

# Department of Educational Leadership

Updated: 06/03/2024

Compiled by: Bisola Neil and Emily Hodge

## Program

Teaching Innovations Program (TIP): a year-long program that supports faculty teams in developing or redesigning a course or academic program

## Intervention

The project “From Stories to Interventions: Identifying Programmatic Shifts by Understanding Belonging Among Aspiring Leaders of Color” sought to assess the sense of belonging among students, particularly current students of color, in the Educational Leadership Department.

## Participating faculty

Dr. Bisola Neil and Dr. Emily Hodge, Department of Educational Leadership

## Implementation

- We (Emily and Bisola) administered the survey to students in their internship in Fall 2023 via Qualtrics.
  - Survey included items corresponding with three measures: Sense of Belonging & Department Culture, Student Resilience, Well Being and Sense of Belonging.
  - Survey included closed survey questions, as well as one open-ended survey response specifically for students of color.
  - Survey results disaggregate by gender, race, and program modality to understand potential patterns and trends.
- Survey sent to 51 students; 29 fully completed responses for response rate of 57%
  - Of those 29 fully completed responses, nine were from students of color, five were women of color (two did not wish to answer).
  - Four of nine students of color completed the open-ended response question asking them about their experiences in the program
- We discussed our findings at our first program meeting on January 31, 2024, again on February 28, 2024 and then briefly on April 24, 2024.
  - In those meetings, we shared a [data analysis spreadsheet](#) to understand patterns and trends.
  - We also developed [presentation slides](#) to share our work with our colleagues.

# Program Redesign Goals and Analysis

## Summary

**Goal 1:** Assess students' current degree of belonging in their final semester by designing, administering, and analyzing a survey that measures their beliefs around Department culture, resilience, and general sense of well-being and belonging.

**Status:** Completed

**Discussion:** We now have a survey instrument that can be used on a regular basis.

**Goal 2:** Work collaboratively with program faculty and staff to identify programmatic ideals and lived experiences based on the survey results.

**Status:** Completed

**Discussion:** We distributed the survey, analyzed the results and presented twice to the program faculty and brainstormed possible interventions. Many ideas for possible interventions focused on ways to think more deeply about advising in the Core Choice program, though we have some reservations about the extent to which this conversational focus emerged directly from the data or was already an area the program felt needed support.

**Goal 3:** In collaboration with program faculty, design and potentially execute one or more culturally responsive, programmatic interventions to enhance the sense of belonging, ideally among students of color but also in response to emergent trends in survey data

**Status:** Not yet completed

**Discussion:** Across two different program meeting conversations, we had a difficult time coming to consensus with program faculty about one intervention to try next; we did agree on the need to collect more data from students in their internship semester using this survey instrument.

## Student Perspectives

### Key Findings from Survey

*The data was disaggregated by race, gender, and program (e.g., cohort program with a mix of hybrid and online courses; fully online cohort; non-cohort program where students proceed at a self-selected pace)*

#### 1. Sense of Belonging and Department Culture:

- **Acceptance Levels:** Our survey showed varied acceptance levels among students. Students of color reported feeling quite extremely accepted, indicating a positive shift towards an inclusive department culture.
- **Understanding and Respect:** However, understanding and respect levels show room for improvement, particularly among different demographic groups. Some students reported only feeling somewhat understood or respected, highlighting areas where our department can develop further."

## 2. Connections with Faculty, Staff, and Peers:

- **Advisor and Professor Connectivity:** Connection with professors and advisors was inconsistent. Some students felt highly connected, while others felt less supported. This variance was particularly noticeable among students of color.
- **Cohort and Staff Relations:** Students' feelings of connection to their cohorts and staff also varied, with some feeling disconnected. Our program must address these disparities to ensure all students feel equally supported.

## 3. Well-Being and Support:

- **Seeking Help:** Most students felt comfortable seeking help, indicating a level of trust in the availability and approachability of our faculty and staff.
- **Understanding Student Problems:** Feedback on how well staff understood student problems was mixed, suggesting that while some students feel their concerns are appreciated, others do not feel adequately understood.

## Next Steps

- Our conversations with faculty members this spring are informing the next steps for this work in terms of continued rounds of data collection and/or culturally responsive programmatic changes, informed by belonging research.
- Steps for next year include securing IRB approval for this project to potentially be publishable as the survey is administered multiple times and as the educational leadership program faculty test out new approaches to making sure that our revised program vision—preparing PK-12 school leaders who advance educational justice—is fully enacted in our community and curriculum.

