

# **EVALUATION REPORT FOR SAGE 2YC COHORT 3 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION PROGRAM**

*Faculty as Change Agents: Transforming  
Undergraduate Geoscience Education in  
Two-Year Colleges*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report evaluates the SAGE 2YC six-month leadership development program involving 24 Change Agents (CA) from 12 different community colleges and 8 Peer Leaders (PL). Participants in this 2021 program were also involved in a 2020 year-long virtual Professional Development (PD) project. Programming in this extension portion of the grant involved a series of synchronous and asynchronous sessions throughout the first six months of 2021. Eight sessions of PD occurred in spring 2021, and a final summer workshop followed in June 2021. The sessions provided the CA opportunities to hone their skills on the three strands of the project (supporting student success, broadening participation, and building career pathways). A focus on leadership development was at the center of the programming. The PLs offered peer consultations for the CAs and ran some of the spring sessions. As well, the PLs received further support on leadership topics to help advance their own development. The summer workshop provided the PLs the opportunity to deliver workshop sessions to the CAs, and the CAs had the opportunity to report out on their progress. The overriding evaluation question for this series of sessions was *How did the professional development sessions influence how the CAs developed as leaders?* Likewise of interest were the ways in which the PL further developed in their own leadership. The evaluation question here was *How did peer leaders perceive a change in their leadership due to their participation with the C3+ program?*

The evaluation found the faculty CAs defined their personal approaches to leadership. They acquired the language to use in working with administrators, learned how to network with other areas on campus, and continued to increase their confidence in the work in which they engaged. The PLs continued to refine their own approaches to leadership through their consultations with the CAs, and leading workshop sessions helped expanded their skill set. The continued use of a virtual format of delivery of PD highlights the value of this approach as an effective strategy to help support community college faculty members to lead change on campus. Central to this success are well-organized sessions, clear communication on expectations, and opportunities to practice what was being learned.

Conclusions and recommendations emerging from this evaluation include: 1) learning to lead requires building up background in the language and theory of leadership; 2) practicing leadership in lower-stakes roles helps build confidence and willingness to tackle bigger projects; 3) mentorship and reflection help support faculty learning; 4) building a network to tap with questions helps expand learning opportunities.

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
1. Introduction.....	4
2. The Cohort 3+ Faculty Change Agents .....	4
3. Cohort 3+ Programming.....	8
4. C3+ CA Leadership Development.....	16
5. The Peer Leader Experience.....	20
6. Lessons Learned and Recommendations.....	27

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1: Summary of team composition and distribution.....	5
Table 2-2: Summary of Minority Serving Institutions (MSI's).....	6
Table 2-3: Institutional enrollment IPEDS data.....	7
Table 4-1: Levels Used for Scoring the CAs' Leadership Frame Orientations.....	16

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1: Geographic distribution of SAGE cohorts .....	6
Figure 3-1: PD overview .....	9
Figure 3-2: C3 extension spring 2021 workshop ( <a href="https://serc.carleton.edu/241426">https://serc.carleton.edu/241426</a> ).....	9
Figure 3-3: Workshop satisfaction ratings .....	10
Figure 3-4: CA ratings of spring workshop sessions on end of program survey.....	10
Figure 3-5: CA response to spring workshop goals.....	13
Figure 3-6: CA average ratings of summer workshop sessions .....	14
Figure 3-7: CA average ratings of session themes from C3+ .....	15
Figure 3-8: CA average ratings of forms of engagement and learning in C3+ .....	15
Figure 4-1: CA Bolman & Deal Comparison 2020-2021 .....	17
Figure 4-2: CA leadership development ratings prior to C3+ program .....	18
Figure 5-1: PL Bolman & Deal Comparison 2016/2017, 2019, 2021 .....	26

## I. INTRODUCTION

The SAGE 2YC Cohort 3 Extension (C3+) group of participating Change Agents (CA) and Peer Leaders (PL) provided participants an opportunity to extend their work from prior iterations of the SAGE 2YC Professional Development (PD) program with a specific focus on leadership development.

Differences in the C3+ program included: 1) a shorter six-month timeframe for programming; 2) PLs taking on more responsibility for delivery of programming to the CAs; 3) opportunities for more practice with strategies focused on the three strands of the SAGE 2YC project, with a focus on campus workshops; 4) delivery of sessions focused on leadership development; and, 5) use of reflective journaling for both the CA and the PL. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to exert influence on community colleges across the nation, with many campuses remaining in a virtual delivery model for teaching.

The overarching question of the evaluation was: *How did the professional development sessions influence how the CAs developed as leaders?* The overarching question centered on the PL role was: *How did peer leaders perceive a change in their leadership due to their participation with the C3+ program?* The participants in the C3+ project were selected from the group of PL who participated in the C3 year-long SAGE 2YC project. The evaluation also paid attention to the COVID-19 backdrop that continued to complicate the context of PD and the work of CAs and PLs on their campuses.

## 2. THE COHORT 3+ FACULTY CHANGE AGENTS

The composition of C3+ CAs and the institutional characteristics of their colleges helps ground the evaluation of the ways in which the CA experienced their extended virtual PD. A total of 24 CAs from 12 community colleges worked individually or on teams. This group began the program in January 2021. In C3+, 25% of the 24 CAs self-identified as faculty of color. Three of the 24 CAs in this cohort were adjunct faculty members (12.5%), with one team comprised solely of adjunct faculty.

This section addresses the following questions about CAs in C3+:

- How was the cohort selected?
- Who are the CAs/CA teams?
- What leadership skills did the CAs identify they were most interested in developing?

## METHODS

This section reviews the application process used to select the C3+ CAs and reports on themes from their application regarding the leadership skills they were most interested in developing further. A summary of the C3+ participants and their colleagues is included, and a comparison to prior cohorts occurs.

## COHORT 3+ CA FACULTY AND TEAMS

Cohort 3+ was designed to build on the CAs previous experience in the C3 program, specifically in working with their campus on the three project strands (supporting the success of all of their students, broadening participation in STEM, and facilitating students' professional pathways in careers and transfer). A specific focus on leadership development intended to help the CAs learn more about leadership strategies for leading change in-place as community college faculty members. The focus on leading in-place sought to highlight the role of faculty as leaders even when they were not in a formal position of authority. As recorded below, the C3+ faculty and teams show diversity of participation in a number of measures, including geographic distribution and institutional types.

### Selection

The C3+ application was open to the CAs that participated in the SAGE 2YC C3 project. Thus, members of C3+ came from a range of disciplines. The application was open to individuals desiring to continue in the project as well as teams. A total of 24 CAs were selected either as individuals or as part of a team. Of this group, one team consisted solely of adjunct faculty (Lane Community College). Criteria for selection included the likely success of the proposed work, the potential impact of the work, and the institutional student diversity of the CAs' campuses. Table 2-1 shows a summary of the C3+ participants relative to prior cohorts.

Table 2-1: Summary of team composition and distribution

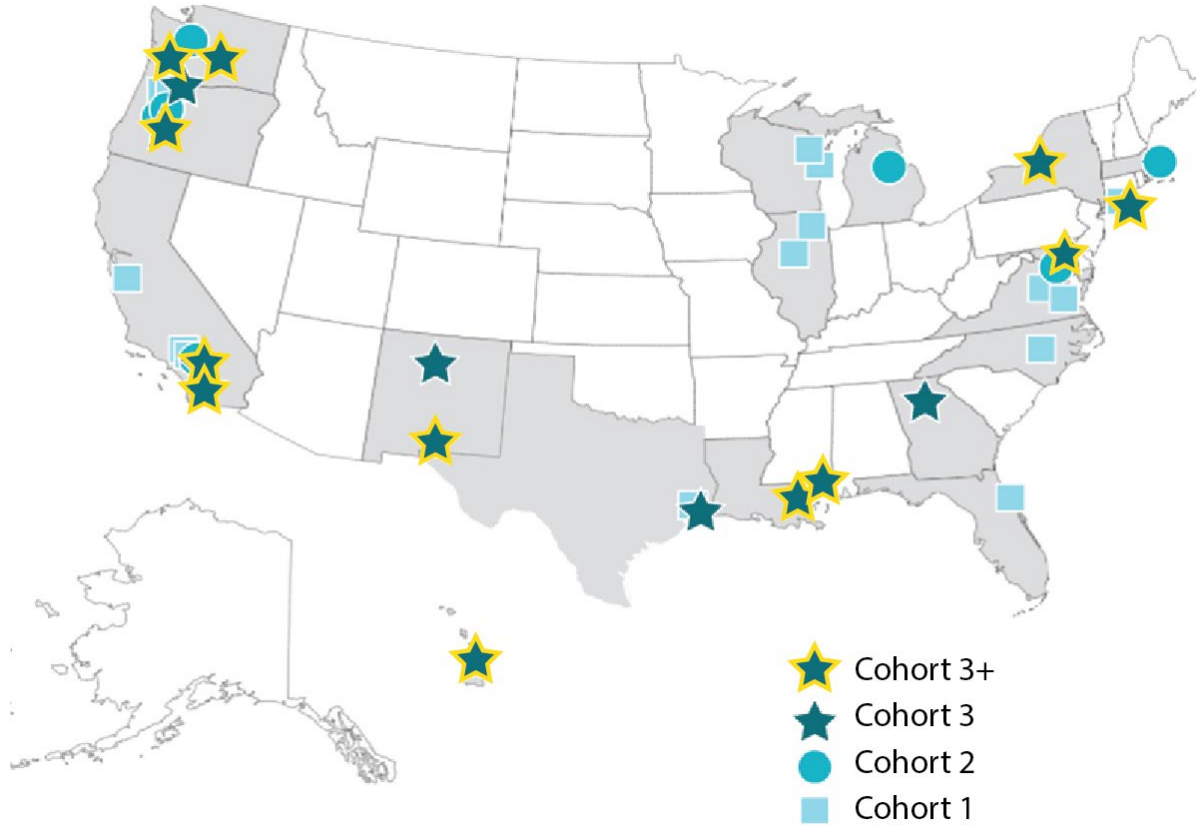
Cohort	Number of CA teams	Number of CAs	Number of 2YCs	Number of States
1	11	23	17	9
2	6	13	8	5
3	16	45	16	10
3+	12	24	12	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>81<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>40<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>17<sup>3</sup></b>

