
AC 2012-5496: WOMEN'S CAMPUS LEADERSHIP SEMINAR PROGRAM

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Women's Leadership Initiative

Abstract

Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU) has many programs and departments that are in traditionally male-dominated areas. Many universities, ours included, do not necessarily see the problems with this environment and the availability for leadership roles for female faculty. Too often, women are not as exposed as men to leadership opportunities, for various reasons.

Two of our female faculty and two female administrators attended a certificate program entitled Executive Women's Leadership for Higher Education Institute. The President of SPSU, Dr. Lisa Rossbacher, and a few of our female faculty have decided that we needed to create a Women's Campus Leadership Seminar Program to facilitate empowering female leadership and awareness on campus. We wanted to introduce our female faculty to the skills and criteria necessary to become a leader.

This paper will focus on content development, participant selection, and the topical information to be included in the program. The program was developed by the faculty that attended the certificate program. Participants were selected based on how the program could potentially benefit them as seeking leadership positions on campus. For our first offering of the program, we are focusing on six major topics.

1. Personal Branding – helping female faculty determine their personal brand and making it work for them.
2. Life Balance – how female faculty can balance the workload of their job while also being wife, mother, daughter, sister, etc.
3. Personal Advisory Board and Networking – developing a group of people who knows this person and their capabilities.
4. Language, communication, influence and social intelligence – increasing awareness and skills for effective communication and interaction in a leadership role.
5. Negotiation skills – helping female faculty be more effective negotiators.

Our paper will detail the activities of each of the workshops and conclude with a summary of the benefits of the program and areas for improvement.

Introduction

There are two major problems for women in higher education: the advancement into leadership positions at the academy, and the recruitment of women in STEM fields. The following describes the two problem areas.

Higher Education Leadership Position for Women

There has been a long-standing problem with women in academic leadership positions in higher education. According to Catalyst¹ the following statistics have been collected:

- In 2006, women held 23% of president positions at colleges, and men held 77% according to the American Council on Education ².
- Women held 26.6% of all college president positions at public institutions².
- Women held 18.7% of all college president positions at private institutions².
- People of color comprised only 13.6% of all college president positions².
- As of March, 2011, women held the president position at four of the eight Ivy League schools (Ruth Simmons at Brown University, Drew Gilpin Faust at Harvard University, Shirley M. Tilghman at Princeton University, and Amy Gutmann at the University of Pennsylvania) ³.
- Women had fewer and lower percentages of tenure positions than men at doctoral, master's, and bachelor's institutions ⁴.
- Women occupied more non-tenure track positions than tenure track positions, and men overwhelmingly comprised the majority of tenured faculty ⁴.
 - 25.8% women at doctoral institutions
 - 35% women at master's institutions
 - 36.1% women at bachelor's institutions
- The percentage of women in academic positions drops off the higher they climb⁴.
 - 57% lecturers and Instructors
 - 46% Assistant Professors
 - 38% Associate Professors
 - 24% full Professors
 - 23% College Presidents
- The pipeline of women to presidential positions is smaller for people of color⁵.
 - Women of all races/ethnicities made up 45% senior administrators and 38% of chief academic officers.
 - People of color were only 16% of senior leader positions and 10% of chief academic officer positions.
- Women faculty members earn less than men faculty members across all ranks and all institutional types. On average, women earn 80 percent of what men earn⁶.
 - Professor – 87.8% of men's salary
 - Associate Professor – 93.1% of men's salary
 - Assistant Professor – 92.7% of men's salary
 - Instructor – 96.0% of men's salary
 - Lecturer – 90% of men's salary
 - All women combined – 80.7% of men's salary
- Women continue to earn the majority of bachelor's degrees, and are projected to earn the majority of master's degrees – for the class of 2018-2019, women are projected to earn 62.0% of master's degrees, and 54.9% of doctorate degrees⁶.

Looking at these statistics it is clear that women are still far behind men in achieving higher education leadership positions.

