Overview of Activities and Classroom Assignments used with the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

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Samples of Objectives/Competencies Related to the Five Practices
1. Students will understand the Five Practices of leadership and value the contribution of each in being an effective leader.
2. Students will develop an appreciation of the importance of learning from other’s observations.
3. Students will apply the Five Practices of leadership to an outside example in order to draw parallels and real-life connections.
4. Students will be able to identify other individuals who apply the Five Practices of leadership.
   • Students will be able to apply leadership practices and behaviors to the successful functioning of groups and organizations

Sample Class work/Homework Assignments Related to the Five Practices

Personal Best Leadership Experience:
This activity is designed to help you find your “personal best” performance or behavior as a leader. Once you know and understand how you are when you’re at your very best, then you can work to be at that very best in all that you do.
You will not turn this activity in, but use it next week to share with others in the group. Please write freely, but also be very open and honest with yourself. You grow as a leader from a greater awareness of your own self as a leader.

First, think about a time when you “performed” your very best as a leader. Think about what we talked about in class on what makes a leader, a leader (so this time doesn’t have to be when you held a “leadership position,” simply when you were leading). Your experience can be during any point in your life. You just have to find a point when you were at your very best. Some experiences you might consider are something you led at school, in the community, or at home. You might think of times when you were involved in sports, working a “job,” volunteering, participating in a religious activity, being part of a group, sports team or club. You might have been recognized for your work, or maybe not. The experience you decide on doesn’t matter as much as what you did to be your very best as a leader.

Statements and questions for students to respond are provided and derived from “The Personal Best Leadership Experience” exercise in The Student Leadership Challenge, James Kouzes and Barry Posner, 2008.

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Simulations:
Working in a group, identify a practical, realistic response to one of the “crisis” situations below. Your group will share with the rest of the class in a 10-15 minute presentation of your
response. Think about how you can intentionally incorporate, in your leadership behavior, the commitments and behaviors that define the Five Practices.

As a student leaders (LEAD Scholars) you must address the president, Board of Trustees and local government about ideas to help students deal and function with a major tragedy.

A plane has crashed coming from Miami to Orlando. 105 people died - 75 were UCF students - freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, LEAD students, fraternity and sorority members, SGA members, African American students, Latina students, grad students and professors.

A Hurricane has come through Orlando and severe damage has occurred on campus. Hercules 110 (residence hall) is completely destroyed (no students were injured), the union is not able to be used, and the recreation and wellness center is completely damaged.

You, as a LEAD Student, have been given grant money to devise a plan to deal with a major tragedy in the city of Orlando. Many local residents were affected - children, parents, teachers, local business persons, etc. They are in need of money, food, clothing, health care, housing, etc. How would you lead a group to provide support and assistance?

Case Study Sample:

**Serving the Stakeholders’ Interests** (see below)

- Apply the 5 practices to this case
- Have students get into groups, answer the questions, and share their responses with the class.
  - Are there differences among the groups’ responses?
  - How did groups come to a consensus?
  - Which practice of leadership was most difficult to uphold/maintain? Easiest?
  - How does this relate to being a student leader in an organization?

**Serving the Stakeholder’s Interests**

You’ve looked at the numbers of freshman students who have signed up to be involved in a student organization during Fall Fest. You know that only 15% the 2000 freshman students at your conservative religiously-affiliated college have signed up to get involved. Many students are sponsored by financial aid contributions from their home congregations that stresses they must be invested in their academics and classes and that involvement outside of class should not be a concern of theirs. The college’s hard driving Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Phillip Worsten, phones you, as the Student Government Association (SGA) President, in a panic late one soggy mid-November afternoon. “As the President of SGA, I’m letting you know that we’re going to be firing Shelly McDonaldson, the Director of Student Activities, who also serves as the advisor of the SGA,” says the agitated vice president.

Ever mindful of the vice president’s notorious temper, you dare to ask why. The vice president snarls his explanation. It seems that Pastor Lefty Ring, the college’s largest benefactor and pastor of a very civically engaged church, refuses to give the college any more financial aid money nor send any more students from “his” congregation because the college is not preparing its students for experiences outside of the classroom since fewer and fewer students are getting involved in the 150+ clubs and
organizations and with his community organizations. Shelly is going to be made aware of this decision prior to tomorrow morning’s divisional meeting that you have been invited to as the SGA president.

As the President of the Student Government Association, you know that Shelly is deeply committed to SGA and you are sad to hear that she will be let go. Because you see her not only as your mentor and advisor, but also as a friend, you take the news hard. Just like her commitment to SGA, you know that she wants more students to get involved but is finding it hard to compete against Facebook, video games, and students leaving campus to go to events sponsored by other local religious groups, not to mention home. You have seen Shelly try reaching out to different groups of students in hopes to increase involvement and have helped her create a new program set to launch in the spring that allows the university to collaborate with all local religious groups to bridge the gap between campus and community and graduate both academically and socially prepared students.

Vice President Worsten tells you he is angry because, unless the Director of Student Activities is fired and student involvement increased, the college is going to lose the future financial support of Pastor Ring and his congregation along with that important source of future students.

