

Truist Leadership Center Impact Report
Leadership Development Academy
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Needs and Opportunities

The Leadership Development Academy (LDA) is an intensive professional development experience that aims to further leadership training and development for faculty and staff who are ready to expand their capacity for leadership in higher education and who are committed to enhancing their contribution to the university. The Academy offers leadership development to university members through lectures, didactic discussion, activities and experiences, and storytelling delivered by top-level administrative and academic leaders. Intended to expose participants to the variety of leadership theories that exist, LDA facilitators provide a blend of didactic sessions and experiential learning activities to aid in the development of one's own personal leadership statement. The Academy is composed of 12 three and a half hour sessions on a weekly basis beginning in late January and concluding in April. Each of these sessions align with the identified goals of the Academy which are outlined below. Preparation for the Academy begins in early fall with a university-wide open house, followed by the application process for participation and ending with a closing graduate recognition ceremony.

The LDA was instituted nearly two decades ago in response to the need for professional development in leadership development. However, the project has shifted over time. Next is a historical perspective on the project's evolution. The LDA was reimagined through the vision of Chancellor Steve Ballard who challenged East Carolina University to be "The Leadership University." Under the leadership of Dr. Virginia Hardy, LDA was implemented with the first cohort starting in spring semester 2008. Over the past 15 years, LDA has evolved based on the feedback and evaluations of participants, along with changing professional needs seen on the local, state and national fronts. Many of the facilitators have been involved for the duration of the LDA which speaks volumes to their commitment to the Academy and to what the participants receive from those discussions. Once individuals complete the Academy, they are then referred to as "Fellows." One main goal is to have the Fellows become a cadre of leaders on campus who can be called upon as needed to fill leadership roles around the campus. The LDA has an Advisory Council, consisting of a Fellow from each cohort. The Council meets annually to review Academy "exit interview" data and to make recommendations for Academy improvements.

There have been several major improvements to the Leadership Development Academy experience since 2009. The opportunity for cohort members to "job shadow" university leaders, (2017 initiation) was implemented with one cohort. This experience provided an invaluable opportunity to "be there in the midst" of leadership decision making and other interactions. In 2014, the cohorts expanded their leadership perspectives with the inclusion of more leadership literature. In 2021, LDA participants worked with the Chancellor's Student Leadership Academy student participants to offer mentoring and career advice over a shared meal. During previous years, LDA included a community engagement project (2013 initiation) to demonstrate the importance of servant leadership. Cohorts have supported the Habitat for Humanity, Ronald McDonald House, Hope Lodge and the 1209 Breakfast Ministry for West Greenville Homeless. In 2009, "Fireside Chats" were started to provide CLA cohorts the opportunity to engage in

conversation with statewide leaders, to hear their leadership stories and to learn from them. These lunch and learn sessions have continued up until the current year; in summer 2023, a luncheon focused on small business leadership included nearly 60 participants. Some of the other speakers include the Honorable Judge Henry Frye, State Representatives Edith Warren and Marian McLawhorn, Commissioner for the Department of Motor Vehicles, Janice Faulkner, and Kris Carroll, Chief Executive Officer from Grady White Boats. In response to popular demand, then Chancellor Steve Ballard delivered the Fireside Chat in 2016 since he was stepping down from the position and in honor of his role with the Academy.

More recently, the project is looking to more explicitly address and connect the development of faculty/staff to the Truist Leadership Center's focal priority of improving student leadership at ECU.

Defined Aims

The LDA has six goals:

- Leadership Academy Goal 1: Expose and explore tradition of emerging leadership theories and their application within higher education:
- Leadership Academy Goal 2: Explore leadership for individual, personal and professional development within the context of the strategic aims of East Carolina University:
- Leadership Academy Goal 3: Explore individual leadership strengths and areas of development
- Leadership Academy Goal 4: Build relationships and networking opportunities
- Leadership Academy Goal 5: Development of understanding of higher education leadership and its application at East Carolina University in context of our society, region, and local communities.

Logic Model

ECU Leadership Development Academy

Goal: To have Fellows become a cadre of leaders on campus who can be called upon as needed to fill leadership roles around campus				
Leadership Competencies Targeted: Networking, interpersonal skills, decision-making, articulating a compelling leadership vision				
Who Participates: The Chancellor’s Leadership Academy (CLA) is an intensive professional development experience that aims to further leadership training and development for faculty and staff who are ready to expand their capacity for leadership in higher education and who are committed to enhancing their contribution to the university. Preparation for the Academy begins in early fall with a University wide open house, followed by the application process for participation and ending with “graduation.”	Activities: The Academy is composed of 10 three and a half hour sessions on a biweekly basis beginning in January and concluding in April. Includes a “job shadow” of university leaders, book studies, chats with statewide leaders, and mentoring student participants	Participant Outputs: # of participants in the Leadership Academy Personal leadership philosophies articulated and edited	Which Will Change Participants In These Ways (short-term): Increased understanding of leadership theories and their application within higher education Deeper understanding of their own leadership profile Build relationships and expand network Expanded understanding of ethics/legalities and decision-making	Which Will Lead To (long-term): Cadre of leaders on campus with deeper connections Employees who have stronger leadership abilities and who can be more competitive for new opportunities

Activities

The activities are organized and described by goal.

Leadership Academy Goal 1: Expose and explore tradition of emerging leadership theories and their application within higher education:

Several sessions focus on this goal, including the Chancellor’s session, which focuses on leadership and leadership theories. During this session, participants learn the ECU definition of leadership along with key characteristics of good leaders (honesty, integrity, courage, followership, inspirational, servant leadership, influential, etc.). ECU senior leadership staff also share their leadership theories as they describe their personal leadership journeys. They make distinction between servant and traditional leadership. Another session of the Leadership Academy, “Leading in Intercultural Environments,” focuses on how diverse perspectives impact leadership. The cohort has the opportunity to analyze how their identity affects their personal journey, analyze the perception of power and privilege, and analyze how embracing differences

in others affect one's leadership values and style. Leadership theories are also explored via leadership literature as part of their coursework. In the 2021, 2022, and 2023 Academies, the following literature was available for the cohort: *Leadership Theory and Practice* by Peter Northouse, *A Leader's Legacy* by Kouzes and Posner, and *Great Leaders are Great People* by Steven Curtis Ballard.