Women in STEM Fields at the Academy

The number of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields are traditionally at a much lower percentage than the number of men. In higher levels of STEM

education, the percentage of women continues to decline – called the “leaky pipeline”. The number of women in STEM academic careers has improved consistently, but slowly, and there are many discrepancies in the numbers across the various disciplines. At any academic career stage, men in the STEM fields are still more likely to hold a higher rank than women. In other countries the problem also exists. For instance, in the United Kingdom 50% of biology graduates have been women for the past 30 years, but women only hold 9% of ranked full professors.⁷ In the workforce, women make up 48% of the total jobs, but only hold 24% of STEM jobs.⁸ Women with a STEM degree are less likely than men to work in the STEM field – more go into education and healthcare.⁹

In order to address these two problems, SPSU began looking at ways to address these problems.

Southern Polytechnic State University Background

SPSU is a public institution that grants associate, bachelor and master’s degrees. The majority of the degrees granted are in the STEM fields – science (biology and physics), technology (computer science, information technology, electrical engineering technology, civil engineering technology, mechanical engineering technology, industrial engineering technology and mechanical engineering technology), engineering (mechatronics, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, and electrical engineering), and mathematics.¹⁰ Women faculty make up only 22% of the faculty, and women in leadership positions are minimal.

In order to address the problems of few women faculty and even fewer women leaders, the President wanted to develop a program that would foster and educate our female faculty about leadership opportunities and the strategies necessary to prepare for leadership roles on our campus.

Need for the Program

As educators ourselves, we felt that the best way to educate SPSU’s female faculty about aspects of leadership and the various ways to lead on campus was to develop and deliver a semester-long program that addresses tools and resources necessary to become a leader. One goal of the program was for the participants to develop long-term support relationships with each other, and future junior female faculty, as they pursue their career paths.

In academic leadership roles, there is an implied 24/7 availability requirement. For women who are mothers, spouses, etc., this can be quite daunting. Our female faculty need to have the necessary strategies and mechanisms with which to achieve a life’s balance the will enable them to succeed in leadership roles.

We also perceived the need to reduce the perception of gender-stereotypes. There is a perception that paths to leadership for women at SPSU are harder for them than their male counterparts. Part of this is due to the fact that many of our programs are typically male dominated. We need to educate our female faculty about ways to overcome these stereotypes.

Program History and Development

In 2009, SPSU developed its new three year strategic plan that is in effect from 2010 to 2013.¹¹ This strategic plan has three major goals – one (Goal 3) of which is “To increase the sense of community within the University and between the University and the region.” One of the major objectives (Objective 3.2) under this goal is “Increase the diversity and inclusiveness of the University community”. As part of the plan, each objective has a set of key indicators (or actions) that would indicate how this objective (and goal) would be met. Two of the key indicators for objective 3.2 are:

- 1) Increase the percentage of women faculty from 28.8% to 33% by 2013.
- 2) Develop and implement recruitment and professional development strategies so that women and people from underrepresented groups will be eligible for promotion, including senior leadership positions by 2012.

In order to meet these key indicators, the SPSU’s President chose four women, two faculty and two staff to attend an Executive Women’s Leadership Workshop during Summer 2011. After attending the workshop, the four women returned to meet with the President and exchanged ideas for bringing something similar to the SPSU campus internally.

During Fall 2011 the President and four leaders met to discuss how to implement such an internal workshop for leadership development. This group became the leadership team. During these discussions, an idea arose to create a series of separate workshop presentations during spring 2012 that would be taken as a whole and a certificate awarded at the end of the term. The leadership team then created the Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI) with six different topics to be presented in a workshop format. The workshops are scheduled on Friday mornings through Spring semester January-April. Formal notebooks were created that included material for each of the six workshops.

Selection of Participants

A letter was sent to all women faculty and women non-exempt staff about the upcoming workshops. Those desiring to participate first submitted a letter of interest and explained how such a series of leadership workshops would benefit them faculty member or staff member if chosen to participate. The leadership team then chose the participants for the workshop asking that everyone commit to attend all sessions. Finalists were notified at the beginning of December, 2011.

