments, change initiatives, and individuals effectively. Furthermore, many organizations have used these training programs as retention tools. While research suggests that leadership development programs provide several benefits to the individual, providers of these programs have difficulty measuring their direct impact on career advancement and return on investment.



The **State University of New York (SUNY) Strategic, Academic, and Innovative Leadership (SAIL) Institute** is an initiative to provide professional development and leadership training for faculty, staff, and students across 64 campuses within the SUNY system. The SAIL Institute offers innovative leadership development opportunities using a fee for service model, providing campus members affordable training, while aiming to strengthen the SUNY system leadership pipeline (SUNY SAIL, 2022). Since its initiation in 2016, they have launched 17 new programs and served over 600 higher education leaders.

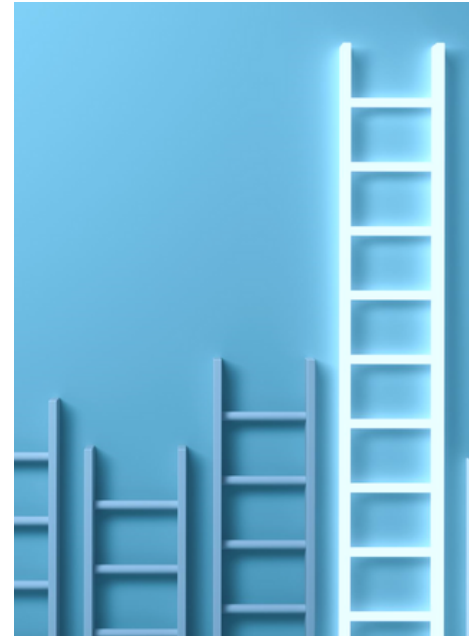
After six years of operating, SAIL does not have a viable mechanism to track alumni who have participated in their programming and thus are struggling to communicate their impact. This capstone project aimed to help SUNY SAIL better understand the impact on program participants' career advancement.

PROJECT DESIGN



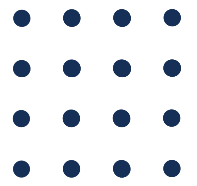
Before collecting and analyzing data, an extensive literature review was conducted focused on understanding how to define career advancement, how leadership programs are historically evaluated, individual benefits of leadership development programs, and challenges experienced in advancing careers.

In a mixed-methods approach, three data sources were used to answer project questions including 46 alumni impact survey responses, 4 SUNY SAIL program pre- and post-test assessments, and 17 semi-structured interviews derived from the alumni impact survey respondents.



Project Questions

1. How has participation in a SUNY SAIL program impacted participants' career advancement?
2. How has SUNY SAIL participation affected confidence, beliefs, and skillsets related to leadership capabilities?
3. What challenges or barriers do participants encounter with career advancement?



FINDINGS



Participation in SAIL has not directly impacted career advancement



Program impact can be measured far beyond career advancement



Identifying specific leadership capabilities gained was difficult



Participation does not negate challenges to career advancement

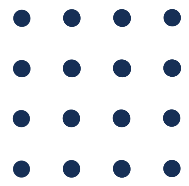


Lack of coordinated recognition and follow-up limits future advancement

Although only 14 of the 46 survey respondents indicated they had advanced their careers since program completion, SUNY SAIL program participants found their experiences impactful in ways measured beyond advancing their careers. Themes such as navigating the higher education landscape, connecting with others, gaining more self-awareness, and self-promotion were all aspects of participation that proved impactful.

Additionally, findings uncovered that advancing one's career can be difficult, and participating in a leadership development program does not negate those challenges. Limitations such as encountering biases in the hiring process, missing out on opportunities due to the organizational structure, and holding oneself back were highlighted as reasons individuals were unable to take the next step.

Furthermore, while participation allows for individuals to self-promote, interviewees felt that SAIL could better recognize their successful completion in the program to key decision makers and provide follow-up opportunities to connect with colleagues and hiring managers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a standardized evaluation process



Using a four-step approach, informed by Holton, Guskey, and Kirkpatrick's frameworks, SAIL can establish a standardized evaluation process utilizing short and long-term components to understand program learnings and impact, and track participants' career advancement. The four steps include defining overall outcomes, creating a career advancement database, implementing short-term evaluation tools, and curating a 12-month follow-up protocol.

Design a recommendation protocol



Based on the evaluation strategy, SAIL should design a recommendation protocol to communicate program participant's successful completion better. Using a report to communicate leadership recognition, key decision makers in the SUNY system would have real-time data and access to their talent pipeline. Creating a post-program newsletter could serve as a way to expand participants' exposure and promote future SAIL offerings. Last, offering an annual reception with key SUNY system stakeholders provides an additional opportunity to connect and celebrate high performers.

Build a digital community



Program participants felt strongly connected with others when participating in SAIL programs. Building and nurturing a digital community would help sustain relationships individuals build organically during their program. By awarding digital badges and using a technology platform, participants can quickly identify other alumni, re-engage with each other, celebrate wins, provide support during challenging times, and share job postings. SAIL could also use this to more easily monitor career progress.

Identify Challenges & Strategize



SAIL must include opportunities for program participants to identify challenges they have experienced in trying to advance their careers and offer strategic activities during program sessions to help navigate and mitigate those challenges. Considerations such as expanding the mentorship component, reflection activities, or exclusive resources such as mock application and interview processes could help participants be more successful in the future.

Organizational Context

The State University of New York (SUNY) Strategic, Academic, and Innovative Leadership (SAIL) Institute is an initiative to provide professional development and leadership training for faculty, staff, and students across 64 campuses within the SUNY system. The SAIL Institute offers innovative leadership development opportunities using a fee-for-service model, providing campus members with affordable training while aiming to strengthen the SUNY system leadership pipeline (SUNY SAIL, 2022). Launched from a re-envisioned Leadership Institute in 2016, SAIL focuses on learning opportunities through a strategic, academic, and innovative leadership (SAIL) lens.

The SAIL Institute comprises an administrative team, including a founding executive director, director, leadership development manager, and three leadership strategists. In addition to the administrative team, SUNY SAIL works closely with seven leadership fellows who are experts in various areas of leadership development and either currently serve in roles on a SUNY campus or have retired but are still active in further leadership development initiatives across the state system. The administrative team partners work closely with the fellows to facilitate (SAIL) program offerings.

As a system-wide institute, SAIL offers self-assessments, workshops, retreats, cohort-based academies, executive coaching, webinars, and research to train future faculty, staff, and student leaders. Since its initiation in 2016, they have launched 17 new programs and served over 620 higher education leaders and 170 students (SUNY SAIL, 2022). Of these offerings, nine of the 17 programs are considered long-term engagements utilizing a cohort model servicing faculty, staff, and physicians. Other programming includes a student leadership academy, customizable workshops, and ongoing webinar series.

Area of Inquiry

After six years of operating, the SAIL Institute does not have a viable mechanism to track alumni who have participated in their programming. The organization has identified the need to show relevant impact as a fee-for-service model. While the Institute has collected data on its programs, including satisfaction surveys, and pre-and post-test assessments, there needs to be more consistency amongst its data collection methods, and they are ultimately unable to assess the overall success of its programs. With a desire to understand the potential relationship between its professional development offerings and career movement amongst participants, they fall short. Furthermore, SAIL has been unable to craft a successful feedback loop to central SUNY administration and its campuses interested in building strong leadership talent pipelines.

After initial conversations with the SAIL team, their focus is understanding the direct impact of training on career advancement for participants. In addition to uncovering the impact of career advancement, we expand the approach to understand how program participants' leadership development and competencies (confidence, beliefs, communication) are impacted at an individual level and seek to identify challenges to participants' career advancement.

Despite the known benefits of leadership development programs, more research is needed about their long-term impact from an individual and organizational perspective. Historically, SUNY SAIL has not administered a program Alumni Survey or longitudinally tracked alumni that come through their programs. However, given its revenue-driven model, the desire to bolster internal leadership capabilities, and continuously improve its program offerings, the SUNY SAIL Institute developed and administered its first Impact Survey in April 2022 to obtain data from its alumni to inform their program value and future strategic vision.

Capstone Purpose

This project focuses on nine programs offered through the SUNY SAIL Institute (see Table 1). These programs are considered long-term engagements with a cohort model and include faculty, staff, and clinical physicians. Using a mixed methods approach, the purpose of this capstone aims to accomplish the following:

1. Identify overall impact and career advancement among SUNY SAIL alumni,
2. uncover potential relationship or disconnect between SUNY SAIL professional development offerings and career advancement, and
3. provide an overall understanding of SUNY SAIL's organizational impact at the SUNY system level and construct a strategy to strengthen the leadership talent pipeline.

Findings and recommendations aim to provide SUNY SAIL with a focus on how participants feel their experience in a SAIL program has impacted their career advancement, what individual benefits participants are walking away with from their program, challenges participants experience in advancing their career that SUNY SAIL can potentially play a role in solving, and strategies to seamlessly collect and utilize data to maximize the value of program alumni.

Table 1
SUNY SAIL Programs

Program Name	Program Duration	Audience
Business Officers Leadership Academy	5 Months	Staff
CIO Leadership Academic	4 Months	Staff
Clinical Leadership Academy	7 Months	Physicians
Department Chair Training	1 Month	Faculty
Hispanic Leadership Institute	6 Months	Faculty/Staff
Executive Leadership Academy	1 Month	Staff
Summer Retreat	1 Week	Faculty/Staff
Winter Academy	2 Months	Faculty/Staff
Mindful Leadership Certificate	2 Months	Faculty/Staff

Research Synthesis

Leadership development programs train individuals to lead departments and change initiatives and individuals effectively. Furthermore, many organizations have used these training programs as retention tools. While research suggests that leadership development programs provide several benefits to the individual, providers of these programs have difficulty measuring their direct impact on career advancement and return on investment. A literature review will define career advancement, help understand how we measure impact, benefits to participating, and other considerations that may influence impact as related to leadership development programs.

Defining Career Advancement

With the belief that a measure of success for program participants is career advancement, we must define career advancement. The idea of career advancement has evolved significantly from prior research findings (Conlon, 2004; Herr, 2001). What was once a practice owned by an organization has become the employee's responsibility (Conlon, 2004) as they move within and to other organizations. Furthermore, career advancement is considered a process that occurs over an individual's lifespan and is influenced by several social and environmental factors (Lent & Brown, 1996).

A literature review indicates a few ways to define career advancement (Conlon, 2004; Huo, 2021; Kraimer et al., 2011; Weng & McElroy, 2012). In a study conducted by Weng and McElroy (2012), they conceptualized and supported career growth through three factors: career goal progress, professional ability development, and promotion speed. Similarly, Huo (2021) defined career progress as fulfilling one's career goals, developing professional skills and abilities, and receiving rewards. In contrast, using a "boundaryless" career attitude (Heslin, 2005), individuals evaluate their career success using their criteria, which may include acquiring specific skill sets, certain work arrangements, or seeking out work in precise organizational contexts or industries (Kraimer et al., 2011). This capstone defines career advancement objectively regarding job promotion or increased responsibilities directly related to leadership functions.

How do we Measure Leadership Development Impact?

Based on the literature review, understanding how to measure the impact of leadership development programming is not a unique challenge to the SUNY SAIL Institute. Several articles point to the need for more research to measure the impact of leadership development

programs (Agboola Sogunro, 1997; DeSimone, 2011; Dopson et al., 2018; Flaig et al., 2020). Furthermore, in the context of research on leadership development impact within higher education, Dopson et al. (2018) could only surface 17 studies. However, the context did not make a difference as Flaig et al. (2020) searched for participant impact on hospital managers and leaders and found results of only 23 viable studies to conclude. This lack indicates a need for more research on how organizations evaluate the impact of their leadership development programs.

