

2009-2010 LEAP Program Annual Report

Office of Undergraduate Studies

The University of Utah



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Executive Summary

LEAP had another great year in 2009-2010, offering 32 sections for 958 students (including students in the Multiyear and Architecture LEAP programs). This number of students represents a 42% increase over last year's enrollment! (See Appendix for an article in The Daily Utah Chronicle about enrollment increases.) In order to accommodate these extra students, we raised the per section enrollment caps to 35 (from 30), with the understanding that we will respond to future student demand by offering more sections. To that end, we have hired a new faculty member for the 2010-11 academic year, Dr. Matt Bradley, who currently teaches in Honors and at the AMES School. The addition of Dr. Bradley brings our number of faculty to 13. Student satisfaction with LEAP through the enrollment increase remained high, with 80% of the students who responded to the 2010 LEAP Spring Survey reporting that their expectations were met or even exceeded by their LEAP experience!

A notable development this year concerned the status of LEAP faculty at the university. In March the Academic Senate passed a rule which allows LEAP



professors (along with those affiliated with other programs on campus such as Gender Studies, Honors, Writing and Ethnic Studies) to apply for faculty status at the lecturer rank. This rule, Rule and Policy 6-310, replaces an ill-defined system that was inconsistently implemented by different departments and programs, a system that left most LEAP professors stranded at the level of Associate Instructor, from which no advancement was possible. (See Appendix for a copy of the Rule and Policy.) By contrast, the lecturer rank permits steady progress through ranks analogous to the tenure track: Assistant Professor (Lecturer), Associate Professor (Lecturer) and Full Professor (Lecturer). We think this is an important change, not only because it formally recognizes the importance

of the above-mentioned programs to the university but also because, in the case of LEAP specifically, it will support our effort to hire and retain top-notch faculty, which ultimately benefits our students.

LEAP's commitment to service was further realized this year by the classification of two LEAP courses as official service learning courses: Dr. Jennifer Bauman's Fine Arts LEAP sections (spring semester only) and Dr. Carolan Ownby's Service LEAP sections.

Our efforts in program assessment this year were largely devoted to consolidating research begun in previous years. We continued working on the matching study (described in detail in previous annual reports) by asking and attempting to answer further questions. A final draft of the article reporting our findings is near completion and is included in this report below, under "Assessment." Most noteworthy among our findings is that women and students of color seem to benefit most from the LEAP experience, though the effect sizes are small. In comparison to their non-LEAP matches, LEAP women and students of color show significantly improved retention, GPAs and time-to-graduation ($p < .05$). LEAP men also outperformed their non-LEAP matches in these areas, but the differences were not statistically significant.

It must be pointed out, however, that whether or not LEAP has statistically discernible effects on subsequent student performance, the program offers all students an engaging and efficient way of satisfying general education requirements in a learning community environment. LEAP is good for students and good for the university. The program's impact on student retention, in particular, helps the university financially by preventing the loss of tuition from students who are not retained. In fact, a revenue/cost calculator developed for use by colleges and universities by the Delta Cost Project (<http://www.deltacostproject.org>), a non-profit educational policy organization in Washington D.C., reveals that LEAP essentially pays for itself each year with the money it saves the university in tuition. (See the Appendix for the results of the calculator exercise as well as an article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that discusses the financial impact of improved retention.)

The matching study has deepened our understanding of the LEAP Program and led to further ideas for research. We plan to follow up the matching study by conducting a regression analysis of LEAP student performance. This study will be ongoing. We are also planning to conduct a social network analysis of the development and effect on student satisfaction of classroom community in the LEAP Program. We are particularly interested in the impact peer advisors have on the development of classroom community.

In yet another effort to present LEAP simply at Orientation, we've updated our way of explaining the program to prospective students. This year at Orientation, partially on the advice of Terry Pavia, whose classes in the business school worked with us during 2009-10 to develop strategies for marketing the program, we've decided to emphasize the fact that LEAP enables students to satisfy three general education requirements in two semesters. This efficiency towards graduation is apparently the most appealing feature of the program for

prospective students. Hence, our orientation slide show, which was designed by students (see the Appendix), will center on two ideas: that LEAP helps students make progress toward their majors by offering classes in their areas of interest (“There’s a LEAP for that!”), and that LEAP speeds students through general education (“Three for two”). We also commissioned a former LEAP student, Colin McDermott, who is a film studies major, to make a LEAP Program video for showing at Orientation. The video is available for viewing on the LEAP website: www.leap.utah.edu.

LEAP Program Description



LEAP is a year-long learning community for entering University students. It consists of two three-credit-hour courses – one fall semester, one spring semester – taken with the same professor and classmates, allowing students to build community. LEAP’s two classes typically fulfill the diversity requirement and two general education requirements (one social science and one humanities) and are linked to optional classes in writing, library research, major selection, and service. (Health LEAPs fulfill two humanities requirements and the diversity requirement; Architecture LEAP fulfills fine arts and humanities or two humanities.)

LEAP’s mission is three-fold:

1. To promote and implement scholarship and service for first year students through an integrated, interdisciplinary, and collaborative teaching and learning community;
2. To attract and retain a diverse student population; and
3. To engage students in an interactive exploration of diversity issues both in the classroom and through community outreach.

A Program Overview for the Year

The program enrolled 876 first year students in the fall (counting the number that remained enrolled through the semester), as compared with 617 students last year. (These enrollment numbers all include Architecture LEAP.) Fall-spring retention was again strong. Of the 876 students who began in the fall, 657 students, or 75%, registered for the spring semester. This is a spectacular improvement over past years, in which retention has typically been in the low 60% range, an improvement attributable largely to reversing the sequence of semesters in fall 2007: rather than starting in the fall with LEAP 1100, which

satisfies two graduation requirements, we have been ending with it. LEAP offered 27 sections this year for first year students, in both fall and spring semesters.

- Fall Semester 2009. LEAP offered 14 sections of 1101 for 413 students, 6 sections of 1100 for 200 students, and 1 section of Architecture 1610 for 35 students. Of these 1101 sections, 10 were Exploration LEAP (3 of which were designated Service Learning sections), 3 were Business LEAP (one of which was for ASAP business students), 2 were Residence Halls LEAP, and 1 was Education LEAP (offered for the first time). The ELEAP courses that were previously designated 1101 were re-coded this year as LEAP 1501, of which there were 6 sections for 226 students. Among the LEAP 1100 sections, 2 were Fine Arts LEAP (up one section from last year), 2 were College of Health LEAP (also up one section from last year), 1 was Health Sciences LEAP (first year), and one was Pre-Law LEAP (first year). 876 students were enrolled in total in these courses (as compared with 617 in fall 2008).
- Spring Semester 2010. LEAP offered 14 sections of 1100 for 314 students, 3 sections of 2004 (the second semester of College of Health and Health Sciences LEAP) for 68 students, 2 sections of 1101 (the second semester of Fine Arts LEAP) for 49 students, 1 section of Architecture 1611 (Architecture LEAP) for 40 students, and 1 section of 1150 (the second semester of Pre-Law LEAP) for 22 students, 6 sections of 1500 (the second semester of ELEAP) for 164 students. 657 students were enrolled in total in these courses (as compared with 488 in spring 2009).

In addition, LEAP offered the following courses:

- LEAP 1050: Major Selection, a course taught in the spring by Martina Stewart and Steve Hadley from University College Advising, for 17 students.
- LEAP 2002: Peer Advisor Seminar elected for credit by 10 of our 27 Peer Advisors.
- LEAP 2003: service learning for Peer Advisors (spring semester only) for 4 students.
- LEAP 1300: service learning add-ons (spring semester only) for 17 students.
- Writing 1060-01: library research add-on for 202 students.
- LEAP 2700: second year of Pre-law LEAP for 16 students.
- UUHSC 2500-001: second year of Health Sciences LEAP (fall semester) for 22 students.
- UUHSC 2500-001: Health Science Transfer course (spring semester) for 6 students.
- UUHSC 3000-001 (fall) for 25 students and 3001-001 (spring) for 22 students: third year for Health Sciences LEAP.

- UUHSC 4000-001 (fall) for 13 students and 4001-001 (spring) for 12 students: fourth year for Health Sciences LEAP.
- LEAP 3700 (fall) for 6 students and LEAP 3701 (spring) for 5 students: third year Pre-Law LEAP.



These enrollments are very comparable to last year's.

For next year, 2010-2011, we plan to add at least one section of Explorations LEAP bringing our total course offerings for first year students to 28 sections.

International LEAP will be offered for the first time during the 2010-11 academic year. It will be a version of

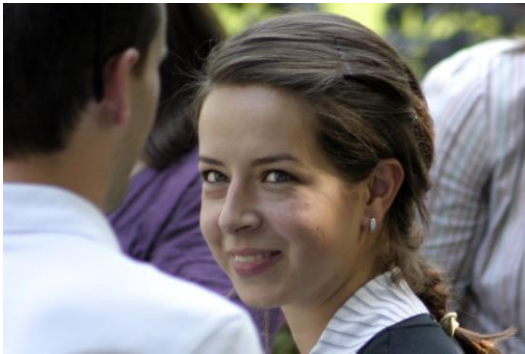
Explorations LEAP that will pair Chinese with American students to explore the challenges of being new to a culture, whether that of the US or of higher education.

Health Sciences LEAP for Transfer Students will accept one more class of six students who will begin the three-semester sequence in the spring of 2011. The program will probably be discontinued after that class finishes in the spring of 2012.

