

Background

- Leadership has recently been added as an educational outcome and a key element of professional development in the 2013 Center for the Advancement of Pharmacy Education (CAPE) report and 2016 Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) standards, respectively¹.
- Student organizations and government have been the primary source of leadership opportunities before CAPE 2013, which calls for an integration of leadership skills in doctor of pharmacy curricula². However, providing leadership development opportunities to all pharmacy students is a significant effort and has yet to be implemented.
- Although participation in pharmacy organizations is common for students, leadership positions tend to be held by more senior students rather than entry-level or junior students. In addition, pharmacy students may not be presented with many overall opportunities to formally develop leadership skills throughout pharmacy programs.

Objective

- A Leadership Development Program (LDP) involving structured workshops, event-planning, and mentorship was developed to provide entry-level and junior students with exposure to essential leadership skills earlier in their pharmacy education while continuing to develop students in executive leadership roles.

Methods

Participant Recruitment

- Each fall, the Rutgers chapter of NCPA's Professional Affairs Coordinator informs potential participants, first pre-professional (PP1), second pre-professional (PP2), and first professional (P1) students, about the LDP via Facebook.
- An application for the program is released to students online and gathers information regarding students' participation interests, their desired learning outcomes from the program, and committee preferences (Legislative Affairs, Business Plan, Public Relations, Fundraising, Professional Affairs, Social, and Patient Care). Each committee coordinator serves as a mentor to one or two applicants (mentees).
- Mentees are invited to the program at the discretion of the Professional Affairs Coordinator based on specificity and maturity in applicants' responses.

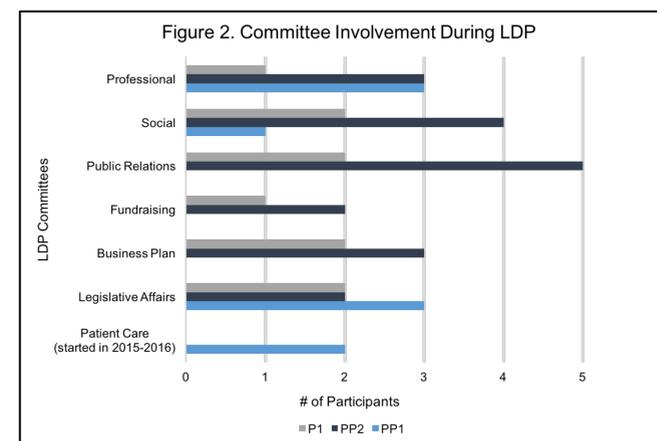
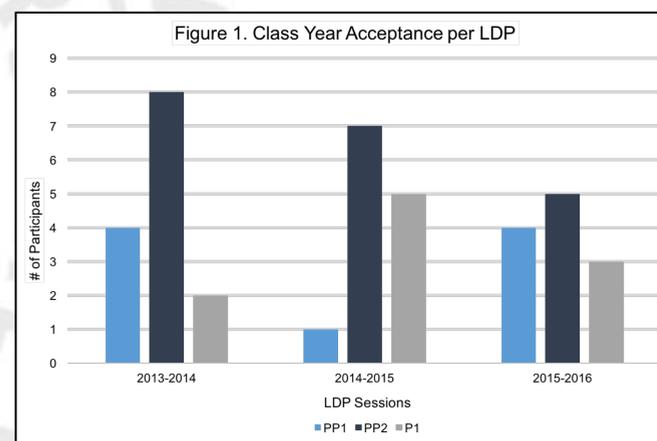
Leadership Training

- In collaboration with the coordinator, the mentee must draw up an outline for an event that is relevant to the committee during winter break. The mentee is responsible for executing their plan in the spring semester.
- Formal development of leadership skills occurs through the Professional Affairs committee's initiatives. The Professional Affairs Coordinator designs workshops which target specific leadership skill sets, such as public speaking, networking, CV building, interviewing, and professional dressing. Interactive sessions followed each lesson to allow students the opportunity to practice the skills they learned (Table 1).

Results

Participation

- Since 2013, a total of 39 participants have completed the LDP.
- In 2015-2016, 12 students were selected as LDP mentees: four PP1s (33.3%), five PP2s (41.7%), and three P1s (25%) (Figure 1).
- Each committee in the 2015-2016 LDP was assigned two mentees with the exception of the Social and Public Relations committees, which only received one mentee each (Figure 2).
- Many participants have subsequently served on executive boards and committees in numerous other organizations, including 13 of 22 (59.1%) executive board and committee members of NCPA for 2016-2017.



Program Workshops

- Six 2-hour leadership-based workshops were held from November through April. Workshops were led by the Professional Affairs Coordinator, three postdoctoral fellows, the NCPA chapter faculty advisor, and the Fellowship Director.

Leadership Skill	Exercise
Professional Dress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by Professional Affairs Coordinator Peer critique and praise of professional attire
Public Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by two postdoctoral fellows Public speaking exercises based on improvisation performed in front of group
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by two postdoctoral fellows Speed networking with E-board members, committee coordinators, and postdoctoral fellow presenters
CV Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by NCPA chapter faculty advisor Critique by E-board members or committee coordinators
Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by Fellowship Director Mock interviews with two E-board members or committee coordinators with standardized evaluation sheets
Golfing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson with semi-pro golf instructor Attended by postdoctoral fellows who led previous workshops

Discussion

- Upon completion of the program, participants indicated that the experience taught them many valuable lessons and improved their overall self-confidence.
- Students often are committed members of only one organization, which may discourage students from applying to our organization-specific program. Collaboration with several organizations for certain workshops could create more interest in our LDP.
- Participation in the LDP may encourage the commitment and opportunity for growth in one professional organization earlier in students' education. This is desirable compared to students who may not be as dedicated to an organization until they have already served in a leadership position in that organization.
- A major emphasis on interprofessional collaboration in the field of pharmacy which has started to be incorporated into curricula might signal a need for a component dedicated to this type of teamwork in the LDP.
- Further research will be performed on the impact the LDP has on its members, particularly assessing leadership experiences attained after completing the program.

Limitations

- It may be difficult to incorporate the efforts of another executive board and committee chairs in order to introduce multi-organization collaboration to the LDP.
- Senior students did not necessarily have extensive exposure to leadership skills, particularly if they were not involved during their earlier years. Excluding them from the program put these students at a disadvantage.
- Due to the limit of the academic calendar year, the LDP could only address a few competencies related to leadership.

Conclusions

- Through structured workshops and programs, less-experienced PP1, PP2, and P1 students learned and applied skills to enhance their involvement in leadership opportunities while seasoned leaders further developed their leadership and mentoring skills.
- The LDP model can be utilized by other schools of pharmacy interested in further developing their current and soon-to-be leaders through an interactive program that provides participants with early exposure to various skills they may not be able to experience otherwise.

References

- Feller TT, Doucette WR, Witry MJ. Assessing Opportunities for Student Pharmacist Leadership Development at Schools of Pharmacy in the United States. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2016; 80(5): 79.
- Medina MS, Plaza CM, Stowe CD, et al. Center for the Advancement of Pharmacy Education 2013 Educational Outcomes. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2013; 77(8): 162.

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Disclosure
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