Questions: Thinking of the Five Practices of Leadership, how would you deal with this situation, keeping in mind there are many different factors, people, and issues at play?

1) Who are the primary and secondary stakeholders involved, and what are their interests?
2) What factors should you take into consideration, and how do you weigh them?
3) How would you encourage everyone to see the issue the same way and foster shared vision/goals?
4) How would you describe the problem which needs your attention?
5) How do you determine which of your three or four best options to pursue first?
6) How do you recognize others in a positive way and show that you value their contributions?
7) You’re “just a student.” Why is this even an issue for you?

Adapted from “Serving the Stakeholder’s Interests” by Dr. Peter and Facione. All characters, situations, and stories described here are fictional. No reference to actual persons, events, or institutions is intended or assumed. Drs. Peter and Noreen Facione developed and refined these hypothetical cases based on the experiences gained through their many decades of service as faculty, administrators, workshop presenters, and leadership consultants to colleges and universities throughout the nation. Permission is granted to make copies of these cases and materials for personal and strictly noncommercial use, provided that proper citation is made to the author(s) and this website. © 2000, The California Academic Press LLC, Millbrae CA. Updated: 10/26/2005 www.insightassessment.com/cases.html.

Skits:
Before starting the discussion about the Five Practices & Commitments (below), divide the class into 5 groups so that each group will perform a skit/role-play exemplifying/applying each practice of leadership. Allow the students 15 minutes to put together a presentation/skit utilizing their random objects to illustrate their assigned practice (5 -7 minute presentation). After each skit, the class will discuss the skit using the guiding discussion questions.

Guiding questions throughout the discussion:
  i.  How do you as a leader exhibit these characteristics?
  ii.  As a follower/participant, how does a leader need to exhibit these to be effective?
iii. How does the group impact the application of these characteristics? (i.e., how are class group projects different than student clubs, etc?)
iv. In the face of resistance, how does a leader effectively still uphold these characteristics?

The Five Practices of Leadership

a. Model the Way
i. Finding your voice by clarifying personal values
ii. Setting the example by aligning actions with shared values
   1. How do you communicate your values?
   2. How do you develop shared values?
   3. What role do values play in everyday life? When should leaders exhibit their values and when should they not?
   4. How do different organizations impact your values/shared values (and vice versa)? For example, is a political student organization different/similar to an Anime club?

b. Inspire a Shared Vision
i. Envisioning the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities
ii. Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations
   1. How do you encourage others to think about big possibilities and not get stuck in the past/what has always been done?
   2. How does a leader learn everyone’s individual aspirations and then create a shared aspiration?
   3. What resistance might be encountered when developing a shared vision?

c. Challenge the Process
i. Searching for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change & improve
ii. Experimenting and taking risks by generating small wins and learning from mistakes
   1. How does a leader encourage innovation?
   2. How do leaders and group members challenge those with more power/authority to achieve results?
   3. How do leaders encourage the search for new opportunities?
   4. What is the role of the leader when helping group members to learn from mistakes?

d. Enable Others to Act
i. Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust
ii. Strengthening others by sharing power and discretion
   1. What happens if a leader is a micro-manager and does not share power?
   2. What if group members have “hidden agendas” or are following personal goals?
   3. What about the mentality of “if you want things done right, you have to do them yourself?” How does this foster or inhibit collaboration, trust, and developing other leaders?

e. Encourage the Heart
i. Recognizing contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence
ii. Celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community
   1. How can all group members contribute to rewarding each other?
   2. What are ways that group members would enjoy being appreciated?
   3. When, how and where do you celebrate victories and how do you know which ones to celebrate?
   4. What are ways to promote group community and pride?
Forced debate:
Students form dyads to compete against other pairs in a debate on the Five Practices and Ten Commitments of Exemplary Leaders. Each pair will randomly draw an “agree” or “disagree” card along with a randomly assigned Practice and/or Commitment. Pairs will have ten minutes to prepare their argument (this can also be formatted successfully by allowing the time between classes for students to create more solid arguments), for the position they selected. The debate format is as follows: 5 minutes each side for opening statements/arguments, 3 minutes rebuttal for each side, 1 minute conclusion/rebuttal for each side. The “audience” then has 5 minutes to ask either side questions about their positions. Your grades will be based on: individual presentation, presentation-argument-logic as a pair, audience vote/comment, and basis for your arguments. You may or may not choose the position you agree with, but are still expected to make the best argument from your side of the question.

Papers/Short writes:
1. Five Practices of Leadership Paper: Students are to reflect on the readings and course materials related to the Five Practices and write a 3-5 page paper describing the relationship of the Five Practices, Ten Commitments and behavior statements from the SLPI to effective and exemplary leadership. Some questions to consider are: why would these particular practices be the ones discovered and the most commonly identified behaviors of great leaders? What about all of the other leadership behaviors and skills? How would leaders work to exhibit these behaviors on a more frequent basis? What is your opinion of the value and importance of these practices? What do you agree/disagree with? These papers should allow instructors to assess the level of comprehension and understanding that students have of the material.