Changes in LEAP

1. New Teaching and Administrative Assignments

As mentioned above, LEAP hired Dr. Matt Bradley to teach two LEAP sections during the 2010-11 academic school year. Matt has a Ph.D. in Folklore from Indiana University, an MA in Education from the University of Utah and is currently working on another Master's degree in Economics, also at Utah. Matt has taught in the English Department and the College of Education, and will retain his teaching appointments in Honors and at the AMES School while teaching for LEAP. Matt brings to LEAP a set of skills and interests that mesh perfectly with our program: a strong grounding in social science and humanities, along with a commitment to community research and social justice.



Dr. Carolan Ownby will be teaching a new section of LEAP in 1101-03: International LEAP. Half of the students will be international students and the other half will be American students who are interested in international issues. Students will be paired up early in the semester. They will work on several, but not all, assignments together during the

semester. This section will focus on the way individuals acclimate to new cultural environments. Students will be encouraged to think of themselves as anthropologists exploring that new culture.

2. New Programs and Partnerships

College of Education LEAP. LEAP formed a new college partnership with the College of Education at the urging of Bobbi Davis, an advisor with the College. Dr. Jeff Webb taught the new Education LEAP course for prospective Education majors. Judging by all reports, it was a great success.

International LEAP. As mentioned above, Dr. Carolan Ownby will be teaching a new LEAP class next year: International LEAP. Half of the students will be international students and the other half will be American students who are interested in International issues. Here is the course description:

“This LEAP sequence of classes will explore the theme of Community: how it is defined theoretically and how it operates in reality. We start with the premise that international students and freshmen students have something very significant in common: both are minority groups operating within an unfamiliar culture. Using an anthropological framework, we will discuss how best to make sense of this new culture as well as how to succeed in it. We will then focus on the ideas of ideology, point of view, and community narrative some questions which we will consider are:

- What is the goal of the cultural anthropologist?
- What does it mean to be “culture bound”?
- What is “ideology”? How does it affect the actions of a community?
- Why do dominant groups enjoy privilege? What is “American privilege”?
- How do minority groups gain status in a community?
- What is “American Exceptionalism”?

- What responsibility does a community have to its less fortunate citizens?
- What is globalization, and are its effects inclusive or exclusive?
- What is a community? Does a community need to be small in size to function effectively or can a community be global?
- What responsibility do we owe the global community (assuming it exists) as individuals?
- Do global organizations have a duty and/or right to intervene in the affairs of nations?
- Can one individual make a difference in a community?"

New and Ongoing Partnerships. LEAP maintained its partnerships with the Horizonte ESL Program, Guuleysi, Highland High ESL Program, West High School, Crossroads Urban Center, University Neighborhood Partners, Jackson Elementary and Mountain View Schools, and Neighborhood House, as well as various departments and entities across campus. A new partnership was formed with Bryant Middle School.

SRI. The Student Readiness Inventory is an instrument designed by ACT to measure student readiness for college and to gauge, on that basis, individual students' strengths and weaknesses. Dr. Jeff Webb and Dr. Carolyn Bliss piloted the SRI in their classes last year as a way of structuring students' campus engagement. The pilot was deemed successful. Students seemed to appreciate use of the SRI as a tool to help them focus on success. Dr. Paul Gore has come up with a similar but shorter instrument, the SSI (Student Strengths Inventory), which will be quicker for students to take and, due to an improved database system, easier for teachers to administer. Dr. Bliss and Dr. Webb will use the SSI in their classes next year. And several other LEAP instructors have indicated interest in adopting this shorter instrument for use in their classes. See Appendix for a copy of the SSI.

LEAP Mentorship Program. A new program matching members of the Board of Advisors for Undergraduate Advancement and the LEAP Community Advisory Board with LEAP students in a two-semester mentoring relationship will be initiated in the fall of 2010.

3. Program Assessment

We continued to implement the assessment plan put in place in 2005. Here are the current components of LEAP Program assessment.

Online Fall and Spring Surveys, administered by the online assessment company, StudentVoice (for the results of this year's surveys see Appendix). The Spring Survey asks a variety of questions about the year-long LEAP experience including 17 questions about educational outcomes that we borrowed from the Survey of Graduating Seniors. A total of 375 students

responded to this year's Fall Survey as compared with 480 respondents the year before. The lower number this year is attributable to problems with the administration of the survey which prevented students in some sections from taking it. In future years, if we retain this survey, teachers will have the option of administering a paper survey so as to remove the time-pressure created by filling out the electronic survey in the fifth library class in spring semester. Data from the paper surveys will then be entered into the electronic database. We may also be replacing our spring survey with one designed by Educational Benchmarking Incorporated, which would allow us to tease out the relative contributions of aspects of LEAP pedagogy to the already demonstrated overall success of the program in increasing students' GPAs, retention, and likelihood of graduation. Use of the EBI survey would also allow us to more accurately measure how well students are realizing the Essential Learning Objectives adopted last year for General Education classes, even in individual LEAP sections.

Statistical matching study comparing LEAP and non-LEAP students on GPA, retention, and time-to-graduation. The study, initially completed in 2008 but substantially refined this year, is discussed below under "Program Assessment Analysis." Dr. Carolyn Bliss, Dr. Jeff Webb and Mark St. Andre are currently preparing a journal article discussing the study results.

New Studies. We are planning a new statistical study of LEAP using techniques of regression analysis, as well as a study of the social networks that develop in LEAP classrooms. Both studies are discussed below under "Program Assessment Analysis."

4. Peer Advisor Program

See the Annual Report for AY 2005-2006 for a description of the Peer Advisor Program. (http://www.leap.utah.edu/media/leap_05-06_report.pdf)

The Peer Advisor program had another fantastic year under Dr. Carolan Ownby's leadership. This year's cohort of Peer Advisors numbered 27: one per LEAP section including a Senior Peer Advisor. They met twice a month as a group and had the following committee responsibilities:



Senior PA - Aaron McKinstry-Luepke

The Senior PA is the designated leader of the Peer Advisor cohort. S/he has already served one full year as a PA, and is therefore in a strong position to mentor the group. This PA is charged with strengthening the sense of team and collaboration among all PAs, and defining the vision for the year.

S/he is in charge of organizing and carrying out a retreat between fall and spring semesters. S/he will draw up the agenda for and help conduct the monthly meetings. This PA will also represent us at occasions such as recruitment events and campus meetings, where LEAP is asked to send a representative.

Service: See You at the U – Xiaoxia Dong, Courtney Gwinn, Kylee Tokita, Yara Abawi



In the spring of 2005, the LEAP Peer Advisors adopted a service activity which has become a Peer Advisor tradition. Through University Neighborhood Partnership, Peer Advisors sponsor a *See You at the U* activity, where approximately eighty to one hundred students from Northwest Middle School come to the

University campus for a full morning of activities. People on this committee are responsible to make all arrangements for the campus tour in the fall [including planning with Ellie Brady at Northwest, contacting University departments for tours, making sure transportation is arranged, collecting items for 'goodie bags' which the students take with them when they leave] and a follow-up in the spring [soliciting community donations for tee-shirts for the students, having the shirts made, arranging to have certificates made, and arranging a visit to Northwest Middle School towards the end of the school year to present these to the students]. These responsibilities may shift, according to the needs and desired outcomes that Ellie Brady identifies.

Courtney Gwin comments: "The event was held November 13, 2009. There were approximately 100 kids and 4 teachers that attended. The kids were dropped off at the bus stop at the bottom of President's Circle at 9:15 am. We were told that they would be there at 9:00 am, and had tentatively scheduled a demonstration with the Engineering department. This fell through because the kids were later than expected so we went straight to the Museum of Natural History for an hour. We then left 15 minutes to reconvene and walk to the library. We scheduled a library tour and stations through Linda St. Clair. She set up all of the stations and contacted all of the people to do this library presentation for the kids. There were four stations and the kids stayed at each of the stations for 20 minutes. We then scheduled 15 minutes

to again reconvene and take pictures. Next, we walked up to the Heritage Center for lunch. This took 30 minutes, and the kids had an hour to eat. The buses then picked them up in front of the Heritage Center.”

Service: Food Drive – *Ange Holland, Shelley Westwood, Austin Dombrosky*

This committee is in charge of our food drive. In the past, the food drive was concentrated in February. This food drive complements the reading that many of the classes are doing on problems of poverty. This year, because several sections have shifted the Social Science class to the first semester, the focus lasted all year long. The Glenn Bailey workshop was in September. The committee tied this to a Trick or Can activity to benefit Crossroads Urban Center, and that activity was coordinated with a campus-wide Trick or Can activity. Glenn Bailey has said that Crossroads needs the food that LEAP collects in February, however, so the committee also continued the food drive then. The committee members decided where to place barrels for collection of food around campus, skillfully publicized the food drive in advance, collected donations on a regular basis, delivered the food to Crossroads Urban Center, returned the barrels, and wrote a summary of the year's drive. The summary discussed how the committee proceeded, how much food we collected, how much cash was donated, what problems were encountered, what you would do differently, etc. In the past, committees have had spectacular success collecting coins after a basketball game, and also collecting gently used clothing from the Jewish Community Center. The Food Drive Committee is responsible to continue to think of innovative ways to make the food drive a yearlong success.

Service: LEAP to the U – *Marianne Schmidt*

This person worked with the L2TU Service LEAP section, which has a partnership with students at West High School. This person attended all meetings at WHS, networked with the LEAP student leaders at WHS, took full responsibility for the LEAP/WHS bowling activity, helped organize the campus tour, Shadow Day, and assisted the *LEAP to the U* Intern to make the program run smoothly. See the description of this year's accomplishments under “Service” below.

