A Pilot Study on the Effect of the Wilderness Education Association Stewardship Course at Western Kentucky University Perceived Leadership Skill Development

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A PILOT STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF THE WILDERNESS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION STEWARDSHIP COURSE AT WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY ON PERCEIVED LEADERSHIP SKILL DEVELOPMENT

A Thesis
Presented to
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Master of Science in Recreation

By
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A PILOT STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF THE WILDERNESS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION STEWARDSHIP COURSE AT WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY ON PERCEIVED LEADERSHIP SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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Director of Thesis

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The Wilderness Education Association has seen and answered the need to train outdoor leaders. It has provided a wide range of courses and opportunities for future outdoor leaders to learn and practice their skills. It is important to examine the effectiveness of these courses and how they effect course participants. This study focused on the perceived changes by students in their leadership skills as a result of the Wilderness Stewardship Course.

This study was conducted during a Wilderness Education Association Wilderness Stewardship course offered at Western Kentucky University. The established Leadership Skills Inventory, developed by Frances Karnes and Jane Chauvin, was used in evaluating student leadership perceptions. The inventory requires individuals to respond to questions that have been separated into 9 leadership categories. Strengths and weaknesses of the individuals are measured by their answers. The categories include fundamentals of leadership, written communication, speech communication, decision-making, group dynamics, problem-solving, personal development, and planning skills. Students were given the inventory as a pre and posttest and the results were analyzed using a paired t-test.
The results indicated a significant change in student's perception of skills in four areas. These areas include fundamentals of leadership, speech communication skills, character-building skills, and group dynamic skills. Length of course, direct teaching on subjects, and opportunities to practice skills provided opportunities to develop skills in the above mentioned areas.
Chapter 1

Introduction

Adventure programs have been developed to encompass all people. The opportunity to learn, develop and reflect on the outdoor experience has appealed to many professionals working with at-risk youth. Leaders involved with college students, persons with disabilities, and women’s groups have also found the experience of adventure programs transforming. Adventure programming includes activities set in the outdoors with the use of “adventurous experiences” (Priest, 1999, xiii). Though there are no set outcomes, the experience is powerful enough to move participants to a new view of their abilities and surroundings. With adventure programming, the challenges and experiences available are unlimited because the experience does the teaching. Each person may learn something different.

How does one prepare to lead a group with diverse abilities, backgrounds, ages, skills and possible outcomes? The answer lies in proper leadership training. The demands on outdoor leaders are great, but adequate and thorough preparation is the answer (Priest, 1987). Buell (1983) stated “leadership is the single most important aspect of conducting Outdoor Programs” (p. 5). Outdoor leaders must be fully prepared to react in any situation with the proper skills while providing safety to the group with minimal harm to the environment. There is a variety of skills a leader must learn, but those skills can be separated into two groups: hard skills or technical skills that must be learned; soft skills or people skills that enable a leader to organize, instruct and facilitate (Priest, 1999).
The Wilderness Education Association (WEA) has answered this need for training. In 1977, Paul Petzoldt and others, concerned with the proper development of outdoor leaders and the preservation of wildland areas, founded the WEA. These individuals believed that education would create a change that would lead to preservation of and safety for those using wildlands. Because of these beliefs a nonprofit membership organization was established that today continues to “train outdoor leaders, instill a sense of stewardship toward the wild outdoors, and provide the skills and knowledge necessary to lead and teach the public in the appropriate use of wilderness areas” (Course Catalog, 1996). The WEA mission is “to promote the professionalization of outdoor leadership and to, thereby, improve the safety of outdoor trips and enhance the conservation of the wild outdoors” (Cockrell & Lupton, 1991, p. 1).