Many studies used Kirkpatrick's four-level evaluation model to determine the effectiveness of training programs (Burke & Day, 1986; Collins & Holton, 2004; Dexter & Prince, 2007; Dopson et al., 2018; Flaig et al., 2020; Sirianni & Frey, 2001). In the Kirkpatrick model developed in 1954, evaluators aim to understand how well the program functioned from participant feedback and achievement of desired organizational outcomes. Level 1 assesses if participants liked the training. Next, level 2 measures what participants learned from the program, i.e., skills, attitudes, or behaviors gained. Level 3 examines on-the-job application of their learnings, and level 4 data aims to understand if there were tangible benefits to the organization. However, some researchers are pushing back on the framework noting these evaluations are superficial (King & Nesbit, 2015) and need to speak to the organizational impact or performance (Collins & Holton, 2004). Salas et al. (2012) indicate that this framework does not consider human learning and uses a checklist approach, ultimately providing no value to stakeholders. Holton (1996) proposed an evaluation method to combat these shortcomings, establishing learning outcomes aligned with the organization's strategic direction and goals.

What are the Individual Benefits of Leadership Development Programs?

Despite the lack of evaluation of the overall leadership program impact, several studies state there are identifiable and measurable benefits for individuals participating in leadership development programs, professional development opportunities, and formal training sessions (Agboola Sogunro, 1997; Collins & Holton, 2004; Sirianni & Frey, 2001). Only one study differed, noting that managerial training is only moderately effective, but it was small scale and could not conduct potentially useful follow-up analyses (Burke & Day, 1986).

Looking across the research, pre-and post-test evaluations indicated participants report improved leadership capabilities, such as enhanced communication skills, improved problem-solving skills, networking abilities, and strategic visioning (Agboola Sogunro, 1997; Cohrs et al., 2019; Flaig et al., 2020; Paterson et al., 2015). Supporting these findings, Flaig et al. (2020) captured data from 23 healthcare leadership programs, identifying consistency for 20 beneficial outcomes. Similarly, a study by Agboola Sogunro (1997) examined the impact of a 19-year-old leadership program and found that a leadership program intervention improved participants' leadership knowledge, communication skills, ability to influence others, and serve as role models. Expanding on the notion that participants reported improved capabilities, findings from Cohrs et al. (2019) indicated there is also a relationship between pre-test scores and degree of improvement. Consistent with those findings, Hirst et al. (2004) found that individuals who came as novice leaders showed the best improvement in areas of managing others, influencing others, and navigating organizational structures from a leadership development intervention. These findings indicate there may be further exploration and understanding of what stage of their career an employee receives leadership training when measuring individual learning and success within a program.

Acknowledging the changing landscape and needs of leaders, Pearce (2007) argues for pushing beyond the transactional-transformational model and evaluating characteristics such as “identity, multi-level approaches, self-leadership, physical fitness, shared leadership, networking, creativity, emotions, spirituality, and the onboarding process” (p. 356). However, despite discrepancies in what to measure, the question remains: How can programs successfully evaluate the improvement of these characteristics over time? Some studies have suggested that measuring these traits is difficult (Blackler & Kennedy, 2004; Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). What is most useful in evaluation is understanding how the leadership intervention will support individuals’ learning by learning from program participants over time and designing a program using a continuous improvement method (Blackler & Kennedy, 2004). This capstone will focus on understanding the following individual benefits of participating in a leadership development program: increased confidence, improved communication skills, enhanced self-awareness, ability to create strategic vision, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced feelings of career success or progression.

Are Leadership Development Programs Enough?

If measuring the impact of leadership development through career advancement outcomes, it is essential to understand other factors that may limit or enhance career advancement. Simply put, participation in a leadership development program does not guarantee successful advancement in one’s career. Based on a review of the literature, a few factors may contribute to or prohibit individual career advancement (Arokiasamy et al., 2014; Carmeli et al., 2007; Lewis, 2016; Monkhouse et al., 2018; Whitmarsh et al., 2011; Williams, 2007). As uncovered in a study of leadership fellows in a global health program, one such challenge was that participants needed a chance to utilize learned skills that may enable advancement (Monkhouse et al., 2018). In contrast, a study by Laud and Johnson (2012) found that successful

career advancers were those who created their own opportunities for advancement. Both findings indicate there are other factors at play in determining career success.

Furthermore, career advancement may be influenced both by individual and organizational variables. Laud and Johnson (2012) identified 15 individually driven tactics that career aspirants use to progress. Arokiasamy et al. (2014) and Carmeli et al. (2005) confirm that individual demographic characteristics can also be contributors or barriers to career advancement. In addition, Weng and Zhu (2020) highlight family as a critical factor in determining advancement, whether due to women having children and pausing their careers or a supportive home that allows for career mobility.

However, career advancement is not always attributed to the individual. As noted above, the opportunity to advance within or outside an organization is not always possible, and therefore organizations should offer additional support mechanisms. Considerations such as providing challenging work assignments and continuous education opportunities (Monkhouse et al., 2018), financial support for conferences or medical leave (Arokiasamy et al., 2014), and well-defined career paths (Dopson et al., 2018) have been found to contribute to career advancement. Similarly, Agboola Sogunro (1997) believes that organizations must see leadership potential in every employee and make leadership training widely available at their organizations rather than to a select few.

While reviewing the literature on barriers to career advancement, most results focused on challenges for women or people of color. While this is not surprising, understanding successful development tactics for women and people of color may benefit anyone seeking career advancement. The most prevalent concept of successful career advancement was mentorship (Adeniran et al., 2013; Ayyala et al., 2019; Lewis, 2016; Mate et al., 2019; Randel et al., 2019;

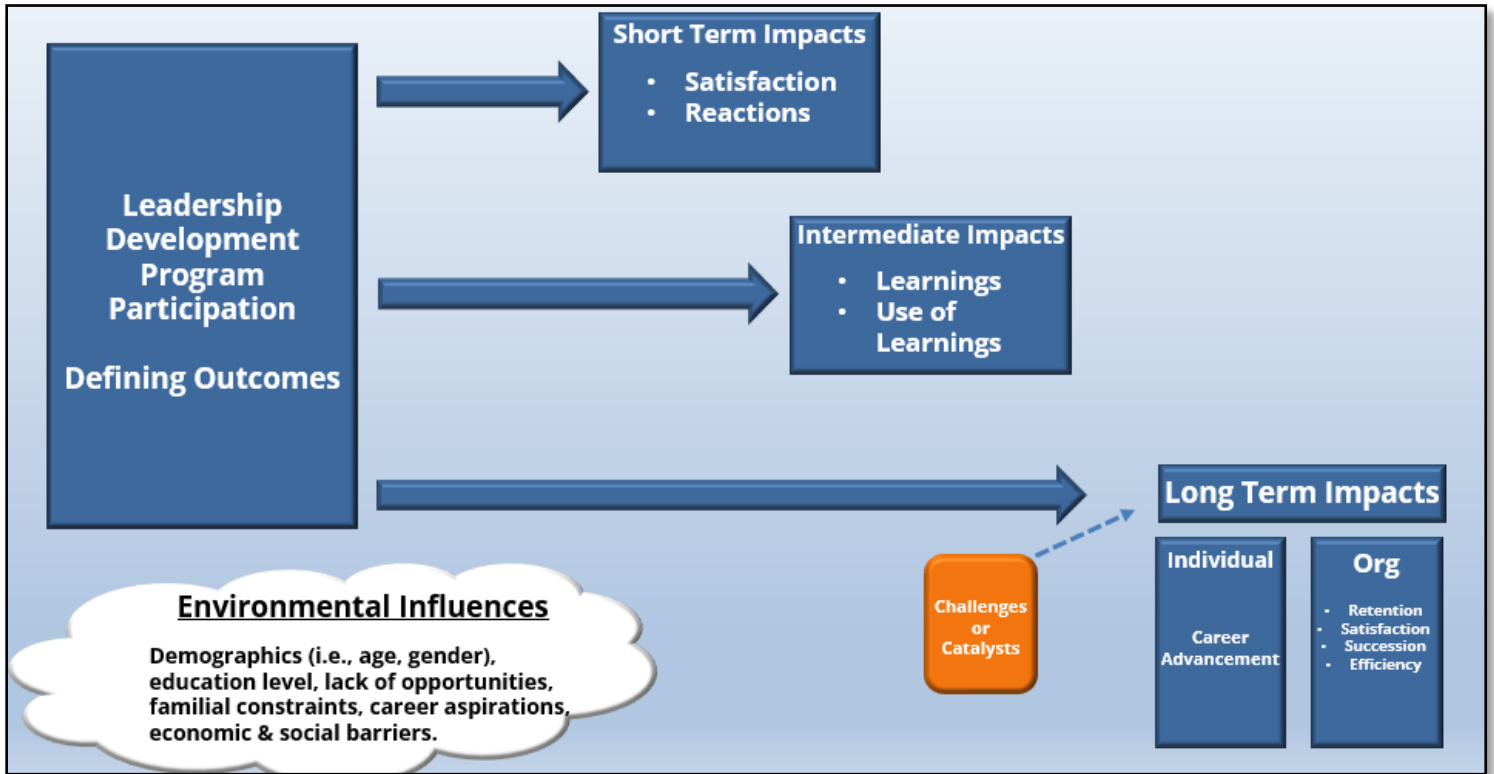
Williams, 2007). Supporting this claim, research conducted by Allen and Eby (2004) demonstrated that mentored individuals experience quicker advancement, higher salaries, increased job satisfaction, and higher retention rates. While Ayyala et al. (2019) and Randel et al. (2019) acknowledge the benefits of mentorship, their work explored moving beyond a mentorship model to an expanded view, including sponsorship. Sponsorship is the aspect of mentoring that allows individuals to grow their networks more rapidly (Randel et al., 2019). This capstone will specifically explore challenges participants have experienced in their advancement and provide recommendations for SAIL to help participants overcome them.

Conceptual Framework

An extensive review of the literature provides us with insight into understanding leadership development programs. From this research, the key takeaways were as follows: There is a significant gap in studies evaluating their programs from an impact perspective; however, consistency in evaluating leadership development and frameworks will meaningfully contribute to the field of impact evaluation. Evidence suggests that leadership development programs benefit individuals, with many participants indicating satisfaction with program material and increased skills, attitudes, and behaviors. However, individual satisfaction with training and improved leadership skillsets does not necessarily correlate to career advancement.

Using the research and findings which suggest additional individual characteristics and organizational support structures must be prevalent for long-term success, the conceptual framework for this study will rely on several existing program evaluation strategies, including Kirkpatrick's four-level evaluation model, Guskey's five levels of professional development evaluation, and Holton's model.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework to Assess Impact of a Leadership Development Program



Using Holton’s framework, one must first define the outcomes from the organizational perspective. Then, in the first level of impact, we can address short-term benefits such as participant satisfaction and reaction to the training. Using Kirkpatrick’s four-level model, this level one data can be collected from each program and participant to understand if there was a positive experience. We can examine level two data in the intermediate impact level to assess participants’ learning. We can understand what was learned from program participation using pre-and post-test data. As a follow-up, we can aim to collect data that assess’ participants’ use of their newly gained skills on the job. Here is where we can use Guskey’s additional level of assessment to focus on the organizational characteristics and attributes necessary for success.