Service: Fine Arts Community Liaison – *Meg Williams, Shalayna Kumar*

The LEAP Fine Arts sections give a major production at the end of spring semester. This Peer Advisor helped make any necessary contacts during the fall, and was responsible for production details during the spring, as directed by Dr. Bauman.

Service: Adult Literacy Awareness Week – *Ashley Bitner, Liliana Martinez*

This is a partnership with the Literacy Action Center to educate students about the problems of adult [non ESL] literacy. Activities have included spontaneous spelling bees in the Union Bldg, etc.

Service: University Service Corp Representative – *Priscilla Auduong*

The University has formed the USC this year to try to coordinate the many service activities that are carried out on campus. This PA was responsible to attend an occasional meeting and kept the other PA's and through them the LEAP students informed of service opportunities on campus. Each organization has been asked to give active support to one event, and because of our existing commitment to a food drive we committed to working with the campus Trick or Can. The USC Rep was also responsible for coordinating the activities of the Food Drive Committee with the campus Trick or Can.

Priscilla comments: "I attended at least 6 meetings during the year. Many were planned during my classes so I was not able to attend those. With the food drive, "Trick or Can," being able to coordinate directly with the Bennion Center was fantastic! We were able to be very productive and bring up a large number of volunteers for our event. With Trick-or-Can having been planned by the Community Service Board of ASUU last year, we were able to use the director's map of the city to plan out routes for each volunteering organization. We were able to iron out details and communicate with each student liaison which then spread word to each individual club. This was fantastic and worked out very well!"

Administrative Assistant – *Justin Clifford*

This person was responsible to help Dr. O keep all necessary records

- Email reminders to Peer Advisors to hand in monthly time sheets
- Keep a running record of all monthly time sheets on Excel
- Hand a summary of the PA time sheets to Dr. O at the beginning of each month
- Take notes at our bi-monthly PA meetings, and email a copy to all Peer Advisors and professors

PA's need a full set of time sheets to qualify for consideration for Peer Advisor scholarships at the end of the year.

LEAP House Staffing – *Benjamin Sondelski*

It's important that LEAP students have access to the LEAP House. However, we need Peer Advisors to staff the LEAP House so that the LEAP students can gain that access. A list of the Peer Advisors' names is kept at the desk in the Heritage Center, and Peer Advisors can pick up a key to the LEAP House there. When finished, the PA must securely lock up the LEAP House and return the key to the HC desk. Time spent staffing the LEAP House counts toward the PA's required ten hours per week. The PA in charge of staffing compiles a full schedule for both fall and spring semesters by the

third week of each semester. The LEAP House is staffed from 5-9 pm, Monday through Thursday.

Activity: Opening and Closing Events – *Mikelle Gordon, Shiwani Chauhan, Sydney Phillips*

The opening and closing picnics have traditionally been well attended by LEAP students. They are a physical manifestation of the community we study and strive to build in the curriculum. The students on this committee planned both. They were in charge of publicity, activities at the picnics, arranging for food, etc. These students also helped with the planning of any informal events.

Mikelle Gordon comments: “Opening event was held on September 18, 2009, on the outdoor lawn behind the Sill Center. We purchased 9 six-foot subs from Subway in addition to chips, drinks, cookies and mini eclairs/cream puffs. The total came somewhere between \$600 and \$700. We planned for about 300-350 students and the food ended up running out about an hour and a half into the two hour picnic. Considering that, we probably had slightly more students than we planned for. Along with the food we had volleyball set up, as well as a few other little lawn games and music playing in the background. The Closing event was held on April 23, 2010. Because of the weather that day we held it in the large conference room of the Sill Center. We had pizza, cookies and drinks that all totaled between \$450 and \$550. Since we had fewer students enrolled spring semester we were expecting around 250 students to come. We ended up with a lot of extra pizza and drinks so I think we had fewer attendees than we expected. Along with the food we had music playing in the background and a LEAP slide show playing through a few times.”

Budget – *Todd Haight*

The person who takes this responsibility should be interested in serving as a liaison between LEAP and ASUU. Peer Advisors constitute the leadership of the LEAP Club, and are entitled to apply for money from ASUU. The person in charge of the budget has at least five responsibilities:

- Contact ASUU [as well as last year’s budget person] immediately, and find out how we access the money we are allotted for the current year, how we make line-item changes, etc.
- Communicate frequently with Dr. O, evaluating how money was spent or might have been spent for LEAP that month. These communications should result in recommendations on what money we will apply for, for next year.
- Attend the meeting [which usually happens in February or March] sponsored by ASUU where one learns how to submit a budget, and then actually submit the budget on behalf of LEAP.
- Write a short summary of budget procedures at the end of the school year, which will be used to help next year’s PA in charge of budget

- Be available to attend the PA Workshop in August to orient the new PA in charge of budget
- Be ready to petition ASUU for additional funds in September, based on the response to last spring's budget request.

Publicity – *Lada Radetic, Amy Steimke*

Committee members have the following responsibilities:

- Committee members are responsible to fully document activities and service projects organized and carried out by the Peer Advisors for the academic year. Documentation should include pictures, as well as information like how many people attended, who the service projects benefitted, how much food and money was collected in the case of the food drive, etc. [Dr. O has a digital camera PA's may borrow when needed]. This information is gathered during the year, since it is very difficult to reconstruct at the end of the school year.
- In connection with the written report, committee members are responsible to produce a power point presentation [due at the end of the school year] which documents the year, and which can be used in the next Peer Advisor workshop.
- Maintain the Peer Advisor Facebook page for high school students.
- Contact the Chronicle with any noteworthy news items
- Solicit noteworthy news about LEAP students for inclusion on the LEAP web page
- Update outreach material when needed.

Lada Radetic comments: "Most of our work was via Facebook. I took the photos of the events that I was able to attend and then I uploaded them on Facebook and Amy created events on the LEAP group page and invited everyone. We'll be creating the slide show for the Peer Advisors this coming year."

International Committee – *Shukaria Rajabali*

The purpose of the International Committee is to help a child from a poor family in a developing nation attend school. The Committee would determine what child or program to select. In the past, all the LEAP outreach has gone to Utah. It is exciting and appropriate for LEAP to begin international outreach. In addition to fundraising, the International Committee could raise awareness about education and literacy in other countries."

Handbook Revision – *Michelle Tyler*

This person is responsible for updating information contained in the student resources section of the Peer Advisor handbook. This is done largely by referring to suggestions made during the summer class. This update is submitted to Dr. O by mid-October on CD.

Sweatshirt Design - Joemy Ramsay

For the past several years Peer Advisors have opted to have a sweatshirt identifying them as PAs in the LEAP program. The person in charge of this should have some skill in art [including graphic art]. S/he designs the shirt, helps the budget person lobby ASUU to partially fund the shirts, collects any necessary money from interested Peer Advisors, and arranges to have the shirts made [Dr. O. has information from the past designs]. Sweatshirts are in the hands of the Peer Advisors by November, so that PAs can wear them for *See You at the U*.

Peer Advisor Workshop Series – Erin Adcock

This idea originated with a Peer Advisor. The first series consisted of informal meetings held at the LEAP House, where Peer Advisors talked to LEAP students about things they felt they had expertise in. Last year's series was more formal, with speakers being drawn from experts on campus. We have had workshops in public speaking, time management, where to go for fun in SLC and how to get there, etc. The person in charge of this series draws up a schedule, makes sure that the LEAP House is free, and advertises [through Liz Taylor's giant LEAP distribution list]. This year's focus was on workshops to help LEAP students be successful at the University. This PA has a rough schedule for the first semester drawn up by mid-September.

LEAP Games - Jakub Szpunur

This comes from a summer discussion about the appeal of a LAN party to a significant part of the LEAP student body [primarily E-LEAP students]. The first LEAP LAN was held two years ago in the LEAP House. The original idea has expanded to include computer games and even board games. The PA in charge plans and carries out the game night.

Jakub Szpunur comments: "Game night was held on December 1. It was a fun night where everyone got to know each other a little more, and find some common ground on things they enjoyed (Board Games / TV series)."

Justin Clifford was chosen to be Senior PA for the 2010-11 school year.

5. Program Activities

LEAP sponsored the following activities in 2009-10:



- *LEAP Convocation*, Sept. 1, 2009; Speaker: University of Utah President Michael Young. See Appendix for this year's program.
- *Opening Picnic*, Sept. 18, 2009.
- *Closing Picnic*, April 23, 2010.
- *Fall and winter food drive* for Crossroads Urban Center, October 2009 and February 2010. This year's food drives produced 1006 cans of food and \$900.06 for the Crossroads food pantry.

LEAP Creative Gala, March 31, 2010. This event combined readings of poetry, short fiction and nonfiction with a display of photography (see below).



- *Pre-Law LEAP luncheon*, April 22, 2010.
- *Closing reception for Health Sciences LEAP students*, April 15, 2010.

- *Fine Arts LEAP Theater production* with the students of Neighborhood



House. *The Amazing Technicolor Hedgehog* premiered on April 28, 2010, and received money and support from a variety of donors. See Appendix for this year's program.

- *Peer Advisor Luncheon* on April 13, 2010. This occasion involves campus-wide and community partners in honoring our Peer Advisors and celebrating their accomplishments. Peer Advisor Scholarships and the Frost Award for Outstanding Peer Advisor of the Year are presented. The scholarship winners are listed below. See Appendix for this year's program.
- *LEAP Scholarship Winners' Reception*, April 20, 2010. This is an event honoring scholarship winners. Parents and family are invited. This year's reception was held at the Alumni House.

