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Collegiate Leadership and Involvement at UCF: A Study on Leadership Limitations, Benefits, and Creating Balance

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COLLEGIATE LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT AT UCF:
A STUDY ON LEADERSHIP LIMITATIONS, BENEFITS, AND CREATING
BALANCE

by

ALYSSA J. MARCHIONE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Public Administration
in the College of Community Innovation and Education
and in the Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

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Thesis Chair: Daniel J Seigler, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between student leadership at the University of Central Florida, and the benefits and drawbacks that may result from this involvement. Student leadership is defined as the number of clubs and organizations a student is involved in and how many roles or titles a student has in those organizations. Student leadership benefits is defined as students feeling a higher sense of self efficacy, a greater chance of post-graduation success, and feeling as if they earned more opportunities due to their student leadership. Drawbacks of student leadership include feeling overworked, stressed, burnt out, and role strain. Work-life balance is defined as the number of hours a student spends working in their roles or collegiate responsibilities relative to the number of hours they spend on themselves. This study is going to explore the significance between student leadership and the benefits and drawbacks that students may experience from their leadership activities, as well as the relationship between their work-life balance and those benefits and drawbacks. This thesis will inquire upon the many facets of student leadership and the feelings that culminate due to these acquired responsibilities. For this research there are three Hypotheses. H₁: *The greater a student's involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience a higher sense of self efficacy and competence, as well as more opportunities and more confidence in post-graduate success.* H₂: *The greater a student's involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience role strain, role overload, and feel more burnt out.* H₃: *Students leaders who demonstrate the characteristics of a work-life balance are better able to reduce the negative impacts of student leadership than those who do not demonstrate the characteristics of a work-life balance.*

DEDICATION

For my mom, dad, and sister who have always empowered me to believe I can accomplish anything that I set my mind to with their encouragement, inspiration, and unconditional love.

And to my college friends with whom I shared my leadership journey; I couldn't have done this without you.

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Introduction

Student leadership can contribute a significant amount to an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, if practiced well. The skills learned from student leadership are highly transferrable to future careers, and those individuals engaged in leadership are also generally viewed as better candidates for jobs. In professional organizations, training is often provided for individuals with leadership potential. Employers are constantly looking for prospective employees with strong leadership traits, and if an individual has the potential to grow into a company leader, they are willing to train them to become one. This indicates the significance of leadership in a professional setting and the desire of student leadership knowledge to be conveyed in the workplace (Voight, 2014). Before earning a job, these leadership attributes can be acquired at the collegiate level. Acquiring those desired skills can essentially place students in a more advantageous position than others when applying for jobs. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, leadership is one of the six competencies that qualify for career readiness. By demonstrating leadership, as well as the other qualities, it can be inferred that an individual is career ready and prepared for a successful transition into the workplace (National Association of Colleges and Employers). These are a few supporting reasons that student leadership is so important for the short-term and long-term.

Leadership is defined as the office or position of a leader, but being a good leader encompasses more than just a hefty title (Leadership, 2019). According to the Center for Creative Leadership, great leaders utilize ten significant leadership skills including integrity, the ability to delegate, communication, self-awareness, gratitude, learning agility, influence, empathy, courage, and respect (2020). Being a student leader in higher education is more than

only showing up for events- it is taking an active role in planning, organizing, and executing events, as well as applying those leadership skills. These are tasks that can be extremely time consuming but ultimately rewarding since these skills are learned and enhanced over time.

However, in spite of these benefits, there are a number of negative impacts that individuals in student leadership positions may experience as well. Some questions guiding this research are:

(1) How are UCF student leaders impacted by the benefits and drawbacks of student leadership? and (2) How are they managing a work-life balance with their leadership responsibilities?

This thesis focuses on the variety of potential benefits that student leadership provides, drawbacks that may occur, and how a work-life balance contributes to those important factors. By studying both the benefits and drawbacks that student leadership can cause, it may help reduce the severity of drawbacks and increase the impact of benefits. This study may also influence current leaders to make their activities more manageable by incorporating a work-life balance into their schedule. By observing student's leadership experiences, this may allow other student leaders to resonate with them and alter their personal expectations without having to first-handedly experience those drawbacks; therefore allowing for an overall more purposeful and successful sense of themselves and their leadership. This study will help individuals understand how student leaders at the University of Central Florida feel about their student leadership experiences, give insight to those in similar leadership situations, and illustrate the role these student leaders contribute to at such a large University.

Significance of Study

This topic is of personal significance because throughout college there have been apparent moments of feeling overworked, stressed, and burnt out from the overbearing number of responsibilities that had been acquired as a student leader. In a clearly distinguishable way, many students at the University of Central Florida have followed a similar path of initiating an overbearing responsibility for themselves through leadership, which are then followed by the inevitable emotion and confusion that appear to commonly follow. It has been observed that once a work-life rhythm has been established, student leaders have an easier time committing to their activities and accomplishing important personal and professional tasks. A sufficient balance of leadership, school, personal time, and work may differ for everyone, but finding the appropriate time allocation for each commitment can clearly influence an individual's life. It is also seemingly important that personal time is a crucial component for student leadership success, because oftentimes it may not be implemented at all. From leadership, there can be a variety of feelings that derive from the abundance of acquired activities but finding that personal stability could mitigate or altogether remove the potential negative impacts.