The WEA has affiliates in colleges, universities and select public and private organizations. It is through these organizations that varied WEA courses are offered, each following elements of the established 18-point curriculum. The National Standard Program (NSP) for outdoor leadership certification is taught by WEA certified instructors; it is structured for those with minimal wilderness experience but would like to become WEA certified or lead wilderness expeditions. The courses require very few classroom days but extended periods of time (up to 35 days) in wilderness field experience (Cockrell & Lupton, 1991; Course Catalog, 1996). The Professional Short Course NSP is designed for those individuals currently working in the field but would like to become certified outdoor leaders via a shorter length course. A screening process is in place for admittance into this course. Wilderness Stewardship Programs (WSP) are also offered by affiliate institutions. The WSP are of differing lengths, but all follow the
guidelines of the WEA and follow all or portions of the 18 components of the WEA curriculum development (Cockrell & Lupton, 1991). In 1992, Western Kentucky University (WKU), an affiliate of the WEA, began offering a fourteen-day Wilderness Stewardship program (REC 482). Leadership, judgment and decision-making skills, and evaluation have been stressed in this course (see Appendix A for full course outline) (Spencer, 1993). Another course offered by WEA is the Wilderness Education Workshops (WEW). This course is designed for people of all ages, and areas of interest, wanting to learn more about outdoor leadership. Lastly, the WEA offers an Instructors Course (IC), designed for those who would like to pursue a profession in outdoor leadership. Courses are directed by senior instructors and require participants to have extensive experience in outdoor leadership.

Proper training for outdoor leaders does not end with a good curriculum. Evaluation and assessment provide opportunities for further training and development. According to the course catalog (1996) instructors, leaders and students all participate in evaluation. Students evaluate fellow student’s skills and techniques, instructor leadership skills, the course itself, and their own abilities and limitations. The WEA considers evaluation a very important component and makes the evaluation process a serious priority. Without evaluation, there is no way to determine whether or not the student is ready for certification (Wagstaff & Cockrell, 1991). Western Kentucky University requires full participation in the evaluation process as designed by the WEA curriculum. Yet in this curriculum, there is no specific assessment of the effect, if any, the course had in changing the participants’ perception of themselves as leaders as a result of the WEA course. With this important measure, students will be able to
realistically assess their leadership skills and establish a more objective view of themselves. This form of evaluation would focus on the soft skills. Since these skills are an important component of any WEA course, an in-place evaluation tool could be beneficial in determining the impact on and change in skills due to the WEA course.

Purpose of Study

The objective of this study was to examine the change in students’ perceptions, if any, of their leadership soft skills after participating in a WEA Stewardship course at WKU. The independent variable in this study was the content covered by the WKU/WSP course. The dependent variable was change in student leadership skills, specifically the soft skills as measured by the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI).

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that the WEA Stewardship course affected a students’ perception of their leadership skills, specifically soft skills of leadership.

Significance of the Study

The Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) was utilized as the method of self-assessment of leadership skills (see Appendix B for complete inventory). The LSI has been established as a tool to help evaluate an individual’s leadership abilities in nine different skill areas (Karnes & Chauvin, 2000). The difference between how students perceived their leadership ability before and after the course is significant information for the course leader. It can be used to evaluate whether or not the course had any effect on the learner, thereby enabling the instructor to redirect learning activities or teaching style toward any specific needs that may be lacking. The results of the study could help the WEA in determining the effectiveness of the Wilderness Stewardship course. This study
will also be an important tool in making assessing REC 482 in the future. Once the evaluation tool is in place, the instructor will be able to evaluate and compare the course's impact on students in subsequent years. An objective of the course stated students would begin to recognize their leadership abilities and limitations (Spencer, 2000). This evaluation tool should aid the process. The LSI allows students to obtain and objective view of their leadership skills and analyze strengths and weaknesses.

**Limitations**

Experiential education allows for learning in all situations. Designed activities as well as natural phenomenon, such as inclement weather and accidents, will provide opportunities for the course content to be met. Although such situations are out of the researcher's control, they will not hinder the study. One factor beyond the researcher's control was the honesty with which the self-assessment was answered. Class size was also a limitation. WKU class size for Rec 482 will allow no more than 12 students.

**Delimitations**

The researcher has chosen to include only one REC 482 class to participate in the study. No other WEA Stewardship courses from other schools were included in this study. As noted previously, WSP courses are of differing lengths and contain all or part of the 18-point curriculum. Few WSP courses require students to teach segments as the WKU course does, and therefore no direct comparison could take place. This fact resulted in a small sample.
Assumptions

It was assumed that the course would be structured to assure that all course content would be covered. It was also assumed that students answered the Leadership Skills Inventory honestly.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are related to this study:

1. Adventure Programming – The deliberate use of adventurous experiences to create learning in individuals or groups, which result in change for society and communities

2. Leadership – The ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals.

3. Leader – One who influences others to create, identify, work toward, achieve, share, and celebrate mutually acceptable goals.