Note: <sup>1</sup>All C3+ participants were in C3. <sup>2</sup>One 2YC has a faculty CA team in C1 and C2. <sup>3</sup>Eight states have faculty CA teams in multiple cohorts

### Geographic distribution

Figure 2-1 illustrates the location of the 12 C3+ individuals and teams (as represented by dark green stars outlined in yellow on the map). The visualization of the various CA 3+ teams continues to show a wide spread across the United States, with over half the participants located in states with two teams. Continued clustering occurs across the cohorts in Southern California, Virginia/Maryland, and in the Washington State/Oregon corridor.

Figure 2-1: Geographic distribution of SAGE cohorts



**Institutional contexts**

Table 2-2 highlights the pattern of Minority Serving Institution (MSI) involvement over time, with peak involvement from MSIs in Cohort 3 and fewer minority-serving institutions in Cohort 3+. Institutional context influences what pressing needs face the CAs and how they are able to implement the new practices they learned.

Table 2-2: Summary of Minority Serving Institutions (MSI's).

	Total 2YCs	MSIs <sup>1</sup>	% MSIs
<b>Cohort 1</b>	17	5	29%
<b>Cohort 2</b>	8	3	38%
<b>Cohort 3</b>	16	9	56%
<b>Cohort 3+</b>	12	5	42%

<sup>1</sup>2020 data from the U.S. Department of Education Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) that receive or qualify for MSI funding: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>

Cohort 3+ institutions range in enrollment size (from 2,000 to over 25,000 students), student demographics and socioeconomic status (Table 2-3).

Table 2-3: Institutional enrollment IPEDS data

College	Fall 2019				
	Enrollment	Students awarded Pell Grants	Students of color <sup>1</sup>	Hispanic or Latinx students <sup>2</sup>	25 years or older
Anne Arundel Community College	12655	21%	27%	9%	33%
Centralia College	3077	25%	10%	12%	47%
Clark College	9233	25%	15%	12%	31%
Delgado Community College	14140	60%	58%	10%	52%
El Paso Community College	29080	41%	3%	84%	20%
Fletcher Technical Community College	2304	49%	31%	4%	34%
Lane Community College	8861	32%	12%	14%	34%
Leeward Community College	6568	23%	74%	16%	33%
Monroe Community College	11572	51%	31%	11%	35%
San Diego Mesa College	20712	16%	29%	39%	34%
Santiago Canyon College	11911	14%	14%	53%	35%
Suffolk County Community College	25230	26%	14%	27%	18%

<sup>1</sup>Includes American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and students of two or more races. <sup>2</sup>Hispanic/Latinx column is separated from Students of Color, as IPEDS does not collect race data for those students that identify as Hispanic or Latinx (personal communication with IPEDS Ed.gov employee). It is thus impossible to tell which Hispanic and Latinx students also identify as students of color or students of two or more races.

## THE C3 FACULTY CHANGE AGENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROJECT

At the beginning of the program, CAs filled out an application form, which included a prompt that asked: *The 2021 program has a focus on developing leadership skills. At the moment, what skill(s) would you be most interested in developing further?* Coding of the CA’s responses determined three emerging themes for main areas of desired development: communication skills, motivating others to change/dealing with resistance, and advocacy and partnerships.

### Communication Skills

One-third of the CAs noted a desire to enhance their communication skills. Learning to effectively communicate with others was central to this desired skill development. The CAs recognized the need to communicate with a range of stakeholders—students, peers, administrators, the

community. For example, one CA noted: *I'm interested in learning more about "Framing the Story."* Enhanced communication skills included speaking up to advocate for program needs, and to convey the exemplary practices happening in the program.

### **Motivating Others**

When entering the project, the CAs were interested in supporting change. Again, about one-third of the group noted a desire here to address resistance and get others to buy-in to proposed change initiatives. A CA summed this sentiment up as follows: *Positivity and motivation for change. Something I believe some of our faculty are lacking at the moment. Recognize roadblocks and be able to overcome them.* Working to engage faculty in supporting new ideas for classroom teaching and programming were at the heart of the CAs desire to support change on campus.

### **Advocacy/Partnerships**

Cohort 3+ CAs sought to become advocates in leading on campus. This advocacy focused on building relationships to benefit programs and students and was core to the identity of being a CA. Partnerships with four-year universities leverages one of the strands of the SAGE 2YC project (i.e. career pathways). Building relationships with adjuncts was seen as a form of partnering. About one-third of the group identified seeking to learn more about this leadership skill.

## **3. COHORT 3+ PROGRAMMING**

The Cohort 3+ programming was shorter in duration relative to prior SAGE 2YC projects. The CAs participated in eight PD sessions in the 2021 spring semester and in a summer workshop. An optional workshop on internal and external funding was hosted in May 2021. Eight of the CAs participated in this optional session.

The questions this section addresses are:

- How did the CAs perceive the workshops contributing to their leadership development?
- What did the CAs identify as valuable to their learning in the program?

### **METHODS**

End-of-Session (EOS) evaluations were collected at the conclusion of each individual workshop session, as well as evaluations at each program transition point (e.g., end-of-spring, summer workshop). The EOS included numeric assessments of these sessions, and short-answer prompts asked what the participants found most valuable in the session and how they would apply what they learned. CAs completed pre- and post-project surveys to help assess change over time. The teams also submitted a summary report after they concluded their campus workshops, and reflected on what went well, what they would do differently the next time, what they felt the impact was for participants, and what they learned that they will apply in their future work. Finally,



the teams presented a summary final poster of their work in the program in the summer 2021 Workshop. This presentation included a specific prompt about leadership development.

Figure 3-1: PD overview



The evaluation report highlights data from PD workshops #2, #4, #6, and #8 as these sessions specifically centered on leadership. (See Figure 2-2 below, leadership sessions are in blue.)

Figure 3-2: C3 extension spring 2021 workshop (<https://serc.carleton.edu/241426>)

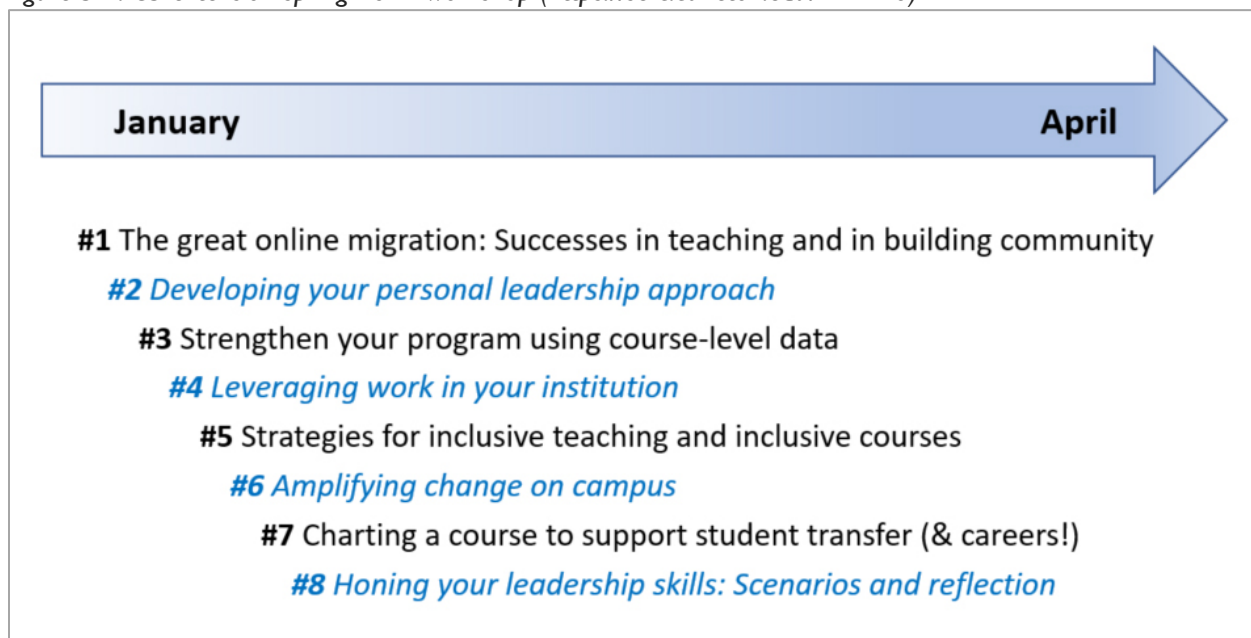


Figure 3-3 highlights the overall satisfaction of participants of the spring series of workshops and the summer workshop. The vast majority of the group were very satisfied (78% and 83% respectively). Likewise, the final participant survey provided CAs an opportunity to reflect back on the value they found in the eight sessions offered in the spring (see Figure 3-4). The sessions on leadership were valued (3.7 or 3.5 out of 4). Notably, the highest rated session was on strategies for inclusive teaching. The CAs were interested in learning more about practices they could immediately employ.