This study will bring forward noticeable difficulties from student leadership and emphasize the importance of a work-life balance. This study will primarily benefit student leaders; however, it may benefit anyone who has daily commitments or obligations, and will provide insight to how creating a balance could change their lives. This study is important because not much research is conducted regarding leadership, even though it is a large part of functioning society (Gannouni 2018). It will provide insight and clarity for actions that student

leaders can take to be more successful in their positions, and help student leaders determine what they should add, remove, or incorporate into to their routines.

Leadership is such a crucial piece of our society, yet according to Gannouni (2018), “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (p. 67). This study will provide more insight to student leadership at the University of Central Florida from a variety of core campus leadership groups with an integrated perspective from literature insights that delve into workplace leadership, team sports leadership, and a variety of other common fields where leadership is prevalent. The combined perspectives will share how leadership can change or impact one’s life. This research will provide some insight to college-aged students regarding drawbacks, benefits, and how students at the University of central Florida are managing their leadership lifestyles.

Leadership varies with the type of group being led, and the varying respective traits considered necessary to be successful guiding different groups. Leadership also appears to be a subject matter that cannot only be taught, but for optimal implementation, it should also be applied through experience. The goal of this study is to provide students leaders with the understanding that they are not alone in their journey, and that although there are potential varying implications of student leadership, with the right amount of subjective balance, those experiences can create many opportunities and impactful, lifelong benefits.

Literature Review

Possible Benefits of Student Leadership

When determining the benefits and drawbacks of student leadership, this study is not referring to the role of leadership itself, but the tasks and responsibilities that a student may endure because they are in a student leadership role. This literature review starts by examining the potential benefits of student leadership. Leaders are important because they are the individuals that can be tremendously influential, and their primary role should be to inspire, help, and guide their followers. Although there could be drawbacks from taking on too much responsibility, there is also the potential to leave a remarkable impact on others and the community, as well as the student them self. According to Cetin (2016), “effective leadership means more than simply knowing what to do as well as knowing when, how, and why to do it” (p.676). Leadership is much more than what may appear on the surface; someone may know the proper action to take but pursuing the additional step of executing that action is what makes them stand out as a leader. It has been proven that student leadership has a positive impact in students’ lives based on a meta-analysis of over 5000 different studies (Cetin, 2016). According to Gannouni (2018), “leaders are considered inspirational role models in organizations that people trust and follow” (p.66), and that is seemingly the most important aspect of being in a leadership role.

Self-efficacy is the ability for an individual to execute tasks and acquire the necessary results. A study of 319 university students was conducted to determine whether leadership had a direct effect on GPA, intention to persist, and self-efficacy. While the results failed to show an impact of GPA correlating with leadership, results did show there was an effect on students’ self-

efficacy as well as a student's autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thus furthering them to persist in their own ways. While there may be instances of alternative effects from leadership, there are clearly many positive outcomes; self-efficacy being a strong example of the many potential benefits of student leadership (Gannouni, p.77, 2018).

H₁: The greater a student's involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience a higher sense of self efficacy and competence, as well as more opportunities and more confidence in post-graduate success.

Possible Drawbacks of Student Leadership

A study that was completed with individuals who took on the role of captain in a team sport, and the effects it had on that individual over time, showed that there was a significant decrease in the individual's performance from the time they started as a member on the team to the time they pursued the team's captain role and thereafter. The study concluded that one of the reasons this may be occurring is due to "role overload" (David Day, 2004). Day (2004) defines "role overload" as occurring when "individuals take on more roles than they have the time, energy, or resources to handle" (p.576). He also found that once a role becomes more stressful than recreational or educational, it may result in "anxiety, tension, and frustration creating a condition known as role strain" (p.577). Taking on a leadership role in a sport that an individual previously played recreationally has the potential to create these consequential feelings (Day, 2004).

When observing involved college students that are in one or more leadership roles, it is evident how increased tenseness and the possibility for role strain and role overload can become a large part of students' lives (David Day, 2004). It also seems much easier to become burnt out

when taking on many opportunities (Kosiarek, 2016). Another pivotal point made by Day (2004) is that those taking on leadership roles in more formal positions such as on college campuses, at work, or other daily functions, “usually involves some costs to individual leaders” (p. 581). Essentially, this study exposes how taking on a leadership role may be more harmful to a person than if an individual had not taken on a leadership role. This proves the significance of ensuring there is balance to help prevent the feelings of burn out, role overload, or role strain.

H₂: The greater a student’s involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience role strain, role overload, and feel more burnt out.

Leadership Practices for Capitalizing on Benefits and Overcoming Drawbacks

A study of 72 Harvard senior leaders showed that almost all of them felt burnt out (Kosiarek, p.2, 2016). According to Harms (2017), “burnout” includes three symptoms that are indicative of this situation: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Since there is such little satisfaction, what can be done to alter this perception to increase attitudes and morale when students are feeling overworked, burnout, and no longer wanting to pursue any leadership interests? The answer of how to be a great leader may simply begin with the need for individuals to understand themselves in order to impact others. There are many ways to avoid or remove the drawbacks of leadership while simultaneously focusing on the benefits and impactful processes. A work-life balance may be the answer, but it is about the execution and effort to create a balance that makes it effective. According to Mattock (2015), “work-life balance is something that is both hard to define and hard to achieve” (p. 306). It is difficult to define because balance is relative, but incorporating down-time and relaxation into a busy schedule is crucial for busy leaders. A study including 202 male and 200 female

participants proved a correlation between leadership aspiration and a work-life balance; it was concluded that there is a significant increase in desire for leadership aspirations when work-life balance initiatives are incorporated (Fritz, 2018, p.859). Not only are there countless benefits to creating a balance in one's life, but this study supports the theory that having a balance increases one's likelihood that they will experience the desire to pursue leadership. If a work-life balance is a responsible source for individuals to have a desire to pursue leadership, it can be inferred that it is fundamental to create a balance while in a leadership position as well.