The last level of impact looks at the long-term impact on the individual and the organization. From an individual perspective, we seek to understand the impact of leadership development program participation on their career advancement. At the organizational level, is there a relationship between participation and goals such as employee retention, satisfaction, and enhanced succession planning? Furthermore, we must acknowledge that leadership development participation is not the only factor in determining long-term impact and must be accounted for, represented by the orange in Figure 1. Similarly, the framework has also been designed to acknowledge the environmental influences that may be a factor in assessing impact.

Project Questions

A conceptual framework and extensive research were used, formulating three project questions to better understand the overall impact and career advancement among SUNY SAIL program participants.

1. How has participation in a SUNY SAIL program impacted participants' career advancement?
2. How has SUNY SAIL participation affected confidence, beliefs, and skillsets related to leadership capabilities?
3. What challenges or barriers do participants encounter with career advancement?

Question one seeks to understand if participation in a SUNY SAIL program has led to career advancement and how they perceive the impact of their participation. This question will uncover potential relationships or disconnect between professional development offerings and career advancement. The second question provides an opportunity to explore how participation in a SUNY SAIL program may impact other aspects of one's career not directly related to advancement or promotion. Aiming to measure a change in participant's leadership skills (i.e.,

communication, strategic planning, problem-solving, providing feedback) and attributes (i.e., self-awareness, trust, creativity, transparency) to understand the immediate impact that could lead to long-term advancement. Leadership programming is only one tool used when seeking to advance a career. Thus, the last project question will seek to understand what challenges or barriers participants face when looking to advance. This project may uncover potential gaps in their service model and inform future programming for SUNY SAIL.

Project Design

A mixed methods approach to address project questions utilizing three data sources. First, SUNY SAIL administered an Alumni Impact Survey containing quantitative and qualitative data questions. Additionally, they provided quantitative pre- and post-test assessment data for four of their programs to examine changes in participants' leadership skills and attributes. As the third data source, the Alumni Impact Survey was used as a base to conduct interviews with participants of the nine SUNY SAIL programs to dive deeper into their experiences.

Data Collection and Analysis

Alumni Impact Survey

The Alumni Impact Survey was distributed by SUNY SAIL on April 26, 2022, and remained open until the end of May 2022. After the initial survey distribution, one additional communication was sent out as a reminder two weeks before closing. Using Survey Monkey, SAIL's survey consisted of 24 questions, which included a mixture of yes/no, a 5-point Likert scale, and open-ended questions. All survey questions can be found in Appendix A. The survey was sent to 646 participants using Constant Contact and offered respondents a chance to win 1,000 continuing professional development (CPD) points, which could be used toward any SAIL or SUNY Continuing Professional Development program or service in the future. At the end of

May, the survey received 46 responses. To collect more responses, the researcher attended a SUNY SAIL *Leaders Learning Live Webinar* on October 20, 2022, sharing an overview of the project and encouraging additional participation in the survey. After reopening the survey until October 31, 2022, no additional responses were received.

This survey provided insight into how program participation impacted leadership advancement, if programming met expectations, what skills, assessments, or topics impacted growth as a leader, and if they would recommend SAIL to a colleague. Survey questions were then used to develop the interview protocol to explore further how participants felt impact (or not), what other factors may be influencing (or not) their career advancement, and challenges participants may face in their effort to make advancements in career progression.

Most respondents participated in the summer (13) and winter (11) leadership academies. Additionally, nine respondents participated in two programs, while one respondent participated in four of the nine different programs. A full breakdown of responses can be found in Figure 2. Responses that are listed as other include programs that are not part of this capstone scope.

Figure 2
Survey Responses by Program

SAIL Alumni Impact Survey		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Business Officers Leadership Academy	6.52%	3
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy	17.39%	8
Clinical Leadership Academy	8.70%	4
Summer Leadership Program	28.26%	13
Department Chair Academy	10.87%	5
Hispanic Leadership Academy	6.52%	3
Executive Leadership Academy	6.52%	3
Winter Leadership Program	23.91%	11
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program	19.57%	9
Other (please specify)	10.87%	5
Total Respondents: 46		

Survey respondents represented all six major campus types (Academic Medical Center, Agriculture/Technical College, Community College, Comprehensive College, Not-for-Profit, University Center) serviced by SAIL, with comprehensive colleges having the most significant number of respondents. While Comprehensive Colleges comprise the largest share within SUNY, this sample is not necessarily representative of their entire population of participants because SUNY SAIL does not have clear data on the makeup of their participants across programs and campuses. Thus we cannot argue that the data collected is representative of all SAIL program participants. A complete listing of responses by campus type can be found in Appendix B.

After cleaning the data, descriptive statistics using a cross-tab analysis were used to identify which programs and campuses had career advancers. Additionally, a chi-square and

difference of means tests were used to see if any key variables were related to advancement (program met expectations, likeliness to attend another program, a recommendation to others). Last, logistic regression was used to determine if the participant's impact rating predicted career advancement.

To determine what skills, assessments, or topics individuals found impactful to their leadership growth, a review of responses was conducted to open-ended question number nine. Initial coding was based on the literature review of leadership skills and attributes. Leadership skill codes included: communication, strategic planning, problem-solving, and providing feedback. Attribute codes comprised self-awareness, trust, creativity, transparency, and confidence. Each response was manually coded based on those general concepts from the literature. Then, answers were re-reviewed to produce additional codes based on the participant's responses. Overall, there were 26 codes produced, as shown in Table 2 (initial codes formulated from the literature have been bolded).

Using the same approach to evaluate open-ended response question ten, which speaks to how the program impacted participants' leadership journey, the assessment started with the same literature review codes. Ten additional codes were produced in this coding process, and only one differed from the codes identified in question nine. Table 3 provides a complete list of codes and their frequency in survey responses.

Table 2
Qualitative Codes from Survey Question #9

Leadership Skills		Leadership Attributes	
Code	Frequency	Code	Frequency
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	10	Self-awareness (360 assessment)	17
Communication	8	Mindfulness	10
Change Management	6	Relationship building	8
Difficult Conversations	5	Emotional Intelligence	3
Conflict Management	3	Confidence	2
Networking	2	Self-care	2
Listening	2	Trust	1
Budgeting/Finance	2	Creativity	0
Public Speaking/Presenting	2	Transparency	0
Navigating Higher Education	2		
Strategic Planning	1		
Organizational Management	1		
Mentoring	1		
Evaluating/Managing Others	1		
Assessment	1		
Problem Solving	0		
Providing Feedback	0		

Table 3
Qualitative Codes from Survey Question #10

Leadership Skills		Leadership Attributes	
Code	Frequency	Code	Frequency
Navigating Higher Ed	6	Confidence	12
Mentoring	4	Self-awareness (360 assessment)	8
Networking	4	Mindfulness	5
Evaluating/Managing others	3	Relationship Building	5
Strategic Planning	1	Trust	2
Conflict Management	1	Self-care	2
Goal setting	1	Emotional Intelligence	1
Communication	0	Creativity	0
Problem Solving	0	Transparency	0
Providing Feedback	0		

Pre- and Post-Test Assessments

SUNY SAIL provided pre-and post-test survey data for three programs (Business Officers Leadership Academy, CIO Leadership Academy, and Clinical Leaders Academy). The Business Officer Leadership Academy had two years of data, with 16 participants, 15 of whom submitted pre- and post-data in 2020-2021 and 15 participants in 2021-2022, with 10 submitting pre- and post-data. The 2020 CIO data included 18 participants, nine of whom submitted pre- and post-data. Clinical Leaders Academy had 38 participants, with 25 completing pre- and post-data.

Participants were asked to reflect on their knowledge, skill, and comfort level of seven different categories (higher education trends, building, and leading campus teams, leveraging diversity in the workplace, communication, building partnerships/networking and mentoring, project management, and public speaking) using a 5-point Likert scale at the beginning of the program and the end of the program. Complete survey question data can be found in Appendix C.

For each program, a measurement of the average of participants' self-assessed growth experienced in their knowledge, skills, and comfort level in each of the five categories by calculating the average percent change of participant growth by subtracting the sum of pre-program scores from the sum of the post-program scores and dividing by the pre-program score. Participants who did not record a pot-test assessment score were excluded from the calculations. Then, the overall percentage change in growth by category was calculated by subtracting the total pre-test scores from post-test scores and dividing them by the total pre-test scores. With this data, participants that experienced the most growth within the program and how that aligned with

the literature, the Alumni's Survey question responses, and their interview responses were assessed.

Interviews

Forty-six individuals who had previously completed the Alumni Impact Survey were recruited to serve as interview participants. To represent the SUNY campus system and the survey response distribution, a sample of 25-30 individuals who work at various types of campuses across the state and at least one participant in each of the nine SAIL programs were targeted.

The first recruitment email (see Appendix D) was sent on October 13, 2022, and resulted in 10 interviews. A second email request was sent on November 1, 2022, and another two interviews were scheduled. A third recruitment email was sent to the remaining survey respondents as a last attempt. This email was sent individually, rather than a blind carbon copy, and included a note that if proposed times did not work for them, they could reach out directly to schedule. This last communication resulted in an additional six interviews scheduled. However, one individual had to cancel and could not reschedule, bringing the total number of interviews to 17.

Of the interviewees, there were 12 female and five male, 14 identifying as White/Caucasian, one African American, one Latin X, and one Native American/Caucasian. There was at least one interviewee from each of the institution types SAIL services with the following distribution: Ag/Tech – 6, Community College – 4, Academic Medical Center – 2, Comprehensive College – 2, University Center – 2, and System/Non-Profit – 1. Additionally, each of the nine programs was represented by an interviewee. Table 4 shows a count of survey responses and interviews by the program.

Interviews were scheduled for 45 minutes and conducted virtually. Using the Alumni Impact Survey questions as a starting point to dig deeper into the participants' experiences, a protocol that included 19 questions was developed (see Appendix E). Each interview was recorded in Zoom, and Otter.ai was used to transcribe the audio into a text transcript.

Table 4
Count of Survey Responses Compared to Interviews by Program

Program	Survey Response	Interviews
Business Officers Leadership Academy	3	1
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy	8	1
Clinical Leadership Academy	4	1
Summer Leadership Program	13	3
Department Chair Academy	5	1
Hispanic Leadership Academy	3	1
Executive Leadership Academy	3	1
Winter Leadership Program	11	2
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program	9	1

After conducting each Zoom interview, notes were reviewed, and the Otter.ai transcript was used to capture initial thoughts before coding and creating a memo for each interview. Each transcript used the first set of codes developed from the alumni impact survey, including the original literature review codes. A notation of where an existing code was referenced in the interview was made to provide a count of each code (see Table 5).

During the following review of transcripts, examining the highlighted information for each interview and relevant concepts found would indicate any new codes that emerged. Given the introduction of new concepts from the interviews, another review of codes was based on each project question. Categorizing based on general themes identified most frequently and most intensely, the emergent codes (with descriptive meaning) for each question discovered are included in Table 6.

