ILA

International Leadership Association

General Principles for Leadership Programs

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Introduction

In 2019, the International Leadership Association (ILA) convened the General Principles Task Force to develop guidelines for academic curricular and co-curricular leadership programs. The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* was first published in 2021 and then further refined in 2025 by ILA's Committee for the Advancement of Leadership Programs.[1] The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* reflects the ever-evolving nature of this work and provides guidance and questions for continuous quality improvement of leadership learning and will be reviewed regularly.

The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* builds on the significant work previously done by a similar group that developed ILA's *Guiding Questions: Guidelines for Leadership Education Programs* in 2005-2009 — an evaluative instrument that focused on context, conceptual framework, content, teaching and learning, and assessment.[2] The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* is based on these five categories and incorporates recommendations discerned from ILA member feedback gathered from multiple conferences and virtual initiatives. The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* echoes previous versions in advocating that leadership learning should be "grounded in a coherent Conceptual Framework within the Context of the institution," and it acts on the recommendation that ILA should "develop a formalized program review model...thoroughly tested across a variety of program contexts" using ILA's *Guiding Questions* as the model.

Other efforts to set expectations for leadership learning in higher education informed the development of this document as well. The Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification on Leadership for Public Purpose is a newer elective classification and provides a leadership development framework at the institutional level.[3] Another example is the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2019) standards for student co-curricular leadership programs, first published in the 1980s. CAS issued its most recent revision of the standards for Leadership Education and Development in January 2020. The American College Personnel Association and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators issued a joint statement in 2004, "Learning Reconsidered," which argued for a transformative education, a holistic process of learning, that places students "at the center of the learning experience."[4] Working synergistically with these other statements, ILA's *General Principles for Leadership Programs* offers advice for the programmatic level (e.g., program, department, center, institute, school).

The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* reiterates this holistic perspective for leadership learning. We are also mindful of the 2019 edition of the *Collaborative Priorities & Critical Considerations for Leadership Education*, issued by the Inter-Association Leadership Education Collaborative (ILEC),[5] which included three priority areas in leadership learning: (a) building inclusive leadership learning communities; (b) expanding evidence-based practice through assessment & evaluation; and (c) enhancing our community of practice through professional development and resources.

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[1] https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/about/advancement-of-leadership-programs/
[2] https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Resource-GuidingQuestionsFinal.pdf
[3] https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/elective-classifications/leadership-about/
[4] https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Learning_Reconsidered_Report.pdf
[5] https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/events/ilec_2016.pdf Collaborative Priorities and Critical Considerations for Leadership Education Report

Leadership Capacity Building — An Evolving Commitment

Cultivating leadership capacity has long been an implicit goal of education at the post-secondary level. As the world has become more complex and seamless, the importance of clarifying what is meant by "leading" and "leadership" has become more important. From the mid-20th century to the present, the focus on cultivating leadership in various sectors has increased exponentially, but the impact of this focus has been unclear. ILA has taken on the challenging task of advocating higher expectations in leadership learning due to societal critiques of the effectiveness of these efforts, and the need to define a better future through more effective and inclusive leadership.

The word "leadership" conjures multiple meanings in the leadership studies literature. This document considers leadership as a relational process in which participants or stakeholders work toward a common goal to find solutions to a complex problem they are inspired to solve. This relationship, however, does not take place in a vacuum. The historical and organizational context influences the leadership process. Further, cultural norms and values shape the expectations of those who participate in this process. The greatest challenge was to draft general principles to reflect a variety of cultures and contexts and that could guide continuous quality improvement on a global scale.

Leadership education, training, and development serve as different elements of leadership studies. The body of knowledge developed over the past century through the empirical study of leadership now constitutes the core theories and models that are advocated throughout leadership learning. In addition to passing down this knowledge to learners, leadership program architects may also seek to develop competencies through leadership training (skill-building). The combination of leadership education and training provides a foundation for leadership growth — the essence of leadership development. "Leadership learning" serves as the inclusive term used for what leadership educators seek to achieve in total (education, training, and development).