H₃: Students leaders who demonstrate the characteristics of a work-live balance are better able to reduce the negative impacts of student leadership than those who do not demonstrate the characteristics of a work-life balance

Methodology

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between student leadership at the University of Central Florida, and the benefits, drawbacks, and if there is a relationship between work-life balance and benefits or drawbacks. Student leadership is defined as the number of clubs and organizations a student is involved in, and how many roles or titles a student has in those organizations. Student leadership benefits is defined as students feeling a higher sense of self efficacy, a greater chance of post-graduation success, and feeling as if they earned more opportunities due to their collegiate leadership. Student leadership drawbacks include feeling overworked, stressed, burnt out, and role strain. Work-life balance is defined as the number of hours a student spends working in their roles or collegiate responsibilities relative to the number of hours they spend on themselves.

Ideally students that create a balance will feel comfortable completing daily involvement activities, school activities, and personal activities. To test the hypotheses proposed above, this study will explore student involvement in a variety of Registered Students Organizations at UCF. It will investigate the values and priorities of individuals in those organizations to better understand the true benefits, drawbacks, and the current impact from personal work-life balance to those benefits and drawbacks. The results will hopefully allow for a better understanding of the accountability and responsibility these students willfully take on and how it affects their lives.

Measurement

Student leadership will be measured in relation to the number of clubs and/or organizations they are involved in, and the number of roles a student has. In the survey, students will be asked to share information regarding their involvement and roles, and will have answer choices 1 through 5 for the number of clubs and/or organizations they are involved in. Answer choices will start at 1 being the lowest number of clubs/organizations an individual can be involved in and 5 being the highest number. They would also have the ability to answer “other” for number of clubs and/or organizations they are involved in which would indicate that they are involved in more than 5 clubs/organizations. In order to participate in this study, students were required to be members of at least one club and/or organization so there is no answer choice of “none” for this section. Students will have the same answer choices for the following question regarding their leadership titles with the exception that an answer option of “none” is also provided, as students were not required to have a leadership title in order to participate in this study. The ability to respond as “other” to the number of leadership roles/titles they hold would indicate a student has more than 5 leadership roles/titles. A combined score of both questions will result in a student leadership score. A score of 1 would indicate a low student leadership score and a score of 10 or higher would indicate a high student leadership score.

Student leadership benefits will be measured through a Likert scale including answer choices of strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree or disagree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. Each answer choice is worth a different number of points; strongly agree=5, somewhat agree=4, neither agree nor disagree=3, somewhat disagree=2, and strongly disagree=1. There will be three questions which will relate to student leadership benefits and will

include statements regarding self-efficacy, opportunities, and post graduate success optimism resulting from their student involvement. A combined score of all three statements will indicate whether students feel there are benefits to student leadership or if they feel there are little to no benefits from student leadership. A score of 3-6 is low score and would indicate that students feel there are not benefits to student leadership. A median score of 7-11 would indicate that they feel some benefits from their student leadership. A high score ranging from 12-15 would indicate that students feel that there are strong benefits to their leadership.

Drawbacks of student leadership will also be measured through a Likert scale including answer choices of strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree or disagree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. Each answer choice is worth a different number of points; strongly agree=5, somewhat agree=4, neither agree nor disagree=3, somewhat disagree=2, and strongly disagree=1. There will be 4 questions relating to the drawbacks of student leadership and will concern feelings of being overworked, stressed, burnout, and role strain. A combined score of all four questions will indicate whether a student feels strongly about the drawbacks of leadership or if there are no feelings of drawbacks from this involvement. A higher score will indicate a more significant impact of drawbacks whereas a lower score will indicate little to no feeling of drawbacks. A score of 4-9 is low score and would indicate that students feel there are little to no drawbacks of student leadership. A median score of 10-14 would indicate that they feel some drawbacks from their student leadership. A high ranging score from 15-20 would indicate that students feel there are strong drawbacks to their leadership.

Work life balance will be measured through questions comparing the numbers of hours a student spends each week in their leadership role versus how many hours a student spends each

week on themselves. This will be calculated by taking the number of hours each student spends in their leadership role and subtracting how many hours they spend on themselves. The number of hours students spend on their leadership activities and their personal activities will be recorded from a weekly number of hours committed. If the subtraction of the number of hours spent on oneself from the number of hours spent on leadership activities is equal, then this would indicate a work-life balance of leadership and personal activities; meaning their personal time and involvement are equivalent. If a student spends more hours in leadership activities each week than on themselves, that would indicate a negative balance between a student's leadership and personal life. If a student spends more hours on themselves each week than in their leadership, that would indicate a positive balance between a student's leadership and personal life. The equation being used to determine a student's work-life balance score is:

$$\text{Number of hours spent on leadership activities} - \text{Number of hours spent on personal activities} = \text{Work-Life Balance Score}$$

Student work-life balance scores will consist of three possible scores: positive, negative, and equal. To analyze the relationship between student leadership benefits and drawbacks in relation to students' work-life balance, after each work-life balance score is determined each of those positive, negative, or equal scores will be paired with the individual scores for student leadership benefits and student leadership drawbacks. Once the scores of positive work-life balance, negative work-life balance, and equal work-life balance are matched with their respective individual from the benefits and drawbacks scores, scores will be added up from each work-life balance section of students based on whether they scored positive, negative or equal. This will be done with both the student leadership benefits scores and the student leadership

drawback scores. Once this is complete, scores from each work-life balance section will be added up and averaged from both previously calculated student leadership benefits scores and student leadership drawback scores. Each of these scores will distinguish students work-life balance, and how that balance has benefitted them or how it has impacted the students feelings of drawbacks. The number calculated for student leadership benefits will be the separated average of students who scored an equal work-life balance, positive work-life balance, or negative work-life balance. The number calculated for student leadership drawbacks will be the separated average of students who scored an equal work-life balance, positive work-life balance, or negative work-life balance.

