

TEXAS A&M ESSENTIALS

LEADERSHIP IN THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT →

means actively engaging in opportunities where skills can be practiced. These experiences are usually longer in term.

LEADERSHIP EDUCATION →

means opportunities for learning that is informed by theory or research. These experiences usually take place in a more formal setting, such as an academic course.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING →

means opportunities for skill-based learning. These experiences usually take place in workshops, seminars, and trainings.

FACILITATOR UNIVERSITY →

seeks shared responsibility. The goal for advisors is to find a balance between directly guiding the organization and allowing students to guide the organization themselves. We want our students to take risks and try new things, provided that they do so within the guiding boundaries that are set forth for them. (Bickel & Lake, 1999)

ADVISORS →

manage the parameters under which choices are made. Students must choose for themselves and shoulder significant responsibility for outcomes of their choice.

TRAINING →

“At least once during each academic year, a postsecondary educational institution shall provide a risk management program for members of student organization registered at the institution. Any member of a student organization who is not otherwise required to attend may attend the program.” (S.B. No. 1138, 2007)

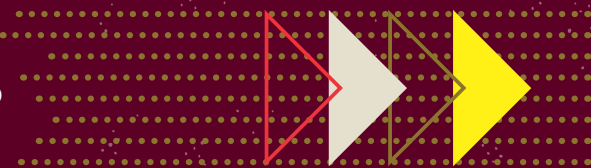
The Division of Student Affairs is committed to fostering leadership learning in the co-curricular. Over the past fifteen years, we have engaged in strategic leadership efforts. These conversations occurred in the early and mid-2000’s and focused on leadership development across the institution. In 2003, student affairs and academic affairs colleagues explored the need for a common leadership philosophy, theory, or language. In 2005, a select group of leadership educators focused on undergraduate leadership education and development where they explored the creation of leadership degree programs to connect with Vision 2020.

In 2009, leadership conversations gained momentum again when representatives across the Division of Student Affairs came together to discuss the Division’s Strategic Plan. The culmination of these studies and conversations resulted in the creation of the Maroon and White Leadership Society and our leadership common language noted on the sidebar (The Leadership Syndicate, 2012 & The Leadership Task Force, 2013).

We believe leadership is learned through experience, organization environment, background and culture, and the process of absorbing and interpreting one’s life experiences. “Leadership learning is not simply a laundry list of programs, services, and resources. It is an outcome of purposefully designed and integrated experiences that foster the development of human capacity for change. It is about the substance of our efforts, the purposefulness of learning, and the individual/collective pursuit of organization culture that demonstrates respect, appreciation, mutuality, and strives to fulfill the potential that we all possess” (Allen & Roberts, 2011, p. 69).

The Division strives to create a climate in which students feel welcomed and valued. In our effort to “develop leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good”, we shape and guide transformational learning experiences that allow our students to engage with people different from themselves in order to prepare them for an increasingly diverse world. These experiences challenge and support students as they expand their horizons, and build on existing and develop new leadership skills and competencies (DSA Strategic Plan, 2017; Young, 2016).

Beyond leadership, we uphold expectations set by state, federal, and local laws, university rules, and the educational mission of the institution to guide our advising practice. As such, we adhere to the facilitator university model (Bickel & Lake, 1999). As facilitators, we seek to balance the rights and responsibilities of students and the university. Our goal is to empower students to make fair, reasonable, and intelligent decisions about their events and activities while also providing opportunities for leadership development, education, and training.



The Division of Student Affairs at Texas A&M University values the relationship with students engaged in co-curricular activities, and has adopted a philosophical approach to partnering with individual students and student organizations as facilitators of the involvement experience. With this approach, student organization members, leaders and advisors work with administrators, faculty and staff to make intelligent, fair and reasonable choices within the boundaries established by state, federal, and local laws, university rules, and the educational mission of the institution. A facilitator college balances rights and responsibilities - it is neither extremely authoritarian nor overly solicitous of student freedom. Importantly, a facilitator college seeks shared responsibility rather than allocating it unilaterally or not at all. Facilitation implies an appropriate and reasonable degree of risk. The goal of the university is to advise student organizations of the potential and perceived risks involved in their activities. Universities should also strive to facilitate the coordination of organization events and help student leaders take corrective actions and proactive steps to minimize accidental injury and/or loss. A facilitator institution seeks to balance the rights and responsibilities of students and the university.

THE UNIVERSITY IS...	THE STUDENT IS...
<p>“FACILITATOR”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks shared responsibility rather than allocating it unilaterally or not at all • Provides as much support, information, interaction, and control as is reasonably necessary and appropriate in the situation • Guides decision making, providing information, assistances and affirmation 	<p>“RESPONSIBLE STUDENT”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes on appropriate and reasonable degree of risk • Feels empowered to take on appropriate shared responsibility • Learn to choose for themselves and bear the consequences of decisions
<p>FACILITATORS HELP STUDENTS MAKE INTELLIGENT, FAIR, AND REASONABLE CHOICES (BICKEL & LAKE, 1999).</p>	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Allen, S. J. & Roberts, D. C. (2011). Our response to the question: Next steps in clarifying the language of leadership learning. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 5(2), 65-70.
- Bickel, R. & Lake, P. (1999). *The rights and responsibilities of the modern university: Who assumes the risks of college life?* Carolina Academic Press, Durham, NC.
- Student Affairs Risk Management Team (2000, summer). *A proactive risk management plan: Final report*. Report presented at Vice President for Student Affairs meeting, College Station, TX.
- S.B. No. 1138. (2007). Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. 80th Texas Legislature.
- The Leadership Syndicate (2012, March). *Leadership syndicate final report*. Report presented at Vice President for Student Affairs meeting, College Station, TX.
- The Leadership Task Force (2013, December). *Maroon and White Leadership Society*. Report presented at Vice President for Student Affairs meeting, College Station, TX.
- Young, M. (2016). *State of the university address*. Presented at Texas A&M University.