

The Mount Leadership Society Scholars Program Assessment: 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **Student Affairs Assessment**

This project describes the experiences of students in the Mount Leadership Society Scholars Program at The Ohio State University during the 2001-02 academic year. The report is based on responses to a survey that was distributed to all members of the program during Spring quarter. In total, 43 (or 43.5%) of the first-year students completed the survey of the 99 who participated in the program. In addition, a comparison group of 130 students also completed a parallel survey about their OSU experience.

In this summary, the findings, as related to the articulated goals of the program, are addressed as well as students' satisfaction with the Mount program. For further detail, a complete report is available. Please note that references to page numbers in this summary correspond to the complete report.

The "Mount Essentials" for leadership and service are five competencies that comprise the foundation of the Mount Leadership Society and give focus to the program's goals. The Mount Essentials include; honor of integrity, being prepared and following through, creating and nurturing relationships, valuing individuals, and willingness to teach others. Overall, evidence suggests that student participation in the Mount Leadership Scholars Program positively enhances their development as leaders for a diverse society and contributes to fostering an ethic of service. For example, Mount Scholars were asked if they could explain the Mount Essentials for leadership and service, and over 65% of the students agreed that they could do so. Furthermore, over 80% of the Mount Scholars reported that they could model the Mount Essentials for leadership and service.

Goal: Academic Achievement – To support a scholar's ability to succeed academically at Ohio State through learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

- ❖ Mount Scholars (91%) were significantly more comfortable with their academic plan compared to the comparison group (75%) (see page 6).
- ❖ Mount Scholars were significantly more likely to report being connected to OSU instructors and faculty members and to staff and administrators than were students in the comparison group (see page 11).
- ❖ Mount Scholars (86%) were more likely to agree that they felt a sense of belonging in their classes than students in the comparison group (72%) (see page 12).
- ❖ Mount Scholars (98%) were significantly more likely to agree that they have the academic support they need to succeed at OSU compared to of the comparison group (75%) (see page 13).
- ❖ When comparing the Mount cluster courses to other courses, Mount Scholars were more comfortable asking questions in the Mount cluster courses but were not more likely to participate fully (see page 35).

Goal: Community Connection – To connect scholars with the campus and the community.

- ❖ Mount Scholars were significantly more connected to the OSU community than were members of the comparison group (see page 8).
- ❖ Mount Scholars (88%) were more likely to respond that they were satisfied with the sense of community on campus than were students in the comparison group (78%) (see page 14).

❖ Mount Scholars were more involved on campus and off campus than members of the comparison group. Over 81% of the Scholars were involved with on-campus activities in addition to the Scholars Program compared to nearly 58% of the comparison group; the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. Although off-campus involvement is less, 42% of the Scholars were involved off campus compared to 29% of the comparison group (see pages 20-24).

❖ A high proportion of Mount Scholars (81%) agreed that the Mount Scholars Program made it easier to get involved on campus (see page 34).

Goal: Diversity – To increase respect for and appreciation of personal and cultural differences in a diverse society.

❖ “Celebrating and learning from our diversity” was of significantly greater importance to Mount Scholars than it was to the comparison group (see pages 15-16). (This difference may be indicative of the selection process rather than any change resulting from being in the Mount Program.)

❖ Mount Scholars reported greater gains, albeit modest, since entering college in their knowledge of and ability to get along with people from different races/cultures than did students in the comparison group (see pages 16-17).

❖ Mount Scholars reported that they interacted significantly more often with students who were of a different race/ethnicity compared to students in the comparison group (see pages 18-19).

❖ The majority of Mount Scholars agreed that they have an increased respect for and appreciation of personal and cultural differences. Similarly, the majority of Mount Scholars agreed that they could explain the benefits of diversity (see pages 35-36).

Goal: Leadership – To enhance a scholar’s leadership skills and self-knowledge.

❖ Mount Scholars placed significantly greater importance in the “ability to lead a group” and the “ability to speak in public” than did students in the comparison group (see pages 16-17).

❖ The majority of Mount Scholars agreed that they have a better understanding of their leadership style (60%), of their strengths and weaknesses as a leader (72%), and of what motivates them as a leader (71%) (see pages 36-37).

❖ In the words of Mount students: “I’ve learned to work with others better.” “I feel more confident in my talents and abilities.” “I’ve become a better leader.” And “I feel I have changed in the aspect of having more awareness of my responsibilities as a student leader and of those around me” (see page 38).

Goal: Service – To instill an on-going ethic of service.

❖ Mount Scholars were significantly more satisfied with the availability of community service opportunities at OSU than were the members of the comparison group (see page 15).

❖ Mount Scholars placed significantly greater importance on “making the world a better place” than did students in the comparison group (see pages 15-16).

❖ Mount Scholars placed significantly greater importance on the “ability to identify social issues and concerns” than did students in the comparison group (see pages 16-17).

❖ Mount Scholars (73%) agreed that they had a better understanding of the service agencies/resources in the local community as a result of their involvement in the Mount Scholars Program (see page 35).

❖ The majority of Mount Scholars (73%) agreed that they were better able to conceptualize, design, and implement a service project. However, fewer than half of the Scholars agreed that they have a better understanding of how to research and address social problems (see page 37).

❖ Similarly, the majority of Mount Scholars agreed that they could explain the importance of service (77%) and that they could motivate others to participate in service (63%) (see page 37).

Satisfaction with OSU and the Mount Scholars Program

In addition to assessing the Mount Scholars Program in relation to the stated goals, students were also asked about their level of satisfaction with OSU and the Mount Scholars program.

❖ Although Mount Scholars reported similar levels of satisfaction with their experience at Ohio State to the comparison group, they were more likely to respond that OSU exceeded their expectations (see page 8).

❖ A majority (51%) of Mount Scholars indicated that the Mount Program was either “very important” or “somewhat important” in their decision to enroll at OSU (see page 25).

❖ Speaking to their overall satisfaction with the program, 56% of the Mount Scholars said they would participate in the Mount Program if they had to do it over again. Of note, 33% of the Mount Scholars responded that they were unsure as to whether they would participate in the Mount Program again. Furthermore, over 58% of students responded that they were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the overall program (see pages 25-27).

❖ Of the “required” elements of the program, students were most satisfied with the Mount early arrival program with over 95% responding that they were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with this aspect of Mount. In addition, students frequently stated that the early arrival program was their favorite aspect of the Mount Program (see page 29).

❖ Among students who took the Mount leadership class, nearly 92% said they were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied.” Over 70% of Scholars were satisfied with their English 110 course. Additionally, a high proportion of students (81%) reported that they were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their classes outside of Mount clustered courses (see page 28).

❖ Over 81% of the students reported being satisfied with living in Halloran House (see page 27).

❖ Approximately 75% of Scholars responded that they were satisfied with the retreat to Camp Akita and the sense of community among Mount Scholars and staff (see page 29).

❖ However, fewer than half of the Scholars were satisfied with the Mount survey class (38%), the leadership workshops (42%), and the monthly service projects (48%) (see page 28).

❖ When asked about their least favorite aspect of the Mount program, students’ most frequent responses were the meetings and various aspects of the service projects (see pages 30-31).