Table 5
Count of Existing Qualitative Survey Codes That Appeared in Interviews

Leadership Skills	
Code	Frequency
Navigating Higher Education	12
Networking	11
Difficult Conversations	9
Communication	7
Mentoring	7
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	6
Conflict Management	4
Listening	3
Change Management	2
Budgeting/Finance	2
Public Speaking/Presenting	1
Evaluating/Managing Others	1
Providing Feedback	1
Strategic Planning	0
Organizational Management	0
Assessment	0
Goal Setting	0
Problem Solving	0

Leadership Attributes	
Code	Frequency
Self-awareness (360 assessment)	12
Relationship building	9
Mindfulness	3
Confidence	3
Self-care	1
Emotional Intelligence	0
Trust	0
Creativity	0
Transparency	0

Table 6
Qualitative Code Themes From Interviews

How has participation in a SUNY SAIL program impacted participants' career advancement?	
Learning from others	the ability to engage with others whether as topic sessions, or from colleagues in the program
Self-awareness	learning more about oneself whether through program topics or assessments, or interactions with others
Enhanced relationships	participants felt like their experience enhanced relationships with others outside of the program itself
Connections with others	meeting other participants during the program and then having the ability to lean on them when needed after the program
Understanding SUNY	having explicit knowledge and access about the SUNY system and being connected with other individuals at different campuses to utilize as resources
Self-promotion	participation in the program to enhance one's visibility and make it known they want to be a leader
How has SUNY SAIL participation affected confidence, beliefs, and skillsets related to leadership capabilities?	
Listening	increased listening capabilities
Engaging with team members	how to strengthen relationships amongst team members
Navigating higher education	better understanding of the complexities of higher education and how to lead within a university
Evaluating staff	knowing how to provide feedback and help others with their career journey
Communication	how to effectively communicate amongst different levels of staff
Crucial Conversations	leveraging techniques on how to manage difficult conversations
Confidence	increased levels of confidence in how they lead or approach situations
Self-awareness	understanding more about myself as a leader and how to utilize that when leading others
What challenges or barriers do participants encounter with career advancement?	
Environmental	challenges related to gender, race, disability, or other biases
Organization limitations	challenges that are rooted within the organization and outside the control of the individual
Personal limitations	challenges that are related to the individual and are generally controllable

Findings

After analyzing the survey data, pre-and post-test assessments, and interviews, five findings were formulated. Findings one, two, and five address how participation in SUNY SAIL programs has impacted career advancement. Findings two and three answer project question two by understanding how participation has affected confidence, beliefs, and skillsets related to leadership capabilities. Finally, the fourth finding addresses how challenges and barriers participants experience can affect their career advancement.

Finding 1

Participation in SAIL has not directly impacted career advancement.

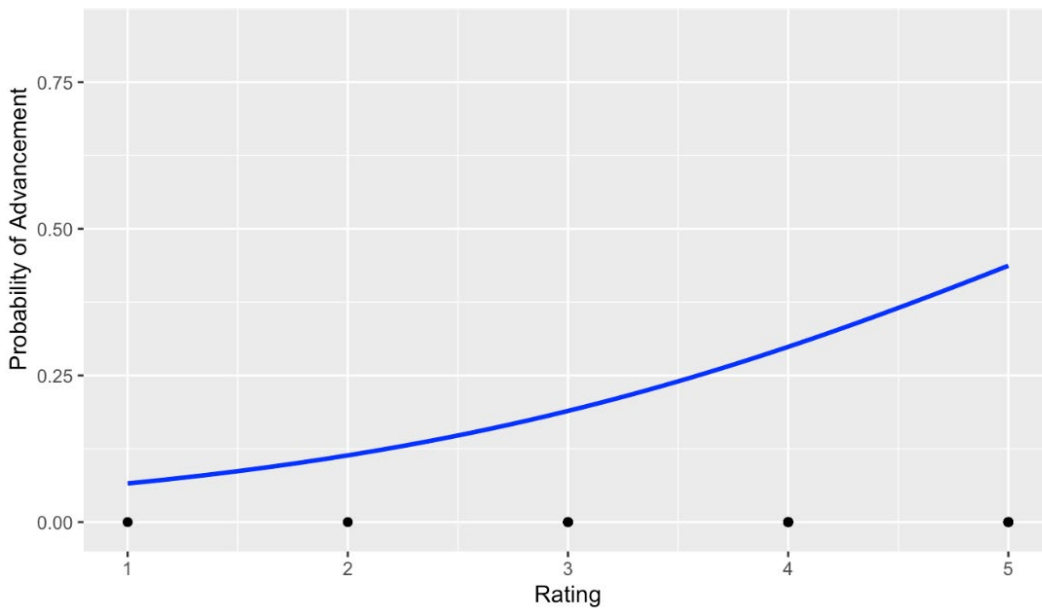
As we can see from the survey data, only 30% of respondents reported they had advanced their careers ($n = 14$). Only five interviewees confirmed they had advanced careers after participating in a SAIL program. Analysis of career advancers by program and campus type showed that 100% of respondents from the Business Officers Leadership Academy and 50% of CIO participants indicated they had advanced their careers. Additionally, Ag/Tech and Community Colleges had 54% and 38% of respondents advance their careers, respectively. While these numbers are compelling, after speaking with interviewees from these programs and campuses, it did not appear there was anything unique about their participation or background that accounts for the higher likelihood of advancement, making it difficult to draw any significant conclusions between participating in a particular program and career advancement.

Furthermore, after conducting the difference of means test and chi-square tests, it was evident that critical variables, including program, met expectations, likeliness to attend another

program, or recommendation to others, were not predictors of career advancement. Descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix F.

With 72% of respondents rating their leadership advancement impact as “impactful (4 stars) or “most impactful” (5 stars), I ran a logistic regression to determine if there was a relationship between respondent’s perceived impact on their leadership advancement (rating scale 1-5) and their career advancement (yes or no). Given this data set, we can see a positive relationship; however, with the probability under 0.5 for each rating, impact rating alone is not the best predictor of advancement. There are likely several other factors predicting advancement.

Figure 3
Logistic Regression Analysis



Finding 2
Program impact can be measured far beyond career advancement.

Although there was no clear statistical correlation between program participation and career advancement, it was obvious throughout data collection and analysis that program participation had a significant impact. After triangulating the survey data, pre-and post-test assessments, and interviews, four impact themes emerged. Those themes, which are outlined in detail below, are:

- A. Navigating the higher education landscape
- B. Connections with others
- C. Self-awareness
- D. Self-promotion

A. Navigating the Higher Education Landscape

The first theme to emerge was that program participants felt they gained the most experience and impact in understanding how to navigate the complexities of higher education as a leader. In three pre- and post-test program assessments, the most reported growth came from higher education trends, with 63% growth reported in the CIO program, 52% in the Clinical Leader Academy, and 36% in the 2020 Business Officers program. Navigating Higher Education Trends was the second highest growth category at 27% behind Building and Leading Campus Teams, noting a 30% growth in the 2021 Business Officers Academy. However, overall, the average percent change in navigating higher education trends was

44%, over 12% higher than the next highest category (see Table 7).

Table 7
Average Percent Change of Self-Assessed Growth in Knowledge, Skillset, and Comfort Level by Category and Program

Category	Program				Overall
	2020 CIO Leadership Academy	2021 Clinical Leader Academy	2020 Business Officers Leadership Academy	2021 Business Officers Leadership Academy	
Higher Ed Trends	63.40%	51.85%	36.36%	26.67%	44.04%
Project Management	27.59%	40.91%	28.89%	24.24%	32.37%
Public Speaking	29.33%	27.63%	26.67%	23.33%	26.96%
Building and Leading Campus Team	25.86%	29.87%	20.75%	30.00%	26.72%
Leveraging Diversity in the workplace	22.26%	30.00%	3.64%	14.29%	18.86%
Building Partnerships, Networking & Mentoring	25.00%	25.64%	18.87%	2.63%	19.35%
Communication	25.81%	18.82%	8.93%	20.00%	17.39%

Furthermore, the most frequent code from survey question ten and the interviews was navigating higher education. For example, a survey response shared,

“Participating in the program provided me with insight on how to navigate difficult times in higher education. Right now, we have many staff vacancies, budget issues, and declining enrollments. This helped me better understand how to navigate specific processes on my campus.”

Digging further into the importance of navigating the higher education landscape, many interviewees talked about the benefits program participation provided in better understanding the SUNY system. A participant shared the following:

“I learned more than I knew before about the inner workings of a SUNY campus in terms of the administrative side of the campus...if I’m serious about the idea of becoming a VP or Finance or Chief Financial Officer, I’m going to have to really understand the structure of the campus.”

Although all participants work at a SUNY campus, interviewees mentioned significant differences and nuances within each campus. Participants recognized that if they were hoping to advance their career, whether at the same campus or elsewhere in SUNY, their time in the program provided them with knowledge, resources, and connections that were broad enough to be considered a benefit. One participant shared,

“I feel like I know more about SUNY, with all the different units you can get wrapped up in what you’re doing individually, but when you participate in these types of programs that connect you with a lot of resources, you learn more, and now I know where to find things that I couldn’t before, and I can answer questions.”

And last, an interviewee who was newer to higher education shared,

“I had no connections in higher ed, because I came from corporate America, but this program has better educated me on the mission of higher education and helped me gain a better understanding of the complexity and nuances of being a leader in this space, not to mention now people know me.”

These data points further cement that program participation may not directly lead to a promotion or salary increase, however, there are key learnings that participants are coming away with that could be valuable in future advancement opportunities.

B. Connections With Others

Connecting with others was the next theme that surfaced as an impactful aspect of participation. In the survey data, respondents identified skills and attributes such as networking, mentoring, and relationship-building multiple times when asked what leadership skills they gained from participating in the program. As one survey respondent shared,

“It has made me more thoughtful and intentional with my reports, peers, and superiors. I learned to manage up!”

In addition to the survey data, SUNY SAIL included relationship-building, networking, and mentoring as pre- and post-test questions. While growth across programs was not as high as in other assessed areas, growth was found in all four programs. The Clinical Leader Academy participants averaged over 30% self-assessed growth in this category. This growth further confirms that program content aims to establish this type of skillset and thus leading to an impactful outcome.

Interviews only confirmed that connection with others was the most impactful aspect of their participation. Referencing Table 5, the same codes identified in the survey frequently appeared in the interviews, with networking, mentorship, and relationship building topping the list. Participants spoke highly of their peers and the experience they were afforded to meet individuals from different campuses, whether in person or on Zoom.

Participants also talked at length about how they could learn from peers or campus leaders, allowing them to understand better the challenges they may face in their career path or unprecedented access to experts they could later use as resources. One respondent described their experience as bigger than career advancement, saying their experience enhanced their friendships

and personal and professional relationships. They have learned how to better connect with people in difficult situations. Two participants shared the following:

“The opportunity to work with other executives who are the same level, interested in advancing, I came out with some connections that have been extremely valuable.”

“Meeting others in the program as well as the facilitators has been a powerful experience. Getting to see how a large variety of people lead authentically, leaning into their strengths, has enabled me to do the same.”

As we can see from the quotes above, individuals experienced impact through their access to peers and facilitators in the program, providing them with a relationship they could use on the job. Program participants are being provided content and material to build better relationships with others. They can also live that experience in real-time as they connect with others during the program and afterward.

C. Self-Awareness

As we know from the literature, a leadership attribute that can be gained or enhanced through participation in development programs is self-awareness, which emerged as another area of impact. Self-awareness, usually referenced by the 360-degree assessment, showed up in over 54% of the responses to survey questions nine and ten. Most programs embedded a 360-degree assessment in their activities, allowing individuals to assess their strengths and weaknesses while receiving feedback from their peers and supervisors. While the 360-degree assessment was referenced in the survey data, the interviews provided a deeper look into what those results meant. They ultimately revealed that participants have a better understanding of themselves. One interviewee detailed a moment of clarity because of the SAIL programming, saying the following:

“While putting together my promotion packet, I originally thought I wanted to drop the quality and safety part of my application, but that totally shifted during the program and I realized that is not what I want to do with my life, so I decided to expand my quality and safety role enormously. The project that I was working on within the SAIL course brought me closer to being ready to apply for full professor.”