4. Hard Skills – Solid, tangible, measurable skills. They are easy to train and assess. Included are technical skills, safety skills and environmental skills.

5. Technical skills – Competencies in the actual adventure activities or outdoor pursuits being led. An example is proper climbing techniques.

6. Safety Skills – Competencies necessary to enjoy the adventure activity in a safe and prudent manner. Examples include understanding survival, first aid, accident response, and search and rescue techniques.

7. Environmental Skills – Competencies necessary to limit damage to the natural surroundings. Examples include minimum-impact travel, and no-trace camping.

8. Soft Skills – Organizational skills, instructional skills, and facilitation skills. The people skills of leadership.
9. Organizational skills - Those competencies that permit a leader to plan, prepare, execute, and evaluate experiences.

10. Instructional skills – Competencies required to appropriately teach people technical skills related to the activity, environment and safety.

11. Facilitation skills - Those competencies fostering productive group dynamics.

12. Experiential Education – Learning and teaching that takes place outside the classroom setting and involves applying of what has been taught. Knowledge is gained through doing.

13. Wilderness Education Association (WEA) – An association developed to promote the professionalism of outdoor leadership. This goal is met through various strategies: certification, accreditation, affiliation, membership, program consulting, and research and development.

14. National Standard Program (NSP) – A course involving extended wilderness travel (21-35 days) through which successful graduates may obtain outdoor leadership certification. Such certification allows individuals to conduct wilderness education workshops and wilderness steward programs.

15. Wilderness Steward Programs – A course, typically 10 days in length, designed to teach participants the basics of judgment and decision-making skills, leadership, minimum impact camping and travel techniques, and other essential components of the WEA 18-point curriculum.

16. 18-Point Curriculum – The major skill and knowledge areas in which a qualified outdoor leader should be able to demonstrate a minimum level of competency.
Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects the Wilderness Education Association Wilderness Stewardship course had on perceived leadership skill development. It was important review the components involved in leadership courses to understand the goal of outdoor leadership curricula. Therefore, this chapter includes literature related to outdoor leadership competencies, outdoor leadership curriculum, the WEA leadership curriculum, and evaluation techniques used to determine leader readiness.

Outdoor Leadership Competencies

"The industry need for training competent outdoor leaders is stronger now than in the days when WEA was originally founded" (M. Simon, personal communication, November 28, 2000). With this in mind, it is important to understand what the industry means by "competent outdoor leaders." Priest (1984) stated there must be a "balance of five types of competencies" (p. 34). They are activity and safety skills, organizational skills, instructional skills, group counseling skills and experience-based judgment.

Activity and safety skills include the hard skills of leadership. Understanding the correct technical aspects of an activity and proper first aid techniques are included in activity and safety skills.

Included in organizational, instructional and group counseling skills are the soft skills of leadership that are needed for planning, teaching, assessing, and facilitating the group activities. Experience-based judgment is thought of as "the cementing component.... It is the ability of outdoor leaders to make sound decisions based on their
knowledge, skills, past experience and past poor judgment” (p.34). In a survey conducted by Priest (1987) involving experts from various countries, components necessary for outdoor leaders are similar to those mentioned above. All experts agreed “safety skills, judgement, awareness and empathy, and group management skills were the most important” (p. 102). Buell (1983) stated that outdoor leaders should “provide a blend of personal and leadership characteristics with experience and training in order to make sound judgments, convey a sense of caring for participants and accomplish pre-determined goals and objectives” (p. 10). Buell listed 12 competency categories: philosophical, historical and theoretical foundation, outdoor leadership and instructorship, counseling, program planning and development, outdoor skills and abilities, professionalism, environmental awareness, first aid and safety, administration and supervision, facilities and supplies, evaluation and assessment, trends and issues. Although there are small differences between a number of the competencies listed above, there is considerable common ground.