Leadership Academy Goal 2: Explore leadership for individual, personal and professional development within the context of the strategic aims of East Carolina University:

The “Teambuilding and Leadership” session demonstrates the significance of empowering teams to influence positive change and how to inspire followership through team building. They explore leadership for their personal and professional development. They learn that trust is a major characteristic for team activities.

One of our very first sessions, the Individual Leadership Assessment (DISC) session, explores individual leadership development where participants learn their leadership competencies, their behavioral skill strengths, and how they react to pressure situations. Cohort members learn how to identify leadership styles of others and how to maximize interactions. A follow up session is held where the participants' complete activities to solidify leadership strengths; engage in group activities with a focus on identifying the strengths of others and learn how to best interact with others based on the leadership strengths of others.

Leadership Academy Goal 3: Explore individual leadership strengths and areas of development

In the “Followership and Engagement Session,” participants discuss the dimensions of followership and better understand the interdependence of followership to leadership. They are challenged to participate in transformations, to take moral action, to speak to hierarchy and to listen to followers.

Leadership Academy Goal 4: Build relationships and networking opportunities

There are a variety of activities where cohort members are provided the opportunity to build relationships and to network. Each session allows for the participants to interact with each other and with the scheduled facilitator(s). They also collaborate with the student leadership academy to build relationships through mentoring. Often, the members of the cohort serve as mentors for members of the Chancellor's Student Leadership Academy. Lunch and Learn (Fireside Chats) programs and the Open House Event also provide the opportunity to fellowship and network. For the opening and closing sessions, LDA Fellows, current cohort participants, instructors, Chancellor and other key stakeholders are invited to attend and interact.

Leadership Academy Goal 5: Development of understanding of higher education leadership and its application at East Carolina University in context of our society, region, and local communities.

Several sessions, “Ethics in Higher Education Leadership” and “Legal and Ethical issues in Higher Education,” focus on understanding higher education leadership. During these sessions, participants are exposed to scenarios and case studies that allow them to get a better understanding of how ethics impact decision making. Additionally, using an interactive activity,

participants engage in a situation to determine “where do you stand” which then leads to a discussion for them to explain how their ethics influence their decisions.

Every leader’s decisions are influenced by their ethics and this session focuses on how one can justify their decisions based on their ethics and experiences. Good leaders have strict ethical behaviors and rarely deviate from that ethical foundation.

Legal and Ethical issues in higher education are crucial for effective leadership. Leaders must know and stay in compliance with legal issues that impact the organization. During this session, the cohort has an audience with the university attorney where the following issues are addressed:

- What legal issues impact decision making in higher education?
- What laws govern decision making in higher education?
- Case studies/scenario activity for participants to provide feedback/decisions

When this session concludes, cohort members have a better understanding of the legal implications within higher education and specifically, at East Carolina University.

Each cohort will also select a community service project, participate in several book talks, and attend a leadership lunch with a local/state leader.

Spring 2023 LDA Sessions

Wed, January 25, Dr. Elizabeth Hodge, Individual Leadership Assessment

Wed, February 1, Dr. Gwen Tyson, Team Leadership

Thurs, February 2, ECU Board of Trustees Meeting, University Governance

Wed, February 8, Dr. Dennis McCunney, Dr. Jeremy Tuchmayer, Defining Leadership

Wed, February 15, Dr. Dennis McCunney, Dr. Jeremy Tuchmayer, Introduction to Leadership Styles

Wed, February 22, Dr. Steve Ballard and panelists, Everyday Leadership

Wed, March 1, Dr. Stephanie Helms Pickett & Dr. Virginia Hardy, Leading Through an Intercultural Framework

Wed, March 15, Dr. Philip Rogers and panelists, Organizational Excellence

Wed, March 22, Joint session with Chancellor's Student Leadership Academy, Mentoring & Leadership

Wed, March 29, Dr. Maria Clay & Paul Zigas, Ethics & Leadership

Wed, April 5, Dr. Steven Asby, Dr. James Coker, and LDA Fellows Panel, Leadership in Action

Wed, April 12, Dr. McCunney & Dr. Tuchmayer, Individual Leadership Philosophies

Wed, April 19, Closing Ceremony & Wrap-Up

Implementation Fidelity, Quality, and Outputs

Fidelity. Implementation fidelity went exceedingly well. The schedule for the 12 sessions was devised and confirmed in the fall and no deviations from the planned discussions, speakers, or activities occurred. Attendance was very strong among the fellows for nearly all sessions. Many Academy participants are heavily involved in the university and several had to miss a session due to conference travel. Otherwise, Academy participants are professionals who make time to attend the sessions and actively seek out opportunities to further their involvement. No interruptions or unanticipated events occurred to deviate the planned activities. Rather, much work is conducted by the program directors immediately after the conclusion of each Academy to begin planning the schedule and confirming guest lecturers, panelists, and activity facilitators. A brief post-session reflection instrument collects participant feedback on the extent to which the session outcomes were accomplished, and what key take-aways the participants experienced. These post-session reviews consistently demonstrate that participants agree that session outcomes were met, presenters were knowledgeable and inspiring, and that participants were left with concepts to continue to investigate further.

Quality. Session activities were evaluated with a brief post-event reflection instrument where participants evaluated the knowledge and effectiveness of session presenters/facilitators in achieving the stated outcomes, and what key lessons, concepts, or ideas participants identified as being central to their experiences. Consistently, these post-session evaluations showed that participants overwhelmingly agreed that session presenters/facilitators were knowledgeable, thought-provoking, and inspiring; the content presented met session outcomes, and participants were able to identify key concepts or ideas they would continue to explore and consider after the session concluded. More specific information is presented in the Outputs and Impact sections.

Outputs.