6. Service



Formal service learning opportunities in the LEAP program for which first-year students get academic credit this year included Dr. Carolan Ownby's service sections of Explorations LEAP (which were approved for three hours of service learning credit each semester beginning in 2010-11), Dr. Jennifer Bauman's spring semester sections of Fine Arts LEAP

(designated as service learning sections for 2011), Dr. Ann Engar's third year Pre-Law Leap (LEAP 3700), and both semesters of Dr. Bliss's fourth year Health Sciences class. In addition, Dr. Jeff Webb's section of Education LEAP and Dr. Bauman's fall semester sections of Fine Arts LEAP offer an optional service learning credit through the add-on course, LEAP 1300. For this, students are required to complete 20 hours of service (ten during fall semester and ten during spring semester) and are involved in service projects with East High's LEAD Program and the Horizonte ESL Program. Here are details on LEAP service during the 2009-10 school year.

Fine Arts LEAP Service. Dr. Bauman's students completed 2,200 hours of service for Neighborhood House (a non-profit, low-income day care center for children), working with 36 children grades 1-6. Here is a list of what they did:

1. Raised a \$500 donation for Neighborhood House.
2. Created an original musical, "The Amazing Technicolor Hedgehog" (includes original script, music, choreography, costumes, sets, publicity, press releases, fundraising, rehearsing with the children, etc.) and "behind-the-scenes documentary" performed at the U of U Fine Arts Auditorium April 28, 2010.
3. Gave children at Neighborhood House exposure to and experience in the fine arts and also confidence and community-building experiences.
4. Collected, analyzed and created an extensive report of demographic and other data to benefit Neighborhood House to help enhance their service.
5. With the help of the Board of Trustees of Neighborhood House and LEAP Faculty, provided t-shirts, which Fine Arts LEAP students created for each of the 36 children involved in the musical.
6. Provided: food for the children and families after the performance (thanks to our sponsor, Rubio's); gifts for each child (thanks to many sponsors and donors); healthy snacks and fun prizes each time Fine Arts LEAP students worked (and played) with the children at Neighborhood House; and also a DVD of the documentary and performance for each child!
7. Provided publicity for our community partner, Neighborhood House, thanks to articles in the *Daily Utah Chronicle* (two), *Salt Lake Magazine*, *iUtah*, an indoor and outdoor exhibit and at the University of Utah, flyers, banners, t-shirts, fundraisers and program inserts.
8. Provided materials for Neighborhood House to use to create an exhibit for their upcoming NAEYC accreditation.
9. Involved parents and the community in helping to create the performance, thereby raising awareness and support of the children...and providing them with an audience of over 300 to perform in front of!!!



Service LEAP. Dr. Carolan Ownby's students continued to work with West High ("LEAP to the U"), the Horizonte ESL Program, Guuleysi, and the Highland High ESL program. Here are details on Guuleysi and "LEAP to the U":

1. *Guuleysi Project*. From the Utah Federation for Youth Website:
"Project Guuleysi serves youth ages 6-18. Refugee boys and girls from Africa and newcomers from other countries are the focus of this customized after school and in school initiative. These youth are at high risk for school dropout, recruitment to gangs, and other high risk behaviors. Named after the Somali verb for success, Project Guuleysi is about preventing these high-risk youth from finding their way to high-risk behaviors. Keeping these young men and young women engaged in structured, positive activities, addressing their academic needs, and working to strengthen their families is Guuleysi's vision—a way to prevent trouble from finding these young people, and a way to help these young people find success—in school and life." Dr. Ownby's students tutored Guuleysi students and hosted 17 students for a tour of the University campus. The tour included a visit to the Natural History Museum, a visit with the University soccer team, and lunch in the school cafeteria.



2. *LEAP to the U!* LEAP to the U held six meetings throughout the year. October 28 was "First Contact" where 30 students from West High School (WHS) came to campus to talk about community, and meet their partners from LEAP for the year. On November 11 the WHS students came again. Brizia Ceja spoke to them in the LEAP House about why they should consider getting a college education, and then the students walked the campus. They stopped briefly in the Union Bldg, where their picture was taken on the steps of the Park Bldg, and then they went to a physics



demonstration. On November 18 they came again. First they had pizza in the Sill Center and then went bowling for an hour. In spring semester the WHS students came to campus on March 10 for Shadow Day, during which they attended a LEAP class and then a random class [depending on whatever class their partner had]. On March 17 we held a joint Service Day at Washington Elementary for Dr. Seuss's birthday. The WHS and LEAP students helped the elementary students build Dr. Seuss hats, play Seussical Chairs, and enjoy a puppet show. Finally, on April 14 we held our final banquet at West High School where we talked about what we had done during the past year. Tiffany Justice, a U student, was a guest speaker.

Dr. Ann Engar's third year Pre-law LEAP class, also a designated service learning section, did over 200 hours of service at the Matheson Federal Courthouse, at an international adoption agency, at the law school's free clinics, and for the Utah Rivers Council, Sylvia Pena-Chacon, an immigration attorney, and Judge Andrew Valdez.

Dr. Bliss's Health Science students worked in two service learning classes with students from Riley and Mountain View Elementary Schools and with Bryant Middle School students. They also worked on projects with Neighborhood House.

The Peer Advisors also do a great deal of service, which is detailed above in the PA committee assignments: See you at the U, and the annual LEAP food drive.

Austin Dombrosky, PA for Pre-law LEAP, organized a benefit concert for Crossroads Urban Center at Mo's Grill and Bar in downtown on November 20, 2009.

As mentioned above, this year's food drives produced 1006 cans of food and \$900.06 for the Crossroads food pantry.

7. Advising

LEAP continued an effective partnership with University College advising this year, with the aim of helping students investigate and choose majors.

- University College advisors visited LEAP classes in October to advise students preparing to register for spring semester. This year advising became mandatory at four points throughout a student's career; the advisor visit to LEAP classes satisfies the first point for LEAP students. This visit also has guaranteed and will continue to guarantee students early registration for spring semester classes.
- A 1-credit hour class, LEAP 1050, taught by University College Advisors Martina Stewart and Steve Hadley on the process of major selection, was offered again this spring for LEAP students and will be offered next year in the fall as well.
- Advisor John Nilsson visited College of Health and Health Science LEAP sections this year to advise students on admissions requirements for various professional schools in Health Sciences.
- Study Abroad Advisors visited Dr. Jeff Webb's sections of College of Health LEAP in the spring to talk about health-related study abroad opportunities. Advisors from the College of Health also visited College of Health LEAP to tell students about the different majors in the College.

- Two LEAP teachers, Dr. Carolyn Bliss and Dr. Jeff Webb, incorporated the SRI (Student Readiness Inventory) in their classes in order to give structure to student engagement activities. See above for a more detailed discussion of the SRI and its replacement for next year, the SSI.
- Other pre-Professional LEAPs, such as Engineering, Business, and Education, also incorporate visits by college advisors.

8. LEAP Advisory Boards



The LEAP Community Advisory Board met twice this year on October 20, 2009, and March 30, 2010. Meetings of the Internal Advisory Board have been suspended for now and this body will probably be replaced next year by a smaller “LEAP Policy Board.” For the past two

years external advisory board members have helped the program by serving on scholarship selection committees. Bert Zimmerli and Kathryn Lindquist deserve special mention in this regard. See Appendix for agendas and minutes from this year’s meetings.

9. Student Recruitment and Program Outreach

The following is a list of initiatives undertaken this year to improve LEAP publicity and enrollment.

- *The LEAP website: www.leap.utah.edu.* The existing website was moved to the HUMIS system and updated by Liz Taylor in preparation for summer orientations starting in June 2009, and she has continued to maintain the site expertly. One feature added recently is a tracking device on each page that indicates which pages on our website have the most traffic. This should be helpful in determining whether revisions to the website are needed.
- The LEAP Program presented during the High School Conferences held during February and March, and reached prospective Asian American, African American and Hispanic LEAP students at college conferences for these students.
- Fine Arts LEAP did a 45 minute presentation at the Asian American High School Conference about opportunities available at the U, including

LEAP. The class received a nice thank you for helping “provide access to the U to underrepresented students.”

- *Revised Orientation PowerPoint Presentation and Introductory Video.* As mentioned above, a new slide show for the general LEAP Orientation presentation (five minutes) was created by select PAs and UGS interns. (See Appendix for a copy of the presentation.) LEAP alum and film studies major, Colin McDermott also created a short video on LEAP for screening at Summer Orientation sessions. The video is available for viewing online at the LEAP website: www.leap.utah.edu.
- *PAs assisting with Orientation.* Jamie Bowen, Caroline Czernichowski, and Michelle Tyler assisted with Summer Orientations last year, helping students sign up for LEAP during registration. Partially as a result of their efforts, LEAP enrollment jumped 42% in 2010-11, to a total of over 950. This year PAs will again be helping with Orientation. Three PAs have been hired: Ange Holland, Michelle Tyler, and Shelly Westwood.
- *LEAP Scholarship winner's Reception, April 20, 2010.* This is an evening for LEAP scholarship recipients and their parents to celebrate their awards.
- *News Articles.* Informative news articles on LEAP appeared in various publications this year. See Appendix for a selection of them.
- *ELEAP.* LEAP hosted a lunch for Engineering advisors on May 19, 2010, to explain ELEAP in detail so that advisors can portray the program accurately (and, it is hoped, enthusiastically) to prospective students. Assessment results were presented at this luncheon. See Appendix for a copy of this PowerPoint presentation.
- LEAP and Honors co-hosted a lunch and an Advising Roundtable for advisors from across campus on June 9, 2010. Sixty advisors attended.