Figure 3-3: Workshop satisfaction ratings

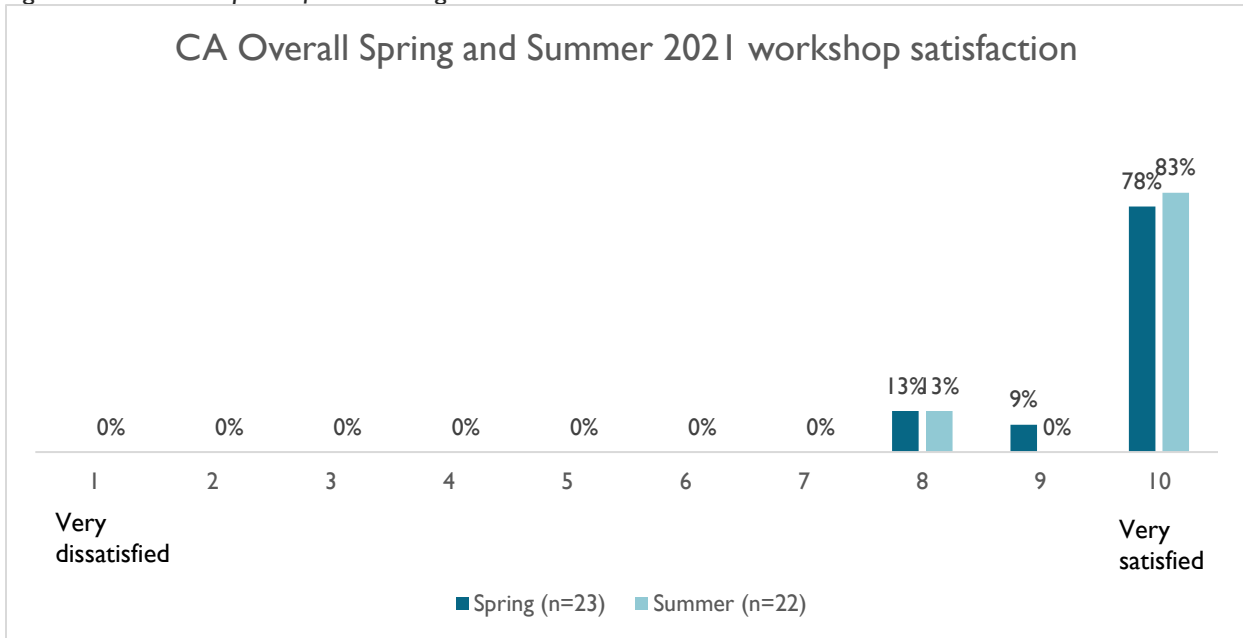
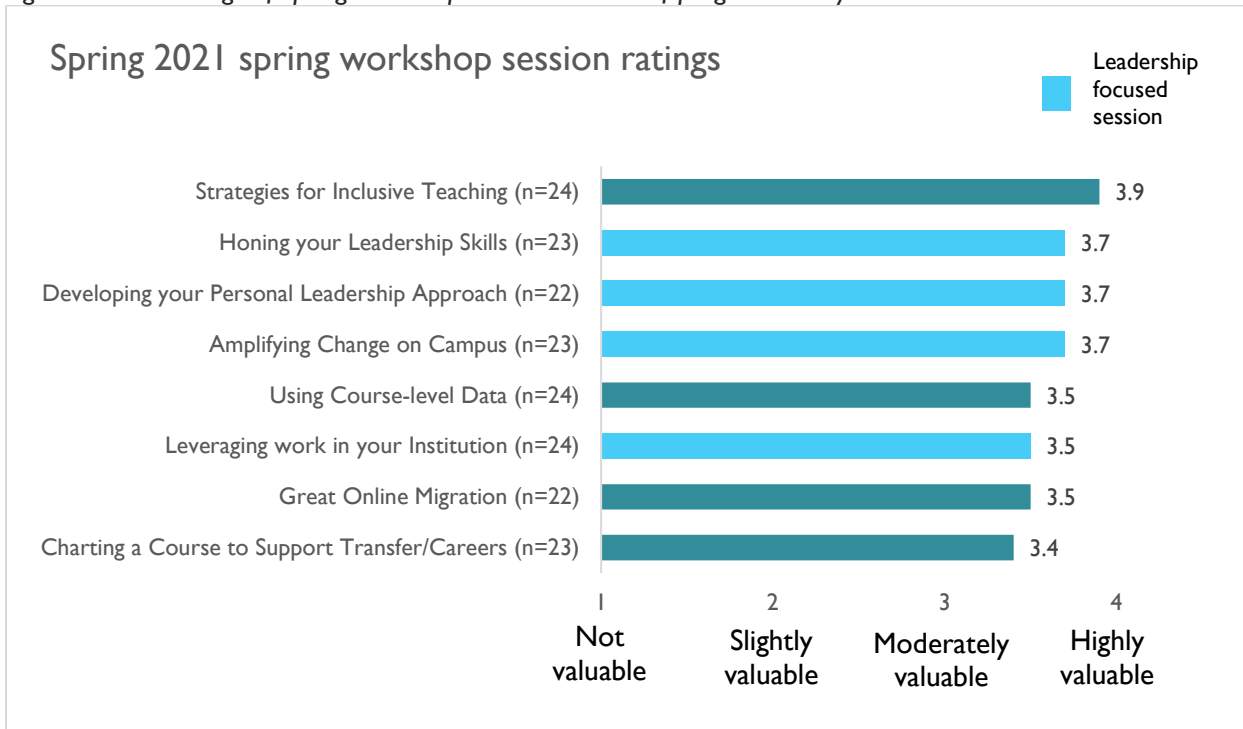


Figure 3-4: CA ratings of spring workshop sessions on end of program survey



## VALUE ADDED FROM PD SESSION

The leadership focused PD sessions moved from an individual level (Session #2: Developing your personal leadership approach) to connecting the work of the program on campus (Session #4: Leveraging work in the institution) to influencing change on campus (Session #6: Amplifying change on campus). The final leadership PD session provided an opportunity for the CAs to think about how to lead in various situations (Session #8: Honing your leadership skills: Scenarios and reflection).

### **Session #2: Developing your personal leadership approach (EOS 9.3/10)**

The opportunity to share experiences with others in the breakout rooms was viewed as valuable to the CAs. Comments also included the value of hearing about examples of how the leadership theory might look in practice, and understanding more about their own leadership preferences helped situate how the CAs could relate to others from different orientations. A representative quote was: *I appreciated hearing the different strategies for working with people with different frames. I think the concrete examples given in the breakout rooms and the discussion at the end gave me some good ideas for my role as an instructor, department chair and colleague.* The CAs learned that their peers had similar, yet different, leadership at their colleges. When asked what one or two things they might apply from the session to their work, the CAs noted how they wanted to work on networking and relationship building on their campus as they felt they could better understand how to connect with others using the leadership frames. Representative quotes include: 1) *Understanding the language that represents each of the leadership styles will be very helpful to me.* 2) *I will incorporate languages of appreciation in the workplace to motivate and congratulate colleagues as a symbolic approach.* 3) *Another tool to put in my tool kit of being a better teacher and leader.*

### **Session #4: Leveraging work in the institution (EOS 9.5/10)**

As in other sessions, the CAs valued the opportunity to engage with one another and to share information. The focus on their own activities helped to make the session especially tangible as they noted how they could imagine readily applying this approach to their own work. Sharing of projects and initiatives was helpful in presenting a larger context for the CAs. Some representative quotes included: 1) *Finding out about the issues and initiatives that other colleagues and institutions are doing, it gives me ideas and insights on how to accomplish goals at my own institution.* 2) *Being able to verbalize my ideas out loud and have others give feedback or input on possible solutions to problems.* As the CAs thought about how they would apply information from the session to their own practice, they synthesized the common themes from the session in a way they could apply them to their specific circumstances. For example: 1) *I will consider the different leadership types in my pitch to the different groups we are inviting to our meeting and not just come from the data side of things.* 2) *We need to think more about how we present our findings to our colleagues and make sure that there is support for colleagues so that we can focus on how the findings of our audit can make our programs stronger, rather than making fellow faculty feel put on the spot.* 3) *Some of my stumbling blocks was determining how to keep faculty engaged. My breakout group peers brainstormed some excellent ideas and will be employing some of them.* Hearing from others experiencing some of the same challenges helped.

