



LENA

LEADERSHIP EDUCATION
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Office of Student Life at
The Ohio State University

2018 Autumn Overall Report



INTRODUCTION

The Leadership Education Needs Assessment (LENA) is a tool built for students at all academic levels to learn about their leadership strengths and areas for growth. The instrument was designed to measure students’ leadership skills in four different areas: Purpose and Vision, Accomplishing Tasks, Building Relationships and Charisma. The table below outlines the specific skills that make up each area of leadership. Students who take LENA are provided with a list of resources tailored to their personal leadership needs at the end of the survey. Students are encouraged to take the survey multiple times throughout their academic career to track their leadership development over time. LENA was created by the Center for the Study of Student Life in collaboration with Student Life Student Activities at The Ohio State University.

Purpose and Vision	Accomplishing Tasks	Building Relationships	Charisma
Plan for the future	Delegate tasks	Communicate	Speak in public
Set goals	Problem solve	Motivate others	Represent self, group and/or project in meetings
Take initiative	Coordinate tasks and assignments	Develop relationships	Craft persuasive oral arguments
Seek support/resources	Obtain support/resources	Influence others	Craft persuasive written arguments
Articulate purpose of group	Accomplish goals	Mentor others	

HIGHLIGHTS

- On a scale of 1 – *not at all confident* to 5 – *completely confident*, both undergraduate and graduate/professional students had Overall Leadership Scores of **4**.
- Out of all four leadership areas, **Charisma** was the area with the most room for growth for both undergraduate and graduate/professional students.
- Undergraduate students’ Leadership Confidence Scores for Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks were both significantly higher than Building Relationships and Charisma. The Building Relationships score was also significantly higher than Charisma.
- Graduate and professional students’ Leadership Confidence Scores for Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks were both significantly higher than Building Relationships and Charisma. The Building Relationships score was also significantly higher than Charisma.
- The most reported leadership-related involvement opportunity that undergraduate students wanted to take on during the rest of their time in college was an **officer position in a student organization**.
- The most reported leadership-related involvement opportunity that graduate and professional students wanted to take on during the rest of their time in their programs was **presenting at conferences**.

DEFINING LEADERSHIP

There is no universally accepted definition of leadership. Leadership may be defined differently for each person. To make sure those taking the assessment think about the term “leader” in the same way, before answering any questions regarding leadership students are prompted to think of a leader as “someone who participates fully as a member of a group attempting to accomplish positive change” rather than someone who holds a formal leadership position.

METHOD

This report summarizes data from LENA collected during the 2018 autumn administration period, which took place from October 19, 2018 through January 31, 2019. LENA was open to all students to take and advertised across campus via marketing materials. A total of 522 students took the assessment during this autumn administration period. Additionally, a random sample of 4,000 undergraduates and 1,000 graduate/professional students were invited to take the survey via email. A total of 439 undergraduate students responded to the survey and 83 graduate/professional (i.e., 68 graduate and 15 professional) students responded to the survey. Students were able to access the survey in a variety of ways, so there is no way to accurately report response rates.

One-way analysis of variance, repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVAs) and independent samples *t*-tests were performed to determine if there were statistically significant differences between mean scores on several different variables. The following section outlines how students were scored regarding the four different areas of leadership.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Student Affiliation	<i>n</i>	Percent
Undergraduate	439	83.9%
Graduate	68	12.6%
Professional	15	2.9%

Undergraduate Students by Year	<i>n</i>	Percent
First-year	117	26.7%
Second-year	127	28.9%
Third-year	90	20.5%
Fourth-year and beyond	105	23.9%

SCORING

Overall Leadership Score

Students received an Overall Leadership Score at the end of the assessment. The score was calculated from responses to a series of statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (scored as 1) to *Strongly Agree* (scored as 5). General statements such as, “I have the ability to lead a group to accomplish its task” and “I can engage my group in actions that improve our local or regional community” were used to measure leadership confidence in a general sense. The following table details all nine statements that comprised this score.

	I can encourage a group to work towards goals that benefit the common good.
I have the ability to lead a group to accomplish its task.	Overall, I doubt that I could lead a group successfully. ¹
In general, I’m not very good at leading a group of my peers. ¹	I am aware of what my strengths and weaknesses are as a leader.
I am confident in my ability to influence a group that I lead.	I can engage my group in actions that improve our local or regional community.
I have no idea what it takes to keep a group running smoothly. ¹	

¹These statements were reverse coded in the data cleaning process.