Milestones and Awards

1. Student Achievements

- Priscilla Auduong has won the Scholar of Promise Scholarship.
- Congratulations to Priscilla Auduong and Colin McDermott on being chosen to exhibit their research posters at the Posters on the Hill Event on January 28, 2010.
- Adam Tuero is the 2010-2011 Freshman Council Advisor on the Executive Cabinet for The Associated Students of the University of Utah (ASUU).
- Kylee Tokita has received an internship at the Idaho National Laboratory where she will be studying extremophiles and how their enzymes can aid in the production of fuels and chemicals from biomass.
- Suneil Bhambri, former peer advisor, received a \$1000 award from the Marriott Library for the Best Honors Thesis of the year.

- Suneil Bhambri and Amie Richards will be receiving Honors degrees.
- Julia Toscano, another former peer advisor for LEAP, received an Honors Certificate.
- Eduardo Reyes-Chavez and Sarah Hammer both received Honors scholarships.
- Suneil Bhambri, Angie Doan, Stanley Lloyd, and Candelario Saldana were Beehive Honor Inductees.
- Stanley Lloyd was a Bennion Service Scholar.
- Michelle Mueller received an Alumni Bennion Service Fellowship.
- Ali Vance, former LEAP student and Peer Advisor, has been accepted in the 2 year Circle in the Square Program: <http://circlesquare.org/>
- Courtney Gwinn has been named a Presidential Intern for 2010-2011. Stessie Dort was also accepted to this position, but had to decline because of her duties as an RA.
- Marko Mijic, a former LEAP Peer Advisor, was invited to attend the signing of the health care “fixes” bill on March 30. While there, Marko shook hands with both Nancy Pelosi and the President. He thanked the President for his work on behalf of the American People. Then, in Marko's words, “The President looked me in the eye and said: ‘I could not have done it without you!’ Wow, I will never forget that moment.”
- Lindsay Painter, former Service LEAP student, received a \$5,000 scholarship from the O.C Tanner Foundation.
- Sydney Sorenson, Jean Paul Santos, John Rasmussen, and Sara Torres won Bridge Scholarships. This first time scholarship of \$2500 was for students bridging from a learning community, in this case LEAP, to the Honors College.
- Former LEAP students Victoria Morales, Eduardo-Reyes Chavez and Wendolens Ruano were selected as 2009-10 McNair Scholars.
- Justin Clifford was chosen to be Senior PA for 2010-11. He was also chosen to be a USET Scholar for 2010-11 to study social networks in the LEAP program.
- Lacie Newland was accepted to pharmacy school.

LEAP Freshmen Scholarship Recipients 2010-11

- Vinh Huynh believes that people should be proud of their cultural identities, be involved with those cultural as well as larger communities, and appreciate and respect others’ cultural traditions. Vinh is a business major; Margaret Harper is his LEAP instructor.
- Hong Phuong Tran left most of her family in Vietnam when she came to the U.S. with her mother 3 years ago; LEAP enabled her to connect with people of similar backgrounds. She wants to become a dentist to help immigrants facing cultural differences and language barriers. Carolyn Bliss is her LEAP instructor.

- Natalie Fang, whose family emigrated from Cambodia, has a passion for speaking up and acting on behalf of social justice issues. Natalie is undecided about her major; Jennifer Bauman is her instructor.
- Sarah Hammer, a strong advocate for service and social networking, is a member of many U of U organizations such as the Bennion Community Service Center, Freshman Council, and the Pacific Islanders Association. Her major is undecided; Carolan Ownby is her instructor.
- Seiyong Lee, a member of the Korean-American community, wants to learn several languages in order to understand related cultures for a career in international diplomacy. Ann Engar is his instructor.
- Crystal Orantes hopes to become an FBI agent after earning a civil and environmental engineering degree. Rebecca Larsen is her instructor.
- Tina Parsons wants to become a social worker and work with intercity and refugee populations at risk in Salt Lake City. Influenced by Judge Andrew Valdez, Tina has decided to be a Service-Learning Scholar. Carolan Ownby is her instructor.
- Aneisha Reed, a first-generation college student, appreciates LEAP for helping her set short- and long-term goals and encouraging her to participate in leadership opportunities. Ed Barbanell is her instructor.
- Antonio Robles, an international business major, appreciates the LEAP experience for teaching him about the global economy and the concerns of people residing in different countries. Margaret Harper is his instructor.
- Adam Sandoval believes LEAP has been most helpful teaching him how to take constructive criticism, be a leader, work responsibly in groups, and learn how to compromise. His mother's death taught him to appreciate every day and take nothing for granted. Adam plans to be an urban planner; Margaret Harper is his instructor.
- Jean Paul Santos, an electrical engineering major, says LEAP has challenged him to be part of a community that can find ethical solutions to needs. He is especially concerned with finding a viable alternative energy source. Rebecca Larsen is his instructor.

Peer Advisor Scholarships

- Priscilla Auduong received \$500 for the Frost Award for outstanding Peer Advisor.
- Cynthia Pettigrew received the \$2000 Bob Marquardt Pre-Law Scholarship.
- The Board of Advisors for Undergraduate Advancement awarded a \$3000 scholarship to LEAP Peer Advisor, Erin Adcock.
- The Ruth Eleanor Bamberger & John Ernest Bamberger Memorial Foundation awarded three \$2000 Peer Advisor Scholarships to: Priscilla Auduong, Meg Williams, and Marianne Schmidt.

- The Lawrence T. Dee and Janet T. Dee Foundation award four \$2,500 Health Science LEAP Scholarships to: Stessie Dort, Priscilla Auduong, Yauling Auduong, and Tuyet Nguyen.

2. Faculty Activities and Achievements

Dr. Jennifer M. Bauman received the HEART AND HANDS AWARD, Utah Philanthropy Day, for community service through Fine Arts LEAP and personal service to Neighborhood House. Her course, Fine Arts LEAP 1101, was designated as a Service-Learning Course for Spring Semester. Here is a list of her other accomplishments:

- Awarded a scholarship by the Bennion Center to the Utah Campus Compact Conference in Civic Engagement.
- Directed the Fine Arts LEAP final performance, which raised a \$500 donation for Neighborhood House and had an audience of over 300!
- Co-partnered with Mike White to create the first annual Creative Gala to celebrate the literary and artistic accomplishments of LEAP students.
- Chaired the Sill Center Art Selection Committee and curated the spring and fall Student Art Shows in the Sill Center.
- Served as faculty head of the ASUU Fine Arts Playground Student Group.
- Presidential appointment to chair the Investment Committee, Board of Trustees, Neighborhood House. Also served on the Strategic Planning and Programs Committees of the Board of Trustees, Neighborhood House.
- Continued to serve on the Peace and Justice Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Utah, appointed to this committee by the Rt. Rev. Carolyn Tanner Irish, Bishop of Utah.
- Continued for the 5th year in a row to Coordinate and teach Art History on the faculty of the Venture Program, through the Utah Humanities Council (a year-long, cost-free college course in the humanities for low-income adults).
- Appointed to serve on the art jury of the Neighborhood House/337 Project Urban Art Gallery.
- Attended the College Art Association Conference in Chicago.

Dr. Carolyn Bliss continued to serve on Undergraduate Council as well as a number of University committees and assisted in the campaign for passage of a new rule and policy allowing interdisciplinary teaching programs to nominate faculty for Lectureship ranks. She oversaw the inauguration of International LEAP and the new LEAP Mentorship Program, worked on the implementation of the new Suder Scholars program, continued to pursue assessment initiatives, and continued to review Australian fiction for World Literature Today and other journals.

Dr. Kris Koford was reelected Chairman of the Board of Crossroads Urban Center for a third year. Dr. Koford remains active in a medical research

group on kidney disease at the medical school and recently co-authored an article that appeared in the Sept.-October issue of *Clinical Transplantation*: "The role of the economic environment in kidney transplant outcomes." *Clinical Transplantation* 2009 Sept.-Oct., 23(5): 643-52.

Dr. Ann Engar serves as Senior Bibliographer for the Modern Language Association International Bibliography Committee. Her article, "*To Kill a Mockingbird*: Fifty Years of Influence on the Legal Profession," will be published in a volume of essays edited by Michael Meyer in August 2010 by Scarecrow Press. She is currently working on collection of critical essays (and writing the introduction for) a volume on Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* for the *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism* series to be published by Layman Poupard Publishing. Dr. Engar also served on scholarship committees for Hinckley Institute of Politics and Honors College, and on the Undergraduate Studies Committee and Graduation Committee of the University.

Dr. Jeff Webb designed and taught a new class this year, Education LEAP, and served on two search committees this year: one for an advisor in the International Center and the other for the Director of the Suder Foundation. He also serves on the University's Retention and Assessment Committee. His student, Justin Clifford, was selected as a USET scholar for the 2010-11 year to research, under Dr. Webb's supervision, the formation of social networks in the LEAP Program. This study is part of a two year study proposed by Dr. Webb which received IRB approval in June 2010. The study is entitled "Social Network Analysis of Classroom Community in the LEAP Program." Dr. Webb will also be entering the Master of Statistics Program at the University of Utah in August 2010.