Many people unknowingly contribute to or undermine leadership lessons by the way they talk about, celebrate, and encourage "leading." The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* provides ideas for leadership educators to gain an understanding of how they can build leadership capacity of learners. These ideas are consistent with recent reports that have identified the top capacities that global employers look for in higher education graduates. The 2022 QS Global Employer Survey indicates that the most important capacities sought by employers across sectors and countries are problem-solving, teamwork, communication, flexibility, and interpersonal skills, all of which are central to leadership.[6]

Leadership learning remains an emerging field, and ILA's *General Principles for Leadership Programs* is an indication that core theories and concepts have begun to unify and thereby improve the study and practice of leadership. Regardless of the advances in leadership understanding and learning, there are significant examples of leadership in multiple sectors that contradict what research has discerned, and leadership educators have advocated. These contradictions and violations of leadership knowledge must be interrogated by leadership scholars and publicly challenged. The global conversation regarding common principles is crucial and must be recognized as evolving. This conversation requires openness and a commitment to discerning a workable unity among leadership educators that serves all, rather than a detailed, fine-tuned, and prescriptive view that serves only a subset of educators.

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[6] What do employers want from today's graduates? https://insights.qs.com/hubfs/Reports/What%20do%20employers%20want%20from%20todays%20graduates%20%20(1).pdf?_hsmi=65742003&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8cuBVrWOecMohUo0JxvDc3vwGawnV4niW_oIFPjqnVN5tSo4C5jmUX8RmOIjgn-PXxkqFC-evTx2I2VJLaJz-CZvdtGeA

It is ILA's belief that there are certain leadership capacities that can be discerned from the current evidence of research, theory, and practice and that these have been, and continue to be, refined over time. Leadership educators cultivate in their learners these capacities: an understanding of history and experience; an agile and open mind; examination of oneself and systems of leadership through a critical perspective; active and engaged learning; effective dialogue and problem solving with others; adaptability and resilience; purposeful and evolving aspiration to achieve societal good; local and global perspectives; ethics and core values; and optimism while engaging in addressing difficult challenges.

Centrality and Coherence in Leadership Learning

Drawing from previous research and initiatives regarding the evolution of leadership learning across cultures and regions of the world, ILA offers the following general principles that fall within each of the five topical areas outlined below:

1) **Context**: In a world of rapid change and critical, seemingly intractable local and global problems, leadership programs foster optimism and the desire to bring about positive and transformative change. They prepare learners to be agile, open-minded, and humble. Learners deal with increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. The best leadership programs encourage a global as well as a local perspective, and a respectful, holistic, systems approach to engaging multiple stakeholders.

2) **Conceptual Framework**: Leadership programs recognize that the capacity for effective leading and following resides in each person and that broader numbers and more diverse leadership are important in resolving the challenges of the modern age. Deeper learning in leadership is demonstrated by critically examining one's own and others' assumptions through active learning and practice and by analyzing the use of power and its impact. Most importantly, leadership learning is guided by a cohesive and coordinated framework that results in repeated and consistent messages across the entities, disciplines, and experiences that learners encounter.

3) **Content**: Truly transformative leadership is shaped by aspirational vision and the pursuit of purpose, approached from both a humanistic and pragmatic perspective that strives to serve the common good and create inclusive and sustainable communities. It is culturally sensitive and relevant and is grounded in ethics and core values such as integrity, courage, humility, honesty, fairness, empathy, and transparency.

4) **Learning**: The most effective leadership education programs incorporate highly active and engaging instructional strategies and recognize the appropriate developmental level and maturity of the learner. They create a "trusted space" that integrates theory, practice, and experiential learning to build core competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork. They promote engagement, dialogue, reflection, and active questioning of learners' experiences as both leaders and followers.

5) **Metrics, Outcomes, and Assessment**: Clearly and concretely described outcomes are required based on the type of leadership program, its context, individual learner goals, and programmatic goals within each individual leadership program. Similarly, assessments need to be directly aligned to the program's goals and outcomes to provide valuable information. Leadership learning and program outcomes are regularly evaluated to assess effectiveness and ensure continuous quality improvement.

These five areas and the general principles within them serve as a foundation upon which leadership educators in an existing leadership program — as well as those designing new programs — can build to promote continuous quality improvement.

We will now dive deeper into the five areas and respective principles and offer key questions that programs are encouraged to examine under each. The questions were drafted in the specific context of higher education with the "Learning" area as the most specific in its focus. Leadership educators in other sectors will likely need to adapt the questions to their own settings.

Context

How does the context of leadership learning affect the program?
Why is it important to consider context for leadership learning?