Outdoor Leadership Curriculum

How are outdoor leaders trained? With such importance placed on the development of competent leaders, close scrutiny must be applied to the training of these leaders. Research has indicated that field experience is the best method of training and should be the primary one (Priest, 1987; Raiola & Sugerman 1999). Today the current practice involves a mix of classroom and field experiences (Raiola & Sugerman, 1999). In a classroom the two primary senses are hearing and seeing. In general individuals will remember only 50% of the information received in this setting, they will retain 90% of the information presented when they are actually involved in hands on experience (Bible,
1998). Experiential education, knowledge through doing, promotes behavior reinforcement (Drury, Bonney, 1992). Such training takes place within the WEA programs. Students are taught certain skills and then given the opportunity to practice and use them. Instructors also delegate the decision making process when possible, thereby allowing students to practice non-technical skills in real situations (Cain, 1991). The WEA curriculum focuses on the following 18 points, since they have been determined as areas necessary for becoming competent outdoor leaders (Teeters & Lupton, 1999). They are as follows:

1. Decision making and problem solving
2. Leadership
3. Expedition behavior/group dynamics
4. Environmental ethics
5. Basic camping skills
6. Nutrition and ration planning
7. Equipment/clothing selection and use
8. Weather
9. Health and sanitation
10. Travel techniques
11. Navigation
12. Safety and risk management
13. Wilderness emergency procedures and treatment
14. Natural and cultural history
15. Specialized travel/adventure activity
16. Group processing and communication skills

17. Trip planning

18. Teaching and transference.

Although the WEA has followed the 18-point curriculum for many years, the curriculum content adapts as new information becomes available. Adaptation is possible “primarily because the emphasis is not on the ‘correctness’ of practices in the backcountry, but rather on the quality of judgment and decisions” (Cockrell & Lupton, 1991, p. 7). The WEA curriculum places strong emphasis on theoretical and experience-based judgment and decision-making. Cain (1991) believes the WEA is separated from other outdoor leadership programs because these emphases are considered “the necessary foundation of all outdoor leadership competencies” (p. 13).

Leadership is emphasized on each WEA trip. The goal is “to provide participants with a background of leadership theory and its components in order to reinforce field knowledge and practice” (Drury & Bonney, 1992, p. 86). In the manual for the WKU/WEA Wilderness Stewardship course, it was stated that a student will “begin to recognize his or her leadership abilities and limitations” (Spencer, 2000, p. 2-3). Each course is designed to allow the student to develop his or her skill, through both theory and practice.

Raiola and Sugerman (1999) believe that leadership development is an ongoing process. A framework needs to be in place to maintain a balance between education and training. “One can think of training as the learning of techniques…and can view education as the process through which the student comes to understand the appropriate use of technique, as well as the implications of such use” (p. 244).
When viewing outdoor leadership education as an ongoing process best learned by doing, it is appropriate to explore the most effective methods for teaching skills in this setting. Phipps (1987) proposed an integration of three models, Situational Leadership, Jones’ Model of Group Development, and the Group Dynamics Teaching Model to form Experiential Leadership Education. Situational Leadership, developed by Hersey and Blanchard, “is based on the amount of direction and the amount of socio-emotional support a leader must provide given the situation and readiness of his or her followers” (p.23). The Jones’ Model is similar in that as the followers begin to develop, the leader’s role will change. A group will move from dependency, to conflict, cohesion and then to interdependence. A group will be more leader centered until it begins to mature in ability and willingness. The purpose of the Group Dynamics Teaching Model is reinforcement of positive behaviors. The premise is that once group dynamics are understood, a more effective leadership style can be chosen (Phipps, 1987).

**Evaluation Techniques**

Leadership training can continue to transpire in the evaluation and feedback stages of training. The WEA believes evaluation is a valuable component in all leadership-training programs (Course catalog, 1996). Self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and leader evaluation are often used to determine whether a student is ready to lead. In Priest’s 1987 study, experts differed in their choice of evaluation techniques. The majority of experts believed that program leaders provided the most valid assessment. A lesser number chose peer evaluation and self-assessment as tools for determining readiness.
Buell (1983) developed an assessment inventory designed as a self-assessment tool and staff evaluation tool. It catalogs the competencies outdoor leaders should possess and requires an honest response to each. The inventory allows one to identify areas that require further training. The Outdoor Leadership Competency Assessment Inventory is long and comprehensive; it includes the 12 components of outdoor leadership mentioned earlier in Chapter 2.