- Participants
 - 38 total participants for 2022 and 2023
 - 68% female ($n = 26$) | 32% male ($n = 12$)
 - 68% staff ($n = 26$) | 32% faculty ($n = 12$)
 - LDA continues to have wide representation and participation from all across the university. At the time of participation in LDA, the 2022 and 2023 cohorts represented the following Colleges and Divisions at ECU:
 - THCAS (3)
 - Allied Health Sciences (2)
 - COB (2)
 - COE (3)
 - CET (2)
 - CFAC (2)
 - SODM (3)
 - BSOM (7)
 - Student Affairs (8)
 - Academic Libraries (1)
 - HR (1)
 - ITCS (1)
 - Administration and Finance (1)

- Each individual participant developed and wrote their own individual leadership philosophy statement; those statements were shared with colleagues at the closing ceremony and participants were encouraged to share the statements with supervisors and colleagues in their home departments. Participants are encouraged to utilize this one-page personal leadership philosophy as a living document that they constantly modify and refer back to as they evolve as leaders. In these statements, usually about one page in length, participants identified four key aspects of their leadership philosophy:

- Their personal definition of leadership
- The one or two main leadership theories / styles of leadership that best describe their leadership style (e.g. visionary and servant leadership)
- What key values, behaviors, attributes, and beliefs are core to their personal definition of leadership
- Together, how does their definition, leadership style, and core values describe their vision for how they describe their leadership beliefs and what their vision of leadership entails

Evidence of Impact

Impacts During Participation. Below are results (in bar graph form) from pre and post self-assessment of participants for the 2023 cohort, showing their overall confidence in each of the listed leadership abilities and skills, and their overall knowledge of different leadership theories reviewed during the semester. The last bar graph describes the extent to which participants identify with a specific personal leadership style. Overall, participants identified statistically significant growth from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment in 30 of the 31 individual items, and all three (3) overall mean scores. The only item which did not show statistically significant improvement using paired-samples t-tests, was the extent to which they agreed that their writing skills were strong. In all other areas, participants rated themselves improved in their confidence of key leadership abilities (Leadership Abilities graph), their command for key leadership skills (Leadership Skills graph), and their knowledge and familiarity with key concepts and theories of leadership (Leadership Theories graph).

Overall, roughly 35% ($n = 13$) identified servant leadership as their primary leadership style, with another 16% each ($n = 6$) describing themselves as primarily authentic or transformational leaders. For those who did not identify servant leadership as their primary leadership style, another 22% ($n = 8$) identified it as their secondary style of leadership. Another 19% ($n = 7$) identified themselves as transformational leaders, with an additional 14% ($n = 5$) each identifying themselves as Adaptive or Authentic leaders.

This pre-post assessment clearly demonstrates the impact the Academy had on participants' confidence of their leadership skills and abilities, and their gain in knowledge and familiarity of core concepts and theories of leadership. Together with the leadership philosophy statements that

each participant produces, and the remarks identified in the showcase reports of some participants, the Academy has a distinctive positive impact on participants' confidence of their own leadership abilities, as well as their knowledge and understanding of what leadership is, and how they believe they see themselves as leaders.

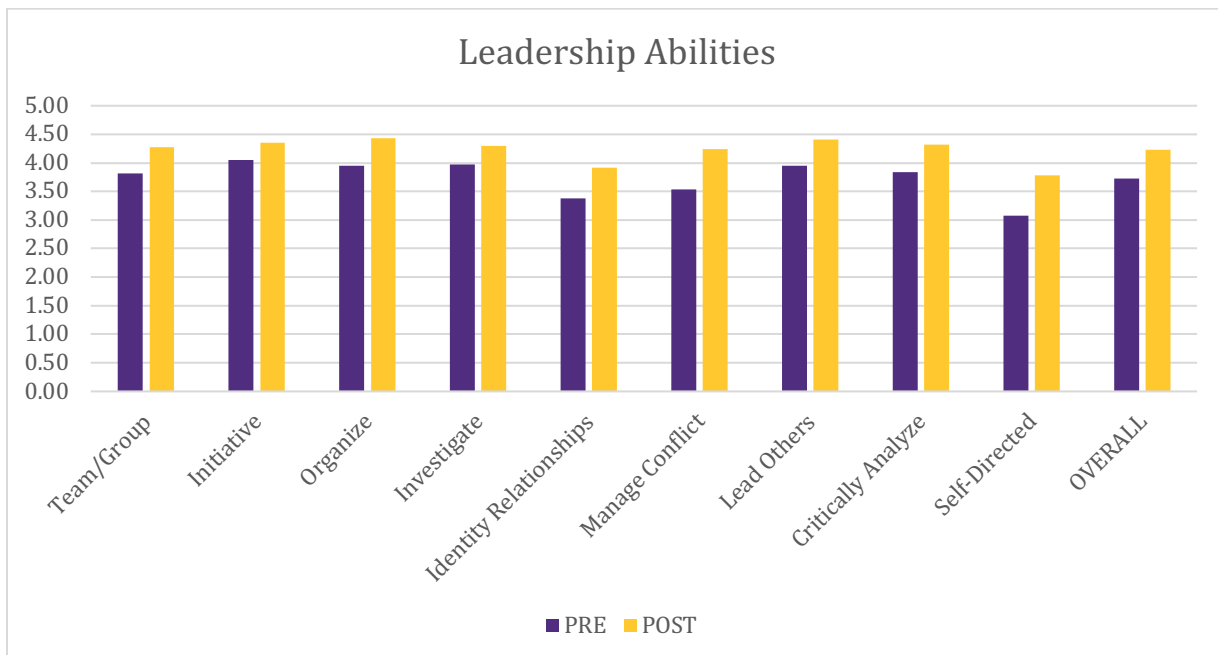
Survey Measures. The LDA Pre and Post Assessment is comprised of three main sections. The Leadership Abilities section is a 9-item questionnaire asking participants to evaluate their abilities on these nine items on a 5-point scale ranging from *Does not describe me* (1) to *Describes me very well* (5). The Leadership Skills section is a 12-item questionnaire asking participants to evaluate how adept they believe themselves to be across these twelve skills on a 5-point scale ranging from *Far below average* (1) to *Far above average* (5). The Leadership Theories section is a 10-item questionnaire asking participants to evaluate how familiar they are with ten concepts of leadership theory on a 5-point scale ranging from *Not familiar at all* (1) to *Extremely familiar* (5).