The context for leadership learning is informed by global, national, local, and organizational factors. It also incorporates history, traditions, culture, and language. Of equal importance is the individual's contribution to this context, in identity, background, values, knowledge, and experience. Leadership learning not only promotes a global and a local outlook in terms of knowledge development and impact, but it also responds to the tensions that exist between global and local forces, recognizing how leadership must endeavor to reconcile these. Keys to leadership learning are several underlying conceptual, epistemological, and design principles.

Context: Global and Regional

i.   What are the global contexts and environmental drivers for leadership learning?

ii. What are the regional dimensions and imperatives which relate to a particular area of a country or the world and how is it reflected in leadership learning?

iii. How does leadership learning provide a common language for dynamic contextual learning, within specific settings, events, or circumstances?

Context: National

i.   How does the national context shape the conceptualization and production of knowledge creation within the leadership learning program?

ii. How do different political systems mirror or contradict the emerging research and knowledge that informs leadership understanding?

iii. How does leadership learning change when it is subject to political forces that deny scientific understanding and seek to advance the goals of a privileged few over the collective membership of an organization or governmental body?

iv. How are authority and power understood in relation to leadership and how is this acknowledged as an influence in leadership learning?

v.   How is the program embedded in a given culture and socio-institutional system (or a set of them, as many learners have a multinational range of experiences)?

vi. To what extent are leadership learning programs evaluated on the social and environmental impact that their research and teaching program has on their immediate and not-so-immediate community contexts?

Context: Organizational

    i.   What does the institution say and celebrate about leadership?

    ii.   What do stakeholders (e.g., employees, managers, executives, the community) expect of the institution in relation to cultivating leadership capacity?

    iii. How does the program promote collaboration across the institution?

    iv. Does the institution address learners' access to, and proficiency with technology for leadership learning?

    v.   How is understanding organizational culture and culture change embedded in the program?

Conceptual Framework

What is the conceptual framework for leadership learning?

The current complex environmental, social, and political conditions of planet Earth are intimidating, but human beings have demonstrated resilience in adapting to these periods of great difficulty. Human organizations thrive because they acclimate to changing circumstances through broad and diverse participation. Including people with diverse perspectives is essential for leadership to develop human capacity and efficacy. Further, leadership educators have a responsibility to conceptualize leadership learning that realistically recognizes these conditions and offers constructive and hopeful processes to respond to them.

Responding to the challenges and opportunities of leadership learning within current world conditions requires a broad conceptual framework that relies on research, knowledge, and insights about organizations in the public, nonprofit, and for-profit sectors. Leadership learning includes ethical implications of power, the need for legitimacy of power, understanding the relevance of leadership and command, recognition of the threat of authoritarianism, and the benefits of moving from the exercise of power to legitimized authority.

The focus on cultivating leadership potential varies across institutions, but almost every organization is more effective when links across entities, disciplines, and experiences are encouraged. Discreet programs, experiences, or courses as well as the comprehensive array of opportunities need to be aligned, repeating core principles, concepts, and rigor of pedagogical methods. The following "Conceptual Framework" questions are proposed as stimuli to increase the priority and integration of leadership learning in participants' experience. Further, they strengthen institutional will and serve learners by leveraging the resources of the institutions in which they enroll and communities with which they engage.

    i.   How is the program's context considered when developing the conceptual framework (e.g., institutional history, intended impact, fiscal and human resources)?

    ii.   Has the conceptual framework been articulated in a way that makes it possible to derive program content, pedagogy, and learning outcomes?

    iii. What theories, research, and wisdom of practice are useful in articulating the program's purpose and goals?

    iv. What evidence exists that the program and its purposes/goals are aligned with the institutional mission, vision, and strategic plan, and adds value to them?

Conceptual Framework: Philosophy, Purpose, and Goals

i. What is the mission/purpose of the program?

ii. What is the program's vision for the future?

iii. How is the relationship among learners' identities, their practical experience, and wisdom informed by research or theory? How is this relationship addressed?

iv. How are conditions that result in equity, justice, and sustainability across diverse populations and contexts addressed?

v. In what ways are participants supported by a community of learners that both challenges and supports them?

vi. Are other statements of standards (e.g., disciplinary, associational, professional, competency frameworks) relevant to the program and the learners' experiences incorporated? For instance: Principles of Management Education (unprme.org); the UN Global Compact Principles (unglobalcompact.org); the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); CAS Standards.