### **Session #6: Amplifying change on campus (EOS 9.6/10)**

As in the two leadership sessions above, the CAs felt they gained the most value by discussing the new ideas they were learning about organizational change and leadership with their peers. Because the information was new to the CAs, some noted how the advance reading materials helped prepare them to engage more effectively (e.g. *I think the introductory lecture was important. I reviewed the articles ahead of time but that provided a framework to think about these topics, which were new to me.*) The discussion in the breakout rooms using a case study, and the sharing of experiences from other campus helped support the value of the session for the participants (e.g. *Going through the case study and analyzing it was helpful. Reading about different strategies is one thing, but seeing how they can be used is really helpful.*). When thinking about how they would apply their new learning on campus, the CAs noted how they had an expanded toolkit (e.g. 1) *I've always been aware that different people handle change differently. I've never taken time to analyze why people react the way they do. The next time I am asked to implement a change on my campus, I feel I have some additional strategies to take into consideration.* 2) *I will apply the education and facilitation strategies to combat resistance.*) The CAs noted the value of having strategies to draw upon when leading change and dealing with resistance.

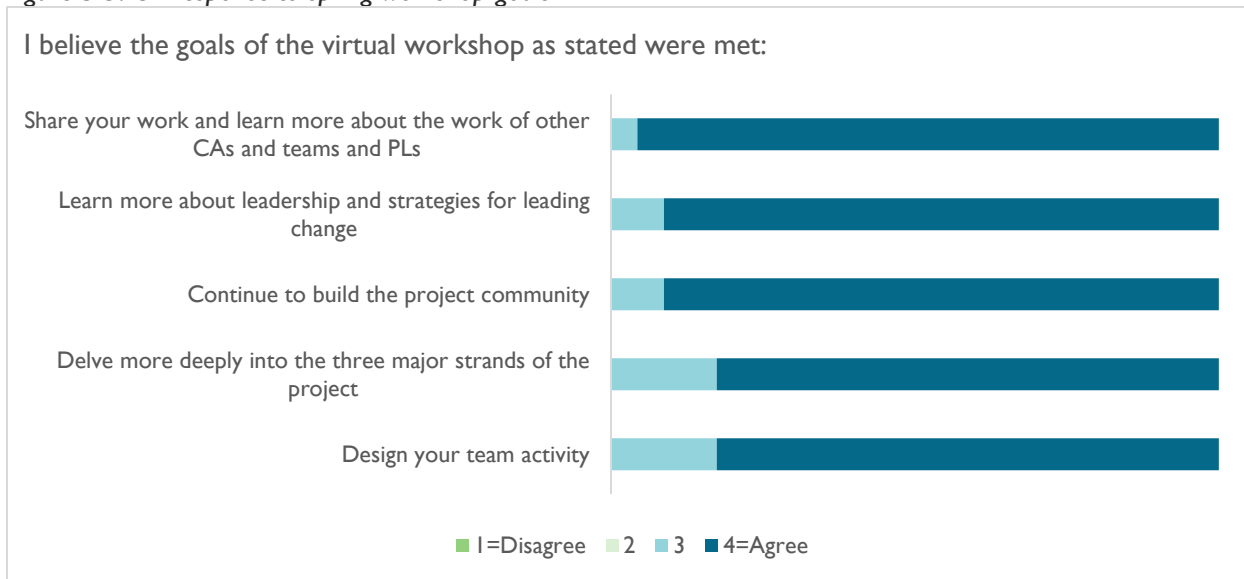
### **Session #8: Honing your leadership skills: Scenarios and reflection (9.6/10)**

In reacting to different leadership scenarios, the CAs were able to see different perspectives on reactions from their colleagues that expanded their thinking (e.g. *It was great to hear the diverging ideas that some folks had on each scenario, but also to see some of the things we had in common.*) Working through the scenarios also provided new ways for the CAs to see what they could do on their campus (e.g. *I really see the value of running a data workshop now. That way, faculty ID problems on their own and then the solutions are THEIR idea!*). Pointedly, current positional leaders also found tips to apply to their work (e.g. *As someone who leads dept. meetings regularly, I've come away from this workshop with a renewed sense of the importance of getting buy-in for change. I like the strategies people shared today: sending data out ahead of time, cultivating a sense of curiosity about the data, being willing to let my own, personal ideas go if the group doesn't support them, etc.*)

### **Summary**

When asked if the goals of the project were met, high levels of agreement were found for sharing work with others and to learn more about leadership and strategies for leading. (see Figure 3-5). The themes running through all of leadership sessions was 1) the value of hearing examples and experiences from peers around the country, 2) an ability to see how their new learning about leadership could be applied on campus, 3) an understanding that there are resources available about faculty as leaders. Figure 3-5 below shows the overall agreement the CAs had about meeting the goals of the virtual workshop.

Figure 3-5: CA response to spring workshop goals



When asked what has been valuable due to being a participant in this project, some of the representative quotes included:

*During Cohort 3, I was much more focused on my role as faculty and my "sphere of influence" in the classroom. I am starting to feel like my "sphere of influence" is much larger now.*

*Looking at leadership as a skill to develop and helping me see opportunities that present themselves. Figuring out how to build a team and appeal to others.*

*Getting to know other change agents and forming a network on knowledge and experience because of those relationships. It's easy to get caught up in our own little academic islands, now we have a mechanism to reach out and connect with others for experience and project building.*

## SUMMER WORKSHOP

The goals of the summer workshop included:

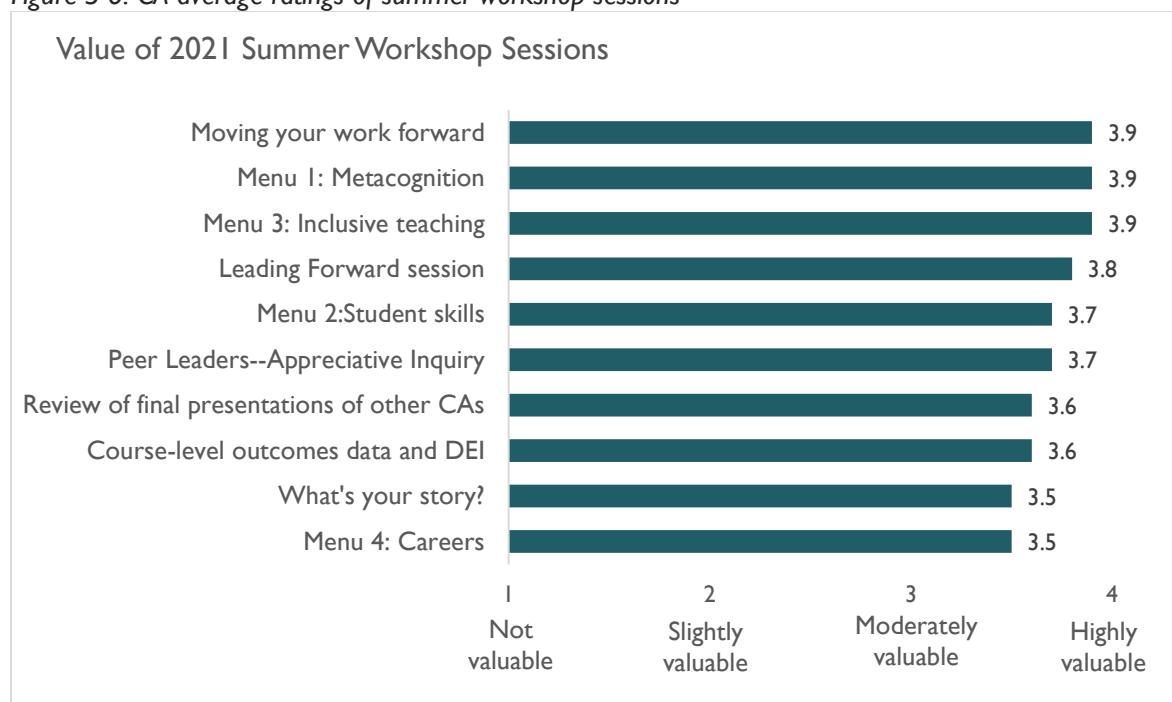
- Continue to learn more about leadership and strategies for leading change
- Share your work and learn more about the work of other Change Agents
- Discuss strategies for moving your work forward beyond the SAGE 2YC project
- Continue to build and support the project community

Programming for the workshop included three half-day sessions. Day 1 focused on Leadership and Project Impact, Day 2 included sessions on course-level outcomes data & project strands, and Day 3 centered on moving the work forward and shaping the future. The workshop evaluations showed

agreement with meeting each of these goals (all four goals received the highest level of agreement indicating high satisfaction with the workshop). As was noted in the spring PD sessions above, the CAs valued hearing from their peers and building relationships (e.g. *Making connections with colleagues across multiple disciplines and in different locations.*). The organization of the workshop was highly valued as well (e.g. *The really well crafted activities- small groups with great facilitation, thought-provoking prompts, and appropriate amounts of time (and an emphasis on time-keeping).*).

The summer workshops offered programming on sustainability, leadership, and course-level outcomes data (See Figure 3-6). As well, the group had the opportunity to select from four menu choices that the PLs led. Learning how to move their work forward (3.9) and an accompanying session on leadership strategies (3.8) indicate that the CAs found this PD highly valuable.