Another participant shared,

“Learning about myself using the self-assessment tool was very informative and had the most impact by helping me gain confidence and learn about where I need to improve.”

Participants were allowed to reflect on their leadership skills assessment, which they may not have had a chance to do otherwise. The time, resources, and space to engage in this type of feedback resonated well with participants.

D. Self-Promotion

The last theme to emerge from the interviews, which was not surfaced through the survey or pre- and post-test assessment data, was the ability to self-promote through participating in a SAIL program. When participants were asked about what they found to be most impactful, eleven interviewees referenced their visibility within the SUNY system. One participant who had advanced after their program shared the following:

“...it was actually my participation itself that lead to advancement... when the executive saw that I was on the roster, that put me on the radar when the position came up. So, when the President of that campus called and asked for a recommendation, my name was brought forward. She saw that I was not only trying to get the position, but that I was trying to improve myself. The fact that she recommended me specifically I think SUNY SAIL participation is what made the difference.”

Even individuals not ready or looking for the next opportunity immediately recognized that participation exposed them to people in roles that may be decision-makers in future career advancement opportunities. Two interviewees shared the following:

“In SUNY, it is kind of important to put yourself on the radar to be like “oh, hey, I’m raising my hand, I’m interested in these opportunities.”

“I want to be seen as a leader and I want to take on more responsibilities.”

Again, having the chance to participate in SAIL’s leadership programs can offer individuals benefits that will ultimately help in their current job or future careers.

Finding 3

Identifying specific leadership capabilities gained was difficult.

Program participants were asked in the survey to identify what leadership skills, assessments, or topics had been most impactful to their growth as a leader. Coding revealed over 25 different skills and attributes within the survey. While survey responses referenced diversity, equity, and inclusion over ten times, it was only referenced six times and not discussed in depth during interviews. Furthermore, while the concept of confidence was noted as impactful 12 times on the survey, it was only referenced three times over the 17 interviews. Interview discussions differed from survey responses because participants talked more about their experiences rather than pointing to a skill learned.

When interviewees did mention a skill or attribute during the interview and were directly asked about how they have applied their learnings or skillsets to their career, or current organization, few could provide a concrete example. When one individual was asked about their sense of gained confidence, they shared that,

“...there isn’t a particular instance I can point to where I feel like I gained that skill or it had a leadership impact that is attributed to SAIL...I might have answered this differently four years ago, but having been so long, I just really can’t pinpoint anything.”

Furthermore, in assessing skills gained from leadership training, communication, self-awareness, strategic planning, and trust were the only existing literature codes that appeared in responses. When speaking in terms of their journey, participants generally spoke of leadership attributes having the most impact on their leadership and career, with confidence and self-awareness accounting for the most responses. Nevertheless, it was evident that individuals' experience and connections with others were what they believed was gained during their time in the program.

Finding 4

Program participation does not negate challenges to career advancement.

Three overarching challenges were identified, relating participants to their career advancement by using their interview responses. These challenges, which are outlined in detail below, are environmental challenges, organizational limitations, and personal limitations.

A. Environmental Challenges

The first challenge is considered environmental, such as gender, race, or disability. A few interviewees noted that due to their race, being a female, or their disability, they have experienced biases in the hiring process, making it difficult for them to advance in their careers. One interviewee shared,

“I think for most folks, me included, the equity is always a challenge as a person of color. It’s always something in the back of your mind because there are disparities there, and you see those, and you know those. So, you know, those are the challenges you have to sort of overcome... having a cultural difference in the way you communicate has also been a challenge in mine and other colleagues’ careers.”

While this is identified in the literature and did surface in interviews, fewer individuals referenced these environmental barriers than anticipated. Most focused more on the following two challenges.

B. Organizational Limitations

The second challenge found is organizational limitations. Many interviewees noted a lack of opportunities for them to advance their careers, which is often out of their control. For example, respondents said the following:

“As the Provost’s assistant, there really is not a next step for me.”

“I’m at a small school and there isn’t really anywhere for me to go.”

“I lost out on an opportunity because they hired the wife of a faculty member.”

Despite participating in the SAIL leadership advancement program and having the necessary skillset and desire to advance in their careers, participants faced barriers at their current campus or in applying and interviewing for specific positions. While interviewees noted these limitations, some confirmed they were ok with those limitations and discussed that their ambition to pursue the SAIL programming was not career advancement related. Others who encountered these challenges shared their frustrations and spoke about the lack of resources to help navigate these situations in the future.

C. Personal Limitations

The third challenge is personal limitations, which are unique to the individual and generally within their control. This challenge surfaced in the context of individuals not feeling confident about their background and skillset, having difficulty communicating their potential in

interviews, or lacking the required experience to be a viable candidate. Several participants shared,

“I’m occasionally not confident in how translatable my experience and knowledge and skills are to a new job opportunity. So, I might not apply for something that I could succeed in because I just don’t feel like I have the technical facility or background, and there is someone else who is really gonna know their stuff. So, I think I hold myself back.”

“You hear the phrase imposter syndrome... I definitely feel like I have that to a great degree.”

When interviewees were asked if SAIL had focused on overcoming any of these identified challenges, the response was no.

Finding 5

Lack of coordinated recognition and follow-up limits future advancement.

Many participants talked about the lack of coordination in communicating their participation and success in the program. Specifically, interviewees were either unsure or said no when asked if their information was being shared with relevant departments across the SUNY system, like a Chancellor’s or President’s office. Participants also mentioned that SAIL rarely, if ever, followed up with them to see if they had made any advancements or to check-in.

Participants felt that having some recognition or follow-up could provide them with additional touchpoints to SAIL and their colleagues while also identifying top-tier talent within SUNY. Several participants shared the following:

“...maybe six months in you come back and you look at what you did, what was helpful, where you’ve been, and you have some type of periodical

reflection of this...then we can connect people back to their original retreat and cohort.”

“I think it would have been nice to have a Credly credential to add to my LinkedIn profile, or a campus wide communication announcing the participants... that way other people know you are a resource, and it puts the vibe out there like hey, this is somebody who’s looking to move and do things, people may look at you differently and tap you for things that they might not have tapped you for before.”

It is clear from this finding that there is a disconnect in the entire feedback loop, both from an individual point of view and the SUNY system perspective.

Recommendations

These five findings, coupled with relevant literature, led to four recommendations for SUNY SAIL to consider as related to understanding the impact of their programming on career advancement. These recommendations have been designed to address three areas of organizational improvement. First, for SAIL to demonstrate that its programming is providing impact, it must create a method to measure key metrics related to impact consistently. Second, to demonstrate value to the SUNY system and ultimately help build its talent pipeline, SAIL needs to craft a strategic process to share participant data and engage alumni well beyond the completion of the programming. Moreover, SAIL must recognize outside factors that enhance or challenge participants’ career advancement and develop strategies to leverage or mitigate those factors.

Recommendation 1

Establish a standardized evaluation process for all programs.

The first recommendation for SAIL is to establish a standardized evaluation process for all programs, including short- and long-term components. Short-term components will be

attached to each program, and long-term components will be utilized to track career advancement and continue to engage alumni. It was clear throughout data collection and analysis that the evaluation of the nine programs needed to be more consistent. SAIL had never previously conducted an Alumni Survey; and only four of its nine programs utilized pre-and post-test assessments. When participants were asked to recall specifics, many could not accurately or easily point to their learnings. Furthermore, the lack of responses from the Alumni Survey suggests that SAIL must rely on other mechanisms to assess impact and track career advancement.

Standardized Evaluation Process

Referencing the conceptual framework for this project, SAIL should use a combination of Holton, Guskey, and Kirkpatrick's models to design and implement its evaluation strategy strategically. The following four-step approach was suggested to do this implementation.

Step 1 | Define Overall Outcomes

In alignment with Holton's model (1996), SAIL should establish learning outcomes from three perspectives, SAIL, the individual participant, and the SUNY system. Since SAIL is interested in understanding and communicating its impact, it should first define what they consider as impact and have a straightforward way to measure it. To establish the individual participant's goals, SAIL should administer an intake survey that collects basic participant data (job title, current institution, contact information) and what they hope to gain from the program, such as career advancement, skill development, or building relationships. These responses should directly relate to the outcomes that SAIL determines are vital for them to measure and understand. Once those outcomes are established, a recommendation for streamlining responses to a pre-defined multi-select option based on those goals is encouraged. Last, SAIL should work

closely with the SUNY system to identify how SAIL programs and participants relate to the strategic organizational benefits.

Step 2 | Create a Career Advancement Database

The long-term impact, including career advancement and SUNY system talent pipelines, requires a more thoughtful, individualized approach. As mentioned, participants will experience advancement at different times in their careers. Additionally, career advancement could mean different things to different people, thus underscoring that SAIL should concretely determine how to measure career advancement. To track career advancement, SAIL may need to consider utilizing several data sources and implementing a streamlined process to update, cross reference, validate, and finalize the information. These nuances lead to step 2, creating a career advancement database.

Once the database is constructed, SAIL must input basic-level information from their program intake form (noted in step 1), providing a baseline to track updated information. Then the team can add data from various sources as it is received. However, multiple ways to retrieve career advancement data may occur at different times. SAIL may see a LinkedIn post, receive an email directly from the alumni, hear from one of their colleagues, or receive a survey response from the annual SAIL Alumni Survey distribution, and given these will provide updated data points at different times, having one trustworthy source of information will provide SAIL with the ability to track their alumni and quickly transfer data to SUNY system administration for their talent pipeline. A suggested template can be found in Appendix G.

Step 3 | Design Short-Term Evaluation Strategy

After outcomes are established for each stakeholder, SAIL can move into designing their short-term evaluation strategy using Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation to implement tools to

measure participants' immediate reactions and learnings. Focusing on these short-term impacts, SAIL can administer two surveys. The first survey should be a post-program evaluation, focusing on immediate reactions, such as participants' overall satisfaction if they would recommend the program to a colleague or their likeliness to re-attend. This data will help improve program design and delivery. While SAIL currently administers these post-program surveys, the questions asked could be more consistent across the nine programs. Providing consistency amongst questions, rating scales, and responses will provide SAIL with data to compare programs, ultimately offering an opportunity to conduct a more holistic assessment of their entire portfolio.

The other survey SAIL should implement more broadly is their pre- and post-test assessment. Understanding participants' self-assessed growth can be valuable in measuring what participants took away from the program (Kirkpatrick, 1954). As we gathered from the literature, leadership development programs can provide individual benefits regarding skills, attitudes, or behaviors gained. However, as surfaced during the interview process, it can be difficult for people to pinpoint a skill learned from a particular training or session at a later point in time. This survey presents SAIL with the chance to determine specific skills, attitudes, behaviors, or leadership concepts participants should be exposed to and ask participants to identify if the program successfully provided them with those takeaways. This survey can be a tool used to connect back to both the individual's desired outcomes and SAIL's outcomes, should they determine specific skillsets gained are considered part of their defined impact. Figure 4 visually represents the strategy, including each tool's suggested timing.

Figure 4
Short-term Evaluation Strategy

Short-term Evaluation		
Tool	Measures	Timing
Post-program evaluation survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactions • Satisfaction 	Immediately upon completion
Pre- and Post- test assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessed growth • Skills, attitude, behaviors learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1 of program • Immediately upon completion

Step 4 | Design a Follow-up Protocol to Evaluate Intermediate and Long-Term Outcomes

Moving to the following levels of evaluation is more complex because we want to understand if the program participation was successful in the long term. As our ability to engage with a captive audience dissipates, collecting information can be challenging for a few reasons. First, each participant will utilize their learnings at different career stages. Second, assessing these learnings needs to occur a few months after their program completion (Collins & Holton, 2004), indicating that SAIL would need to be resourced to conduct this type of assessment. Furthermore, data collection relies on participants completing the assessment. Therefore, a recommendation is that SAIL designs a twelve-month follow-up protocol (see Figure 5) to measure participants’ on-the-job application of their learnings, assess behavioral changes, review career advancement, and generate regular touchpoints for further engagement.