Conceptual Framework: Learning Environment

i. How are the general principles, goals, objectives, and outcomes connected to the program's philosophy and mission?

ii. Does the conceptual framework incorporate diverse options designed to achieve multiple purposes (i.e., training, education, development, and capacity building) delivered through multiple strategies (e.g., virtual/in-person, credit and non-credit courses, seminars, workshops, conferences) and targeting diverse populations?

iii. How is building capacity for both individuals and communities of concern incorporated throughout the program?

iv. How does the program select learning activities and interventions for high likelihood of impact?

Content

What is the content included in leadership learning and how was it derived?

The thought process for developing the program's content needs to be deliberate and inclusive. The program's robustness is a function of balancing well-established theories and evidence-based academic research with relevant effective practices. The content's depth and delivery methods appropriately correspond to the learner's background and experience, educational level, and learning needs, and are conducive to achieving the program's learning outcomes. Furthermore, transitioning among the various program components is well planned, creating a seamless learning experience from intellectual rigor and personal reflection to application in real time. The program could also be further enhanced by embedding one or more globally accepted frameworks. Finally, the program needs to be adaptable enough to enable interdisciplinarity. In the end, the content inspires participants and helps them to see leadership as a process whereby its deliberate and thoughtful enactment brings about positive change — transforming themselves, their communities, their organizations, and in the end, the world.

Several building blocks shape the content of leadership learning. First, the *foundation of the program* sets the tone for other building blocks of content. The design of the content in terms of sequence, interconnectivity, interdisciplinarity, and its relation to outcomes needs to be identified while observing the nature of the target audience. Second, *leadership concepts* supported by theories and global frameworks are specified while considering the geographical and cultural aspects of leadership. Third, a causal association between the program's content and *personal development* is evident in relation to capacity building and the development of leadership skills. Fourth, the *organizational leadership* dimension of the content defines the individual — organization interaction through various means such as communication and culture. Fifth, embedding *global leadership* in the program's content acknowledges the variations and complexities of leadership within the contexts of transnational economies, political spectrums, and environmental ecosystems. Sixth, highlighting *ethics* in the program brings issues such as morality, legality, integrity, and governance to the forefront when setting the content of the program.

Content: Foundations of Program

i. How do conceptual elements (e.g., theory, research, wisdom in practice) influence the program content?

ii. How do contextual elements (e.g., diversity, globalization, security, technology) influence the program content?

iii. How is the program's course content appropriately designed to address the development level of the learner (e.g., first-year undergraduate students versus graduate students)?

iv. How is the program's content related to program outcomes?

v. To what extent is the content of the program sequenced and connected?

vi. What broad and diverse groundings in theories, philosophical and historical approaches do the program provide?

vii. What primary disciplines inform the study of leadership in the program?

viii. How is the content of this program complemented or infused in other fields in an interdisciplinary manner that illuminates historic, social, political, personal, and other perspectives of leadership?

Content: Leadership Concepts

i. How does the program help learners understand concepts such as leadership (formal and informal), followership, and context at a local, regional, national, international, and global level?

ii. How does the program help learners master key concepts in strategic leadership such as vision, purpose/mission, needs assessment, planning, change management, problem solving, conflict, decision making, motivation, building cultures, fiscal responsibility, and innovation?

iii. Does the content contain current/contemporary/developing theories/concepts as well as classic theories or concepts?

iv. How is bad or toxic leadership recognized and addressed?

v. How is the continuum of responsibility from followership through full engagement and leadership addressed?

Content: Personal Development

i. How does the program promote personal development in ways that lead to increased capacities for individual and collective leadership?

ii. Is there any reference to specific skills and competencies (e.g., critical thinking, growth mindset, systems thinking, stakeholder engagement, collaboration, communication, emotional intelligence, and gender intelligence)?

iii. In what ways is self-awareness fostered in participants as a foundation for ongoing and life-long learning in leadership?

iv. How does the program identify learners' stages of development and maturity levels in the selection phase?

v. How does the program address learners' characteristics (i.e., identity development, culture, life experience, and comfort in learning)?

Content: Organizational Leadership

i. To what extent does the program advance an understanding of different organizational contexts (e.g., nonprofit, for-profit, public sector, public-private partnerships) and their governance?

ii. How does the program include aspects of interpersonal skill development, such as collaboration, cooperation, and communication, necessary in a team context?

iii. How does the graduate or undergraduate program help learners to experience and

iv. reflect on such concepts as: organizational context and structure for action and results; organizational design and structure; organizational dynamics (formal and informal communication, culture, technology, group dynamics); and law and policy?

