Poster Presentations

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Shaping Peer Leaders for a PLTL Program

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Peer-Led Team Learning programs have flourished and populated throughout campuses supporting a number of core subjects that university students are required to take early in their careers. The PLTL program at The University of Texas at El Paso consists of about 50 - 60 peer leaders. This program is created to facilitate collaborative learning in college level courses for freshman taking core subjects, however, the program is also about shaping individuals by enabling them to improve in their leadership and professional development. How do we shape these peer leaders? As head peer leaders, we overlook the hiring process, conducting interviews, giving entrance exams to prospective students, and inviting them to a training session built from scratch. While going through the hiring process, we are able to analyze each individual in terms of their personality, strengths and weaknesses, and adaptability to new environments. While many factors affect the efficacy of a PLTL program, the peer leaders are what keep the program alive throughout the years. To become a good peer leader, a prospective student should be mentored by a peer leader, integrated into the culture of the PLTL family, allowed to think creatively, and encouraged to excel as a leader in education. A number of different activities, trainings, and ideas have been implemented into the program throughout the semesters to assure that peer leaders joining the program are shaped into exceptional professionals.

Culturally Relevant Peer-Led Team Learning in General Chemistry: Implementation and Evaluation. A Research Study at a Liberal Arts Historically Black College and University (HBCU)

Taylor Boise; Tomekia Simeon
Dillard University

This project describes the results of implementing a culturally-relevant Peer-led Team-Learning (PLTL) workshop sessions as optional accompaniments for general chemistry 111, a course that is traditionally taught in large-lecture format. About 25% of the students in the course choose to attend the two-hour weekly workshops. Preliminary results indicate students who elected to participate in the workshops demonstrated a continued improvement in exam scores and had a somewhat higher overall grade. In addition, data (final grades, genders and average absences) have been collected for the general chemistry course over the past five years to investigate the outcomes for students. Future work involves comparing the outcomes for students who elect to attend PLTL and those who do not with respect to student success (achievement of a grade of C- or higher), student persistence (completely all two terms successfully in the same academic year), and student performance (percentage of total points accumulated).

Understanding The Role of Metacognitive Skills in Peer Leaders and Workshop Students

Amanda Canellas; Renee Suarez; Rosangela Garcia; Jose Alberte; Thomas Pitzer
Florida International University

The Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) model has shown to have a positive effect on undergraduate Peer Leaders' (PL) professional and personal growth. One factor that could explain these effects is the development of metacognitive abilities. The phenomenon of transfer of knowledge will be used as an indicator for metacognitive ability. An explanatory sequential mixed methods study with a case-selection variant design to explore metacognitive abilities in undergraduates. The Approaches to Peer Leading Inventory (APLI) was administered to students and the PLs to assess the PLs' pedagogical approaches while facilitating the workshop. Although there was no statistical significance in the student results, the proportions showed PLs progressed to more student-centered pedagogy over the semesters led. These data will be paired with the results from the Awareness of Independent Learning Inventory (AILI) questionnaire which measures three subcomponents of metacognition. These surveys will be used to create cases based on metacognitive ability and workshop approach. A representative sample from each group will be used to conduct a think-out-loud problem solving observation session and a semi-structured interview. This pilot study aims to provide preliminary data toward understanding the transfer of metacognitive skills through the interaction between PLs and students.

Initial Reliability Analysis for a 360° Evaluation of Peer Leaders

Daniel Flores; Alberto Cruz; Jose Alberte; Isamar Camarena-Ubiera; Ellen Dow; Thomas Pitzer
Florida International University

Peer Leader Mentor Supervisors (PLMS) are experienced Peer Leaders (PLs) assigned to evaluate PL performance, provide feedback, and mentor the PL. In 2016, the effectiveness of new supervisor training workshops was analyzed to find that the training was informative, but some elements of the workshop were not addressed by the supervising form. This led to updating the supervising evaluation forms. Based on responses four themes emerged: Workshop Interactions, Critical Thinking, Time Management, and Effective Presentation. The new form incorporates these four themes as sections, along with quality assurance, and open-ended questions. To ensure items in each section are reflective of their theme, or that each theme is a reliable latent variable, forms were analyzed using Principal Component Analysis. A confirmatory factor analysis was then used to confirm the established themes, and their line items. This analysis is the first of four of its type to create a 360° Evaluation of the PL. The aim of adapting the 360° Evaluation to PLTL is to create a suitable set if instruments for other institutions to evaluate PL performance.