2. Personal Connection: Students start thinking about a personal connection to The Five Practices and Ten Commitments of Leadership. A well thought out one page reflection about the Practice and Commitment they relate to the most. This paper should include personal experiences and examples from the semester.

3. “Practice of Leadership” Analysis: Your assignment is to write an analysis of the Five Practices of Exemplary Student Leadership by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. In your analysis, you are to discuss how one or more of the Five Practices (you do not have to discuss all five) relate to your behavior as a leader. In other words, think of how you are as a leader when you are at your personal best. If so, how is each practice you choose to discuss reflected in your leadership style? If, as you think about these practices, you find that any are not very present in your style (which is ok...this is not a paper to make up something to say how they are part of your style), think about and discuss how you could begin to incorporate them into you becoming a great leader. Think specifically about a plan you could create for yourself to begin incorporating the Five Practices (or any that are prevalent in your style). This paper is not to provide an in-depth description of the practices. We already know what they are from the readings, but rather how they apply, should or could apply to you as a leader. The paper should be as long as you need to describe the practice(s) you choose to discuss.

4. Personal Best Leadership Experience (see above)

5. Applications Cards: Students write on a card a real-world application of a practice or behavior they just learned.

6. One Minute Paper: Students have 60 seconds to write their reaction (or insert any appropriate question here) to one of the behavior statements in your SLPI and what you specifically can do to further develop that behavior.

7. Movie Reflection Paper: Movies are excellent visual examples of leadership in action (or inaction). In the following assignment you are required to watch a movie outside of class (you
may use the list provided) and submit a 2 page summary/critique following the guidelines given in class. You must choose a movie that emulates one of the Five Practices of leadership. The film can be one that you are familiar with or a new one you would like to watch and review based on the information we have discussed so far in this course. The assignment should be written in the format provided and should answer the questions are provided to guide student responses. Papers must include an introduction, brief summary of the movie, response to the questions provided and conclusion to your paper. (See related movie activities below).

**Movies and Film:**

1. **Leadership in the Movies:** We will view a number of select movies in class as well as assign movies for you to view on your own outside of class (see partial list below). With each movie, you are to look for and find examples of and examples opposite of various leadership concepts, principles, behaviors and “laws” we have discussed in class. We will continue beyond viewing the movie with a variety of ways to process what we have seen through discussions, papers, group work, quizzes, etc. to deepen our understanding of leadership.

2. **Movie Interview:** In this assignment you may choose to attend a local theatre to watch a movie that contains some of the leadership concepts that we have discussed in class. After watching the movie, you are required to interview another person who attended the same movie. You must turn in a summary report of the interview along with the receipt from the movie. Your report must be typewritten and include an introduction, movie background, which concept(s) of leadership are illustrated, the responses from the interviewee and a conclusion. Sample questions are provided to guide the student’s interview.

3. **Film Term Project:** You will create your own leadership movie. The short film must be based on one of the Five Practices of leadership. You may use all of the practices but you should emphasize at least one of the Five Practices in your film (keep in mind the length of your message). Each group will have an opportunity to choose a Practice; however, no two groups can have the same one. Your movie must be creative and innovative yet appropriate and tasteful. You are responsible for creating and writing your own script, production, filming and editing. Your time frame is 15-30 minutes. You must use all of the members of your group in this project (they do not all have to act) because part of your grade will be based on peer evaluations. You will be given up to 3 in-class periods to work on this assignment. All other work must be completed outside of the class. Video editing software will be available on the computers in the lab. Be sure to reserve your video cameras well in advance. The projects must be prepared to be viewed during final exam day. The quality of your movie is very important. The presentations will viewed by other Faculty and LEAD Scholars not enrolled in the class for Impact credit. Your peers will also provide an evaluation that will be considered in your grade.
Partial list of movies that may relate to each of the Five Practices (clearly many movies will exhibit more than one Practice):

**MODEL THE WAY**
A Man for All Seasons  
Rudy  
Glory  
Saving Private Ryan  
Anna and the King  
Fail Safe  
Ghandi  
Gettysburg  
It’s a Wonderful Life  
To Kill a Mockingbird  
Wall Street  
Air Force One  
Little Women  
Schindler’s List

**ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT**
Twelve Angry Men  
Chicken Run  
Philadelphia  
Twelve O’clock High  
Twister  
Lean on Me  
Remember the Titans  
Stand and Deliver  
Tuskegee Airmen  
Lord of the Rings  
The Wizard of Oz  
Fried Green Tomatoes  
Gung Ho  
The Miracle Worker

**INSPIRE A SHARED VISION**
Chicken Run  
Pay It Forward  
The Perfect Storm  
Elizabeth  
Field of Dreams  
Bugsy  
Braveheart  
Excalibur

**CHALLENGE THE PROCESS**
Courage Under Fire  
Working Girl  
Secret of My Success  
Patch Adams  
Hunt for Red October  
Lords of Discipline  
Men of Honor  
Crimson Tide

**ENCOURAGE THE HEART**
Chocolat  
Hoosiers  
Mr. Holland’s Opus  
Harry Potter  
Tuskegee Airmen  
October Sky  
Dead Poets Society  
Billy Elliot  
Shawshank Redemption


**Resources**

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