Dr. Mike White had the following poems published during the 2010-11 academic year:

- *Court Green*: "Missionary Position" and "Nightingale"
- *Witness*: "Bridge"
- *RATTLE*: "The Freshman Essay" and "NASCAR"
- *The American Poetry Journal*: "What Must Be"
- *Denver Quarterly*: "Middle Age" and "Lobster Traps"
- *Sycamore Review*: "Go Ahead"
- *Margie*: "Ignatius at the Y" and "Toy Story"
- *West Branch*: "Invitation" and "Holy"
- *Switched-on Gutenberg*: "Time Pieces"
- "NASCAR" was named the winner of the Neil Postman Award for Metaphor (\$500 prize)
- Three poems were selected for the 2010 Many Voices Press anthology *New Poets of the American West* (ed. Lowell Jaeger)

The following faculty taught classes outside of LEAP:

- Dr. Ed Barbanell taught classes in the Philosophy Department.
- Dr. Mike White taught classes in the English Department.
- Dr. Ann Engar taught classes in Honors.
- Dr. Becky Larsen taught Political Science classes at BYU.
- Dr. Carolyn Bliss taught classes in the University of Utah Health Sciences Center curriculum.
- Dr. Bliss and Dr. Carolan Ownby team-taught an Honors class.

3. Conference Presentations on LEAP by LEAP Faculty

Dr. Carolyn Bliss presented on LEAP at The 29th Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience in Denver, 15 Feb. 2010, and The 49th Annual Conference of the Association for General and Liberal Studies in St. Louis, 3 Oct. 2009. (See the appendix for the powerpoint presentation.)

She also presented a talk on LEAP-Library collaboration to the Association of Research Libraries Leadership Fellows meeting in Salt Lake City, 10 Nov. 2009.

4. Continuing Education for LEAP Faculty

Dr. Jeff Webb has been accepted to the Master of Statistics program the University of Utah.

Dr. Matt Bradley is finishing a Master's degree in Economics at the University of Utah.

5. University Service by LEAP Faculty

LEAP was represented on many campus committees, among them: Undergraduate Council, Safe Passages, UAAC, the Undergraduate Research Scholar Designation Committee, Monson Prize Selection Committee, the Together We Reach Scholarship Campaign Internal Committee, the Virtual Doorway Committee, the UGS Student Initiatives Scholarship Recipient Selection Committee, the Bennion Center Faculty Advisory Board, and the committee to redecorate the Sill Center. LEAP faculty also served on several search committees during the year.

Dr. Carolan Ownby continued her role as the University's advisor for Phi Eta Sigma, a Freshman Honor Society.

Dr. Ann Engar was Library Liaison for LEAP during 2009-10.

Dr. Meg Harper served as the liaison from LEAP to the University Writing Program during the 2009-10 year.

6. Program Achievements and financial support

LEAP 1501 was approved for social science general education credit.

Health Science LEAP now has its own section in the Undergraduate Research Bulletin.

Fine Arts LEAP sections were designated Service Learning classes.

Service LEAP sections will now carry three credit hours of Service Learning credit in both semesters.

LEAP Scholarship funds increased dramatically this year, from around \$30,000 last year to nearly \$55,000. The new scholarships included funds donated by the following organizations/individuals:

- Bert & Lynn Zimmerli
- Kathryn Lindquist & Jim Moore Family
- Jan and Doug Frost
- The Marquardt Foundation
- The Ruth Eleanor Bamberger and John Ernest Bamberger Memorial Foundation (who also support our opening convocation)
- The Lawrence T. Dee and Janet T. Dee Foundation
- The Board of Advisors for Undergraduate Advancement

The University Administration has announced its intention not only to expand the LEAP Program but also to designate LEAP as one of several “exceptional educational experiences” for university of Utah students. These experiences will be noted on transcripts.

Program Assessment Analysis

See the Annual Report for AY 2005-2006 for a detailed discussion of LEAP’s plan of assessment (http://www.leap.utah.edu/media/leap_05-06_report.pdf).

As mentioned above, our efforts in program assessment this year were largely devoted to consolidating research begun in previous years. We continued working on the matching study (described in detail in previous annual reports) by asking and attempting to answer questions raised by our results.

Most noteworthy among our findings is that women and students of color seem to benefit most from the LEAP experience, though the effect sizes are small. In comparison to their non-LEAP matches, LEAP women and students of color show significantly improved retention, GPAs and time-to-graduation ($p < .05$). LEAP men also outperformed their non-LEAP matches in these areas, but the differences were not statistically significant.

This section of the Annual Report will detail our findings from the matching study, then discuss several proposed further studies: a regression analysis of LEAP student performance, a social network analysis of classroom community in the LEAP classes, and revised student surveys.

1. The Matching Study

Included below are the Methodology, Results and Discussion sections of our recently completed paper on the matching study: “Assessing the Educational Outcomes of a Learning Community: Findings from a Matching Study of the University of Utah’s LEAP Program.” See the Appendix for a copy of the entire paper.

Matching Study: Methodology¹

Hypothesis: The purpose of the matching study was to compare demographically alike LEAP and non-LEAP students on important educational outcomes while controlling for as many factors as possible, thereby eliminating these as alternative explanations for any differences observed between the groups. Our hypothesis was that LEAP students would outperform their demographic twins in terms of the dependent variables listed below. Beyond that, we wanted to understand whether gender and race influence the performance of groups within LEAP. Our secondary hypothesis was that LEAP students’ superior performance would be replicated within the subgroups. That is, we expected LEAP women to outperform non-LEAP women, LEAP men to outperform non-LEAP men, and LEAP students of color to outperform non-LEAP students of color.

Dependent Variables: The outcome, or dependent, variables examined in the current study included: first and second semester GPA, first and second semester attempted and completed credits, most recent GPA (referred to as “last GPA,” which is equivalent to graduation GPA for those who have graduated), graduation GPA (calculated only for those who have graduated), first-to-second year retention, four-year graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate. These are all familiar measures of student performance, with the possible exception of first and second semester attempted and completed credits. We included this among our dependent variables with the aim of capturing possible differences in motivation and perseverance between LEAP and non-LEAP students.

Sample selection: LEAP students were defined as those entering the program with fewer than 12 hours of post-secondary credit accrued and who completed both the first and second semesters of the LEAP program. Although LEAP began in 1994, we conducted this study starting with the entering class of 1999. We selected this as our starting year because of the poor quality of data prior to 1999. The University switched data management

¹ The matching study was conducted with the assistance of the University of Utah’s Office of Budget and Institutional Analysis (OBIA).

software during 1998-99; thus data before the switch are difficult to query and compare to data after the switch.

Matching characteristics: After identifying the population of LEAP students eligible for the study, the matching algorithm looked for a non-LEAP student to pair with each LEAP student, based on the following characteristics: year student entered the University of Utah (cohort); high school student graduated from (as a proxy for socioeconomic status); ethnicity; age; gender; and Academic Index (a composite of ACT score and high school GPA that the University of Utah uses for admission). Because non-LEAP students outnumber LEAP students, the matching algorithm generated multiple matches for many of the LEAP students. In this case, we randomly selected one of the matches to be the LEAP student's "twin" for the study. When one of the matched students left the university (defined by an absence of five or more consecutive fall to spring semesters)² the pair was deleted from the study in order to avoid introducing any survivor bias into the results. It is also worth noting that because the algorithm matched students on high school attended, the sample consisted almost entirely of Utah students.

Analysis: For analyses that examined dichotomous dependent variables (retention and four-year or six-year graduation), a chi-square test of difference was performed. For examinations of continuous dependent variables (credits attempted/completed, GPA's), independent samples t-tests were performed. Following accepted practice, we report p-values $\leq .05$ as statistically significant. Effect sizes were calculated for each comparison as well.

Matching Study: Results

One of our concerns in designing the study was the availability of appropriate matches, but this turned out not to be a problem. Here are the LEAP/non-LEAP matches by year from 1999-2006.

Table 2: LEAP to Non-LEAP Matches Available for 1999-2006

Fall Cohort	Entering First-Time Freshman	LEAP	Matched
1999	2,431	412 (17%)	166 (40%)
2000	2,018	450 (22%)	174 (29%)
2001	2,568	497 (19%)	179 (36%)
2002	2,757	538 (19%)	182 (34%)
2003	2,476	549 (22%)	203 (37%)
2004	2,451	539 (22%)	186 (35%)
2005	2,636	584 (22%)	220 (38%)
2006	2,659	523 (22%)	181 (35%)
Total	19,996	4,092 (20.5%)	1,491 (36.4%)

² Our five semester cutoff for deleting pairs was designed to avoid counting LDS missionaries as dropouts until they were gone from the university at least one semester longer than the two academic years that would be expected if they were planning to return.

The total number of matches is 1491, or 36.4% of all students during these years. The total number of students involved in the study is 2982, ample for the study. Here is the profile of the matched students:

- Gender: 53% female, 47% male
- Ethnicity: 96% Caucasian, 2.4% Asian, 1% Hispanic, .5% Undisclosed, .1% Black
- Age: mean=18.96 (min. 18, max. 24)
- Admissions Index: LEAP=110.0, Non-LEAP= 110.1

The following tables summarize the results of the analysis. The asterisks under “Difference of Means” indicate statistically significant differences between LEAP and non-LEAP at $p \leq .05$. Note that these results are not “mission corrected,” meaning there has been no attempt to adjust for the two-year mission phenomenon. We have no data to suggest that a greater or lesser proportion of LEAP students serve LDS missions than do non-LEAP students. Results from the study therefore should not be impacted.