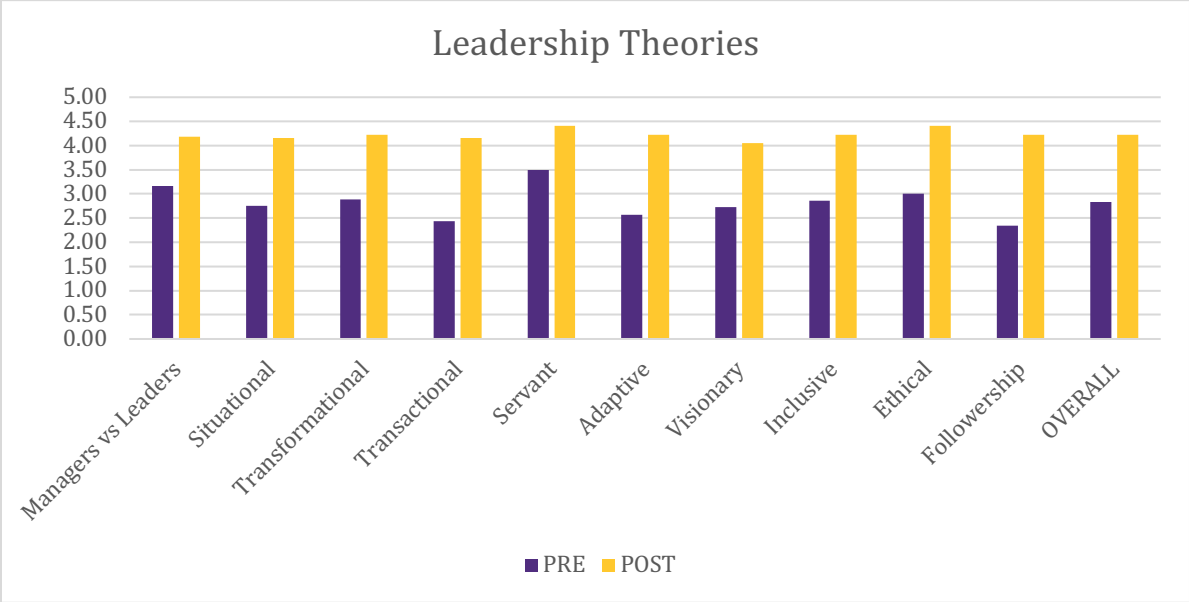
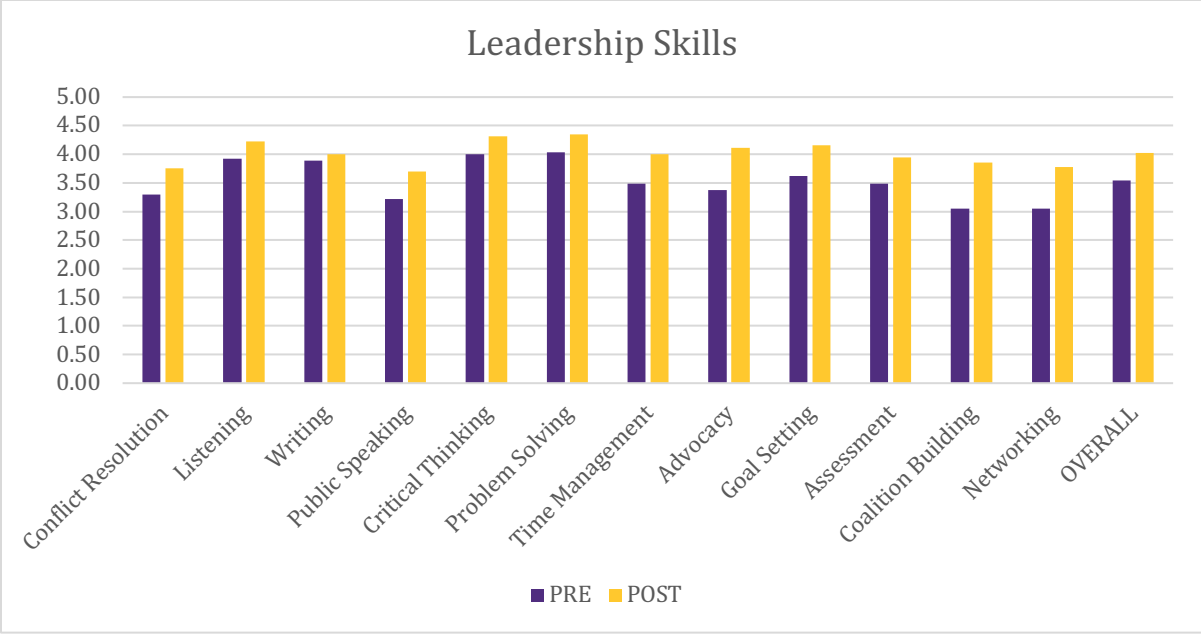
Mean Scores. Mean scores for each item are calculated, with scores ranging from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The higher the value the more capable/adept/confident the individual is for each item. Next, overall means for the three separate scales (leadership abilities, skills, and theories) were calculated by averaging the individual items in each of the three sections together. Thus, the overall mean score for Leadership Abilities comprises of the average of an individual's responses to the nine items on this scale (twelve items for the Leadership Skills, and ten items for the Leadership Theories scales). These overall scale means were calculated because the items met the criteria for inclusion into a scale (*cf.* Internal Validity & Reliability discussion). Mean statistics are displayed in **Table 1** below.