Leadership Confidence Scores

In addition to the Overall Leadership Score, students also received Leadership Confidence Scores for each of four leadership areas (Purpose and Vision, Accomplishing Tasks, Building Relationships and Charisma). To create these Leadership Confidence Scores, students were given a list of four to five leadership-related tasks that pertain to each of the four areas and were asked to indicate how confident they felt about the task on a scale of 0% - *not at all confident* to 100% - *completely confident*. Students had to answer at least 80% of the questions that pertained to the different leadership areas to receive an average score for a given area.

Need-for-Improvement Scores

To give students an idea of their areas for growth as a leader, they received Need-for-Improvement Scores in addition to their Overall Leadership and Leadership Confidence Scores at the end of the assessment. The process for calculating Need-for-Improvement Scores was similar to the process for the Leadership Confidence Scores. Students were given the same list of four to five leadership-related tasks that pertain to each of the four areas, and were asked to indicate how much they would like to improve on each task. Instead of being scored from 0% to 100% as with Leadership Confidence, need-for-improvement was on a Likert scale (1 – *do not see a need to improve*, 3 – *would like to improve some* and 5 – *would like to improve a great amount*). It is important to note that these scores were self-reported, which means that the scores represent the students’ *perceptions* of how much they believed they need to improve in each of the four leadership areas. Higher Need-for-Improvement Scores indicate more room for growth. Similar to the Leadership Confidence Scores, students had to answer at least 80% of the Need-for-Improvement questions pertaining to each skill category in the survey to receive a score for any particular category.

FINDINGS

This report is organized into sections based on the three types of scores students receive at the end of the assessment. There is an Overall Leadership Score section, a Leadership Confidence Scores section and a Need-for-Improvement Scores section. All scores provide students information about where they stand as a leader at the time of the assessment. Need-for-Improvement Scores provide students with where they have the most room for improvement in terms of their self-reported leadership-related skills. The final section of this report discusses leadership-related involvement during the rest of students’ time in their academic careers.

OVERALL LEADERSHIP

After taking LENA, students received a summary with nine total scores: Leadership Confidence and Need-for-Improvement Scores for each of the four leadership areas, as well as an Overall Leadership Score. This Overall Leadership Score is a more general measure that depicts students’ self-efficacy regarding their ability to lead a group. Scores for undergraduate students ($n = 365$, $M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.49$, Range = 2.2 to 5.0) were comparable to those of graduate and professional students ($n = 70$, $M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.47$, Range = 2.6 to 5.0).

LEADERSHIP CONFIDENCE

The following tables show average Leadership Confidence Scores of undergraduate and graduate/professional students. Higher percentage scores indicate that students were more confident in that area.

Undergraduate Students

Leadership Area	Score
Purpose and Vision	82.2%
Accomplishing Tasks	82.4%
Building Relationships	80.5%
Charisma	76.4%

A repeated measures ANOVA revealed several statistically significant differences in scores across the four leadership scales. Scores for Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks were both significantly higher than Building Relationships and Charisma. The Building Relationships score was also significantly higher than Charisma.