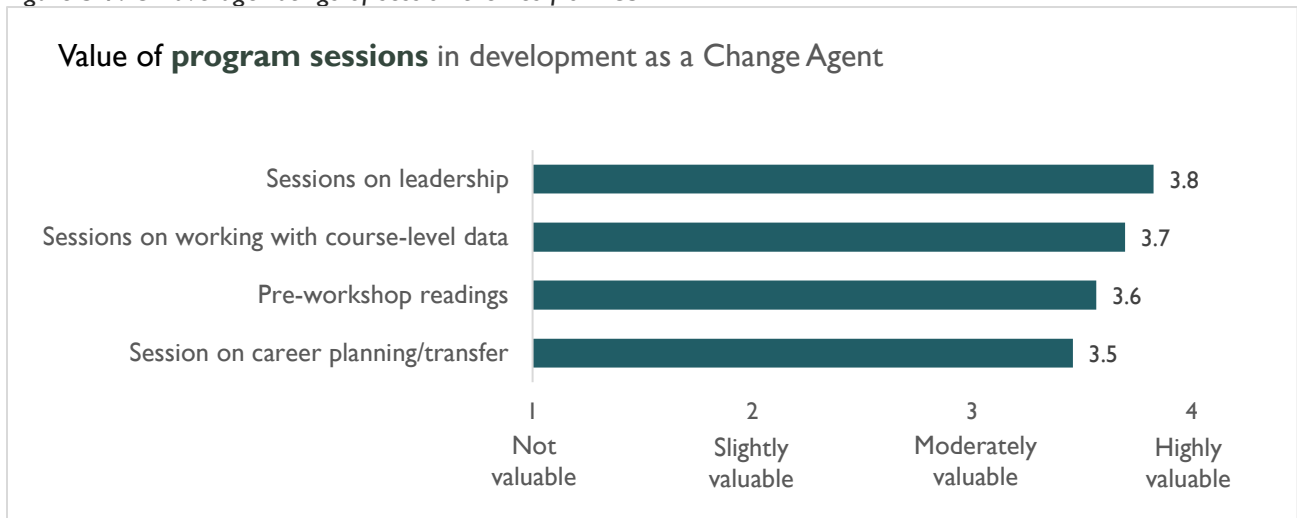
Figure 3-6: CA average ratings of summer workshop sessions



## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

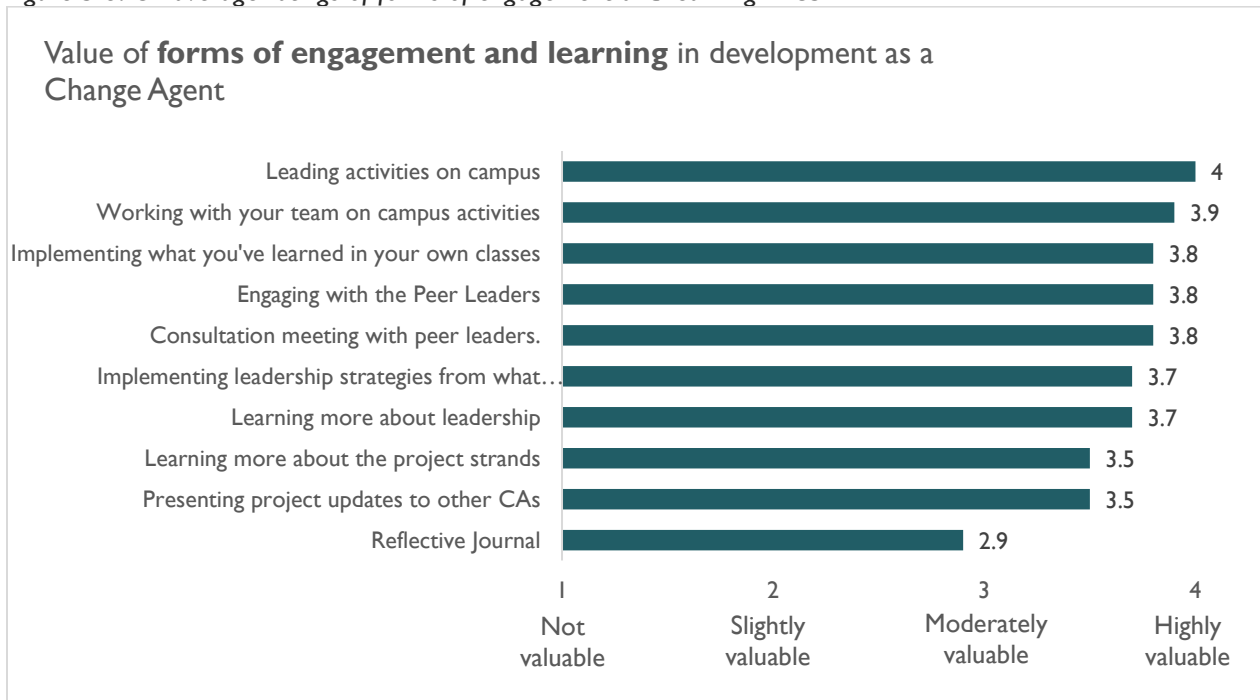
At the conclusion of the PD leadership programming in June, the CAs were asked to assess the value of different program features. Figure 3-7 below shows their responses. As indicated in the data above, the sessions on leadership were seen as highly valuable.

Figure 3-7: CA average ratings of session themes from C3+



The CAs were asked to reflect on the various ways they were asked to engage in the workshops. Having the opportunity to practice leading by delivering their own workshops on campus was rated the most valuable (4/4) and this work was supported by working with others (e.g. team members, 3.9; PL, 3.8). Learning about leadership (3.7) helped ground the CAs as they implemented these strategies on campus (3.7).

Figure 3-8: CA average ratings of forms of engagement and learning in C3+



## 4. C3+ CA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The extension project built on the CAs experiences in Cohort 3 and sought to focus PD on leadership development and deepening practice with the initial project strands. The questions this section addresses are:

- How did the CAs leadership orientations change over the course of their SAGE 2YC involvement?
- What did the CAs identify as key attributes for leadership?

### METHODS

Data for this section came from multiple sources. The pre-project survey included a prompt that asked: What do you hope to gain in terms of your personal leadership development? The survey also asked how the CAs described their leadership to others. In addition to the information reported above on the perspectives of the PD sessions on leadership, the CAs participated in focus groups, responded to reflection prompts after each PD session, took a leadership questionnaire, and responded to a post-project survey. The information presented in this section focuses specifically on the ways in which the CAs developed as leaders over the course of the project.

### BOLMAN & DEAL LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

The CAs took the Bolman & Deal Leadership Questionnaire as participants in Cohort 3 (June 2020) and took the same questionnaire at the conclusion of their participation in Cohort 3+ (June 2021). Table 4-1 identifies the level of scoring for the CAs' leadership frame orientation.

Table 4-1: Levels Used for Scoring the CAs' Leadership Frame Orientations

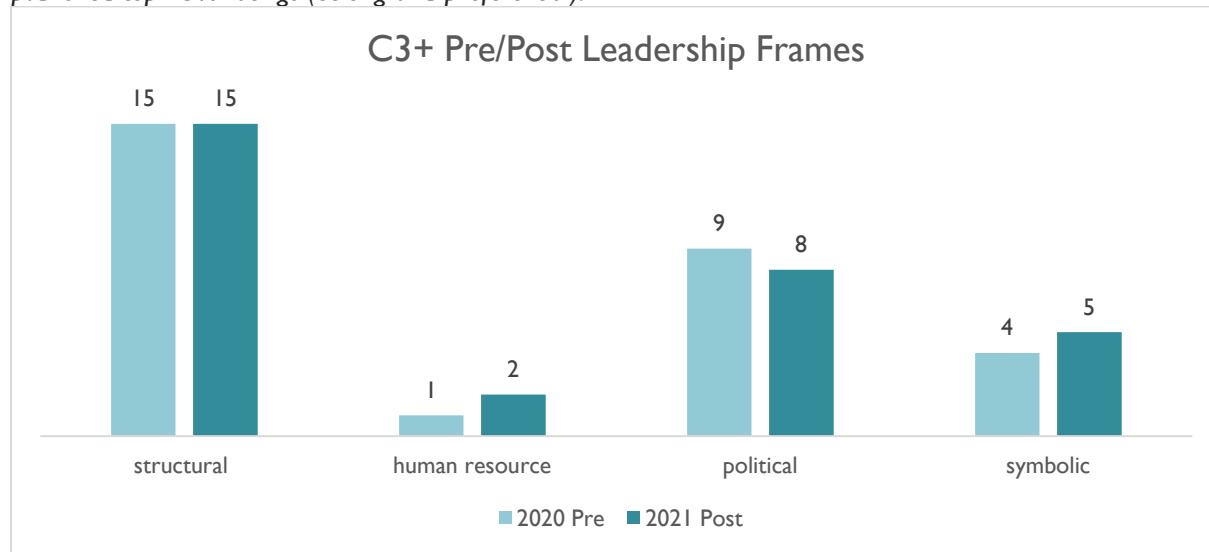
Level	Bolman and Deal's Longitudinal Scoring Ranges
<b>Strong</b>	Only 10% of respondents rated themselves at or above the score.
<b>Preferential</b>	Only 25% of respondents rated themselves at or above the score.
<b>Weak</b>	50% of respondents rated themselves at or above the score.
<b>Very Weak</b>	More than 75% of respondents rated themselves at or above the score

Figure 4-1 below shows the changes in leadership frames over the course of a year for the CAs. The reporting out here is for individuals with Strong orientations. The majority (63%) of the CAs had a structural leadership orientation. The science backgrounds of the group make this finding unsurprising given the reliance in the sciences on a positivist orientation and the notion that there are particular processes in scientific experimentation. About one-third of the CAs also had a strong political frame orientation, which aligns with the need to allocate scarce resources. The fiscal environment of community colleges is historically underfunded and trade-offs occur constantly in



making funding decisions. There was scant alignment with the human resource frame for the CAs (only one in 2020 and two in 2021). This frame focuses on the roles of people in organizations, and those in faculty roles tend to have less oversight or control over others. Likewise, the symbolic frame was observed less (three in 2020 and five in 2021). The focus on PD on the role of framing the story for change may have influenced how some of the CAs felt alignment with this particular frame at the end of the project.