PLTL Training Workshop Style & Beyond

Jose Gonzalez; Ana Garza; Iliana Barrera; Nancy Uroza; Diana Rodarte; Pedro Brito; Mitsue Nakamura
University of Houston, Downtown

Since 2007, the University of Houston - Downtown (UHD) has incorporated key workshop elements into peer leader training. Through this, these peer leaders gain a well-built foundation needed to lead other students in new areas, such as research and the workforce. This is a result of completing semester-long training comprised of 11 weekly sessions of delving into topics from the book, Peer-Led Team Learning: A Handbook for Team Leaders. Every semester, incoming new leaders directly experience the benefits of the workshop style before eventually leading one themselves. After completing the training, our peer leader take up new opportunities including, but not limited to, becoming coordinators, conducting workshops in Computer Science, Mathematics and Freshman Seminar courses, becoming peer mentors for undergraduates

students, as well as research leaders for high students and undergraduates freshmen and sophomores. This poster will focus on different peer leader experiences as they applied what they learned from the peer leader training into different areas other than workshops.

From Peer Leader to Assistant Professor – a Journey.

Milka Montes
University of Texas, Permian Basin

As an Alumna of a PLTL Program, I have seen first-hand the advantages this model offers to Chemistry students. My first year taking General Chemistry coincided with the implementation of this model at the University of Texas at El Paso. I was able to enjoy learning and practicing chemistry concepts in small groups outside of the lecture hall; as well as being in charge the following year as a peer leader. This experience was pivotal in my decision to pursue a career in academia. Since then, my passion has been to provide my students with opportunities to succeed in their chemistry courses. After six years in academia, the low passing rates in General Chemistry courses have not changed, regardless the one-man efforts in the classroom. After trying difference pedagogical techniques, I am convinced the implementing a PLTL program at my institution into my General Chemistry courses is the best option. This paper will address my progression from peer leader to assistant professor, and the implementation of a collaborative PLTL program at my current institution. I will also address the challenges students and faculty face at a four-year HSI institution; as well as a collaborative approach between a four-year program and neighboring two-year institution in search of creating pipeline of peer leaders.

CRLA & PLTL: Investing in Leadership Skills for Peer–Mentors

Marie Schier
University of Texas at Dallas

The PLTL program at UT-Dallas requires all first-semester leaders to be level one CRLA certified by attending a variety of engaging workshops. By incorporating CRLA mentorship workshops, PLTL leaders are able to refine and development essential skills needed to be successful peer-mentors. Learn about CRLA training, PLTL, and more!

PLTL Gives Back: Integrating Philanthropy and PLTL

Marie Schier
University of Texas at Dallas

In the wake of hurricane Harvey, the PLTL leaders at UT-Dallas yearned for ways to give back to the community. Thus, PLTL Gives Back was created. Occurring twice a semester, this fundraising event has grown to encompass other philanthropies in the community apart from just hurricane Harvey. Learn how this program can benefit your PLTL program!

PLTL Mentor Program: A New Way to Train Leaders

Marie Schier
University of Texas at Dallas

Looking for ways to train leaders before hiring? The PLTL Mentor Program at UT-Dallas was established for students who show great potential as future leaders, but who would benefit from further experience and training. Also, current leaders gain experience as mentors apart from their students in session. A great leadership opportunity for all!

Providing Immediate Feedback to Improve Student Content Understanding Using the Team Quiz Review

Mark Smith; Ashley Baker; James Becvar; Geoffrey Saupe
University of Texas at El Paso

At the University of Texas at El Paso a Peer-Lead Team Learning (PLTL) workshop is required of all General Chemistry Students with weekly quizzes to assess student's knowledge of the constant. Often it takes a week or more to grade quizzes and for students to get feedback meaning they are up to two weeks removed from the content on the quiz. Without reviewing their quizzes, and understand what they did wrong, students have difficulty improving their content knowledge. An immediate team review of quizzes was implemented to see if going over questions after quizzes as a team would increase their content knowledge. Students were able to get additional help from their group members and the Peer Leader who is facilitating the workshop in time to correct problems before moving on to the next topic. Retakes of the quiz after group review showed improved scores which indicate a deeper understanding of course content.

Leading to Employability: Student Engagement and its Relationship to PLTL Involvement

Nicole Vargas; Richard Suarez; Jose Alberte; Thomas Pitzer
Florida International University

The student experience is comprised of various engagements and interactions throughout the student's time as an undergraduate. These experiences mold students into who they are and who they will become as they enter the workforce after graduation. We propose an explanatory sequential mixed methods study with a case-selection variant design to explore the student experience for Peer Leaders at Florida International University. A survey will be used to establish cases based on engagement level and involvement in PLTL. By classifying the students according to type of engagements and time invested in extra-collegiate activities, we will select a representative sample from each level of student engagement. These participants will take part in a semi-structured interview to further explore their experiences in extra-collegiate activities. With this proposed study we aim to further understand the skills gained from several types of activities, including involvement in PLTL, and how engagement levels contribute to employability.