RUTGERS

PreDoctoral Leadership Development Institute
Developing the Next Generation of College and University Leaders
Overview

Traditional discipline-based doctoral education is devoted to preparing students for careers in scholarship and teaching, but often these future faculty members complete their degree with little preparation for academic and administrative leadership roles in their institutions.

A critical need exists for individuals who also understand the structure and dynamics of colleges and universities, know the challenges these institutions face, and possess the interpersonal and organizational knowledge, competencies, and aspirations to provide effective and ethical leadership in addressing the critical issues confronting higher education.

The Rutgers Pre-Doctoral Leadership Program (PLDI) was created to recognize students with these aspirations, and to further develop their capabilities as leaders.

The PLDI Fellows

The Rutgers PreDoctoral Leadership Development Institute (PLDI) annually welcomes a select group of doctoral students from across a broad array of disciplines. Current fellows are from such diverse fields as anthropology, communication, plant biology, and criminal justice. Applicants are nominated by their department’s Program Director, Chair, Dean or Vice President.

Through participation in the Institute, students are prepared to assume both informal and formal leadership roles. This positions them to become more capable leaders and collaborators within their disciplines and their future places of employment, and for these reasons, more marketable and well-prepared for influential careers.

"PLDI gave me a much deeper understanding of how higher education functions, and I am excited to use these lessons in improving the field in my future career."

"I feel much better prepared for the interpersonal dynamics I will engage in when working with administrators because I have a stronger foundation of knowledge relative to how the university functions."

"PLOI gave me a much deeper understanding of how higher education functions, and I am excited to use these lessons in improving the field in my future career."
The PLDI Program

Recognizing the academic demands on doctoral students, PLDI is a part-time program, with a sequence of four, 0-credit seminar-style classes that meet weekly for 2 hour sessions. In their first year, Fellows will enroll in 16:187:501 in the Fall and 16:187:502 in the Spring. During the third semester students enroll in 16:187:503, which provides an experiential field learning opportunity working with a senior leader in an academic or administrative area within the university. The final semester (16:187:504) of the program is the capstone seminar.

Course Sequence

This two-course sequence focuses on leadership theory and practice, administrative styles and strategies, decision-making and collaboration, and internal and public communication, and also examines college and university structure and governance, faculty and staff cultures, budgeting and finance, legal and regulatory issues, state and federal relations, ethics, and other topics. These classes include presentations and interactive sessions with university academic and administrative leaders, group activities, analysis of case studies, and discussion of selected readings and current events in higher education.

Leadership Field Experiences (16:187:503)
This course is open to second-year fellows. In this field-study course, individuals and/or small teams of fellows work with senior academic and administrative leaders at Rutgers who serve as mentors. Students observe and interact with these selected leaders over the course of the semester and learn first-hand about how leaders address problems of practice.

Capstone Seminar (16:187:504)
The Capstone Seminar is designed as an integrating experience, providing “hands-on” interpersonal, group, organizational and public leadership opportunities as students engage in a semester-long analysis of a critical case in higher education, and present their work to other PLDI students, mentors, and faculty.

2012 Capstone Seminar

The 2012 Capstone Seminar focused on the Penn State scandal and its implications for higher education. Fellows researched and discussed the implications for organizational culture, crisis management, the role of athletics and university/program branding and presented their findings to university administrators and academic leaders.

PLDI Faculty

PLDI Faculty members come from all areas of the university, and represent a full range of academic and administrative leadership roles. They include the University President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Department Chairs and faculty and staff.

Areas represented include Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Institutional Research and Planning, Arts and Sciences, Professional Schools, Research Centers and Institutions, University Human Resources, Public Safety, Government Relations, University Relations, the Rutgers University Foundation, Finance and Administration, Budgeting, Organizational Development and Leadership, the Graduate School, and other schools and programs.
Washington Higher Education Forum

The day-long Washington Forum provides Fellows with the opportunity to learn about challenges facing higher education from individuals who are directly involved in shaping policy and practice at the national level. Fellows interact with legislators, national higher education association leaders, representatives from the U.S. Department of Education and individuals from other Washington-based organizations and governmental agencies. The Forum focuses on the complex issues facing higher education in all sectors, and the personal and institutional leadership knowledge and competencies needed to address them.

The Leadership Roundtable

The Leadership Roundtable focuses on contemporary issues of leadership in higher education, and features Rutgers senior faculty, academic and administrative leaders, and invited speakers from other institutions and organizations. The Spring 2011 Roundtable featured Dr. Robert Berdahl, President of the American Association of Universities (AAU), and former Chancellor of the University of California-Berkeley speaking on the topic “Challenges Facing American Public Research Universities Today.”

PLDI Executive Committee

Barbara E. Bender, Ed.D. – Associate Dean, Graduate School-New Brunswick
Richard De Lisi, Ph.D. – Professor and Dean, Graduate School of Education
Jerome J. Kukor, Ph.D. – Professor and Dean, The Graduate School-New Brunswick
Barbara A. Lee, J.D., Ph.D. – Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations
Brent D. Ruben, Ph.D. – Professor II; Director, PLDI Program; and Executive Director, Center for Organizational Development and Leadership

The Pre-Doctoral Leadership Development Institute

is sponsored by

The University Center for Organizational Development and Leadership, The Graduate School-New Brunswick, and The Graduate School of Education with support from

The Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and The School of Communication and Information

The ODL Student Leadership Development Initiative of which PLDI is a signature program has been generously supported by contributions from Johnson & Johnson, AT&T, the Mellon Foundation, Anne Thomas, Fran and Mary Kay Lawrence, and other Rutgers faculty and staff.

For more information, contact:
Dr. Brent D. Ruben, Director
Web: odl.rutgers.edu/pldi • email: pldi@odl.rutgers.edu