## Appendix

### Survey Design and Data

#### Responsive: Preliminary Data - One Survey: Three Components

- **Sense of Belonging & Department Culture**
  - 8 items adapted from Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Assessment (Jack Schneider)
- **Student Resilience**
  - 4 items adapted from Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10 (CD-RISC-10)
- **Well Being and Sense of Belonging**
  - 4 items 2023 Student Well-Being and Sense of Belonging Survey - Perceived Faculty Support

● **2 Open Ended Items**

- We would especially like to better understand the experiences and needs of students of color in our program so that we can take deliberate steps to make our practices match our ideals. Do you identify yourself as a person of color?
- *We are interested in knowing more about your experience as a student of color in the ELAD program so that we can take deliberate steps to make our practices match our ideals. We would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to reflect on a few times that stood out to you and have impacted you the most (think of interactions such as a time you had to work with a cohort member, feedback (or lack of) from a professor, **advocating for yourself in your internship, support (or lack of) from an advisor**) As you think of this moment/s if the recollection feels like a moment/s of harm, what would repair have looked like for you?*

**4 Additional Survey Items**

How do you identify yourself in terms of gender?
How do you identify yourself in terms of race and ethnicity?
When did you enter the program?
When did you anticipate graduating from the program?

**Who Took the Survey?**

- The survey sent to 51 students; 29 fully completed responses for a response rate of 59%
  - Of those 29 fully completed responses, nine were from students of color, and five were women of color (two did not wish to answer).
  - Four of nine students of color completed the open-ended response question asking them about their experiences in the program.

**Analysis—Data was Disaggregated by total respondents, respondents' race, gender, and program. Key Findings were chosen based on clustered or evenly spread apart results.**

**Sense of Belonging and Department Culture**

**In your experiences with the ELAD program, how accepted do you feel by the other students?**

Not at all accepted	A little accepted	Somewhat accepted	Quite accepted	Extremely accepted
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<b>POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>% POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>100%</b>
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<b>Core Choice</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>% Core Choice</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**How well do students in the ELAD program understand you?**

Don't understand me	Understand me a little	Understand me somewhat	Understand me quite a bit	Understand me extremely well
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<b>M/Cis-M</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>% Male/Cis Male</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>10.00%</b>	<b>30.00%</b>	<b>40.00%</b>	<b>20.00%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>% Female</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>5.26%</b>	<b>15.79%</b>	<b>47.37%</b>	<b>31.58%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Non-POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>% Non-POC</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Fast Track</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>% Fast Track</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Online</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>% Online</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>1</b>

**How much respect do students in the ELAD program show you**

No respect at all	A little bit of respect	Some respect	Quite a bit of respect	A great deal of respect
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<b>M/Cis-M</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>% Male/Cis Male</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>40%</b>	

<b>POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>% POC</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>78%</b>	
<b>Non-POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>% Non-POC</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>39%</b>	

<b>Fast Track</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>% Fast Track</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>58%</b>	

In general, how connected do you feel to the professors, advisors, and/or staff of the ELAD program??

Not at all connected	Slightly connected	Somewhat connected	Quite connected	Extremely well connected
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<b>M/Cis-M</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>% Male/Cis Male</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>30%</b>	
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>% Female</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>11%</b>	

<b>POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>% POC</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>33%</b>	
<b>Non-POC</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>% Non-POC</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>11%</b>	

<b>Core Choice</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>% Core Choice</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	
<b>Fast Track</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>% Fast Track</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>33%</b>	

Online	0	2	1	3	0	6
% Online	0%	33%	17%	50%	0%	

How connected do you feel to the professors of the ELAD program?

M/Cis-M	0	1	3	5	1	10
% Male/Cis Male	0	10.00%	30.00%	50.00%	10.00%	
F	0	3	9	6	1	19
% Female	0	15.79%	47.37%	31.58%	5.26%	

Core Choice	0	2	5	0	0	7
% Core Choice	0	28.57%	71.43%	0	0	

Online	0	2	3	1	0	6
% Online	0	33.33%	50.00%	16.67%	0	

How connected do you feel to your advisor in the ELAD program?