Content: Global Leadership

i. How does the program advance learners' understanding of leadership across physical and cultural boundaries?

ii. How do the learners apply their leadership learning to a transnational context? This would include dynamics of interconnectivity, global cooperation, global competition, sustainability of economies, politics, and the environment as well as the contradictions inherent within populist, nationalist, and classist movements.

iii. How does the program help learners understand the global dynamics of the 21st century (e.g., globalization, isolationism) and how to navigate conflicting values and rights?

iv. How does leadership learning create conditions for people and organizations to thrive by addressing equity, justice, and sustainability across diverse populations and contexts?

Content: Ethical Leadership

i. Does the program introduce learners to the different philosophical principles related to ethical leadership (e.g., Utilitarianism, Ethical Egoism, Kantianism)?

ii. How does the program address the ethical complexities (e.g., good vs. bad, morality vs. immorality, moral absolutism vs. moral relativism, character, virtue, social justice, efficiency, moral reasoning, and constitutional rights) of inclusive leadership in action?

iii. How does the program encourage learners to examine their own values in relation to ethical leadership principles?

iv. Does the program effectively contrast "good" and "bad" leadership practices through well documented, real-world examples?

Learning

What teaching and learning methods are appropriate to maximize leadership learning while being mindful of critical situational factors?

Leadership education focuses on the pedagogical practices of facilitating leadership learning to build human capacity. The questions below provide a focus for leadership learning and how each domain of situational factors influences the decisions made about leadership learning goals, feedback and assessment, and teaching and learning activities. In doing so, program architects allow insights that emerge from questions related to situational factors of the learners, leadership educators, and learning environment, to inform how such learning is facilitated with respect to the questions related to learning goals, feedback and assessment, and teaching and learning activities.

Learning: Situational Factors of the Learners

i. What are the learners' developmental levels, that is, how does the leadership program identify learners' stages of development and maturity levels in the selection phase?

ii. How does the program address learners' characteristics (i.e., identity development, culture, life experience, and comfort in learning)?

iii. What theories of development (e.g., human, student, adult, identity) inform the programmatic decisions to engage learners?

iv. How do the situational factors of the learners influence their roles and responsibilities as they develop as learners and leaders?

v. What is the program target level of the learners (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, executive education, professional development)?

vi. How might social and cultural contexts impact learners' understanding of the processes of teaching and learning and their possible roles in these processes?

Learning: Situational Factors of Leadership Educators

i. What methods might be employed to increase instructors' capacities to utilize a wider array of teaching/learning processes?

ii. How might social and cultural contexts influence the educators' understanding of leadership?

iii. How do educators connect theory (conceptual framework) to practice (e.g., real-world examples)?

Learning: Situational Factors of the Learning Environment

i. Which philosophical or theoretical foci would be most appropriate for learners and educators in this teaching environment?

ii. What are the social and cultural contexts/issues/concerns in which teaching and learning take place?

iii. How do leadership educators and their programs create learning environments (i.e., physical, virtual, technology-enhanced, or some combination) that maximize the learning experience?

Learning: Learning Goals

i.   How are pedagogy and andragogy intentionally selected and used to enhance student learning?

ii. What are the expected learning goals at each stage of learners' development in the program?

iii. What types of leadership learning (e.g., knowledge, development, training, observation, engagement) are appropriate to attain learning goals in the program?

Learning: Feedback and Assessment

i.   What feedback and assessment strategies are developmentally appropriate for the learners in the program?

ii. What assessment strategies are most appropriate and intentionally aligned with specific content, competencies, and types of leadership learning?

iii. How is peer feedback used in the program?

Learning: Teaching and Learning Activities

i.   What instructional strategies are developmentally appropriate for the learners in the leadership program?

ii. What evidence-based practices (e.g., pedagogy, experiential, active-learning, high impact) do educators use in the program to enable learners to demonstrate leadership knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations?

iii. In what ways is experiential learning, such as critical reflection that supports learners' active questioning of their experiences as leaders and followers in the program/course, institution, and society at large incorporated throughout the leadership program?

iv. How is artificial intelligence, as a potential aid as well as a distraction or source of misinformation, addressed?