Students will also have the opportunity to provide their name at the end of the survey which would allow for individual results to be compared during the analysis.

Target Population of This Study

The target population chosen for this study are students who have identified themselves as having a role as a member or a leadership position with UCF's College of Business Ambassadors (COBA), LEAD Scholars Academy (LSA), President's Leadership Council (PLC), or Student Government Association (SGA). This target population was chosen because these are typically students that have a wide variety of involvement and diverse backgrounds, consisting of approximately a few hundred students of the UCF population. Additionally, by choosing these strong student organizations, it will allow for scalability of this study to larger populations later. Future studies could progress to generalize and compare different Universities leadership and how it effects their students. It could also be compared by impact of leadership and overall University size, or organization size specifically. Specific attention is given to students of those

organizations because they are comprised of eligible, involved, and distinguished student leaders at the University of Central Florida. It is important that those who are involved and those who hold positions in registered student organizations are surveyed so a comparison can be made between time commitments, drawbacks, and benefits if one is prevalent.

Timeline for Completing Study

This study will consist of two parts; the same survey will be distributed twice to students in the organizations of SGA, LSA, COBA, and PLC. The reason for distributing the survey twice throughout the semester of Fall 2019 is to gauge student's student leadership opinions at different times throughout the semester and record if they vary. The Institutional Review Board received the survey within first few weeks of Fall classes, as it takes 2-6 weeks for them to approve the document. The first survey was distributed to students of SGA, LSA, COBA, and PLC through their designated Knights emails on October 11, 2019, and those students were asked to complete the first survey within the week. This data was analyzed throughout the month of November and December, and reviewed when needed. The second survey was distributed to students designated Knights emails on December 2, 2019 to members of SGA, LSA, COBA, and PLC and those students were asked to complete the second survey within the week. This data was analyzed throughout the duration of January.

The survey was distributed through Qualtrics which is an electronic surveying site. During each of those weeks students responded to surveys regarding their stress levels, responsibility, free- time, benefits, and gave an overall general evaluation of their student leadership and how it had effected them at that point in time during the Fall 2019 semester. During January and February of Spring 2020 the data was analyzed looking for individual results

and comparative results observing the similarities and differences between data collected from survey 1 and survey 2. This timeline permits a comfortable amount of time for creating and conducting the surveys as well as analyzing and expressing the results.

Variables

Independent Variable

In this study, student leadership at the University of Central Florida is the independent variable. These organizations have been selected based on their status as a Registered Student Organizations at the University of Central Florida. Specifically, this survey will utilize students from select organizations including SGA, PLC, COBA, and LSA. Each individual responding to the survey will have the opportunity to share if they have earned an executive title, director title or committee role (e.g., Marketing Committee Director, Justice of the Judicial Branch, etc.) and they will also be able to share if they are serving as a member of the organization.

Dependent Variables

This study is looking at the impact of student leadership in three main areas: benefits, drawbacks, and work-life balance. The dependent variables in each of these areas is detailed below.

- The dependent variables for *benefits of student leadership*: higher sense of self-efficacy, more opportunities, feelings of success for post-graduation
- The dependent variables for *drawbacks of student leadership*: increased feelings of burnout, role strain, stress, and feeling overworked

- The dependent variables for *characteristics of a student maintaining their work-life balance* include: lower impact of leadership drawbacks, more impact of leadership benefits

Procedures

1. Develop a demographics and Likert Scale for the targeted collegiate leadership groups
2. Provide the survey to the IRB for review and approval
3. Enter the approved survey data and questions into Qualtrics
4. Distribute Qualtrics link via Knights email to chosen student populations
5. Allow one week for completion of the survey and for responses to be recorded
6. Collect the data retrieved from these students through Qualtrics
7. Analyze the data through Qualtrics to observe any correlations in the data proving a statistical significance or lack thereof
8. Conclude the information is accurate and valid
9. Repeat steps 4-8 for part 2 of the study which would enable the comparison of data from two different instances of the semester. If you do not wish to compare results, then only complete steps 1-8 one time.

Analysis

After students have responded and results are recorded for both surveys, then the data was transferred into an excel document to easily read and compare results. This data was also viewed in multiple Qualtrics analysis compilations, and the results were compared to see if there were any statistical significances within the survey result statements. This data was compiled in a variety of ways to more elaborately understand the results; it was sectioned by school year,

number of organizations a student is involved in, and hours a week a student invests in their involvement. These survey questions will be tested at a 95% confidence level. To read the results, it is crucial to understand that there is only a statistical significance when the two-tailed test is less than or equal to .05.