Table 3: Performance Outcomes of LEAP Students Compared to Non-LEAP Students

Performance Outcomes by LEAP Participation	LEAP Mean	Non-LEAP Mean	Difference of Means	Effect Size
First Semester GPA (LEAP n=1,470, non-LEAP n=1,449)	3.04	2.93	.11*	.005
Second Semester GPA (LEAP n=1,298; non-LEAP n=1,183)	3.02	2.96	.06*	.002
1 st Semester Credits Attempted (LEAP n=1,491; non-LEAP n=1,491)	12.18	11.45	.73*	.015
1 st Semester Credits Completed (LEAP n=1,472; non-LEAP n=1,449)	11.68	11.09	.59*	.01
2 nd Semester Credits Attempted (LEAP n=1,338; non-LEAP n=1,213)	11.19	11.07	.12	N/A**
2 nd Semester Credits Completed (LEAP n=1,299; non-LEAP n=1,183)	11.46	11.30	.16	N/A
1 st -to-2 nd Year Retention Rate (LEAP n=1,491; non-LEAP n=1,491)	66%	61%	5.0*	.002
Last GPA (LEAP n=1,462; non-LEAP n=1,435)	2.95	2.92	.03	N/A
Graduating GPA (LEAP n=273, non-LEAP n=218)	3.28	3.27	.01	N/A
Four year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=1,470, non-LEAP n=1,449)	15%	10%	5.0*	.005
Six-year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=1,470, non-LEAP n=1,449)	42%	34%	8.0*	.007

* $p < .05$; Effect sizes only calculated for significant results

** Not applicable

As Table 3 shows, LEAP students outperformed non-LEAP students in all measures in both the first and second semesters, although the difference in credits attempted/completed in the second semester is not significant.³ LEAP students returned for their second year at

³ Credits completed are greater than credits attempted because the number of students used in these two calculations is different. Some students dropped out during the second semester (as one can see by the n value for each group); therefore not every student who was counted as attempting credits was still enrolled and among the students used for calculating completed credits.

significantly higher rates than their matches, and a higher percentage of the LEAP group has graduated at both the four and six-year marks. This doesn't prove that more will graduate as time goes on (though that seems likely), but it does show that LEAP students graduate more quickly than their non-LEAP matches. Finally, LEAP students were very slightly higher in both last (most recent) and graduating GPA, but the differences were not significant. Effect sizes for all statistically significant differences were quite low. We address this point below.

Next, we looked at some of the same performance outcomes by gender.

Table 4: Performance Outcomes of Female LEAP Students Compared to Female Non-LEAP Students

Performance Outcomes by Gender: Women	LEAP Women Mean	Non-LEAP Women Mean	Difference of Means	Effect Size
First Semester GPA (LEAP n=778; non-LEAP n=764)	3.12	2.95	.17*	.01
Second Semester GPA (LEAP n=726; non-LEAP n=670)	3.09	2.99	.10*	.005
1 st -to-2 nd Year Retention Rate (LEAP n=787; non-LEAP n=787)	82%	75%	7.0*	.007
Last GPA (LEAP n=775, non-LEAP n=757)	3.04	2.93	.11*	.006
Four-year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=483, non-LEAP n=483)	21.5%	14.3%	7.2*	.008
Six-year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=275, non-LEAP n=275)	57.8%	42.6%	15.2*	.02

Clearly, LEAP women outperformed non-LEAP women on all measures, with differences that were larger for each variable than in the comparisons for all matches in Table 3. The effect sizes were still small, but were larger than those reported in Table 3.

Table 5: Performance Outcomes of Male LEAP Students Compared to Male Non-LEAP Students

Performance Outcomes by Gender: Men	LEAP Men Mean	Non-LEAP Men Mean	Difference of Means	Effect Size
First Semester GPA (LEAP n=692; non-LEAP n=685)	2.95	2.91	.04	N/A**
Second Semester GPA (LEAP n=572; non-LEAP n=513)	2.93	2.91	.02	N/A
1 st -to-2 nd Year Retention Rate (LEAP n=704, non-LEAP n=704)	48%	46%	2.0	N/A
Last GPA (LEAP n=687; non-LEAP n=678)	2.86	2.90	-.04	N/A
Four year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=421, non-LEAP n=421)	6.4%	4.5%	1.9	N/A
Six-year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=244, non-LEAP n=244)	24.2%	23.4%	.8	N/A

**Not applicable

Table 5 shows that though LEAP men outperformed non-LEAP men on all measures, with the exception of last GPA, none of the differences was statistically significant. The performance of LEAP men was largely indistinguishable from that of non-LEAP men. This is in striking

contrast to the performance of LEAP women. In fact, it appears that the performance of LEAP women was responsible for much of the difference between LEAP and non-LEAP students observed in all matches (Table 3). For example, the difference in graduation rates between LEAP and non-LEAP men actually went down between the 4 and 6 year marks (1.9 to .8),⁴ while the difference for LEAP women widened (7.2 to 15.2). In this case, especially, it is clear that the superior graduation performance of LEAP students in general was entirely due to the outperformance of LEAP women.

Next, we looked at performance outcomes by race.

Table 6: Performance Outcomes of Non-white LEAP students Compared to Non-white Non-LEAP Students

Performance Outcomes by Race	LEAP Non-white Mean	Non-LEAP Non-white Mean	Difference of Means	Effect Size
First Semester GPA (LEAP n=59; non-LEAP n=59)	3.12	2.78	.34*	.07
Second Semester GPA (LEAP n=57; non-LEAP n=52)	3.11	2.67	.44*	.08
1 st -to-2 nd Year Retention Rate (LEAP n=60, non-LEAP n=60)	90%	78%	12.0	N/A**
Last GPA (LEAP n=59; non-LEAP n=58)	2.99	2.7	.29*	.05
Four year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=31, non-LEAP n=31)	23%	7%	16.0	N/A
Six-year Graduation Rate (LEAP n=16, non-LEAP n=16)	56%	38%	18.0	N/A

**Not applicable

Because non-white students made up such a small percentage of our sample (see above), the n for these comparisons is small. The performance differences between the LEAP non-white and non-LEAP non-white students, while sometimes not statistically significant, are, nevertheless, suggestive. We see the same patterns for these students that we saw for women. They outperformed their non-LEAP matches to a greater degree than LEAP students did in general, as shown in Table 3. GPA differences in the first year are particularly striking.

Matching Study: Discussion

One limitation of our results derives from our matching criteria, which in some cases may not adequately correct for confounding factors. For example, socioeconomic status is probably not well captured by high school attended, since some high schools in Utah draw from residential areas with very different socioeconomic profiles, or offer programs that attract students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Zip code of home address might be an important additional demographic variable. Another confounding factor might be that our matches don't correct for motivation. Though we would expect to see motivation reflected to a certain extent in admissions index (better motivated students tend to do better in classes and on exams), high school performance does not always reflect

⁴ Four- and six-year graduation rates for both LEAP and non-LEAP men were low compared to the women probably because many more men than women at the University of Utah go on two-year LDS missions.

a student's determination to succeed in college.⁵ We recognized the need for a better measure of motivation to make our matches even more exact. The Student Strengths Inventory, or SSI, an instrument designed by researchers at the U and based on the SRI (Students Readiness Inventory), an ACT-produced instrument to measure student motivation upon initial matriculation, would provide that measure. We may be able to include correlations with the SSI in future studies, as it is being administered with increasing frequency to incoming students at the University of Utah and its usefulness is suggested by one year's administration of the SRI to all incoming U of U freshmen (see below).

Another limitation is that some of the differences between LEAP and non-LEAP students in Table 3, though statistically significant, are clearly not meaningful. These include first and second semester outcomes (GPA, credits attempted/completed), and graduating and last GPA. Differences of .01 in graduating GPA or of .11 in first semester GPA are just not meaningful performance differences between groups even if they are statistically significant (though of course they might be meaningful for individual students). The small effect sizes ($r=.005-.01$) underline this point.

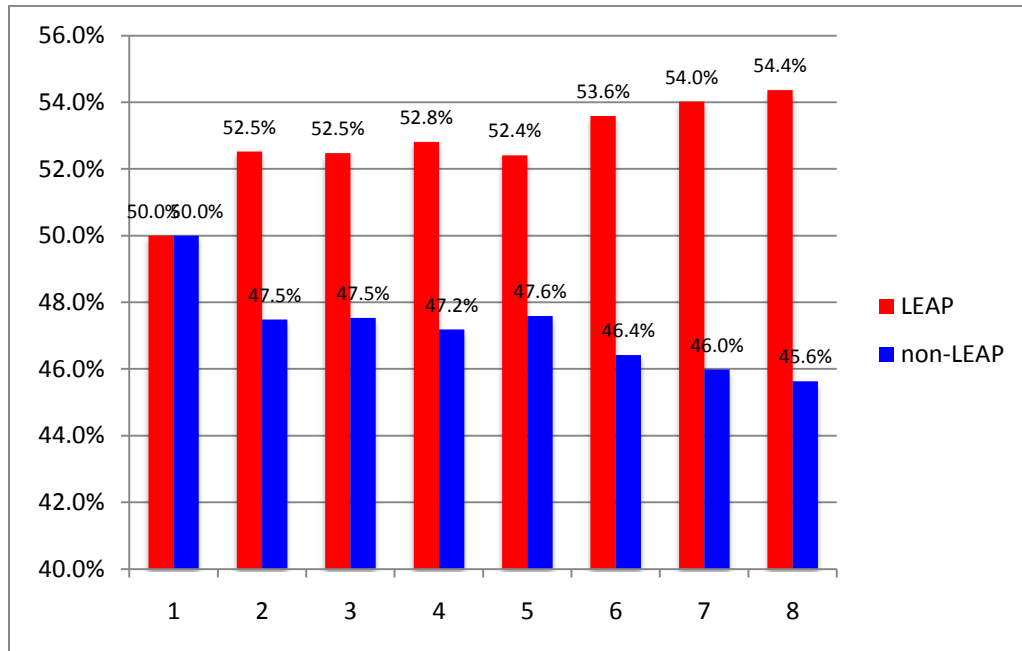
But in the case of outcomes like retention and graduation rates, the effect sizes, while also small ($r=.007$ for LEAP women; $r=.002$ for the whole LEAP population), are arguably meaningful in practical terms. Theoretically small effects can have substantial practical impacts. In terms of retention and graduation rates, the beneficial social impact of educating even a few more students, particularly those belonging to groups under-represented in higher education, is considerable. Moreover, public research universities like ours are increasingly reliant on tuition for funding, which makes retention an increasingly important financial and budgetary concern. In many tuition-driven institutions, improvements in retention could easily "salvage" more revenue for the operating budget than is currently generated by research grants (Heppner).