12 Month Follow-Up Protocol

3 Months Post Program

SAIL should contact participants via phone at the three-month mark as a general touchpoint. During this touchpoint, SAIL can connect with participants and discuss upcoming checkpoints, including submitting a three-to-six-month journal reflection of their applications of learnings. Additionally, they can administer a survey to assess behavioral leadership changes establishing another measurement related to SAIL's desired outcomes.

6-9 Months Post Program

To gather on-the-job application of learnings and behavioral data, SAIL could consider the following methods from Guskey's framework (Learning Forward, 2020): structured interviews with participants and their supervisors, reflections, designed portfolios, or questionnaires. SAIL can conduct structured interviews and review participants' journal reflections at the six- or nine-month marker. This mechanism provides SAIL with a clear opportunity to connect and re-engage with alumni and serve as another data point for the overall impact experienced.

12 Months Post Program

At the year mark of program completion, SAIL should administer a career advancement-specific questionnaire, a quick way to see if any participants have advanced in their careers. Unlike the annual Alumni Survey, this career advancement questionnaire is only used once post-program completion. Future requests for information on career advancement and other accomplishments can be collected through the annual Alumni Survey distribution. In addition to the survey, SAIL should schedule a 1:1 call or Zoom for a general touchpoint about their experience after completing the program.

Post 12 Months

After the last check-in, alumni should receive regular SAIL communications, including upcoming offerings and a request to participate in the annual Alumni Survey. If no career updates are received through any data collection method, SAIL should send a personalized email or call to request updated details.

Alumni Survey

In parallel to designing the follow-up protocol, another recommendation is that SAIL refines the Alumni Survey tool, which will be used in the 12-month completion phase and sent once yearly after their participation. SAIL's first attempt at sending an Alumni Survey produced only 46 responses, just a 7% response rate. One recommendation is to adjust the Alumni Survey questions to focus less on programmatic learning. These learnings can be gleaned in the short-term evaluation phase and other checkpoints identified in the intermediate and long-term follow-up protocol. This survey tool should be used to engage alumni further, asking questions such as:

- What future program topics would be of interest to you?
- Would you like to be a mentor?
- Would you like to facilitate a program, workshop, or webinar?
- What have you accomplished in the last year (changed jobs, wrote a book, or presented a paper)?
- What recommendations do you have for SAIL's continued support?

Figure 5
12 Month Follow-up Protocol

Follow-up Protocol		
Tool	Measures	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 Zoom Call • Behavioral survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Career advancement • Behavioral changes • Application of learnings 	3 months post completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured interviews • Journal reflection reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Career advancement • Behavioral changes • Application of learnings 	6-9 months post completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Advancement questionnaire • 1:1 Zoom Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Career advancement • Behavioral changes • Application of learnings 	12 months post completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters • Emails • Alumni Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Career advancement • Future participation 	Beyond 12 months post completion

Recommendation 2
Design a recommendation protocol.

A second recommendation is for SAIL to design a recommendation protocol. Program participants communicated that it would have been nice for their participation and success to be communicated to key decision-makers within SUNY, and given that SAIL and the SUNY system

are interested in identifying and developing talent for their leadership pipeline, they need to invest in resources and plans to transfer this data back and forth seamlessly.

This recommendation protocol could include a three-pronged approach that would satisfy both participants' desire to share their participation with key decision-makers and provide the SUNY system with a list of individuals who have been recognized as leaders and received relevant training for future career opportunities. The first approach should be a post-program report created by SAIL to share with SUNY system leadership. The report could include an overview of the program, the key learnings and outcomes associated with participation, and brief profiles of successful completers. Not only does this provide visibility of participants to key decision makers, which is vital to them, it also allows real-time data to be shared with SUNY if a participant may fit an open relevant leadership role and could be a natural matching opportunity.

In tandem with the report to SUNY, SAIL could also design a post-program newsletter to share with alumni, current participants, future participants, and each participant's department, office, or organization. As we saw from the second finding, exposure to peers and decision-makers was something participants identified as impactful. SAIL can expand participants' exposure beyond program participants and facilitators by simply communicating information about the program and who completed it. This newsletter also provides SAIL with an excellent opportunity for its own exposure to promote future programs.

The last approach would be to offer an annual reception with key stakeholders in the SUNY system. Sending lists and communications is a great starting point, but enhancing participants' ability to meet with decision-makers may significantly bolster the leadership talent pipelines (Adeniran et al., 2013). A reception is an opportunity to reward participants by publicly

celebrating top performers, thanking them for their time, and connecting them with top management.

Recommendation 3

Build a digital community to engage program alumni.

The most common theme addressed by program participants was the impact they experienced from establishing connections with other participants from other SUNY campuses. Therefore, a third recommendation is for SUNY SAIL to build and nurture a community to engage its program alumni. While interviewees spoke of their connections to others, it was all self-driven. SAIL should consider utilizing a community platform such as Slack or Microsoft Teams to help sustain the relationships their participants are building organically. When using a technology platform, participants and alumni could easily re-engage with each other, celebrate wins, work through challenges they are experiencing in their roles, share job postings, and more.

In addition to a social communication tool, SAIL could utilize a badging system like Credly or Badgr. Digital badging is being increasingly seen as a way for potential employers to validate skills and knowledge gained through a professional development opportunity (Stefaniak & Carey, 2019). Furthermore, research has shown that badges hold the potential to generate peer discussion, feedback, and the ability to link any work from participants' programs to their profiles (O'Connor & McQuigge, 2013). Implementing badges would be shared on a participant's resume and LinkedIn profile, making it visible to future employers and easy for past, current, and future participants to connect. By implementing a community platform and integrating a badging system, SAIL may also be able to monitor individuals' career movement and contact information more easily.

Recommendation 4

Include opportunities for participants to identify challenges to career advancement and include strategies to overcome those challenges within the program.

The final recommendation is for SUNY SAIL to include opportunities for participants to identify challenges to career advancement and strategically design activities to help them overcome those challenges while completing the program. The literature and project findings acknowledge participants' difficulties in advancing their careers. These difficulties range from environmental factors and personal limitations to organizational structure constraints.

Each participant will bring a different set of challenges to their experience; thus, providing space for them to name and explore those challenges will be essential. This exploration could be done in three ways: through the initial intake process, offering a group discussion during the program, or a journaling exercise. By identifying challenges at the beginning of the program, individuals can recognize what they feel may be holding them back. If using a group discussion during the program, participants can vocalize those challenges while others may be able to provide helpful strategies to overcome the challenges. Last, incorporating a journaling exercise may allow participants to self-reflect on their challenges and develop strategies to help them navigate career advancement.

Furthermore, SAIL could incorporate mentorship or sponsorship components when designing program activities. Literature has shown that both tactics help solidify learnings from leadership development programs and increase an individual's success with career advancement. A few interviewees noted that their programs included a mentor component. However, mentors appeared to be in a role specifically related to the program and activities rather than building a long-term relationship with the participants. Moreover, while mentors generally serve in a role to

provide advice and support, sponsors open doors that accelerate career opportunities (Randel et al., 2019).

For a successful mentor or sponsor component, SAIL must identify individuals who can and would like to serve in the role. Considerations may include executive-level campus leaders, past program participants, or program designers and facilitators. If identifying mentors is too heavy of a lift for SAIL, program participants could be given a list of parameters and asked to select a mentor for their program. Aside from mentor and mentee matching, providing expectations, setting guidelines, and offering training will be critical to successful mentoring relationships.

Another strategic approach for SAIL to consider implementing is introducing other activities that may mitigate challenges. One interviewee spoke of a SAIL activity in which he went through an entire mock application and interview process with an external search firm, providing him with first-hand experience of the application process for a SUNY President. He shared that,

“they had us work with a search firm, like an actual headhunting firm that runs college president searches, and they had us go through a mock application and interview process...they had us research online and finding an opening for a presidency and go through the entire process of preparing our materials and everything else...so, they kind of put us through the wringer, and that was awesome because they gave us some really candid feedback...and the mock interviews were challenging and intense, but the feedback was amazing.”

This activity may provide participants exclusive access to resources or experiences they may not get otherwise. If they exhibit personal limitations, as some interviewees suggested, this type of learning could help overcome their fears or perceived shortcomings.

Discussion and Conclusion

Although organizations have historically understood the need to provide opportunities for employees to grow and advance in their careers, the return to normalcy after the COVID-19 pandemic placed even more emphasis on finding ways to retain top-tier talent (Chatterjee et al., 2022). According to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), challenges related to burnout, remote work, increased turnover, and leveraging technology in a changing world are just a few of the topics leaders in higher education will face in the coming years (Brantley & Shomaker, 2021).

Additionally, the “Great Resignation” is absolute; employees quit their jobs in 2021 more than any other year since 2011 (Work Institute, 2022), and data trends point to a lack of career advancement opportunities as one of the top reasons employees leave their roles (Parker & Menasce Horowitz, 2022; Reyes et al., 2019; Work Institute, 2022). Thus, it is critical to focus on providing meaningful opportunities for employees to advance their careers, develop leadership skills to retain talent and shape the organization’s pipeline of leaders. Also, while training, professional development, and leadership development programs have existed for quite some time, successfully evaluating the impact of these programs has been challenging (Agboola Sogunro, 1997; DeSimone, 2011; Dopson et al., 2018; Flaig et al., 2020), placing strain on these organizations to communicate their value.

This capstone project aimed to help SUNY SAIL understand the impact of their leadership programming on participants’ career advancement. Using an Alumni Survey, pre-and post-test assessment data, and semi-structured interviews, the researcher explored how individuals felt their careers had been impacted by participation, what specific leadership skills, attributes, and behaviors were associated with SAIL programming and the challenges

encountered in trying to advance their careers. At first glance, if SAIL were to have just used the data collected from their Alumni Survey, they would likely feel disappointed by the results, given that only 14 of their respondents claimed they had advanced their careers. However, interviews allowed a closer look at how participants viewed their experience and provided insight into how SAIL could leverage those experiences to enhance impact further.

In summary, findings revealed that the impact of leadership development programs could be measured far beyond participants' career advancement. However, participation is not the only factor that might determine success. While SAIL is focused on understanding if participants are advancing their careers, most survey responses and interviews pointed to impact felt through understanding how to navigate the complexities of higher education, the ability to connect with others, an opportunity to learn more about oneself, and the chance to show one's interests in being a leader. Nevertheless, participants also spoke about the challenges they have faced in trying to advance. Participating in a leadership development program does not guarantee a higher salary, a new title, or more leadership roles. Individuals spoke of their limitations because of their gender or disability, the fact that they work at a smaller university with fewer opportunities to move up, and the constraints surrounding the type of work they performed.

Consistent with the literature, it was evident that SAIL lacked a strategic vision to evaluate its programming from a longitudinal perspective. Data collection was surface level, providing insight into participants' reactions and satisfaction, but lacked depth in understanding how learnings translated throughout their career, and a viable mechanism to track career changes. Using key findings, a focal point of these recommendations was to thoughtfully design a standardized evaluation and follow-up process that would provide SAIL with data to understand all aspects of their programs, including overall participant satisfaction, essential

leadership skills gained, behavioral changes, and application of learnings, as well as the means to track career advancement and future engagement longitudinally.