Ethics and Limitations

Each student leader will choose to respond to the 15-question survey which may take a maximum of 10-15 minutes. Based upon the Belmont report from the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (2018), which focuses on ensuring beneficence, justice, and respect for persons, there are no foreseen ethical concerns of this study or survey. These students were chosen based upon their current collegiate involvement, so there is already a relationship between the questions they are being asked and their roles; this means that there should not be a limitation in regard to the type of sample population being surveyed. A limitation of this study may be that the group chosen to represent the larger population of the University of Central Florida may be unproportionate to the number of responses. Another limitation may be that only the University of Central Florida was studied so it is only representative of the students that attend a University of that size and background. For this study, the survey was distributed twice throughout the semester, once mid-semester and once during finals week. The results from finals week may represent distorted information about leadership due to the increased stress that is most likely felt during finals week. Distributing the survey at that time also resulted in a low response rate to the survey. For future studies, it would be best to distribute the survey prior to finals week to mitigate the result distortion of finals week and an increased response rate.

Budget and Schedule

Table 1
Budget and Schedule

Procedure	Budget	Schedule
1. Develop a demographics and Likert Scale for the targeted student leaders	\$0.00	1 week
2. Provide the survey to the IRB for review and approval	\$0.00	2 weeks-6 weeks
3. Enter the approved survey data and questions into Qualtrics	\$0.00	1 day
4. Distribute Qualtrics link via Knights email to chosen student populations	\$0.00	1 day
5. Allow one week for the completion of the survey and for responses to be recorded	\$0.00	1 week
6. Collect the data retrieved from these students through Qualtrics	\$0.00	1 day
7. Analyze the data through Qualtrics to observe any correlations in the data proving a statistical significance or lack thereof	\$0.00	2 months
8. Conclude the information is accurate and valid	\$0.00	1 day
9. Repeat steps 4-8 for part 2 of the study to analyze information from 2 different times in the semester. If you do not wish to compare results, then only complete steps 1-8 one time.	\$0.00	

Discussion

Survey 1 Analysis

For the first survey which was sent out on October 11th, 2019, the results yielded 58 responses. Of these responses 15 students were freshmen, 4 were sophomores, 14 were juniors, 24 were seniors, and 1 was other. From these students, 11 were involved in 1 club/organization, 16 were involved in 2 clubs/organizations, 13 were involved in 3 clubs/organizations, 9 were involved in 4 clubs/organizations, 7 were involved in 5 clubs/organizations and 2 were involved in other. These students were involved in over 40 different student organizations outside of the 4 chosen to be surveyed including roles such as the Director of Pre-med AMSA, Area Council Marketing Chair, Student Body President, Resident Assistant, Greek Leadership Institute, Knight-Thon, and Fundraising Director. Of the 58 students, 44.8% spend 0-5 hours working in their leadership role, 21.69% spend 6-10 hours working in their leadership role, 13.7% spend 11-15 hours in their leadership role, 3.4% spend 16-20 hours in their leadership role, 5% spend 21-25 hours in their leadership role, 5% spend 26-30 hours in their leadership role, and 5% spend more than 30 hours working in their leadership role on a weekly basis. A majority of students, 51%, said that 6-10 hours would be the perfect amount of time working in their leadership role and 66.52% of students were spending 10 hours or less per week in their role.

When analyzing the results for H₁, there was not a statistical significance between the amount of a students involvement and the benefits of feeling a higher sense of self efficacy, more opportunities, and post-graduate success. For this hypothesis, the P value was greater than .05, which indicates that there is not a statistical significance between the amount of a students involvement and the benefits of leadership.

For H₂, there was not a statistical significance between the amount of a students involvement and the drawbacks from student leadership including stress, feeling burnout, role strain, and role overload. For this hypothesis, the P value was greater than .05 which indicates that there is not a statistical significance between the amount of a students involvement and the drawbacks experienced from their leadership.

For H₃, there was a statistical significance observed between student leaders who had established a good work-life balance, and the ability to mitigate drawbacks as opposed to students who had not created a work-life balance. The P value for this hypothesis was less than .05 which indicates that there is a statistical significance between establishing a good work- life balance and lessening drawbacks from student leadership involvement.

Another finding from this research was that there is a statistical significance between work-life balance and benefits of student leadership. The P value for these variables were less than .05 which indicates that there is a statistical significance between establishing a work-life balance and benefits from student leadership. This further reinforces the idea that individuals who establish a good work-life balance feel the most benefits from their student leadership.

In relation to these findings, it can be observed that any amount of leadership offers benefits and regardless of the extent of a student's involvement, it is not indicative of feeling more benefits. Also based off the data from the surveyed population, more leadership involvement does not indicate that a student will experience more drawbacks; the data showed that students who received the lowest student leadership scores actually had the most survey responses for high student leadership drawbacks.

Student Leadership Analysis

Student leadership is defined as the number of clubs and organizations a student is involved in and how many roles or titles a student has in those organizations. The chart reflects the Student Leadership Scores, ranging from 1-10. A score of 1 is the lowest possible student leadership score and a score of 10 is the highest possible student leadership score.

Table 2
Student Leadership Scores

Student Leadership Score	Number of Students who received score
1-3	27
4-7	27
8-10	2
Other	2

Degree of Application: 10=high, 9=high, 8=high, 7=median, 6=median, 5=median, 4=median, 3=low, 2=low, 1=low

A student leadership score of 1-3 falls on the lower end of the score spectrum and 27 students received a low student leadership score. A low student leadership score means a student is involved in 1-3 organizations and/or leadership titles, and has the lowest student leadership score. A student leadership score of 4-7 is a median score and 27 students received the median student leadership score which indicates some student leadership involvement. A median student leadership score means a student is involved in 4-7 organizations and/or leadership titles. A score of 8-10 is a high student leadership score and only 4 students received that score; this score indicates that a student is the most involved and that these students are involved in 8-10 organizations and/or leadership titles. A total of 2 students identified themselves as “other” but did not fill in the “other” column to reflect the number of clubs/organizations they were involved in so the results cannot be identified.