Figure 4-1: CA Bolman & Deal Comparison 2020-2021. Ratings are self-reported, and counts included are top published top 25% ratings (Strong and preferential).

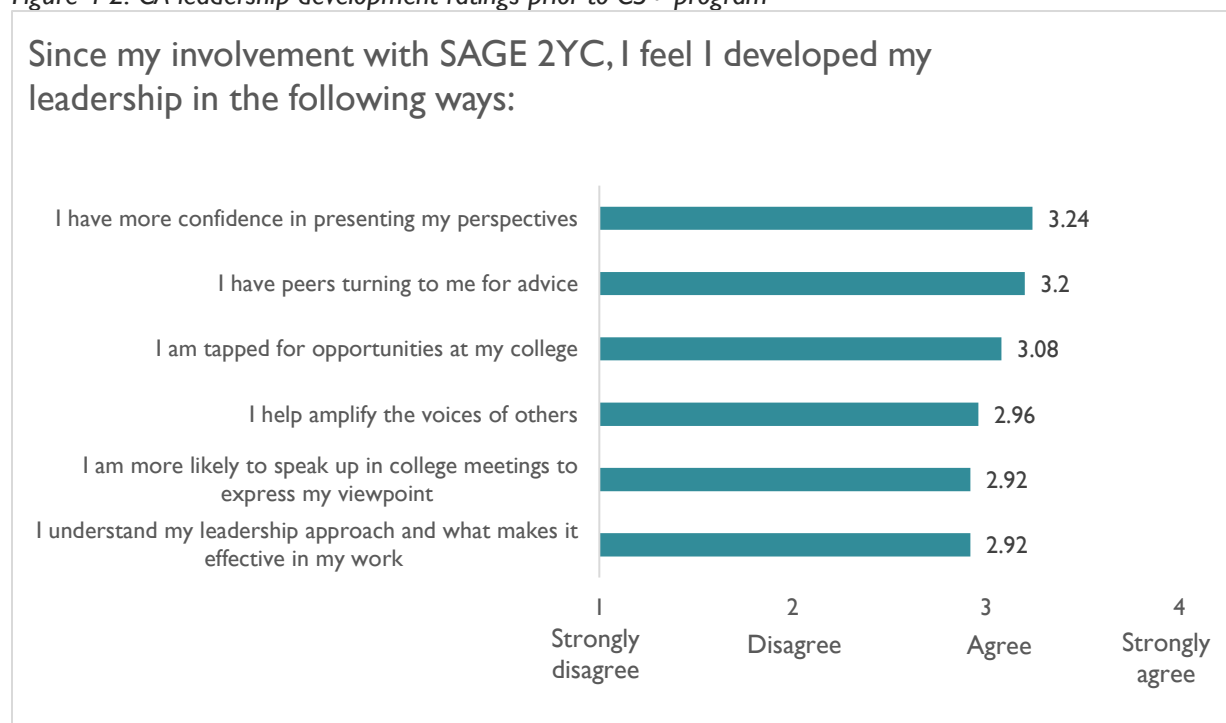


The CAs continuing in C3+ relied predominately on one frame most often. In 2020, only 5 of the CAs (21%) operated from two frames and 1 from three frames (4%). In 2021, a shift occurred with more CAs using two frames (7; 29%) and none using three frames. As noted in the PD programming review above, sessions occurred to review the ways in which the Bolman & Deal frames could be used to help lead and work with others. There was an enhanced understanding that individuals came to their work from multiple perspectives and it was necessary to engage with others based on their preferences.

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

The CAs were asked at the beginning of the C+ program how their involvement in C3 helped develop their leadership. These responses helped present a baseline for how the CAs viewed leadership prior to the C3+ programming. Figure 4-2 Indicates that the CAs are seen on campus as leaders, among their peers and among administrators. Thus, prior involvement in the SAGE 2YC had already begun to bolster the confidence level of the CAs in leading.

Figure 4-2: CA leadership development ratings prior to C3+ program



CAs were asked at the end of the project about their leadership accomplishments. Following are some of the representative responses to this prompt.

- *Tapped into the power of teamwork to accomplish program goals; partnered with other faculty and students; Leverage teamwork and collaboration to accomplish more than doing projects alone*
- *Mentored students and junior faculty members; Led by example to provide a model for others; Model faculty leadership for others to improve student success rates*
- *Increased participation in college, regional, and national professional conferences*
- *Use of active listening to ensure individuals feel heard and appreciated*
- *Increased awareness of personal Bolman and Deal leadership frames and expanded frames beyond personal frame preference; Used knowledge of Bolman and Deal leadership frames to adjust engagement with others*
- *Use of clear communication and consistent systems to provide information to others; taking time for thoughtful responses*
- *Recognition of being a leader on campus and willingness to lead; Seen by others as a faculty leader and advocate for students, resulting in committee appointments. Use of leadership strategies to identify the types of information others need before they might invest in an initiative; took on several informal leadership roles on campus*
- *Increased understanding of organizational operations resulted in pursuit of larger projects to leverage college initiatives; used the power of students' voices when advocating for change; Improved workshop facilitation skills that draw others in to contribute their expertise*

- *Understand the need to work with others who may have different opinions to offer; Engage with broad sets of stakeholders to make sure change is inclusive and others are invested in the initiative*
- *Used leadership strategies from the project to identify key skills and strengths of division faculty to develop these staff to become better faculty leaders*

## **SUPPORTED LEARNING ABOUT LEADERSHIP**

The final project survey included the prompt: *What best supported your learning about leadership in the project?* Several programming areas were noted: Interaction with others; Leading campus based PD; Reflection; Program format. As one CA summarized: *The program pushed me out of my comfort zone.*

### **Interactions**

The type of interactions that helped support the CAs involved interactions within their team (e.g. *My faculty colleague*), with project leaders (e.g. *The interactions with the leaders and peer leaders*), and with other change agents (e.g. *Structured discussions of all kinds, to apply the frameworks we learned about. I love that we developed a common language to discuss our leadership efforts and could see how the principles were playing out in many instances.*) A summary of the roles of interaction with others is represented by a CA who offered *The interaction with everyone allowed me to see different perspectives.* Hearing from others across the country helped illustrate similarities of issues facing all faculty members and the cohort provided a space to share information and strategies.

### **Leading Workshops on Campus**

The responsibility to lead campus based professional development allowed the CAs the opportunity to share with others lessons learned and to increase the CAs network on campus (e.g. *Doing the book club was a great experience that got me in touch with a lot of people at my institution from the planning stage to the implementation and reflections.*). Campus workshops noted were *transfer fair discussion panels* and book clubs.

### **Reflective Journal**

Reflective journaling was a feature of the C+ program. After each spring workshop, the CAs received prompts to respond to on a private journal. Each of the leadership sessions (#2, #4, #6, #8) included the same prompts (*How are you thinking differently about your approach to leadership? How do you envision applying insights from this session to your work on your project and other work on campus?*). A feature of the journal was a final meta-reflection in which the CAs were asked: *For your final meta-reflection, please write a short paragraph about 1) what you see as themes in your reflections, 2) what you note as a change in your thinking over the program, 3) what you have learned about yourself as a leader.* As one CA summarized, *Though I didn't write much, it allowed me to think about my work and also identify lengthier trends.*

## Program Format

The workshops occurred in one-hour sessions and included materials for the CAs to access prior to the synchronous meetings (e.g. *The reading assignments combined with a mini-lecture and break out room discussions helped me to learn about leadership the most.*). According to one CA: *Every single leadership workshop was beneficial to me. I felt like I took away at least one small thing to help forward my ideas and strengthen my confidence in my ideas and in myself to lead change.* Another CA added that the time between the sessions allowed time to *digest lessons*, which the reflective journals helped support. The use of the Bolman and Deal framework was noted by several CAs as an important element in the program format (e.g. *Having a common model for the cohort was useful (Bolman and Deal).*)

## 5. THE PEER LEADER EXPERIENCE

To evaluate how PL felt about their leadership development at the end of their participation in C3+, focus groups were conducted with the PLs. Additionally, the PL participated in the leadership sessions in the spring (Sessions #2, #4, #6, #8), conducted consultations with the CAs, and led PD sessions in the spring and summer workshops. The C3+ project involved eight PLs.

The questions this section addresses are:

- How did peer leaders perceive a change in their leadership due to their participation with the C3+ extended program?
- What did the peer leaders identify as contributing the most to their leadership development?

## METHODS

The PLs participated in the pre- and post-project surveys, though the response rate for the post-project survey was low (50%). Focus groups were conducted with the PL and one question included: *What contributed the most to your learning as a leader?* The PLs also took the Bolman & Deal leadership questionnaire again. This instrument was used in their prior involvement at a CA and as a PL in Cohort 3.