In addition, SAIL has a unique opportunity to leverage how participants describe their impact to enhance experiences and potential for career advancement. In proposing that SAIL develop a recommendation protocol, they can showcase top-tier talent to departments and offices at SUNY campuses, potentially establishing talent pipelines. Incorporating social technology platforms will allow program participants to continue engaging with each other and SAIL, making monitoring career advancements easier. Furthermore, now that SAIL understands the difficulties participants experience in advancing their careers, they can build strategies into their programs to help mitigate those challenges. These recommendations, informed by the findings, will provide SUNY SAIL with a path forward to continuously improve their programming, track participants' career advancement, help mitigate challenges employees face in job transitions, and establish a pipeline of successful leaders for the SUNY system.

Limitations

This project experienced several limitations, including sample size, lack of quantitative data, and timing.

Sample Size

The first limitation of this project was the sample size. SUNY SAIL distributed its Alumni Impact Survey in April 2022. The survey was sent to over 600 past participants of SAIL programs and only received 46 responses, providing approximately a 7% response rate. In addition, SAIL does not currently have data on how many individuals have completed a specific program or which campus they come from; therefore, it is difficult to know if this sample is representative of their program participant population. When asked to resend the survey in

October to retrieve more responses, SAIL chose not to resend. For convenience, participants who had completed the Alumni Survey were interviewed to expand on responses received in the survey. The completed surveys resulted in 17 interviews representative of the participants, programs, and campuses served, but not of the entire SUNY population.

Lack of Quantitative Data

A second limitation was the lack of quantitative data from the Alumni Impact Survey. Since SAIL had sent this survey out before this capstone project began, there were gaps in the data collected that may have proven helpful in findings and recommendations.

Timing

The last limitation of this project was the timing. As mentioned above, the Alumni Impact Survey was distributed in April 2022 and remained open until May 2022. SAIL discussed that low response rates could be due to the end-of-the-semester constraints. Additionally, participants surveyed completed their program anywhere from five years ago to just a few months prior, likely leading to an inconsistent or reduced recall of their experiences.

Furthermore, interviews took place between October and December 2022. The gap between survey collection and interviews may have exacerbated the difficulty of memory recall. With two holidays (Thanksgiving and Christmas) and the end of the semester, participants were probably less likely to commit to an interview.

Despite these limitations, the findings for SAIL were insightful and led to an actionable set of recommendations. Individuals who participate in leadership development programs are eager to learn and advance in their careers, making them great candidates for future leadership roles within an organization. This project provides SUNY SAIL and other organizations with a clear understanding of how their participants perceive impact, a blueprint for evaluating their

programs consistently and tracking career advancement, and a starting point to strategically design programs that help participants navigate challenges in career advancement.

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Appendix A

SUNY SAIL Alumni Impact Survey Questions

#	Question	Answer Type	Notes
1	Which year(s) did you participate in SAIL programming	Selection	2017-2022
2	Indicate all SAIL program(s) you have been involved in/graduated from	Selection	
3	Did you successfully meet the program completion criteria? If not, please indicated what prevented you from meeting the course expectations.	Yes/No	Follow Up Open Ended
4	Did the program(s) you participated in meet your expectations?	5 Point Likert	
5	Would you be likely to attend another SAIL program? If yes, why? If no, why?	Yes/No	Follow Up Open Ended
6	Would you recommend the SAIL program to another colleague?	Yes/No	
7	Please rate the impact SAIL programming has had on your leadership advancement.	5 Point Likert	
8	Have you advanced (promotion, leadership responsibilities etc.) as a leader since participating in SAIL programming?	Yes/No	Follow Up Open Ended
9	What leadership skills, assessments, or topics have been most impactful to your growth as a leader?	Open Ended	
10	How has your participation in SAIL programming impacted your leadership journey?	Open Ended	
11	My current institution/organization type:	Selection	Campus designations
12	Current Campus/Organization	Free response	
13	Have you started a position at a different campus since graduating from a SAIL program?	Yes/No	
14	Are you interested in potential opportunities at different SUNY campus locations/SUNY System Administration?	Yes/No	
15	Any other additional information you would like SAIL to know?	Open Ended	
16	Name	Open Ended	
17	Email	Open Ended	
18	What is your location/geographic region?	Open Ended	
19	What is your race?	Open Ended	
20	What gender do you identify as?	Open Ended	
21	What sexual orientation do you identify as?	Open Ended	
22	What is your ethnicity?	Open Ended	
23	Do you identify as an individual with a disability?	Yes/No	
24	Which of the following best describes your military status	Selection	Active, veteran, never served

Appendix B

SUNY SAIL Alumni Impact Survey Responses by Campus and Type

Campus Type (Specific Campus)	Total Survey Responses
<u>Academic Medical Center</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stony Brook University • Upstate Medical Center 	6
<u>Agricultural/Tech College</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmingdale State • SUNY Canton • SUNY Cobleskill • SUNY Maritime • SUNY Morrisville 	8
<u>Community College</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) • Jamestown • Monroe • Nassau • Onondaga • Orange County • Westchester 	7
<u>Comprehensive College</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytechnic Institute • Purchase College • SUNY Cortland • SUNY Empire State • SUNY Fredonia • SUNY Geneseo • SUNY New Paltz • SUNY Oneonta • SUNY Oswego • SUNY Potsdam 	11
<u>University Center</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUNY Bronx • University of Albany 	2
<u>Not-for-Profit</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Foundation Central Office 	1

Appendix C

Pre- and Post-Test Survey Questions

#	Question	Answer Type
1	<p>Higher Education Trends</p> <p><i>The higher education sector is experiencing significant amounts of change, from demographic transformations to economic upheavals to new forms of public and private resources going to higher education. Higher education leaders need to understand what is happening in the broader environment and to effectively respond to these changes. Having a solid understanding of what data is important to measure and lead with is critical for any academic leader.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
2	<p>Building and Leading your Campus Team</p> <p><i>A good leader inspires the individuals on their team to strive to achieve the team's objectives. Leaders need to employ strategies for team building, coaching the team, creating an inclusive environment, addressing the challenges facing higher education, setting expectations, and keeping accountability at the forefront. Being able to utilize your situational leadership skills is critical.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
3	<p>Leveraging Diversity in the Workplace</p> <p><i>There are many reasons why diversity, in its truest form, is essential and necessary for an organization. It is important for leaders to understand the direct correlation between diversity, equity, and inclusion, and sustaining organizational success. Additionally, the workplace is made up of multiple generations, and having the ability to lead across all generations is critical to the success of the leader.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
4	<p>Communication</p> <p><i>Effective communication helps us better understand a person or situation and enables us to lead projects and initiatives to success, resolve conflicts, lean into difficult conversations, build trust and respect, and create environments where creative ideas, problem solving, affection and caring can flourish. As leaders it's imperative to be able to communicate effectively.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
5	<p>Building Partnerships, Networking and Mentoring</p> <p><i>Establishing cooperative relationships in the organization and community to build a strong network of colleagues and mentors to work with and learn from is an important support mechanism for leaders.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
6	<p>Project Management</p> <p><i>Project managers create plans to manage interdependence, address resource needs, and ultimately influence organizational change. Organizations that use project management to monitor and control processes and schedules can more effectively complete their projects on time and on budget.</i></p>	5 Point Likert
7	<p>Public Speaking</p> <p><i>Speaking in front of diverse audiences, both large and small, is a critical skill that leaders must possess. Delivering a successful presentation and being prepared to speak extemporaneously in a variety of public settings with appropriate use of voice, pace, body language and visuals are key components of that skill. Tailoring your message to the audience and time limit, and delivering it with clarity and confidence, is critical to compel others to action.</i></p>	5 Point Likert

Appendix D

Interview Recruitment Email

Dear SUNY SAIL Alumni,

As a doctoral student in the Leadership, Learning and Organizations program at Vanderbilt University, I am inviting you to participate in a capstone project to understand how your participation in a SUNY SAIL program has impacted your career advancement and leadership growth. You have been identified as a potential interviewee for this study because you have completed one of nine SUNY SAIL programs and completed the SAIL Alumni Impact Survey earlier this year.

Your participation in this study is extremely important to me and to SUNY SAIL and will assist in understanding SAIL's impact in an effort to continuously improve and design programs and services to meet your evolving needs.

Should you agree to participate, please [schedule a time using my calendly link](#) to set up a zoom interview at a time convenient to you. The zoom interview should take approximately 45 minutes. Participation is voluntary and your response will be kept anonymous. You have the option to not respond to any question you choose. Participation or nonparticipation will not impact your relationship with SUNY SAIL. Agreement to participate will be interpreted as your informed consent to participate and that you are at least 18 years of age.

Interview participants will be entered into a random drawing to receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

If you have any questions about the project, please contact Principal Investigator, Amanda Harding, via email at amanda.harding@vanderbilt.edu or my faculty advisor, Dr. Marisa Cannata at marisa.cannata@vanderbilt.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, contact the Vanderbilt Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 615-322-2918. Please print or save a copy of this page for your records.

Amanda Harding, MS

Assistant Director, Strategy & Operations

Office of Digital Education | Vanderbilt University

President, University Staff Advisory Council | 2022-2023

Ed.D. Student | Peabody College

Phone: 615-936-8320 | E-Mail: amanda.harding@vanderbilt.edu



VANDERBILT
Peabody College

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. My name is Amanda Harding, doctoral student in Vanderbilt's Leadership and Learning in Organizations program. The goal of this project is to understand how participation in a SUNY SAIL program has impacted your career advancement, which will ultimately lead to a set of findings and recommendations for SUNY SAIL. In addition to providing SUNY SAIL with these findings and recommendations, this data will be used for my capstone project in partial fulfillment of my doctoral degree.

You were selected to interview because you are a past participant of a SUNY SAIL program and completed the SUNY SAIL Alumni Impact Survey. I have scheduled this interview session to last no longer than 45 minutes. During this time, I have several questions I'd like to cover. If time begins to run short, I may push us forward to complete as much of the protocol as possible.

To facilitate notetaking, I would like to record this interview using the zoom record feature, as well as an audio tape recording using Otter.ai. Only I and my capstone faculty advisor will have access to the recordings which will eventually be destroyed after they have been transcribed. By agreeing to continue this interview you are agreeing that (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm. Please confirm you agree to participate.

If you do not have any questions at this time, we can get started.

1. What is your current title, and what office and campus do you work at?
2. Have you started a new position since participating in the SUNY SAIL program?
3. What was the highlight of the Leadership Development program?
4. What was the lowlight? Is there a way in which the program could improve?
5. How do you define career advancement?
6. How do you feel participation in the SUNY SAIL program impacted your career advancement?
7. (If individual advanced) What about the program do you believe prompted you to seek career advancement or be successful in advancing your career?
8. (If individual did not advance) What do you believe is missing from the program that would have helped you in advancing your career?
9. What are the challenges you have encountered when trying to advance your career?
10. How has SUNY SAIL addressed (or not) challenges to career advancement?
11. What do you feel would be helpful to participants or alumni of programs when seeking advancement?
12. How might SUNY SAIL improve their programming to better prepare participants for career advancement?
13. To what extent has your participation and learnings impacted your organization/office/department?

14. Please describe the specific ways in which you applied what you learned through the program to your current role.
15. To what extent have you used the learning from the SUNY SAIL program in a way that you believe has made a significant difference to the business?
16. How did the program impact the way you think about leadership?
17. What activities or events were most beneficial in developing your leadership skills?
18. Why do you believe those were most beneficial to your leadership advancement?
19. Describe how you have used your learnings from SUNY SAIL program participation in your career.