Graduate and Professional Students

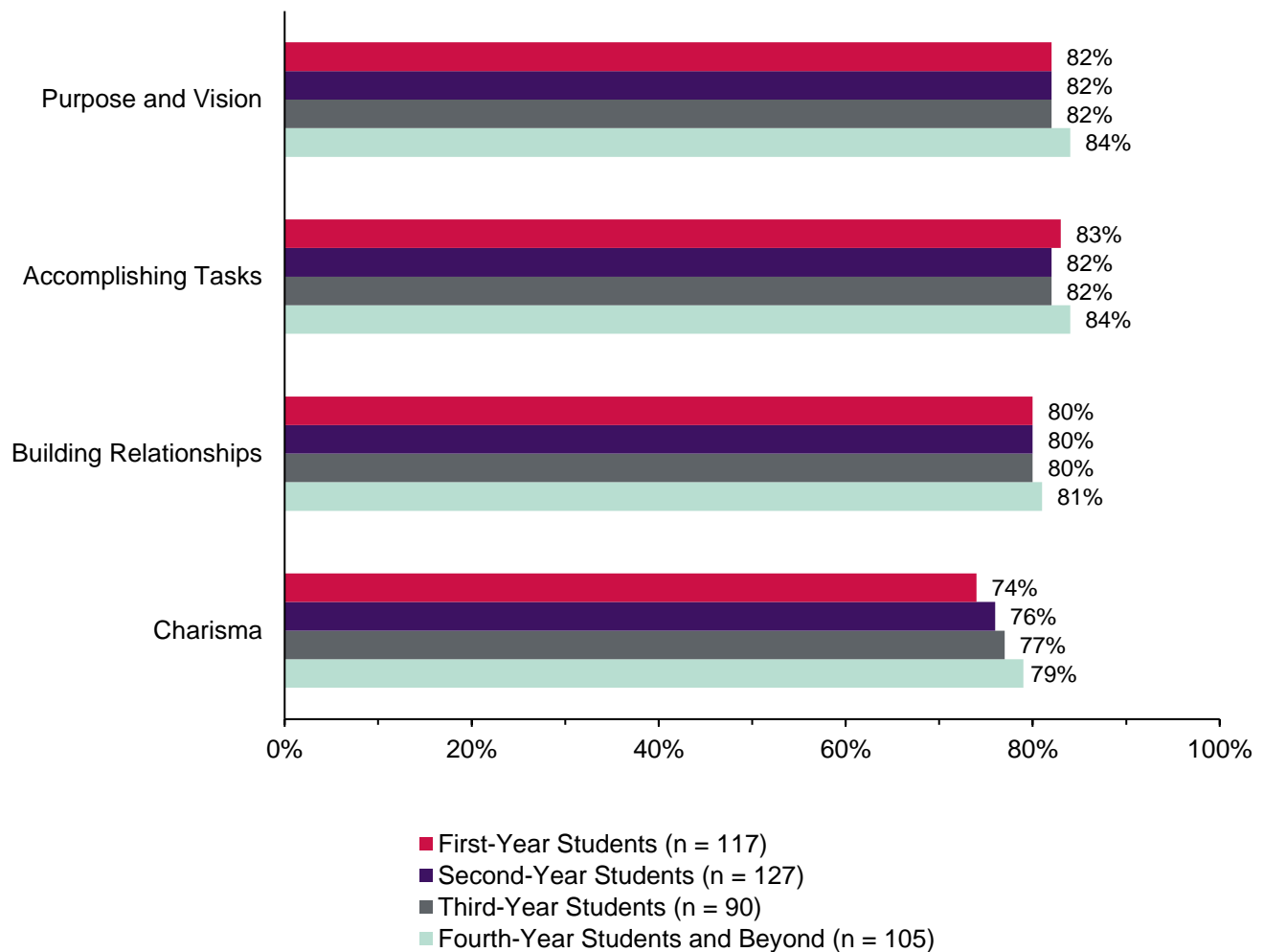
Leadership Area	Score
Purpose and Vision	83.5%
Accomplishing Tasks	82.4%
Building Relationships	80.2%
Charisma	77.2%

A repeated measures ANOVA also revealed several statistically significant differences on scores across the four leadership scales for graduate and professional students. Scores for Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks were both significantly higher than Building Relationships and Charisma. The Building Relationships score was also significantly higher than Charisma. Additionally,

An independent samples *t*-test determined that there were no significant differences when comparing Leadership Confidence Scores between undergraduate and graduate/professional students.

The following chart shows average Leadership Confidence Scores of undergraduate students broken down by year of study. A one-way ANOVA determined that there were no significant differences in Leadership Confidence Scores when comparing undergraduate students by year.

Average Leadership Confidence Scores by Year



NEED-FOR-IMPROVEMENT

The following tables show average Need-for-Improvement Scores of undergraduate and graduate/professional students. Students were scored on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 – *do not see a need to improve*, 3 – *would like to improve some* and 5 – *would like to improve a great amount*) and higher scores indicate greater need for improvement. For example, the mean scores for undergraduate and graduate/professional students are all around 3, meaning they would all like to improve on all areas somewhat, though some more than others (see below). It is important to note that these are students' *perceptions* of how much they think they should improve in each of the four leadership areas.

