

The Rutgers Leadership Academy

There was a time when being the best among equals, a master of one's discipline or technical area, was the primary—sometimes the sole—talent set regarded as necessary for leadership at a college or university. Being a noted scholar and luminary in one's field was the primary qualification to be an academic leader; and superior technical knowledge was the defining leadership skill required for leadership in service or administrative areas. The problems and challenges one encountered as leaders were well-bounded, and often quite nicely addressed within the comfortable siloes of one's program or department.

Even a cursory scan of the higher education work environment reveals how dramatically this well-ordered, well-defined world has changed, and along with it, the knowledge and skill-set required for leadership effectiveness. Being highly accomplished in one's own area—academic discipline or technical area—is insufficient for effectively addressing the contemporary challenges that confront higher education.

These challenges are numerous and they come from all directions—the economic realities of the marketplace, financial and career needs of students and their parents, capabilities and difficulties posed by new technologies, employer demands for a better prepared workforce, regulatory requirements of governments, accountability pressures from boards and accreditors, and internal pressures from faculty and staff in response to the rapidly changing higher education landscape.

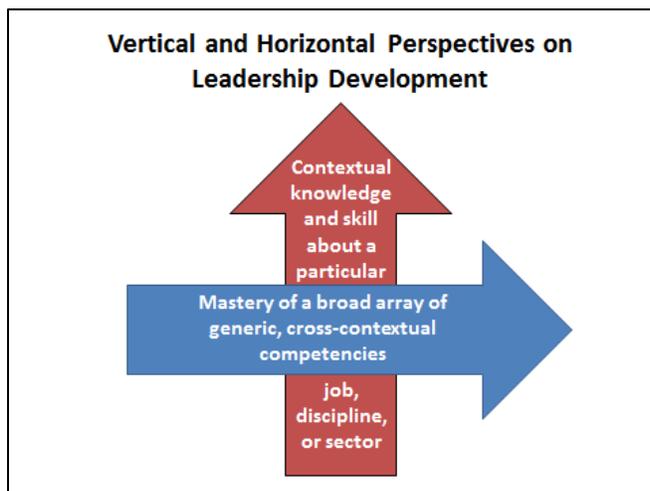
Few, if any, of these challenges have sources or solutions within any single department or functional area of a college or university. Rather most are sector-wide in nature and require systemic solutions—engaging perspectives of multiple internal and external stakeholders to understand/define and address the challenges faced in integrated ways. For academic and administrative leaders, few disciplines offer or require systematic preparation in higher education leadership.

The **Rutgers Leadership Academy** (RLA) provides a broad, integrated array of leadership education and development modules for faculty and staff in academic, administrative and professional programs. The program focuses on the development of cross-cutting leadership concepts, competencies, and tools that can be applied in the context of participants' specific disciplines, departments and schools.

Addressing leadership challenges effectively is particularly daunting in a research-university context given the multiplicity of mission elements being pursued simultaneously, the dynamics of loosely-coupled systems, and the diverse array of professional, administrative, technical and support personnel involved. Adding to the complexity is the array of critical stakeholders, the cultural traditions of collegial decision-making, and the numerous and often conflicting views of the priority goals of the institution and its units.

Each discipline, department or school has particular challenges and themes that leaders must address. In addition, however, all leaders within higher education face common challenges endemic to the sector. Personal leadership and accountability, thoughtful planning and priority setting, effective internal communication, strong relationships with key external constituencies, and high standards and innovation in programs and services are among those dimensions critical in all organizational settings. The same can be said for attention to faculty and staff workplace climate, organizational structure and effective processes, information management, planned change, the assessment of unit and institutional effectiveness, and a focus on documenting outcomes and accomplishments.

Whether the leader in question is a department chair in history, mathematics, or family medicine, a dean of liberal arts or education, the head of a key university committee, the coordinator of a laboratory or a creative writing program, a vice president for research or external relations, or a senior administrator in an academic or administrative program, these same fundamental competencies apply.



The RLA takes a multi-dimensional approach to prepare leaders to be strategic in addressing these challenges. The program builds on a foundation that identifies the commonalities that apply in all leadership roles and in all organizations. This horizontal dimension of leadership emphasizes the generic, cross-cutting organizational concepts and leadership competencies that transcend specific settings and sectors—competencies that have increasingly been recognized as essential for outstanding leadership across

settings. The specific disciplinary/organizational and institutional challenges faced by leaders—

the vertical dimension—are addressed through the completion of participant led field-based projects under the mentorship of senior campus leaders.

RLA draws on the knowledge and skill of Rutgers leaders with input and support from senior campus and university leadership. The RLA is composed of a suite of modules incorporating a variety of teaching-learning methodologies, including seminars, readings, experience-based activities, simulations, case studies, self-assessment inventories, and leadership roles in individual and collaborative projects.

RLA topics include institutional structure and mission, the national and institutional challenges facing higher education, leadership theories and concepts, formal and informal leadership roles and responsibilities, finance and budgeting models and practices, law and regulation, disciplinary and institutional cultures, decision-making, leadership communication, the influence of multiple publics, accreditation, and leadership tools related to organizational assessment, planning, change, metrics, and self-assessment.

For more information regarding the nomination process, eligibility criteria please visit <http://odl.rutgers.edu/leadership-programs/#rla>.