Those are all the questions I have for you, is there anything else you would like for me to know?

Thank you for your time today, the information you have provided has been very helpful and will allow me to formulate a better understanding of the overall impact SUNY SAIL programs provide to their participants. I will be interviewing other participants over the next few weeks, and once I have completed all interviews, I will compile the information and analyze for common themes. I do not anticipate needing any additional time, but if I am unable to transcribe a part of our conversation, I may follow up with you to clarify a few details. If you think of anything else to share in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via email (amanda.harding@vanderbilt.edu).

Appendix F

Descriptive Statistics

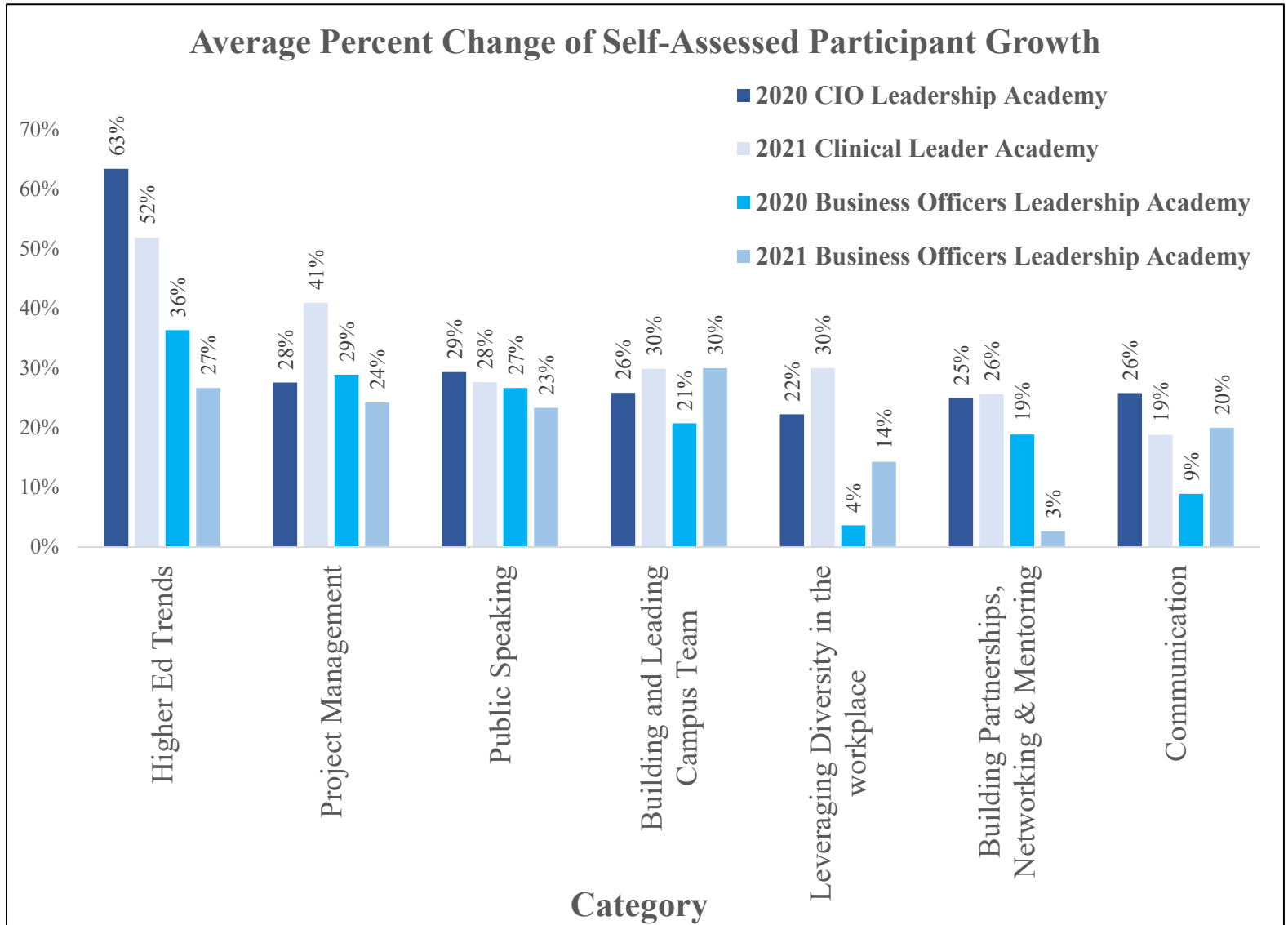
Career Advancements by Program Type and Campus Type

Program	No	Yes	Total Respondents	% of Respondents Advanced
Business Officers Leadership Academy		3	3	100%
Ag/Tech College		1	1	
Comprehensive College		1	1	
Not-for-Profit		1	1	
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy		4	4	50%
Ag/Tech College		1	1	
Community College		1	2	
Comprehensive College		2	1	
Comprehensive College		2	1	
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program		5	4	44%
Ag/Tech College		1	2	
Community College		1	1	
Comprehensive College		3	1	
University Center		1	1	
Executive Leadership Academy		2	1	33%
Community College		2		
Comprehensive College			1	
Summer Leadership Program		9	4	31%
Ag/Tech College		2	2	
Community College		2	1	
Comprehensive College		3	1	
Not-for-Profit		1		
University Center		1		
Clinical Leadership Academy		3	1	25%
Academic Medical Center		3	1	
Department Chair Academy		4	1	20%
Ag/Tech College		1		
Community College		1	1	
Comprehensive College		2		
Winter Leadership Program		10	1	9%
Academic Medical Center		2		
Ag/Tech College		1	1	
Community College		2		
Comprehensive College		3		
University Center		2		
Hispanic Leadership Academy		3		0%
Academic Medical Center		2		
Comprehensive College		1		
Total Respondents		40	19	59
				32%

Career Advancements by Campus Type and Program Type

Program	No	Yes	Total Respondents	% of Respondents Advanced	
Ag/Tech College		6	7	13	54%
Business Officers Leadership Academy			1	1	
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy		1	1	2	
Department Chair Academy		1		1	
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program		1	2	3	
Summer Leadership Program		2	2	4	
Winter Leadership Program		1	1	2	
Not-for-Profit		1	1	2	50%
Business Officers Leadership Academy			1	1	
Summer Leadership Program		1		1	
Community College		8	5	13	38%
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy		1	2	3	
Department Chair Academy		1	1	2	
Executive Leadership Academy		2		2	
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program			1	1	
Summer Leadership Program		2	1	3	
Winter Leadership Program		2		2	
Comprehensive College		14	5	19	26%
Business Officers Leadership Academy			1	1	
Chief Information Officer (CIO) Leadership Academy		2	1	3	
Department Chair Academy		2		2	
Executive Leadership Academy			1	1	
Hispanic Leadership Academy		1		1	
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program		3	1	4	
Summer Leadership Program		3	1	4	
Winter Leadership Program		3		3	
Academic Medical Center		7	1	8	13%
Clinical Leadership Academy		3	1	4	
Hispanic Leadership Academy		2		2	
Winter Leadership Program		2		2	
University Center		4		4	0%
Mindful Leadership Certificate Program		1		1	
Summer Leadership Program		1		1	
Winter Leadership Program		2		2	
Total Respondents		40	19	59	32%

Pre- and Post-Test Assessment Data



Difference of Means Test – Impact Rating & Career Advancement

	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Did Not Advance</i>
Mean Rating	4.33333333	4.23076923
Variance	0.70588235	0.65587045
Observations	18	39
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	32	
t Stat	0.43328527	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.33385716	
t Critical one-tail	1.69388875	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.66771433	
t Critical two-tail	2.03693334	

Difference of Means Test – Program Met Expectations & Career Advancement

	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Did Not Advance</i>
Mean Rating	4.33333333	4.23076923
Variance	0.70588235	0.65587045
Observations	18	39
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	32	
t Stat	0.43328527	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.33385716	
t Critical one-tail	1.69388875	

Chi-Square Test – Likelihood to Re-attend & Career Advancement

Actual values:		
Likely to Attend?	Advanced	Did Not Advance
Yes	14	31
No	0	1
Expected Values:		
Likely to Attend?	Advanced	Did Not Advance
Yes	13.6956522	31.3043478
No	0.30434783	0.69565217
P-value:		
0.50365704		

Chi-Square Test – Would You Recommend the Program & Career Advancement

Actual values:		
Likely to Attend?	Advanced	Did Not Advance
Yes	14	32
No	0	0
Expected Values:		
Likely to Attend?	Advanced	Did Not Advance
Yes	14	32
No	0	0
P-value:		
#DIV/0!		

Appendix G

Suggested Career Advancement Database Template

SUNY SAIL Alumni Database

First Name	Last Name	Email	Program	Program Completion Date	Job Title @ Program Intake	Institution @ Program Intake	Updated Job Title Source	Updated Job Title Date

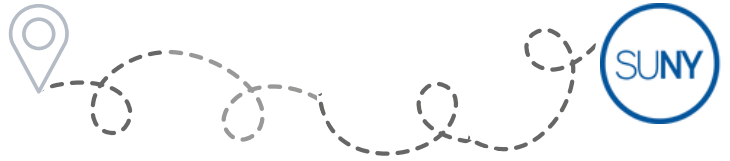
SAIL INSTITUTE

Empowering Strategic, Academic,
and Innovative Leadership

100%



respondents would recommend SAIL programs to a colleague



Program participants find a significant impact in understanding how to navigate the complexities of higher education as a leader. Overall percent change in self-assessed growth in the higher ed trends category increased by

44%

NAVIGATING HIGHER ED

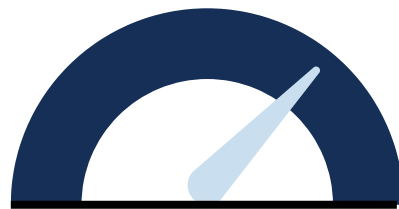
CONNECTION

When you participate in a SAIL program, you can guarantee that you will build lasting relationships with leaders from all over SUNY.

Access to peers, program facilitators, and decision makers will help accelerate your career.

SELF-AWARENESS

MINDFULNESS



72%

respondents rate their SAIL experience as impactful or most impactful on their leadership journey

EMPOWERING STRATEGIC, ACADEMIC, & INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP

.....
april 2023



CONGRATULATIONS 2023 CIO LEADERS!



resources



“It was enlightening to hear from different kinds of leaders with different perspectives, or ways of thinking, and kind of challenge your automatic way of thinking to incorporate new ideas.”

“I cannot say enough about the Mindful Leadership Program. I have recommended it to so many colleagues... it was truly life changing, and impacted the way I approach my job, my colleagues, and work situations.”



“My influence changed. I started approaching my colleagues differently, especially others who don't report to me. I was able to communicate better, engage with them, now things are more connected.”

With SUNY SAIL, your experience opens up bold new paths, and long lasting relationships.



CIO Leadership Academy Participants – April 2023

Mentor Database



Connect with a mentor or a sponsor!



Digital Alumni Network

Join our Microsoft Teams Channel to stay connected with your colleagues.

Executive Coaching

Private and confidential coaching support for leaders at all levels.



Claim Your Badge!

Claim your digital badge and display it on your LinkedIn profile!

Career Advancement Database



Send us your career updates!

up next



Leaders Learning Live

April 20 | Enrollment & Retention
July 20 | Cabinet Dynamics
August 17 | Strategic Planning



SUNY Reception

Join us to celebrate our SAIL alumni with SUNY system administration at our annual recognition reception.