## CHANGES TO LEADERSHIP

Some of the PLs had been involved in SAGE 2YC since 2016, thus, the changes they observed in their leadership were often difficult to attribute to the six month period of being a PL in Cohort 3+. For example, one PL noted, *I think, after the last five years I'm more willing to play the long game, sort of speak, to advance an objective, especially if that means it will result in great buy in and more cooperation from the faculty and staff.* The PLs noted an increase in confidence and an increased awareness that there are theories of leadership that can inform their continued growth. Several noted how they felt they could now initiate projects, bring others along, and expand their influence.

Understanding that leadership is not only positional was an outcome for the PLs. Some representative reflections from the PL about how they have changed include:

- *One of the most important points I've learned is that leadership does not need to come from the "top" (i.e. administration) but can come from within as faculty-driven change. The myth that leaders are born has been dispelled, and leadership is a skill that needs to be practiced and learned.*
- *Quite simply, I started to think about leadership more over the course of the program and reframed what leadership could look like at my institution. I have historically kind of checked out of the idea of leadership on my campus because I thought it had to fit into a box of joining a committee that didn't interest me, but I understand now that there are other ways to lead within my own department and division.*
- *Looking back, and thinking back, I'm somewhat surprised that the last year (including this project, but also the immense professional challenges we've all faced, and my personal ones as well) seems to have been a time of major growth for me! I see a lot of self-reflection and increased confidence, and the ability to find opportunities - which is amazing because I've also felt crushing self-doubt and like a failure at the one thing I felt good at. Learning about my strengths and weaknesses or my leadership style has helped me recognize that I DO have leadership strengths (!) and that rather than trying to master all the new skills I feel like I should have, I can take a step back and consider the frame through which I am working, consider that others might have different approaches and values. I see that I am very interested in many aspects of leadership, and have learned a lot over the past several years of being a change agent and a peer leader, and particularly from pre- to post-pandemic I have learned that I am much more interested in leadership than I previously would have thought.*
- *The biggest recurring themes that I noticed was that I have gained knowledge and with the knowledge came confidence. This has helped me improve my classes, help students with their learning, and have the knowledge to support my ideas when talking with my fellow geology instructors and administration. The biggest change in my thinking is understanding there is a bigger picture.*
- *What have I learned about myself as a leader? I learned that it is not all about just putting together a good idea or presentation on an idea. Leadership among my peers has also changed as I try to think about the best way to approach them with topics to end up with the outcome that I am hoping for.*

The PLs noted how they are now recognized as leaders on campus and this results in being invited to become involved in initiatives on campus, and opened up for them the ability to see how they can work with others on campus. Understanding the language of leadership helped contribute to their change too (e.g. *Confidence and understanding the data and the educational jargon that I might not have known before. Sort of all the jargon that I wouldn't have known before.*). Leading sessions with other peer leaders helped provide practice with collaborative leadership, which helped provide immediate feedback.

Developing a new view of higher education helped expand the PLs' leadership (e.g. *Just being able to hone those skills and be able to kind of think from an administrator's point of view has helped*

make me more effective in terms of advocating for faculty and advocating for my program and courses too.) Part of these expanding conceptions of leadership involved working collaboratively with others. For example, PLs noted:

- *I guess that's a confidence thing too. How can I find my idea of allies? Mostly I look to people in my own sort of role before, and now I am finding allies through different aspects of the college staff and faculty and administrators. I hadn't considered that they would be sort of on that same collaborative level but finding that we have shared goals and that we can accomplish them in different ways is a new thinking and new work for me.*
- *I rely on myself to get the things done. And so, this has been very good for me and multiple ways because I have to ask other people's opinions.*
- *I'm working with a guy in CTE right now... How would that ever happen without me looking outside of my comfort zone, figuring out the things that I want to do, how I want to work, volunteering for things. So, learning about leadership has been very helpful. It's like, just knowing that there's stuff out there that I can latch on to, and help me explain what I'm trying to do. Yeah. So anyways, didn't even know that was a thing, so that's cool.*
- *And probably, I will say, I think it's been really important in learning to listen and that maybe you don't always need to share your experience, but sometimes you're better off letting the person give you their experience and listening.*
- *I think in addition to recognizing these leadership attributes and skills, and that we've sort of picked up on, I'm recognizing when others don't seem to recognize those.*

The PLs noted a continued increase in confidence, the ability to apply leadership theory to their practice, and understanding the value of working collaborating with others. The PLs noted a range of experiences that helped contribute to the changes in their leadership. A quote from one of the PLs reflects the changes experienced:

*But in the last six months, as far as leadership goes, I think I have had a little bit of an aha moment in doing much more strategically in deciding where I want to put my efforts, so that's been really important in the last six months. So sometimes, when somebody says something where I was used to, I probably would have replied right away and then just let it go. It's like, "Oh, well, there's nothing I can do about it." Now, I'm much more likely to think, plan, figure it out how to approach it, and then do.*

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEADERSHIP**

The PLs reflected on how their consultations with the CAs helped contribute to their own leadership development. Leading the consultations helped the PLs practice their facilitation skills, and reflect on the balance between leading the conversation and providing space for others to contribute. For example, one CA commented, *I think this time I really was cognizant of my listening and allowing for many people to talk and share.* Having been in the place of the CAs just a short time ago, there was an acknowledgement of how their prior experiences influenced their work as a PL. Pointedly, one CA reflected, *These consultations remind me of how far I have come since becoming a change*

*agent.* The ability to see the similarity between the consultations and work on camps helped one of the PLs transfer learning from this experience: *I like learning about how different people approach the same problem. As a chair it allows me to provide my faculty with many different solutions to our own problems. By doing so I think faculty see that I'm not simply pushing my idea but offering many viable alternatives and hopefully shows that I want to hear their ideas as well.* When the PLs participated in Cohort 3, they participated in a workshop on Active Listening. The commentary of how their work as PLs with the CAs shows the transference of this prior PD to their current context.

The PLs learned to connect their initiatives to the larger institutional plans. As one PL reflected, *I didn't think that I could do a lot of this stuff, but I also didn't know the structure of the college very well, and once I started figuring out the structure of the college, I realized who I could talk to and share with what I was doing.* The PLs noted how they *developed a tool box of leadership skills,* which helped them reshape their roles as faculty members on campus. Some of the specific tools identified included, the Bolman and Deal frameworks, active listening, and building allies. The practice the PLs obtained from facilitating and leading workshops helped contribute to the changes they experienced in their leadership. This type of practice contributed to building confidence. Hearing about the experiences of other participants in the project helped expand their thinking and provided them with strategies to employ on their own campuses.

Several specific program areas were identified as contributing to the changes the PL experienced in the project. The listing below highlights several of the specific items mentioned by the PLs.

- *Like the Bolman and Deal thing for me is so interesting because I did not perceive myself. I believe they're called wizards. I didn't see the... as fitting into my leadership style and every time it would come up, I'd be like, "[Colleague] this is not right." And he'd be like, "No, it is." I finally was like, "Okay." If I keep getting and it keeps getting... Like every time I take the test, it's like more and more extended to that particular role. And I'm like, "Okay. Well, I'm going to deal with it." When I've read about it, I bought the book suggested and I've been reading.*
- *I think particularly useful now that I can use like... I guess basically like empathy and also like uplifting sort of stories for my students to persuade people, so a lot of the things that you've given workshops about. Those are things that I guess I never thought about in a very meaningful way. I just like... have always been outgoing, so I've just kind of relied on that.*
- *But there is all of these aspects to leadership. There's vocabulary, there's lots of things that I had no idea about because I am a scientist and that's what I've done. So it's been really interesting to sort of get this like... I don't know, like overview, like outside, like view of leadership and think about it more strategically. I'm a lot more strategic, I guess.*
- *A lot of it has been a continuum for me of just again, continuing to hone skills and kind of like that feedback cycle. I mentioned just the more practice, the more confidence, the more I become interested in that. But I think there's*

*one thing I think in the last six months that has really been an aha moment for me. I don't know if it's just me or if it's in our society. This idea like, people are born leaders. You have this like, natural... maybe it's a gene or... I don't know. To me, I feel like... Especially in the last six months, that is in some way, like a myth. Like leadership is very much a skill. There's a lot to be learned. There's a lot to practice and develop over time. I think that's one really cool aha moment I've had especially in the last six months.*

- *From going through this, I see how they strategically use tools that we've learned, so it's cool to see that model. Especially that kind of the demystifying leadership has been a big aha moment for me in the last six months.*
- *One thing I've gained over the last six months is greater appreciation for how much mental work goes into planning useful, professional development sessions, if that makes any sense. Really thinking about what the participants are going to get the most out of. Then I come back and participate in some things in my college, and I just can't help but judge it in the light of what I think is an extremely high standard.*

Many of the points made by the PLs that contributed to the changes in their own leadership tie to adult learning theory. The opportunity to tie new learning to their experiences as community college faculty members working on campuses undergoing tremendous change provides a context to apply theory to practice. The chance the PLs had to lead sessions provided them with a chance to see what works, understanding the need to plan, and to grow in their thinking.