Student Leadership Benefits Analysis

H₁: The greater a student's involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience a higher sense of self efficacy and competence, as well as more opportunities and more confidence in post-graduate success.

Student leadership benefits are defined as students feeling a higher sense of self efficacy, a greater chance of post-graduation success, and feeling as if they earned more opportunities due to their collegiate leadership. The chart reflects the Student Benefits Scores ranging from 1-15. A score of 3 is a low student benefits score and a score of 15 is a high student benefits score.

Table 3
Student Benefits Scores

Student Benefits Score	Number of Students who received score
3-6	1
7-11	9
12-15	46
Incomplete Response	1
No Response	1

Degree of Application: 15=high, 14=high, 13=high, 12= high, 11= median, 10=median, 9=median, 8=median, 7=median, 6=low, 5=low, 4=low, 3=low

A score of 3-6 is low score and indicates that students feel there are little to no benefits from student leadership; 1 student received this score. A median score of 7-11 indicates that students feel some benefits from their student leadership; 9 students received this score. A high ranging score from 12-15 indicates that students feel strongly that there are benefits to their leadership; 46 students received this score. A total of 1 student recorded an incomplete response so their score could not accurately be totaled without being incorrectly reflected on the scale, and

a total of 1 student did not record any responses for this section in regard to student leadership benefits.

Of the 46 students who recorded high benefits from student leadership involvement, 24 students received median student leadership scores, 20 students received low student leadership scores and both students who received high student leadership scores felt high benefits. Students who received median student leadership scores were in the group that recorded the most responses in the high benefits scores. Overall, 82% of the surveyed population that recorded both a student leadership score and a student leadership benefits score, received high student leadership benefits scores. Regardless of the level of involvement, students from all student leadership scores had felt the benefits from student leadership. Only 1 student recorded a low student leadership benefits score but did not record a student leadership score so the amount of leadership involvement this individual engaged in could not be compared to see if there was a relationship between the amount of their involvement and impact to their low benefits score. Overall, this concludes that it is not necessarily the amount of involvement that impacts the benefits, but that being generally involved in student leadership results in student leadership benefits.

Student Leadership Drawbacks Analysis

H₂: The greater a student's involvement in student leadership, the more likely they are to experience role strain, role overload, and feel more burnt out.

Drawbacks of student leadership is defined as feeling overworked, stressed, burnt out, and role strain. The chart reflects the student leadership drawbacks Scores, ranging from 1-20. A

score of 1 is a lowest possible student leadership drawback score and a score of 20 is the highest possible student leadership drawback score.

Table 4
Student Drawbacks Scores

Student Leadership Drawbacks Score	Number of Students who received score
4-9	9
10-14	25
15-20	23
No Response	1

Degree of Application: 20=high, 19=high, 18=high, 17= high, 16=high, 15=median, 14=median, 13=median, 12=median, 11= median, 10=median, 9=low, 8=low, 7=low, 6=low, 5=low, 4=low

A score of 4-9 is a low drawback score and indicates that students feel there are little to no drawbacks of student leadership; 9 students received this score. A median score of 10-14 indicates that students feel some drawbacks from their student leadership; 25 students received this score. A high ranging score from 15-20 would indicate that students feel strongly that there are drawbacks to their leadership; 23 students received this score. A total of 1 student did not record any responses for this section in regard to student leadership drawbacks.

Of the 9 students who recorded low student leadership drawbacks, 4 students received low student leadership scores and 4 students received median student leadership scores. A total of 1 student did not record a student leadership score so the relationship cannot be determined.

Of the 25 students who recorded median student leadership drawbacks scores, 10 students received low student leadership scores, 13 students received median student leadership scores, and 1 student received a high student leadership score. A total of 1 student did not record

a student leadership score so the relationship cannot be determined. The students who received median student leadership scores also recorded the most median amount of drawback responses.

Of the 23 students who recorded high student leadership drawbacks, 12 students received low student leadership scores, 10 students received median student leadership scores, and 1 student scored a high student leadership score. The majority of students who felt the most drawbacks came from the group of student leaders who received the lowest student leadership scores; presumably the least involved group. Of the 2 students who received high student leadership scores, 1 student scored a median drawback score and the other student scored a high drawbacks score- neither of the 2 student who are considerably the most involved felt low drawbacks.

Student Leadership Work-Life Balance Analysis

H₃: Students leaders who demonstrate the characteristics of a work-live balance are better able to reduce the negative impacts of student leadership than those who do not demonstrate the characteristics of a work-life balance.

Work-life balance is defined as the number of hours a student spends working in their student leadership roles or responsibilities, relative to the number of hours they spend on themselves. This is recorded by calculating the number of hours each student recorded for spending in their student leadership roles and subtracting the number of hours they spent on themselves. If the number of hours they spent on themselves is greater than the number of hours spent in student leadership, then it is a positive work-life balance score. If the number of hours individuals spent on leadership is greater than the number of hours spent on themselves, then it is a negative work-life balance score. If the number of hours individuals spend on themselves is

equal to the number of hours spent on student leadership, then they have achieved an equal work- life balance score. A positive-work life balance score and an equal work-life balance score are considered to be optimal; this indicates that students with these scores have established a good work-life balance, compared to a negative work-life balance score which is the least desired of the work-life balance scores and indicates a poor work-life balance. Individuals who demonstrate a good work-life balance are those who spend an equal amount of time on themselves and their leadership (an equal work-life balance score) or those who spend more time on themselves than their leadership (a positive work-life balance score).