Undergraduate Students

Leadership Area	Score
Purpose and Vision	3.03
Accomplishing Tasks	3.08
Building Relationships	3.19
Charisma	3.40

A repeated measures ANOVA, which analyzes differences between scores within-person, revealed that scores for all four scales were statistically significantly different from each other. Students indicated that they wanted to improve on Charisma the most, followed by Building Relationships, followed by Accomplishing Tasks, followed by Purpose and Vision.

Graduate and Professional Students

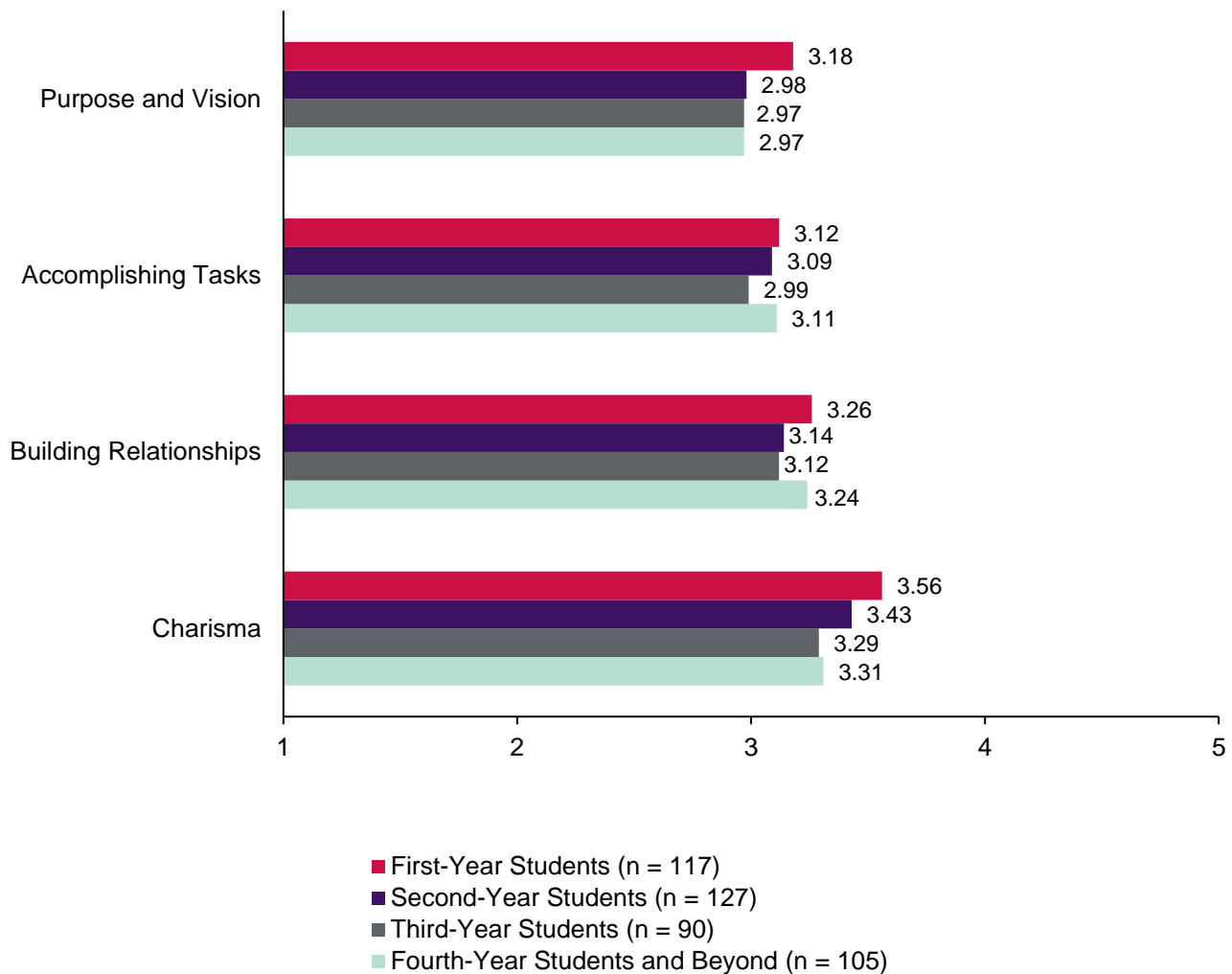
Leadership Area	Score
Purpose and Vision	3.09
Accomplishing Tasks	3.09
Building Relationships	3.31
Charisma	3.38

A repeated measures ANOVA, which analyzes differences between scores within-person, revealed that scores on Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks were significantly lower than Building Relationships and Charisma. Graduate and professional students indicated wanting to improve on Charisma and Building Relationships more than Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks.