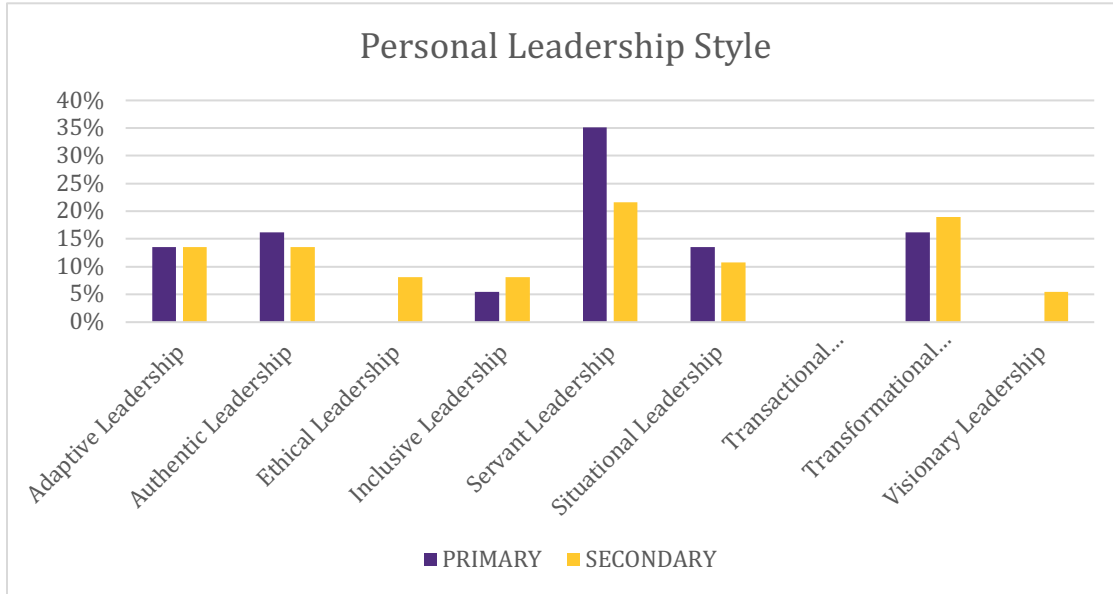
Internal Validity & Reliability. Next, we evaluated each of these three survey sections (e.g. leadership abilities, skills, and knowledge of theories) to determine if they met the criteria to be combined into survey scales. The three sections already had face validity as the items included in the survey included clearly measurable leadership skills, competencies, and theories identified in the literature. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) scores measure the internal consistency, or reliability, of a set of survey items. Alpha scores were calculated for the three aforementioned survey sections to determine if the items could reasonably represent a valid and reliable measurement scale. The alpha statistic, which ranges from 0 to 1, is used to determine the extent to which a collection of items consistently measures the same characteristic (e.g. leadership abilities, skills, and knowledge of theories). The greater the value, the higher the internal reliability of the scale, and the more likely it is that the individual items collectively measure the same characteristic. Each of these three sections met the criteria to be combined into three separate scales representing an individual's overall leadership abilities, leadership skills, and knowledge of leadership theories. Cronbach alpha scores are displayed in **Table 2** below.

Significance Testing. In order to determine growth as a result of participation in the Leadership Development Academy, a pre and post assessment was administered immediately before and after participation in LDA. Paired samples t-tests were calculated to determine if a significant difference exists between participants' mean scores prior to and immediately after participation in LDA. One common measure of significance is the *p-value*, which ranges from 0 to 1. Values very close to zero (below 0.005) generally indicated the observed difference in mean values in unlikely due to chance; whereas values closer to 1 (either above 0.01 or 0.005) suggest no differences exist between the two groups other than what might typically occur due to random chance. Results of the significance testing (*p-values*) are displayed in **Table 1** below.

Graphs displaying the pre- and post-test results of the three scales (Leadership Abilities, Leadership Skills, and Leadership Theories) as well as the frequency distribution of LDA participants' personal leadership styles are displayed below, followed by Tables 1 and 2.







Mean scores for each item and scale on the pre- and post-test as well as the *p-value* associated with significance testing are displayed on **Table 1** below. Cronbach alpha scores for each pre- and post-test item for the three scales as well as the overall scale score are displayed in **Table 2** below.

Table 1: LDA Pre & Post Assessment Measures, 2022-2023

	Pre-Test			Post-Test			Sig.
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	P
ABILITIES							
Team/Group	38	3.84	0.79	37	4.27	0.61	0.005
Initiative	38	4.05	0.70	37	4.35	0.68	0.020
Organize	38	3.95	0.80	37	4.43	0.65	0.001
Investigate	38	3.97	0.75	37	4.30	0.66	0.044
Identity Relationships	38	3.39	0.86	37	3.92	0.60	0.000
Manage Conflict	38	3.58	0.89	37	4.24	0.72	0.000
Lead Others	38	3.95	0.87	37	4.41	0.76	0.001
Critically Analyze	38	3.84	0.92	37	4.32	0.71	0.004
Self-Directed	38	3.13	0.84	37	3.78	0.79	0.000
OVERALL	38	3.75	0.50	37	4.23	0.46	0.000
SKILLS							
Conflict Resolution	38	3.34	0.71	37	3.76	0.80	0.003
Listening	38	3.92	0.75	37	4.22	0.53	0.047
Writing	38	3.87	0.81	37	4.00	0.78	0.353
Public Speaking	38	3.24	1.05	37	3.70	0.91	0.004
Critical Thinking	38	4.00	0.77	37	4.32	0.63	0.021
Problem Solving	38	4.03	0.79	37	4.35	0.59	0.021
Time Management	38	3.47	0.95	37	4.00	0.78	0.000
Advocacy	38	3.39	0.89	37	4.11	0.70	0.000
Goal Setting	38	3.61	0.82	37	4.16	0.73	0.003
Assessment	38	3.50	0.86	37	3.95	0.85	0.001
Coalition Building	38	3.03	0.79	37	3.86	0.86	0.000
Networking	38	3.03	1.17	37	3.78	0.89	0.000
OVERALL	38	3.54	0.42	37	4.02	0.47	0.000
THEORIES							
Managers vs Leaders	38	3.16	1.03	37	4.19	0.70	0.000
Situational	38	2.79	0.91	37	4.16	0.65	0.000
Transformational	38	2.89	1.03	37	4.22	0.71	0.000
Transactional	38	2.47	1.06	37	4.16	0.73	0.000
Servant	38	3.53	1.11	37	4.41	0.64	0.000
Adaptive	38	2.55	1.03	37	4.22	0.67	0.000
Visionary	38	2.74	0.89	37	4.05	0.70	0.000
Inclusive	38	2.89	0.98	37	4.22	0.71	0.000
Ethical	38	3.00	0.87	37	4.41	0.60	0.000
Followership	38	2.37	1.08	37	4.22	0.71	0.000
OVERALL	38	2.84	0.76	37	4.22	0.58	0.000