Table 5
Work-Life Balance Scores

Student Work-Life Balance Scores	# of students
Equal Work-Life Balance (Time Spent on Self = Time Spent on Leadership Activities)	18
Positive Work-Life Balance (Time Spent on Self > Time Spent on Leadership Activities)	18
Negative Work-Life Balance (Time Spent on Self < Time Spent on Leadership Activities)	21

Work life balance and Student Leadership Benefits

To determine the relationship between students work-life balance and student leadership benefits, the average for student leadership benefits in relation to work- life balance scores were calculated. The score range for student leadership benefits was 3-15; a score of 3-6 is a low score student leadership benefits score, 7-11 is a median student leadership benefits score, and 12-15 is a high student leadership benefits score.

Table 6
Work-Life Balance Student Benefit Scores Average

Score	Average
Equal	13.5
Positive	12.4
Negative	14.2

The average student leadership benefits score for students with equal work-life balance was 13.5, the average student leadership benefits score for students with negative work-life balance was 14.2, and the average student leadership benefits score for students with positive work-life balance was 12.4. All student leadership benefits scores are high scores; it can be concluded that students who have an equal, positive, or negative work-life balance score feel strongly about benefits from their student leadership. This means students who spend an equal amount of time on themselves and leadership, students who spend more time on themselves than leadership, and students who spend more time on leadership than themselves all feel strongly about student leadership benefits.

Overall, students who scored a positive, negative, or equal work-life balance score, all averaged high for a student leadership benefits score, however students who spent more time on their leadership activities than themselves scored highest. Students who spent more time on themselves than on their leadership activities scored lowest on their student leadership benefits score, and students who spent an equal amount of time on their leadership and themselves scored the median of the three scores. Since students who spend more time on their leadership than themselves scored the highest, it can be inferred that this may be due to acknowledging the benefits more from all the time spent dedicated to their roles.

Work life balance and Student Leadership Drawbacks

To determine the relationship between students work-life balance and student leadership drawbacks, the average for student leadership drawbacks in relation to work- life balance scores were calculated. The score range for student leadership drawbacks is 4-20; a score of 4-9 is a low student leadership drawbacks score, 10-14 is a median student leadership drawback score, and 15-20 is a high student leadership drawback score.

Table 7
Work-Life Balance Student Drawbacks Scores Average

Score	Average
Equal	13.7
Positive	12.5
Negative	14

The average student leadership drawback score for students with equal work-life balance was 13.7, the average student leadership drawback score for students with positive work-life balance was 12.5, and the average student leadership drawback score for students with negative work-life balance was 14. All student leadership drawback scores from each work-life balance category are median scores; it can be concluded that students who have an equal, positive, or negative work-life balance score feel a considerable amount of drawbacks from their student leadership. This means students who spend an equal amount of time on themselves and leadership, students who spend more time on themselves than leadership, and students who spend more time on leadership than themselves all feel some drawbacks from student leadership. Although all scores are in the middle of the scoring spectrum, students who spent more time on leadership than themselves felt the most drawbacks.

Based on H₃, students who had a positive work life balance score or equal work-life balance score felt the least drawbacks compared to those who had a negative work-life balance score. Students who spent more time on themselves than leadership activities scored the lowest for drawbacks of student leadership and students who spent more time on their leadership than themselves felt the most drawbacks from student leadership. This supports H₃; students who demonstrated a good work-life balance experienced less drawbacks than those who do not demonstrate a good work-life balance. Overall, more students have a good work-life balance from the 58 responses than those who did not. From the responses, 36 students displayed a good work-life balance whereas 21 students did not.

Of the 36 students who established a good work-life balance with a positive or equal work-life balance score, 25 students received high student benefit scores, 8 students received median student benefit scores, and 1 student recorded low student benefits score. A total of 2 students did not record a student leadership benefits score so the relationship for those 2 could not be determined. According to the data, 74% of students who displayed a good work-life balance also felt strong benefits from their student leadership. From the same group of 36 students who established a good work-life balance, 5 students received a low student drawback score, 17 students received a median student drawback score, and 13 students received a high student drawback score. A total of 1 student did not respond to the drawbacks section of the survey so the relationship between work-life balance and drawbacks could not be determined for this individual. A majority of the drawback scores for students with a good-work life balance is a median drawback score at 49% of the surveyed population, as opposed to high score which consists of 37% of the surveyed population. Ultimately, the majority students that established a

work life balance were able to mitigate the highest degree of drawbacks from their leadership involvement.

Out of the 21 students who have not established a good work-life balance, 10 students received high student drawback scores, 7 received median student drawback scores, and 4 students received low student drawback scores. Nearly half of the surveyed population from this group with a poor work-life balance received high student leadership drawback scores resulting in 48% of the group. This group with a poor work life balance had an increased percentage of their group experiencing more drawbacks by 11%, compared to those students who had displayed a good work-life balance. However, from the same group of 21 student leaders who had not established a good work-life balance, 20 students received high student benefit scores, and 1 student received a median student benefit score. Although these students had not established a good work-life balance, 95% of this population with a poor work-life balance received high student benefit scores.

Survey 2 Discussion

The second survey consisting of the same questions was sent out on December 2, 2019 and students were given one week to respond. This survey group yielded 15 responses; this is a low response rate. It is believed this is due to poor timing requesting survey completion during finals week. In addition, finals week is a time of stress for all students and adds an extraneous variable to the research. Due to the low number of responses received, the data recorded will not be expressed.