Additionally, an independent samples *t*-test determined that there were no significant differences in average Need-for-Improvement Scores between undergraduate and graduate/professional students.

The following chart shows average Need-for-Improvement Scores of undergraduate students broken down by year of study. It is important to note that higher scores indicate more room for improvement. A one-way ANOVA determined that there were no significant differences in Need-for-Improvement Scores when comparing undergraduate students by year. Although there are no significant differences, there are still trends over time. Purpose and Vision and Charisma decline between students' first and fourth years.

Average Need-for-Improvement Scores by Year



LEADERSHIP-RELATED INVOLVEMENT

LENA provides students with information about their strengths and areas for growth as a leader, but also points students toward leadership-related resources based on what types of opportunities they indicate seeking. To identify this information, students were given a list of leadership-related activities and were asked to select all of the activities that they wanted to engage with during the rest of their time in college or in their graduate/professional programs. The following table lists the most frequently reported leadership-related opportunities that undergraduate students chose when taking the assessment along with the top leadership-related opportunities that graduate and professional students chose.

Top five leadership-related opportunities students are seeking

Undergraduate	Graduate/Professional
Officer position in a student organization (<i>n</i> = 168)	Presenting at conferences (<i>n</i> = 31)
Attending leadership conferences (<i>n</i> = 137)	Voluntary leadership trainings/workshops (<i>n</i> = 29)
Peer mentoring (<i>n</i> = 129)	Teaching a course or courses (<i>n</i> = 27)
Voluntary leadership trainings/workshops (<i>n</i> = 127)	Mentoring (peer or undergraduate student mentor) (<i>n</i> = 23)
Leading a group project in a course (<i>n</i> = 122)	Leadership retreats/Supervisory role at work (<i>n</i> = 19)

Note. The *ns* in this table exceed the total *n* because this was a select all that apply question. Additionally, voluntary leadership training is a form of training or workshop that students self-select into for their own benefit, as opposed to required leadership training such as a required President or Treasurer training for a student organization.

CONCLUSION

Examining differences in leadership skills among undergraduate and graduate/professional students can provide practitioners with insight on how to structure leadership opportunities. Although Overall Leadership Scores were nearly identical for both undergraduate and graduate/professional students, both groups believed they still had room to grow regarding leadership skills. No statistically significant differences were found when comparing the skill-specific Leadership Confidence Scores and Need-for-Improvement Scores between undergraduate and graduate/professional students. However, there were differences amongst individuals in terms of skills; students had more confidence in Purpose and Vision and Accomplishing Tasks and felt that Building Relationships and Charisma needed improvement.

Finally, using feedback on what types of leadership-related involvement opportunities undergraduate and graduate/professional students are interested in engaging in can help practitioners tailor the resources and opportunities they provide to different student groups.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

	Undergraduate		Graduate/ Professional	
	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent
Total	439	--	83	--
Sex				
Female	294	67.0%	49	59.0%
Male	145	33.0%	34	41.0%
Race/Ethnicity				
African American/Black/African	46	10.5%	4	4.8%
Asian	52	11.8%	16	19.3%
Hispanic	21	4.8%	6	7.2%
Two or more races	20	4.6%	2	2.4%
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native	1	0.2%	1	1.2%
White	282	64.2%	44	53.0%
Other race/unknown	17	3.9%	10	12.0%
First-Generation Student Status				
Continuing generation	337	76.8%	81	97.6%
First-generation	102	23.2%	2	2.4%
Citizenship				
Domestic student	420	95.7%	63	75.9%
International student	19	4.3%	20	24.1%
Age				
18-24	409	93.2%	24	28.9%
25-34	18	4.1%	39	47.0%
35-44	6	1.4%	17	20.5%
45+	6	1.4%	3	3.6%
Undergraduate Academic Level				
First-year	117	26.7%	-	-
Second-year	127	28.9%	-	-
Third-year	90	20.5%	-	-
Fourth-year+	105	23.9%	-	-

Note. All demographic data were collected from the Student Information System.