Metrics, Outcomes, and Assessment

What are the program's metrics, outcomes, assessment strategies, and evaluation processes?

The scope of outcomes represented by education programs focused on learning "leadership" is large. Some programs are designed to support the development of their participants into leaders in specific contexts such as women in leadership programs and faith-based programs. Others embrace a broader leadership learning curriculum. Some programs provide more emphasis on the "study" of the concept of leadership, where understanding application goes together with evaluating the current state of the field and by adding new knowledge within. Some programs rely heavily on social science while others provide a stronger foundation in the humanities. The effective assessment and evaluation of leadership programs, therefore, begins with an explicit understanding and listing of goals and outcomes. These goals and outcomes encompass both the level of the individual learner as well as the program itself. In this way, leadership programs strive to illustrate the measurable impact of their interventions. Moreover, program officers need to focus on the program successes and learn from failures.

Effective leadership learning requires explicit, transparent, and concrete outcomes, and these outcomes need to be regularly assessed with the goal of continuous programmatic improvement. In addition, these processes inform all relevant stakeholders — program architects, university administrators, program participants, financial donors, et cetera — with information regarding the success of the program's efforts.

Outcomes associated with leadership learning may be cognitive, affective, and behavioral. What is most important is that they are transparent. Prospective participants should know what the program intends for them to accomplish through participating. In their stated outcomes, programs need to be explicit about how they define leadership, the environmental contexts for which the program prepares participants; and the specific goals the program intends to achieve.

Program outcomes should be embedded in a similarly transparent process of assessment and evaluation that results in continuous quality improvement. This process needs to be consistently enacted within the program development cycle, in which outcomes are assessed after the activity (e.g., courses, workshops, conferences). Further, these assessments should be used to inform improvements to stated outcomes as well as program initiatives designed to achieve those outcomes. Participants themselves are at the heart of contributing to assessment efforts.

Although the method of assessment may vary (e.g., self-assessment, behavioral observation, capstone projects, comprehensive examination), they must provide meaningful information that align with the stated program goals and outcomes.

Using an outcome and assessment cycle, program officers respond to the following questions for efforts that exist within their programs:

i. Does the program utilize a cycle of assessment, evaluation, and decision-making for a continual cycle of improvement based on the program's stated outcomes?

ii. Is the assessment process for data collection clear?

iii. Do the processes for evaluation and decision-making involve key constituencies?

iv. Does decision-making inform continued improvement in developing curriculum and outcomes?

v. Does the program utilize assessment and evaluation cycles for individual learning outcomes, initiatives, as well as the overall program outcomes?

vi. Does the program also take into consideration campus-level goals and outcomes (e.g., mission, values, and vision)?

vii. Does the program consider its context within the broader society in its assessment and evaluation efforts?

viii. How does the program communicate the results of its assessment and evaluation cycles to relevant stakeholders, including participants and the public?

Next Steps for the Implementation of ILA's *General Principles for Leadership Programs*

The Committee on the Advancement of Leadership Programs recognizes that the field of leadership studies, like any other discipline in higher education, is always evolving and expanding its knowledge in research, theory, and practice. Leadership learning is not a simple and unidimensional enterprise; it is the product of multiple factors that may be unique to each institution or organization. The *General Principles for Leadership Programs* is designed to serve as a compass to guide new and existing leadership programs toward continuous quality improvement. It encourages program designers to aim high through providing rigorous and intentional leadership learning opportunities for their participants.

As a living document, the principles and related guiding questions are reviewed regularly and periodically. The *General Principles for Leadership Programs*, therefore, should be adapted to reflect new challenges over time.

As a global initiative, the *General Principles for Leadership Programs* also is intended for new or existing programs within any cultural context. While the implementation will be mindful of local traditions and specific cultural norms and values, the *General Principles for Leadership Programs* is intended to be broad enough to capture the essence of leadership learning across cultures. The questions within each of the five categories encourage self-reflection and intentional steps in program development and assessment.

Finally, the Committee on the Advancement of Leadership Programs invites users of this document to disseminate this document widely. It is designed to be shared, discussed, and improved upon. The leadership studies community is growing at a rapid pace. It is through these discussions that the field will establish its rightful place and importance and will thereby have a positive impact on the quality of leadership worldwide.

Suggested References

These suggested references are not exhaustive and are only to serve as a resource for anyone who would like to delve deeper into developing and advancing leadership programs.

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