The practical effect of LEAP's increased retention rate is illustrated in the following graph comparing the retention rate of continuously enrolled LEAP students with that of continuously enrolled non-LEAP students from 1999-2006.

Figure 1: LEAP vs. non-LEAP Retention through 8 Semesters of Continuous Enrollment for Freshman Cohorts starting in 1999-2005⁶

⁵ One clue that the matching criteria may not entirely correct for differences in motivation is the number of credits attempted/completed by LEAP students in the first semester. At that point LEAP could have no impact on credits attempted, since students register for those credits before beginning the program, yet LEAP students do attempt more credits in their first semester. This suggests that LEAP students may be more ambitious than their matches even when starting college.

⁶ The data in this graph are restricted to continuously enrolled students in order to focus solely on those who have not dropped out of school. We stopped at eight semesters because by then rates of graduation have reduced the numbers of students enough that the comparison of retention rates becomes less meaningful. The graph shows what percentage of the total number of matched students who return each semester are LEAP or non-LEAP.



LEAP seems to have an effect on retention that extends—and even expands—through a student’s career at the university. Retention rates for LEAP students from first-to-second semester are 5% higher than for non-LEAP students; that margin expands over subsequent semesters, with 8.8% more LEAP students than non-LEAP students returning for the eighth semester of school. Of course, those students who do not return in any particular semester have not necessarily dropped out. Still, these numbers convey a general pattern in the persistence of LEAP students in comparison to non-LEAP students, and suggest the substantial practical effects, both social and financial, of the LEAP experience.

The matching study supports the validity of the first-to-second year retention study, reported in Table 1, comparing all LEAP to all first-year students—the data that motivated this study in the first place. With respect to retention, LEAP seems to have a real effect. Indeed, the impact of the LEAP year is most observable in the motivational/perseverance domains reflected in retention and rates of graduation, which can be seen in the relative effect sizes. The confirmation of our first hypothesis—that LEAP students would outperform their demographic twins—was thus partial, since meaningful differences between the groups were observed only in retention and graduation rates.

The confirmation of our second hypothesis—that LEAP student outperformance in general would be replicated within LEAP subgroups—was also partial, since LEAP men exhibited no significant differences from their non-LEAP matches. But the flip side of the LEAP men’s performance is, of course, the striking outperformance of LEAP women. In fact, two LEAP subgroups—women and non-white students—seem to benefit disproportionately from the LEAP experience.

2. Regression Analysis of the LEAP Program

The matching study was a significant step forward in assessment of LEAP, but it suffered from several drawbacks, chief among which is the fact that the matching algorithm used for the study was lost when analyst David Ma from the Office of Budget and Analysis (OBIA) left to take another job. Our plan is

to continue the matching study in a different form. Mark St. Andre, Assistant Dean in Undergraduate Studies, has arranged to have access to university databases and will conduct an ongoing regression study of the program. This study will look at the same dependent variables as the matching study—retention, grades, time-to-graduation—and a refined set of independent variables. For example, rather than looking only at high school attended as a proxy for socioeconomic status, we will add the zip code of the student's home address.

While a regression analysis is less intuitive for a lay audience to understand, the analysis itself, while mathematically identical to that of the matching study, should be more powerful, yielding information about the relative contribution of the various factors controlling student performance. Mark is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, which will involve getting a Master's degrees in Statistics, and this regression analysis will likely be his Master's project. We are particularly interested in understanding LEAP's impact on students in particular programs such as Engineering LEAP or Fine Arts LEAP.

3. Social Network Analysis of the LEAP Program

To what extent do LEAP students benefit from the community that develops in LEAP classrooms? We propose to answer this question by conducting a social network analysis of LEAP classes.

The LEAP program is, of course, structured to emphasize the development of community in the classroom. LEAP Peer Advisors actively promote the engagement of LEAP students in LEAP classes, in LEAP program activities, and in university life more generally. Does such engagement, especially as measured by the resulting development of social networks in LEAP classes, make a difference to students' satisfaction with their LEAP class and to their subsequent academic performance (GPA, retention, time to graduation)? The social network study seeks to quantify the density of social networks that develop in LEAP classes (actual number of ties per student divided by possible number of ties per student), and to establish correlations between that density and students' satisfaction with their LEAP class as well as their subsequent academic performance. Comparing social networks in LEAP classes with those in non-LEAP classes will also be a component of the study design.

We are especially interested in the role of Peer Advisors (PA's) in these class-based networks. Are different PA's differently situated in their respective class networks? Are some more active/connected? Does the PA's level of connection influence the development of the class's social network and the satisfaction with the course that students report in course evaluations? What is the social network profile of students who go on to become PA's?

Our answers to these questions could impact the LEAP Program substantially. If it turns out that social networks influence student performance, and that PA's are critical players in those networks, then we can take steps to enhance the development of community in LEAP classes by further emphasizing group work and student-student collaboration/learning and perhaps also by channeling more resources into the PA program, or by refining their selection and training.

To our knowledge, there are no studies that investigate social networks in college classes and their correlation with student satisfaction and performance. Nevertheless, the proposed study relies on the growing body of research on social networks, which has increased dramatically in recent years with the development of software able to support the computation-intensive analysis of large data arrays. In particular, our study depends on a seminal 1973 paper by Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," which has spawned a rather extensive literature on networks and the transmission of information between agents located in them. The structure of the LEAP Program is unique enough, however, and, as a result of that uniqueness, the questions we seek to answer are specific enough, that there really aren't any studies that offer an obvious template for our research. As noted above, social network analysis has not been used to focus on the development of community in college classes uniquely. (The exception would be online classes, for which there is an extensive literature.) "Ties That Bind" by Scott Thomas (2000) stands out as the most useful social network approach to studying retention in higher education. Other instructive precursors include studies of social networks in primary school and middle school (e.g. Hansell 1982, Moody 2003) and in an MBA Program (Baldwin 1997). The literature on college student retention and persistence is at this point fairly extensive and forms the background to our study: Tinto (1997) and Kuh (2005) stress the importance of engagement and community to student retention.

The objectives of the study include the following:

1. To map social networks in LEAP classes using a survey instrument administered online to all LEAP students towards the end of fall semester and again toward the end of spring semester, using social network software to calculate the density of student relationships, and to compare the social network densities among LEAP classes.
2. To map the location of Peer Advisors in the social networks of LEAP classes.
3. To use statistical analysis to test for correlation between the density of social networks in LEAP classes, PA network centrality, and student satisfaction (from course evaluations and end-of-year LEAP surveys) and

subsequent academic performance (GPA, retention and time-to-graduation).

4. To map social networks in some non-LEAP classes in order to compare social network densities in LEAP classes with those in non-LEAP classes, and then to compare LEAP and non-LEAP student satisfaction (from course evaluations and end-of-year LEAP surveys) and subsequent student performance (GPA, retention and time-to-graduation).
5. To use a mixed methods approach with one or two LEAP sections. This approach supplements the survey, social network analysis and statistical analysis with student interviews about classroom community. Do student perceptions of community match the social network metrics?

IRB approval of this study was granted in June 2010. Justin Clifford was accepted as a USET Scholar for 2010. USET is a program offered by the Center for Learning and Teaching Excellence that gives stipend support to undergraduates doing research in teaching and learning. Justin proposed the social network analysis of classroom community in LEAP as his focus for USET.

4. Revised Fall and Spring Surveys

We received a grant from the UGS Parent Support Fund to subscribe to the Educational Benchmarking Incorporated survey service for at least a year. Using this service appeals to us because it offers powerful statistical tools for analysis that, should we choose not to continue using this service, we could replicate in our own surveys. Using the service, then, will afford us an opportunity to learn more about surveys. Improving our current surveys will be important going forward because the change in LEAP faculty status, discussed above in the Executive Summary, makes faculty evaluation the responsibility of the LEAP program. This puts pressure on our survey instruments to be reliable and accurate. See Appendix for a copy of the survey.

List of Appendices

1. Article from the *Daily Utah Chronicle* about enrollment increases in 2009-10.
2. Copy of Rule and Policy 6-310
3. Spreadsheet from the Delta Cost Calculator
4. Article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ("On the Bottom Line, Good Teaching Tops Good Research") on the financial impact of improved retention.
5. Orientation PowerPoint for summer 2010
6. Copy of the SSI
7. LEAP Convocation Program
8. 2010 Fine Arts LEAP theater production: program
9. 2010 Peer Advisor Luncheon: program
10. Parent Fund Support
11. Agendas and Minutes for LEAP Community Advisory Board meetings in 2009-10
12. ELEAP Luncheon Assessment PowerPoint, May 19, 2010
13. EBI Survey
14. Assessing the Educational Outcomes of a Learning Community
15. PowerPoint of Assessment Odyssey.