

Impacts of Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence (LCICE)

Summary of Evaluation Results



In 1998, the University of Wisconsin-Madison began offering opportunities for staff, faculty, and students to engage in reflection of our lived experiences in learning communities. In 2012, the Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence (LCICE) unit formally launched, providing dialogue- and cohort-based professional learning opportunities with the ultimate goal of creating a better campus climate for all.

Wilder Research partnered with LCICE in 2024 to learn the impacts of its two flagship programs: the Leadership Institute (LI – a program for faculty and staff) and Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED – a student program). The following provides main evaluation findings.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS – IMPACTS OF LCICE

Through a mixed methods study – which included an analysis of course evaluations, self-assessments, facilitated discussion, and ripple effects mapping – results show that LCICE programs help its participants to:



Become better leaders and community members



Build a stronger inclusive UW-Madison community



Deepen their interactions with others and better navigate conflict



Work to improve broader systems and communities

How do we have these conversations...that include folks that are on both sides...[it's] hard, sacred work. But I'm learning through my experiences of LI that building authentic community means everybody. – LI participant

KEY FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

By comparing pre- and post-ratings on self-assessments, Leadership Institute participants reported statistically significant improvement in the following areas:

- Identifying their own biases and the impact of their behavior on others
- Respectfully interacting and building relationships with people who are different from themselves
- Navigating conflict with people different from themselves
- Building strong, inclusive communities at UW-Madison

1. Self-assessment results show significant growth in Leadership Institute participants (N=94-96)



This table presents a selection of survey items that showed statistical significant change from pre- to post-test. For a full listing of all LI assessment survey items and more information on the methods and analysis used, please see the full report, *Understanding the Impact of Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence (LCICE)*.

Longer-term impacts of Leadership Institute:

Through two Ripple Effects Mapping sessions, LI participants shared how the program continues to impact their personal and professional lives. Specifically, LI's sustained impact includes:



Building stronger and more inclusive communities, relationships, and networks

- Developing an awareness of how backgrounds and identities influence their behavior and perspectives
- Centering relationships in their professional and personal lives on campus and beyond
- Growing networks across UW-Madison through mentorships, committees dedicated to equity and inclusion, and by expanding the community of people doing the work



Personal growth through learning about self, others, and systems

- Enhancing self-awareness, empathy, and social/emotional intelligence
- Becoming better leaders, supervisors, and community members
- Increasing knowledge and awareness of systemic injustice and one's role within systems



Challenging systems, increasing representation, and advancing equity

- Giving participants the language and confidence to advocate for justice
- Developing the courage to ask hard questions, hold people accountable, and act as instruments of change



LI has impacted my values. It's impacted how I see things, so so many ripple effects in my work, and in my life, and in partnerships I have across campus. There are people who I've done projects with in other departments because we met in the program. – LI participant

When I started my senior leadership position, LI gave me the language and agency to affect our work. I knew how to have conversations in a way that led with curiosity so that people weren't seeing it as an attack. – LI participant

We all have different identities, different stories...I didn't grow up here, so there were so many things I needed to learn, and I learned the hard way. And, you know, I am thankful. And so it came from that work in LI, learning the concept of intent versus impact...LI is about self-work, even though you're trying to address systems. Accountability and impact. Self-accountability, holding others accountable, and hopefully holding systems accountable, too. – LI participant

KEY FINDINGS – SEED COURSE

Through participation in the undergraduate SEED course, participants reported that this LCICE program enhanced their abilities to:

- create a community where students can engage in honest conversations about the things that matter
- reflect and think critically about their own experiences and the experiences of other students in the course
- apply lessons learned in the course to their own education and broader lives

2. Most SEED students agreed that the program helped them achieve a number of goals (N=171-212)



99% Of students would recommend SEED to peers (N=110)

I believe this course should be required for every college student. What I learned in this class will stay with me forever, so I feel like it should be incorporated into every college student's experience in college.

I've already told friends (and encouraged a white male since we didn't have any in our class) to consider applying to this class —It is such a gem!

My only complaints about SEED are that I wish we had more time for discussion and that I wish I could take it or a class like it every semester. It has been truly formative for me and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it.

BACKGROUND ON LCICE

Since 1998, UW-Madison has offered cohort-based professional development opportunities around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence (LCICE) unit was established in 2012 within the Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement to offer dialogue- and cohort-based professional learning and development opportunities. LCICE programs engaged UW-Madison staff, faculty, students and community around equity topics, with the ultimate goal of creating a better campus climate for all community members. Two of LCICE's flagship programs included:

Leadership Institute (LI): Program for UW-Madison faculty, staff, students, and the broader Madison community. Using a mix of smaller discussion groups and large group meetings, LI participants discuss topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice work at UW-Madison. LI began in 1998 and continued through spring 2021.

Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED): Course for undergraduates at UW-Madison. Students met weekly to discuss race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and other defining aspects represented in their communities. SEED began in 2008 and continued through spring 2021.



Ultimate goal of LCICE's programs:

To create a better campus climate for all community members.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Wilder Research designed the 2024 LCICE evaluation to include a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods:

Self-Assessment (Leadership Institute) – a pre/post assessment that measures the extent to which a participant has experienced changes in beliefs, behaviors, and knowledge as a result of LI (participant self-report)

Ripple Effects Mapping – a qualitative method that captures stories of impact, mechanisms for change, unexpected impacts, and opportunities for future momentum or growth for LCICE and its programs

SEED Course Evaluations – a post evaluation administered to SEED participants at the close of the course that measures their satisfaction with the course and its impacts on their beliefs, behaviors, and knowledge (participant self-report)

Facilitated Discussion – a semi-structured discussion with LCICE staff to learn key components of LCICE programs

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This summary presents highlights of the *Understanding the Impact of Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence (LCICE)*. For more information about this report, contact Jackie Aman at Wilder Research, jackie.aman@wilder.org or 651-280-2790.

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