Conclusion

For this study, the objective was to understand the benefits, drawbacks, and the work-life balance that coincides with student leadership at the University of Central Florida. Each leadership experience is different, and through this research that becomes a more apparent reality.

For this study, another magnified objective was to be able to understand the impact that student leadership has on students at the University of Central Florida by emphasizing the potential benefits and drawbacks, analyzing how many students leaders practice a good work-life balance, and evaluating how that impacts their ability to mitigate the drawbacks and strengthen the benefits. It was discovered that students from all levels of leadership involvement received high student benefits scores and felt that their leadership experiences strongly provided benefits including increased post-graduate success, opportunities, and higher self-efficacy; 74% of student respondents yielded those results.

When observing student leadership scores and student leadership drawbacks, it was discovered that students who scored the lowest student leadership scores also scored the highest student drawback scores, contrary to H₂ which predicted that those who were the most involved would experience the most drawbacks. The least involved group of the three student leadership score groups received the highest amount of high student drawback scores.

H₃ predicted that student leaders who have established a work-life balance will be able to mitigate the drawbacks compared to those who have not established a good work-life balance; this was discovered to be true. While the group of 36 students who established a work-life balance did not completely eliminate high student drawback scores from their results, they

experienced less high drawback scores relative to the size of their group than those who did not establish a work-life balance. From the outcome of this study, it is encouraged that all students involved in student leadership create and maintain a work-life balance to increase the benefits and mitigate the drawbacks of student leadership. It is also recommended that students involved in student leadership receive some variation of work-life balance training to mitigate the drawbacks. Examples of this may include stress management workshops, learning how to create a balanced schedule, or methods of relaxation for those with a busy schedule. This is recommended because work-life balance training may help individuals create a better work-life balance, therefore reducing drawbacks and increasing benefits.

Going forward, some future recommendations for research would be focusing on the specific type of a student leaders leadership involvement rather than the number of organizations or roles an individual has. An individual who has multiple roles as a member in a variety of organizations may not feel as stressed as an individual who is involved in one demanding role in one organization. Since students who had the lowest student leadership scores received the highest number of responses for high drawbacks, it can be inferred that this may be due to individuals who are involved in 1-3 organizations or roles feel more stress due to their extent of involvement rather than those who may be a member but not have much responsibility in multiple organizations. Another recommendation is considering students majors as potentially determining factors of student leadership stress levels; differing majors may produce varying factors that might subconsciously influence the amount of stress reflected presumptively from student's leadership. Students that are considered to be pursuing more challenging majors can be compared to those students who are pursuing considerably less difficult majors, and that study

may show the impact that one's college major may have on their student leadership involvement drawbacks and benefits.

This study provided significant insight to how student leaders are impacted from their leadership activities, and how they have managed their leadership. Hopefully, these finding can give insight to other student leaders and encourage them to find their personal balance, as well as provide a new perspective for them to reflect upon.

APPENDIX A
STUDENT LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to identify both positive and negative impacts of student leadership at UCF. This includes identifying any benefits and limitations to being involved in student leadership, and how well you balance your academic responsibilities with your student leadership responsibilities.

Ethics Statement:

You are free to omit any questions you are not comfortable with answering and can stop this survey at any time you choose. There are no rewards for participating in this survey or penalties for not participating in this survey. You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

Directions:

You are being invited to take part in a research study because you have been identified as being in a student leadership position here at the University of Central Florida. Whether you take part is up to you.

Two online surveys will be administered for this study. One at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester and one towards the end of this semester. The survey you are being asked to complete today should take you approximately 10-15 minutes of your time and can be completed at any time until the survey window closes. The answers to both surveys will be compared to determine the impacts of student leadership at UCF.

There is a place for you to self-identify on this survey. This allows us to compare your answers on both surveys; however, providing your name is completely up to you. There is no reward for providing your name or penalty for not providing your name. If you do decide to provide your name, only the investigators will be able to connect your name with the answers you provide. If you do self-identify, your responses will be assigned a random number for your confidentiality. Your name and random number will be deleted after five years.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful comments and suggestions.

Survey Questions:

What is your class ranking?	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Prefer not to say		
How many student clubs/organizations are you involved in here at UCF?	1	2	3	4	5	Other	
For this survey, a student leadership role/title is defined as serving on an executive board or in an executive position (e.g. president, vice president, marketing coordinator/director). Based on this definition, how many leadership roles/titles do you have?	None	1	2	3	4	5	Other
Please list your student leadership titles:							
How many hours each week would you say you spend working in your student leadership role, responsibilities, or activities?	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	26-30	More than 30 hours	
In your opinion, what is the “perfect” amount of time (hours) a student should dedicate to leadership roles/activities per week?	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	26-30	More than 30 hours	
Between school and leadership activities how many hours on a weekly basis is spent on yourself?	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	26-30	More than 30 hours	

For these last set of questions, please select the word that best describes how you are feeling as a student/student leader here at UCF.

I feel overworked.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel stressed about the activities I am involved in.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel burnt out. (burnt out definition : the feeling of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel role strain due to my leadership involvement. (role strain definition : once a role becomes more stressful than recreational or educational, the feeling that results in anxiety, tension, and frustration)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel a higher sense of self-efficacy due to my leadership roles and experiences. (self-efficacy definition : the ability for an individual to execute tasks and acquire the necessary results)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My student leadership experiences have given me opportunities I would not have without being involved in student leadership here at UCF.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel my UCF student leadership/involvement better prepares me for life after graduation than I would be without this experience.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Optional: You have the option of providing your name here. Whether or not you provide your name is completely up to you. There is no reward for providing your name or negative impact to you for not providing your name.

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