Table 2: LDA Assessment Cronbach's Alpha Item Correlations

	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	N	α	N	α
ABILITIES				
Team/Group	38	0.745	37	0.822
Initiative	38	0.757	37	0.824
Organize	38	0.763	37	0.821
Investigate	38	0.769	37	0.847
Identity Relationships	38	0.774	37	0.821
Manage Conflict	38	0.762	37	0.827
Lead Others	38	0.773	37	0.829
Critically Analyze	38	0.753	37	0.818
Self-Directed	38	0.762	37	0.818
OVERALL	38	0.783	37	0.842
SKILLS				
Conflict Resolution	38	0.700	37	0.832
Listening	38	0.682	37	0.859
Writing	38	0.682	37	0.847
Public Speaking	38	0.709	37	0.860
Critical Thinking	38	0.660	37	0.839
Problem Solving	38	0.652	37	0.835
Time Management	38	0.721	37	0.866
Advocacy	38	0.661	37	0.832
Goal Setting	38	0.666	37	0.834
Assessment	38	0.682	37	0.831
Coalition Building	38	0.658	37	0.827
Networking	38	0.675	37	0.836
OVERALL	38	0.699	37	0.853
THEORIES				
Managers vs Leaders	38	0.911	37	0.953
Situational	38	0.912	37	0.949
Transformational	38	0.901	37	0.952
Transactional	38	0.905	37	0.951
Servant	38	0.910	37	0.948
Adaptive	38	0.908	37	0.952
Visionary	38	0.909	37	0.952
Inclusive	38	0.908	37	0.951
Ethical	38	0.902	37	0.949
Followership	38	0.919	37	0.950
OVERALL	38	0.917	37	0.955

Excerpts from Individual Leadership Philosophy Statements

The leadership philosophies of participants serve as examples of the kind of learning and internalization of the knowledge and skills imparted by the professional development experience. The following excerpts provide examples of participant development upon the completion of the project.

J. D.'s Leadership Philosophy (2022 Cohort)

I strive to be both a servant and transformational leader and believe the empowerment and development of employees to be the driver of both their success and the success of the organization. Leaders should put the interests and development of their employees before their own interests. Leadership, by definition, is a relational process of inspiring, empowering, and developing others in order to successfully achieve the mission, vision, and values of the organization, while maintaining an engaged and ethical workforce. The values of an effective leader include authenticity, compassion, empowerment, trust, humility, sincerity, tolerance, ethical behavior, inclusivity, transparency, honesty, and congeniality.

An effective leader can successfully identify the strengths and weaknesses of others and use this knowledge to develop them professionally and personally, in a compassionate environment. An effective leader can maintain positive relationships, even during times of struggle, and garner the respect of others while being a role model and ethical and moral guide. If a leader garners this respect correctly, others will follow their lead willingly, without threats of reprisal or intimidation, and with increased organizational engagement. A leader should ensure that employees are focused on the goals of the organization and understand their individual contributions to its success. A leader should understand the needs of both their employees and the organization, both in the short-term and the longer term.

An effective leader must also be successful in creating a nurturing, engaging, compassionate, and welcoming work environment. This includes being compassionate to the individual needs of the workforce members and ensuring they feel included and appreciated. An organization should support diversity and inclusion, foster teamwork, and encourage its workforce to reach their highest potential while ensuring they maintain mental and physical health. A leader must be able to serve in many roles for their workforce, depending on the needs at the time, including a teacher, mentor, delegator, coach, director, role model, and at times, an honest and constructive critic.

I personally view my role as a leader to be that of a workforce gardener. A gardener tends to their crops by giving them the resources they need while removing barriers and outside influences that will inhibit their successful growth. If the gardener does their job correctly, the crops will develop on their own and reach their maximum potential. As a workforce gardener, empowering and developing employees, and creating a nurturing and ideal environment, while removing influences that may inhibit their growth, will lead employees to grow on their own and

reach their full potential and engagement, and thus the success of both the employee and the organization.

A.B.'s Leadership Philosophy (2022 Cohort)

In the KJV of the bible, Paul states “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” (1 Cor. 9:19) Paul knew that he was a man of great authority and leadership, but he adapted when it was required in order to achieve the desired outcome.

After examining the various leadership styles, I find that I have adapted and incorporated a combination of styles, depending upon the situations encountered or issues faced. However, my strongest ability lies with servitude. (The Servant Style) Therefore, I will lead with integrity and stability using this value to inspire others to trust my decisions and respect my opinions. By serving others with truthfulness I hope to create an atmosphere of servitude. I will strive to perform in a professional manner and be fair in all situations.

Although I lead with the servant style, I have no short coming in exercising authority. I set team goals making sure that objectives are clear, leveraging team strengths and abilities to perform concise desired activities. I am supportive and offer positive guidance as well as constructive criticism when needed. Frequent pulse checks will be done during any activity to assess milestones and alleviate road blocks. Also, incorporating ongoing team rewards for successes.

I value accountability, responsibility and dependability and I have a strong sense of confidence in my values and job performance. Communication wether verbal or non-verbal, is very important and I listen to every concern or issue; examining all aspects, prior to coming to a workable solution. I believe everyone’s opinion is valuable. Therefore, I encourage team involvement in decision making. I am a firm believer that team participation while making decisions, will build a stronger team and a more desirable work environment.