## **BOLMAN & DEAL LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE**

The PLs took the Bolman & Deal Leadership Questionnaire as at the beginning of the time of involvement as CAs. For those peer leaders in Cohort 1, they took the questionnaire in 2016, 2019, and in 2021. For those peer leaders in Cohort 2, they took the questionnaire in 2017, 2019, and 2021. As a reminder, a preferential leadership orientation code means that the PL is in the top 25% for the particular leadership frame. The four types of leadership orientations conceived in Bolman and Deal's framework are:

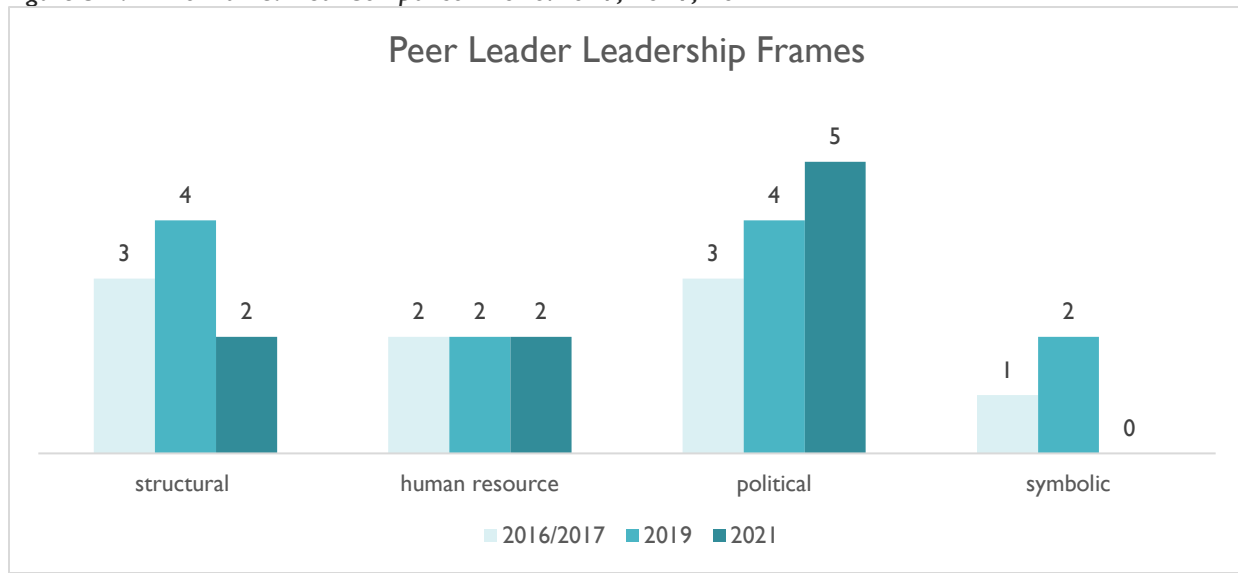
- 1) **Structural** leaders emphasize rationality, analysis, logic, facts and data. They are likely to believe strongly in the importance of clear structure and well-developed management systems. A good leader is someone who sees things clearly, makes the right decisions, has good analytic skills, and can design structures and systems that get the job done.
- 2) **Human resource** leaders emphasize the importance of people. They endorse the view that the central task management is to develop a good fit between people and organizations. They believe in the importance of coaching, participation, motivation, teamwork and good interpersonal relations. A good leader is a facilitator and participative manager who supports and empowers others.



- 3) **Political leaders** believe that managers and leaders live in a world of conflict and scarce resources. The central task of management is to mobilize the resources needed to advocate and fight for the unit's or the organization's goals and objectives. Political leaders emphasize the importance of building a power base: allies, networks, and coalitions. A good leader is an advocate and negotiator who understands politics and is comfortable with conflict.
- 4) **Symbolic leaders** believe that the essential task of management is to provide vision and inspiration. They rely on personal charisma and a flair for drama to get people excited and committed to the organizational mission. A good leader is a prophet and visionary, who uses symbols, tells stories and frames experiences in ways that give people hope and meaning. ([Bolman, 2012, p. 3](#))

Figure 5-1 below shows the changes in the PLs frame orientation since the beginning of their involvement with SAGE 2YC. Notable in the changes over time is an increase in reliance on the political frame (5; 63%) in 2021. The increase in leadership responsibilities for the PLs over the course of the project and the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic made the allocation of resources particularly important for community college leaders. Also notable in 2021 were the number of PLs who scored in the top 10% for their frame preference, which indicates an even stronger reliance on this frame of orientation. Two of the PLs scored in this range for the Structural frame, and these two individuals had a single frame orientation using the structural perspective throughout the project. Again, the influence of the pandemic may be evident here with individuals relying on processes and policies to manage their work and interactions with others. One PL scored in the top 10% for the Human Resource frame, and this frame perspective was evident throughout the project. This PL operates from a two frame perspective and includes a strong preference for the political frame too. In this case, the recent increase in strength of the human resource frame may over concern for the effects of the pandemic on people. Finally, another PL scored in the top 10% for the political frame in 2021. For this PL, a shift from the symbolic frame occurred over the course of the project to this final evidence of very strong orientation in the political frame. Again, the influence of the pandemic may indicate a rationale for this movement in preference. Only one PL operated from two frames for the entire duration of their involvement in SAGE 2YC. The peak for PLs using two frames occurred in 2019 (4; 50%).

Figure 5-1: PL Bolman & Deal Comparison 2016/2017, 2019, 2021



Beyond how the PLs identify with personal preference with the Bolman & Deal leadership frame typology were the ways in which the PLs accessed information about the frames in their leadership. For example, after Session #2, the PLs noted how what was of value in the session and reflected on areas they would like to explore more. Following are some representative quotes.

- *Simply be reminded about the frames and reevaluating my own leadership orientation. I think this was a good way of reflecting in a meaningful way on my leadership wins/losses over the last year.*
- *I really liked the presentation part, the deeper explanation of each leadership frame. I find it always surprising where I land and then people tell me from SAGE, "That is definitely you." So it's nice to get to know the strengths of each frame. It was also interesting to hear that most people see good leadership in the same way, it makes it easier to hone in on these important leadership qualities.*
- *Something I would like to explore, is planning out interactions when possible by thinking about what frame the person I am dealing with has. I tend to often throw all my cards on the table and have no poker face.*
- *I feel like I'm now thinking more strategically about who has the leadership style and political or other position to contribute, and also how to initial conversations that emphasize I want to see if what I'm proposing aligns with others' goals and work from there.*
- *Just the importance of not approaching people like they are all structural frame people.*
- *I've spent this past week really reflecting about how someone's leadership style based on Bolman-Deal might affect their frame of reference, and also how I can think about this as a tool to use to help advocate for change and how I can frame my "asks" by using this information.*

- *I am still not very good with the different frames and recognizing what frame people are coming from and how to leverage their frames. This is something I need to work on more.*

The PLs were understanding the use of the frames on a personal level and using them for their leadership.

## 6. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### LESSONS LEARNED

Several key lessons emerged in this extension project of SAGE 2YC.

- **Lesson #1: Opportunities for Dialogue Matter.** Central for the CAs and the PLs in the project were opportunities to engage in discussions with others around program topics. For the CAs on teams, this occurred as they worked on their campus program, for all CAs this occurred in the spring sessions and the summer workshops in break-out rooms and in conversations with PLs.
- **Lesson #2: Faculty Members are Informal Leaders.** True, some of the faculty involved in the C3+ project had formal leadership positions, yet the majority did not hold formal positions. Through the sessions, the faculty learned that they could lead in place and they could find like-minded faculty, staff, and administrators on campus as collaborators that held similar goals for change.
- **Lesson #3: Practice Opportunities to Lead can be Built.** The project requirement to conduct an on-campus workshop required CAs to lead an activity. Through this requirement, the CAs had an opportunity to put into practice what they were learning in the leadership sessions.
- **Lessons #4: Reflective Practice.** Though the reflective journals were not highly rated among the various programming elements, the final survey highlighted how this leadership practice was important to several of the CAs. Having the opportunity to reflect on actions (in the classroom or in leading) provides a feedback loop as individuals learn to become better leaders.
- **Lesson #5: Leadership Development is Continuous.** The Peer Leaders in the project had additional opportunities to lead sessions, to engage with different individuals, and to refine their thinking about leadership. This “second act” of leading helped them refine their own leadership approach.
- **Lesson #6: Building Space to Learn.** The programming in Cohort 3+ occurred virtually. The set times for meetings, the structure of pre-readings and active learning break-out rooms, and the building of a campus project provided the CAs and PLs with a carved out space to continue to learn.

## Recommendations

This virtual PD program provides several recommendations for faculty members and campus leaders, researchers, and funders.

1. **Faculty can be leaders:** Showing faculty members that they can be informal, as well as formal leaders on campus provides the structure to build collaborative leadership opportunities on campus. Top-level leaders at community colleges can provide opportunities for faculty to lead on committees, task forces, and on campus initiatives.
2. **Knowing leadership theory:** Faculty are skilled in their disciplinary areas and most do not have an understanding of organizational operations or leadership theory. Providing opportunities for PD to build in shared language about leadership can help faculty see themselves in leadership roles.
3. **Leading starts in-place:** Faculty members are instructional leaders in their classes and the experts on curriculum. Understanding that faculty members serve as the first (and sometimes only) contact for students requires giving them the tools to be effective classroom teachers and program leaders. Helping support adjunct faculty becomes critical in this work.
4. **Developing community:** Often faculty work can be isolating. Helping build community in the discipline, in the department, on campus, and in the region can build multiple learning opportunities. The work of community colleges is increasingly complex and requires new approaches to teaching, learning, and leading that requires increased collaboration and networking.