Each chosen participant was then asked to complete the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory during December and to write a one paragraph biography that would be shared with the other participants. These biographies were placed in the WLI notebooks along with a welcome letter from the university President.

Program Topics

The WLI is divided up into six different areas. The following will discuss each area briefly as to general topics and coverage.

1. Personality Profiles

Each participant will be asked to complete the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory prior to coming to the first WLI session. This session will be conducted by our Director of Career and Counseling Services who is certified to evaluate and explain the Myers-Briggs. Each participant will receive their personality type, and the session chair will then spend time explaining each personality type in detail, how areas of personality work together and what it all means to the workplace.

2. Personal Branding

This session will be led by an experienced speaker and coach on personal branding. Branding consists of understanding how creating your own personal brand affects you in your personal and work environment. There are three fundamental qualities of great brands that will be examined as to how they can be used in a personal brand.

- A. Offer and communicate a clear, relevant customer promise.
- B. Build trust by delivering on the promise.
- C. Drive their market by continually improving the promise – will be examined as to how these can be used in a personal brand.

Everyone needs to know their own personal style and what brings meaning and success. Areas of personal importance such as career, relationships, family, health, friends, community, spirituality, finances, and adventure will be covered. The typical leadership brand profile – 1) intellectual horsepower, 2) integrity, trustworthy and ethical, 3) action-oriented, results-focused, 4) perseverance, 5) customer focused and 6) comfort around top leadership will be discussed.

Each participant will have the opportunity to learn their personal brand and to improve it for leadership opportunities.

3. Life Balance

Many of us continue to have the philosophy that if we were just better at time management we could accomplish it all. However, usually there is more to do than there is time to do. No amount of time management will lead to more than 24 hours in a day.

We will pull resources from many sources, publications, and periodicals to help our female faculty better understand what life balance means and how to closely achieve it. One strategy

stressed will be prioritizing which things are important, which are not, and which can not be done.

One obstacle to accomplishing items on our 'to do' lists is procrastination. We will cover methods in the book Eat That Frog, by Brian Tracy. The book covers 21 ways to stop procrastinating as well as methods to get more done in less time.

Another great resource we are using is the self-help book First Things First, by Stephen Covey and A. Roger and Rebecca R. Merrill. The book not only addresses time management, it addresses identifying primary roles and principles when deciding how to prioritize activities. The authors use the concept of a 2x2 matrix to classify tasks as urgent and non-urgent on one axis and important and non-important on the other axis.

Our hopes are that female faculty will apply these tools to their professional and personal lives to help them achieve the leadership roles they desire.

4. Personal Advisory Board

During this session, participants will be learning how to create and use a personal advisory board. This advisory board assists someone to make good decisions, perform brain-storming, help choose options for problem solving, and provide mentoring and leadership. Each participant will learn about choosing a personal advisory board, traits to look for in your advisory board, and thoughtful use of the advisory board.

5. Language, Communication, Influence and Social Intelligence

One of the major problems for women in language and communication relates to socialization issues. Women are taught not to promote their own interests and to focus on the needs of others. This session will focus on how the participants can learn about their current language and communication skills, and how to improve those to move into influence and leadership opportunities. The session will look at the "power of talk" and who gets heard and why. High power speech and communication skills will be covered.

6. Negotiation Skills

One theory behind the fact that women's salaries tend to be lower than their male counterparts and more men are in leadership roles on college campuses is because women simply do not negotiate. One of the resources we plan to use in helping female faculty learn and improve negotiating skills is the book Women Don't Ask, by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever. The authors address issues such as women tend to be less likely to initiate negotiations and are many times more pessimistic about their own worth. We want to help our female faculty identify a personal negotiating style and understand the positive and negative tactics of negotiation.

A group of executive female leaders will be assembled and provide a panel discussion for the leadership participants. We expect that by learning from actual success stories, females will be able to develop skills to make them more effective negotiators.

Summary and Assessment

The WLI program is considered to be a pilot for SPSU. The six sessions will conclude with a panel discussion of distinguished women leaders from across Georgia. This panel will give their perspectives on leadership, give tips and examples from their own personal journey and take questions from the participants.