In summary, throughout my career and life experiences, I have exhibited some aspects of most if not all of the characteristics and attributes of the leadership style and abilities. My goal as a leader of servitude is to inspire, support and influence others to pursue their dreams, ambitions and passions.

K.W.'s Leadership Philosophy (2023 Cohort)

At the very foundation of leadership is relationships. Connection, relationships, and caring for people are at the core of who I am as a human, a professional, and a leader. They say “people do not care how much you know until they know that you care,” and as I am learning to live into my roles as a leader, I am more confident every day that it is through relationships, collaboration, connection, and commitment to the greater good that effective change happens.

While the process of leading can get complicated, the core of what it means to lead is simple - leaders believe in the mission, work, and people of their organization, and they are able to influence & inspire others to collaborate in the collective work of the common good, the common goal. I align closely with Servant Leadership, but I also can see and am practicing Transformational & Systems Leadership. The bigger picture matters, and leaders are the ones that are able to bring all those involved with boots on the ground into formation with a vision that takes the team forward!

I believe that leaders lead by example and they will not ask anyone on their team to do something that they are unwilling to do themselves - however, rather than doing it all, they are empowering their team in their strengths to play their part. I believe that the leader's willingness to step up sets the tone for the team, and establishes the trust needed for the team to engage in effective work. When one team member is successful, the entire team wins - the rising tide lifts all the boats. I am committed to being a leader who works to shift the culture of my organization from "me and mine" to "us and ours."

I have learned so much in the past two years. I had no idea how much I did not know until I started asking questions, engaging with the system of K12 and higher education, and showing up. As a leader, I am aware of the importance of lifelong learning. I will listen to my mentors, supervisors, and team members to address opportunities for growth through ongoing learning.

Effective leaders are stable. Though I may feel like a tornado in my own mind when assessing situations and making decisions, I believe that in order to create positive change, leaders must be able to create an environment of stability, resilience, and safety. Leadership is a risk. Things do not always go like you expect for them to, so the willingness to be flexible, while intentionally keeping the main priority in focus, is important in the health of a team. Leaders authentically communicate with their team, inviting input, engaging in compromise, and igniting action.

Connection is what matters most to me. With connection comes growth, opportunity, success, and innovation. When the team knows that we are in it together, there is a culture of connection that is powerful. Building relationships, leading by example, and communicating the value in every team member guides the team to success. I will lead by valuing my team and what they bring to the table, empowering them in what they are capable of, and cheering for them every step of the way. When the leader is committed to the goal/mission/work, good things happen. It is absolutely not easy, it's a process and some days are better than others. But it's the together that counts.

D.K.'s Leadership Philosophy (2023 Cohort)

Leaders facilitate common goals through fostering healthy relationships within their organization and beyond.

During my academic career, I worked under four different administrators in two institutions. I learned a lot by observing them and formed my own administrative philosophy, by recognizing actions that were positive and beneficial, as well as the ones that were not as favorable in their leadership styles. Those who led their units with transparency and long-term strategic planning based on thorough analysis earned my respect and gratitude. I believe in leadership through service to our students, colleagues, community stakeholders, and the school. I trust that the role of administrator is to primarily act as facilitator for decisions made by the collective, and custodian, balancing the resources and prioritizing the best practices benefiting students and colleagues.

I believe that my Servant/ Coach leadership style is particularly adopted to an academic environment. I hope to motivate my team through my open-door policy and transparent communication style, and to focus on individuals' strengths and motivations.

My goal is, as my team and I grow accustomed to each other, my leadership becomes more transformational in nature, focusing on big picture and long-term goals.

I am convinced that the role of successful leadership is to recognize the needs of the collective, start innovative solutions, establish the processes for those solutions, and make them sustainable. Then, once these processes are in stable motion, empower the others to take on the leadership roles themselves to the best of their abilities. This cycle continues with new creative problem-solving initiatives, benefiting the collective of students and colleagues.

I hope that these experiences illustrate my administration philosophy established through experience, common sense, and service to community.

Post-participation Impact. Next is a presentation of three participant success stories.



TRUIST leadership success story

Allison Flowers

An ECU employee learns how to mindfully say yes and no and utilize active listening in her role as Director of Faculty Affairs and Leadership Development

Leadership Development Academy Participant



beginning the journey

Before coming to ECU, Allison taught at Pitt Community College for 12 years and worked in market research, project management, and project direction in Los Angeles. She started at the Office of Faculty Affairs and Leadership Development at the Brody School of Medicine in 2019.

new avenues to leadership

Allison wanted to be in the same space as these leaders, so she got involved in the Leadership Development Academy (LDA). Prior to engaging with the LDA, Allison approached leadership with the ideology that someone becomes a leader when they obtain a specific job title or stay in one position for a long time.

embracing a new identity

The Leadership Development Academy helped her to realize that leadership qualities were inside her all along.

Throughout the program meetings, she came to feel like a leader in a room full of other leaders. The weekly topic discussions allowed her the chance to work with and discuss various topics with higher leadership. **“We each got to weigh in on the session topic at hand, and that provided an opportunity to share my thoughts, as well as hear and process the thoughts of others in the cohort,”** she recalled.

her testimonial

“The Leadership Development Academy has had great impact on my personal growth as a leader, and I use what I have learned and pass it on to the faculty, staff, and students with whom I interact daily at the Brody School of Medicine in order to enhance their own leader journeys. I strongly encourage those who have the opportunity to take part in LDA to do so!”

understanding the change process

Because of the LDA and the leaders she met, Allison believes that she is better at saying yes and no mindfully. **“Sometimes I have to say no, and I definitely feel that this program empowered me to determine when a task or opportunity aligns with my office’s mission.”**

The LDA discussions and seminars allowed Allison to learn from the leaders who directed each session. When these major leaders impressed upon her the importance of a mindful “no” as well as a mindful yes, she found that she could better balance her responsibilities and commitments.

the lasting impacts

Allison became a much better listener than she was before the program. For example, she participated in a mentoring speed dating event in which faculty and students conversed to see if they were a good mentor-mentee fit. During the three-and-a-half-minute timeframe, she talked about herself for the first 30 seconds. The rest of the time, she devoted to the student. **This active listening came from participating in the LDA discussions and seminars where listening allowed her to gain valuable insights from leaders around campus.**

continuing the journey

Allison is currently pursuing a doctorate in higher education leadership because of the LDA. She believes her experience with the LDA ultimately allows her to better support faculty, staff, and students at the ECU Brody School of Medicine.