M/Cis-M	1	0	2	4	3	10
% Male/Cis Male	10.00%	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%	30.00%	
F	1	3	8	3	4	19
% Female	5.26%	15.79%	42.11%	15.79%	21.05%	

POC	1	1	2	3	2	9
% POC	11.11%	11.11%	22.22%	33.33%	22.22%	
Non-POC	1	1	8	4	4	18
% Non-POC	5.56%	5.56%	44.44%	22.22%	22.22%	

Core Choice	1	2	4	0	0	7
% Core Choice	14%	29%	57%	0%	0%	

Online	1	1	3	0	1	6
% Online	16.67%	16.67%	50.00%	0	16.67%	

**How connected do you feel to the staff in the ELAD program?**

Not at all connected	Slightly connected	Somewhat connected	Quite connected	Extremely well connected
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F	1	6	5	7	0	19
% Female	5.3%	31.6%	26.3%	36.8%	0.0%	

POC	1	1	5	1	0	8
% POC	13%	13%	63%	13%	0%	
Non-POC	1	5	4	8	1	19
% Non-POC	5%	26%	21%	42%	5%	

Core Choice	0	4	2	1	0	7
% Core Choice	0%	57%	29%	14.3%	0.0%	

**How connected do you feel to your cohort/other students in the ELAD program?**

Not at all connected	Slightly connected	Somewhat connected	Quite connected	Extremely well connected
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M/Cis-M	1	2	3	2	2	10
% Male/Cis Male	10%	20%	30%	20%	20%	
F	0	3	2	5	6	16
% Female	0%	19%	13%	31%	38%	

POC	1	2	2	0	3	8
% POC	13%	25%	25%	0%	38%	



Non-POC	1	3	3	6	4	17
% Non-POC	6%	18%	18%	35%	24%	

Core Choice	2	2	1	1	0	6
% Core Choice	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	
Fast Track	0	1	3	5	3	12
% Fast Track	0.00%	8.33%	25.00%	41.67%	25.00%	
Online	0	2	1	1	2	6
% Online	0.00%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	

**2023 Student Well-Being and Sense of Belonging Survey Used to Measure Perceived Faculty Support**

If I had a reason, I would feel comfortable seeking help from ELAD program staff (faculty, administrators, advisors) outside of class time (office hours, etc.).

Completely Untrue	Mostly Untrue	Equally True and Untrue	Mostly True	Completely True
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F	0	0	5	7	7	19
% Female	0	0	26.3%	36.8%	36.8%	100%

POC	0	0	3	3	3	9
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% POC	0	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	100%
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I feel that an ELAD program staff member (faculty, administrator, advisor) really tried to understand my problem when I talked about it.

Completely Untrue	Mostly Untrue	Equally True and Untrue	Mostly True	Completely True
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F	0	1	4	8	6	19
% Female	0%	5%	21%	42%	32%	100%

POC	0	0	4	2	3	9
% POC	0	0%	44%	22%	33%	100%
Non-POC	0	1	2	10	5	18
% Non-POC	0	6%	11%	56%	28%	100%

I feel comfortable asking an ELAD program staff member (faculty, administrators, advisors) for help with a personal problem.

M/Cis-M	2	1	0	2	3	8
% Male/Cis Male	25%	13%	0%	25%	38%	100%
F	0	3	3	8	5	19
% Female	0	15.8%	15.8%	42.1%	26.3%	100%

Non-POC	2	3	2	5	5	17
% Non-POC	12%	18%	12%	29%	29%	100%

Core Choice	1	2	2	0	2	7
% Core Choice	14%	29%	29%	0%	29%	100%

<b>Offsite</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>%Offsite</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Open-ended responses from students of color**

During a course in Financial Literacy, I received feedback to review and edit a submission. I felt I addressed each point, but upon submission the same issue applied in the following assessment. I spoke to the professor and he was receptive to the way I thought and what he expected in his submissions and allotted me with time to review with him and garner a better grasp of his expectations.

It is a worthwhile experience given that we are able to connect theory and practice. The journey provides great insight into leadership as well as affords us an opportunity to grow professionally and personally.

I feel I had a great experience in the ELAD program. I was able to complete my classes why being a stay at home mother. My professors were very supportive and understanding. I feel they held me to high expectations, but remained reasonable. I am thankful for all of their support and encouraging words.

I felt that it was extremely inappropriate for students to be required to purchase textbooks that were either written by or featuring a professor in a book written by said professors friend. In order to repair this, those books should be removed from the programs required materials.