Each individual session will have an assessment associated with it. The assessment will ask the participants about the relevance of the session, the best part of the presentation, and what could be improved. Suggestions for additional material will also be solicited. The individual assessments will be evaluated by the leadership team after each session to see if mid-term corrections need to be made.

At the end of the panel discussion (the last session), participants will be asked to assess the program as a whole. The leadership team for the WLI will meet as a group after the completion of all sessions to discuss how to improve the program for the next year. In addition, the ideas for new topics will be discussed to determine if an additional advanced WLI should be presented along with another session of the pilot WLI. Data will be collected and evaluated to determine the value of this program, and participants will be challenged to seek leadership opportunities wherever possible.

The baseline data of women leaders on campus was collected at the beginning of fall 2011. Each successive fall term, the leadership team will examine new yearly statistics to determine if any additional women have been added to administrative and academic leadership positions. This data will be shared with the vice presidents and deans and evaluated as part of the strategic plan goals.

Initial response from the WLI chosen participants has been very positive. All are looking forward to this opportunity. Our goal is for this program to be one that can be replicated at various colleges and universities to assist in improving opportunities for women to attain leadership positions.

Biography

- (1) *Women in Academic*, March 2011, www.catalyst.org/publication/327/women-in-academia.
- (2) American Council on Education, *The American College President 2007*.
- (3) Catalyst research (2011). www.catalyst.org/publication/327/women-in-academic.
- (4) Martha S. West and John W. Curtis, American Association of University Professors, *AAUP Faculty Gender Equity Indicators 2006*.
- (5) Audrey Williams June, "Pipeline to Presidencies Carries Lots of Women, Few Members of Minority Groups," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 15, 2008).
- (6) American Association of University Professors, "Faculty Salary and Faculty Distribution Fact Sheet 2003-2004."

- (7) Kristine De Welde, Sandra Laursen, Heather Thiry, “Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), www.uwpa.siu.edu/stem_fact_sheet.pdf
- (8) N. DeWandre, “Women in Science: European Strategies for Promoting Women in Science.”, *Science* 295, 278-279.
- (9) “Women in STEM: A Gender Gap to Innovation”, Executive Summary, US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, ESA Issue Brief #04-11, August 2011.
- (10) Southern Polytechnic State University, www.spsu.edu.
- (11) Strategic Plan – Southern Polytechnic State University, www.spsu.edu/planningassessment/strategicplanning/index.htm

In this women's leadership program, you will join an exceptional group of seasoned women to take your management and leadership skills to the next level. As you explore emerging research and best practices, share experiences and insights, and try out new ideas in a supportive environment, you'll prepare to contribute more fully to your organization's ongoing success. While today's companies are making a concerted effort to grow leaders from within, many are missing a crucial opportunity by not fully utilizing the talents of executive women. In this women's leadership program, you will join an exceptional group of seasoned women to take your management and leadership skills to the next level. Women's Leadership Certificate Program. Build vital leadership competencies and earn AMA's Women's Leadership Certificate. Women at every level of an organization can be strong leaders—bringing essential skills like team leadership, strategic thinking and business acumen to their roles. To flourish as a leader, a woman needs not only the skills to lead, but a dynamic voice that can be heard and followed. This unique 2-day program will provide you with the knowledge and tools to present yourself as a present and future leader, and to speak up and create value for your organization no matter what. The President of SPSU, Dr. Lisa Rossbacher, and a few of our female faculty have decided that we needed to create a Women's Campus Leadership Seminar Program to facilitate empowering female leadership and awareness on campus. We wanted to introduce our female faculty to the skills and criteria necessary to become a leader. This paper will focus on content development, participant selection, and the topical information to be included in the program. Women and people from underrepresented groups will be eligible for promotion, including senior leadership positions by 2012. In order to meet these key indicators, the SPSU's President chose four women, two faculty and two staff to attend an Executive Women's Leadership Workshop during Summer 2011.