TRUIST leadership success story

Aisha Powell

An ECU graduate and employee advances her leadership skills in order to effectively support emerging student leaders

Leadership Development Academy Participant



beginning the journey

Aisha completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at ECU before joining the university as a professional staff member. When she began as an ECU employee, she started reflecting on goals she might pursue in the position. She wanted to gain institutional knowledge and learn applicable skills for her future.

new avenues to leadership

Aisha was recommended to participate in the Leadership Development Academy (LDA) so that she could further develop her leadership abilities. She hoped to learn how to advocate for herself, staff, and students and sharpen the leadership skills she had developed throughout her time at ECU.

a broadened perspective

The LDA helped Aisha develop more self-awareness of the leadership model and tenants that could be applied to various situations. She felt as if she grew as a leader and was able to trust in her team members.

Aisha believes she developed her ability to delegate and focus on the mission of projects: ***“So no matter what you are [doing within] your organization, your division, make sure that you’re focused on the overall goal of that unit.”*** She was able to expand her network within the university and gain a more diverse perspective so that she could help ECU students develop into the best leaders they can be.

her testimonial

“The LDA has helped me develop self-awareness as a leader, manage teams effectively, and embrace diversity. I learned that developing self-awareness will strengthen not only individual performance but our organizational performance. Becoming more self-aware created an environment where our cohort listened to other perspectives, recognize my bias, and work collaboratively when discussing complex issues in higher education.”

understanding the change process

The LDA encouraged Aisha to become a life-long learner: ***“[If] I don’t have that in depth knowledge than I least have some type of knowledge that I could begin the conversation or be able to connect with resources or people that are experts in that area.”***

The most impactful part of the academy was the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) focused conversations that allowed the students and professionals to create practical ideas for ECU. She met with students and provided them with resources and a network of people that they could reach out to if they wanted more expertise in an area.

the lasting impacts

Aisha is now working on creating drop-in childcare services for staff members. She is looking forward to connecting students with this opportunity that would improve staff well-being and retention. By focusing on DEI through the LDA, she now hopes to help students develop their leadership skills and reduce staff burnout through this after-hours service.

continuing the journey

Aisha continues to work at ECU connecting students and opportunities. She is now more eager to learn about further learning and leadership opportunities thanks to the LDA.



TRUIST leadership success story

Daniel Stevens

An ECU employee gains insight into the broad perspectives required in the higher education setting

Leadership Development Academy



beginning the journey

After working 20 years for a state agency, Daniel Stevens was interested in what the world of higher education had to offer for his career. He felt nervous about the change he was pursuing in what would typically be the late stages of a career, but he was excited for a new beginning and the paths that would open for him.

new avenues to leadership

Daniel says that the opportunity to participate in the Leadership Development Academy jumped out at him through an email from student affairs. He has always been interested in learning more about leadership, so he decided to apply for the program. Not only was he interested in the leadership aspects, but he also hoped to develop a broader network at ECU so that he could better accomplish his goals within his job.

A broadened perspective

Before participating in the LDA, Daniel describes his approach to leadership as very narrow. He worked in a leadership role which required him to be a subject matter expert, bringing only one perspective to the table for a specific project.

After the LDA, Daniel is aware of the importance of weighing broad interest while maintaining a specific mission focus at the university level. "It [the LDA] gave me a humbler perspective of realizing all the different stakeholders involved and how they are all bringing important interests, and how those interest need to be weighed together."

his testimonial

"I believe the funding for this program is a direct service to the Eastern region of North Carolina. By investing in the leadership development of university staff and faculty, you are providing support for student needs so that when they graduate, we have a new wave of leaders filling a vast array of roles in our community and they are equipped to provide for our state."

understanding the change process

Daniel describes the panels as being enlightening for him. Higher up university leaders, current and past, came in to share the challenging decisions that they had to make in the past. "It was awe-inspiring to hear these leaders, in a very approachable and human way, be open about the decisions that had regret toward while still giving themselves grace for what information they had at the time," Daniel says.

Daniel explains that hearing these things from a broad range of perspectives was impressive and something that he had not heard before. His new perspectives were also developed through small group activities and take-home readings.

the lasting impacts

Not only has Daniel been able gain a better understanding of leadership and his responsibilities in his career at ECU, but he has been able to create a larger pool of connections across the university, people that he says he probably never would have met had it not been for the LDA.

continuing the journey

Since being in the LDA, Daniel has been promoted to an associate director position at ECU where he continues to develop his leadership skills. Moving forward, he hopes to continue gaining a deeper insight in leadership and provide for the university in the best way that he can.

Lessons Learned

For the coming academic year, we will continue to offer lunch and learn opportunities on different leadership topics, and likely open these gatherings to the entire campus. The small business leadership discussion during summer 2023 was particularly effective and well-received by participants, helping to forge connections and new networks on campus, and elevating the campus-wide discussion on leadership.

Similarly, we plan to engage this year's incoming LDA participants in both the Carnegie Leadership for Public Purpose elective classification rollout for ECU, as well as our signature LeaderShape program led by the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement. LDA participants will learn more about institutional assessment of leadership education as well as cross-campus collaboration. Participants will also be invited and encouraged to serve as small group facilitators for LeaderShape, a short-term leadership training designed to help students put their leadership visions into action and develop their own personal leadership statements.

Lastly, one additional goal for next year is to offer more community engagement experiences for participants to witness applied leadership in action. These experiences will help participants to grow their networks and see examples of different types of leaders and leadership styles at work in the local community. This may be embedded within a weekend-long introductory retreat for the program, but those details will be worked out at the beginning of the fall semester.