The WEA employs a variety of evaluation tools. Students are required to complete peer evaluations, instructor evaluation and self-evaluation. The WEA program has two types of self-evaluation: the journal and the ability assessment form. The journal encourages students to reflect on those experiences that have changed or impacted them. Students are also required to complete an Ability Assessment Form. This form asks students to label activities they would or would not feel qualified to lead (Wagstaff & Cockrell, 1991).

Another form of self-assessment is the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI). This inventory allows the student to determine his or her strengths and weaknesses in 9 different areas of leadership. The inventory was developed to assess leadership skills in individuals age 9 to adult and to determine those areas needing additional development as well as those that are already developed. It is a self-administered and self-scored inventory (Lee, 1998). Individuals are required to respond to questions that have been separated into 9 leadership categories: Fundamentals of Leadership, Written Communication Skills, Speech Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills, Decision-Making Skills, Group Dynamic Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Personal Development Skills, and Planning Skills (Edmunds, 1998). Strengths and weaknesses of
the individuals are measured by their answers. According to Karnes and Chauvin (2000), there are numerous benefits in this inventory.

1. Individuals will have a better understanding of the skills necessary for leadership.

2. Individuals will realistically assess their current leadership skills. The self-reporting and self-scoring format allows individuals to obtain a more objective view of themselves, rather than being rated by others who may be less knowledgeable about individual strengths and weaknesses.

3. Individuals will receive immediate feedback regarding their leadership skills, rather than having to wait for two or three weeks to obtain the results. Therefore, areas needing to be developed or improved can receive immediate attention.

4. Students will have a record of their present leadership skills to use as a basis for comparison and as a measure of progress as they work on activities to improve their self-reported areas of weakness.

5. Persons responsible for the administration of the inventory will use the results to plan a program of leadership skill development based on the areas of indicated need. The LSI thus serves the purpose of a needs’ assessment instrument.

Meyer (1996) used the inventory to determine the effectiveness of leadership skill development in students following a leadership academy. The LSI was also used to determine the impact of a week long Leadership Studies Program. It was determined that the course increased participants’ knowledge in many areas (Karnes & Chauvin, 2000).

Summary

The literature on outdoor leadership competencies and curriculum needs has a common theme. The recommended need for hard skill and soft skill development is necessary and is best taught in conjunction with hands on learning. The WEA has taken this need and developed courses that will enable individuals to have the necessary skills to be competent leaders. Evaluation is an important step. Peer, instructor, and self-
assessment are included in the WEA curriculum. An evaluation tool should also be in place to determine the effects that WEA courses are having on an individual’s skill development. Is the curriculum having any effect on how an individual views his or her leadership skills? The LSI can help answer this question. Once in place, it will help both students and instructors determine the impact the WEA is having on leadership training. The methodology used to make such an evaluation will be detailed in Chapter 3.
Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter the writer discusses the research methods used to determine the effect the WEA Wilderness Stewardship Course had on perceived leadership skill development. Topics include subjects, instruments, procedures, design and analysis, and the pilot study.

Subjects

Participants for this study were students enrolled in the WEA Wilderness Stewardship Rec482-482G course at Western Kentucky University during the May 2001 term. Enrollment consisted of 12 students. The course provided 3 hours of credit for students in the Recreation Program. Students not involved in the WKU Recreation program were allowed to sign up for the course. The only prerequisite for students included the Outdoor Recreation Skills class (REC 230). This course provided instruction on outdoor practices and encouraged proper environmental behavior during outdoor activities. If REC 230 had not been taken, students were allowed to obtain permission from the instructor to participate in REC 482.

Previous leadership courses in the recreation curriculum include Recreational Leadership (REC 302). This course provided a classroom approach to teaching leadership theory. The majority of students enrolled in REC 482 had taken REC 302 as a requirement for graduation.

After project review and authorization by the Human Subjects Review Board, participants who signed an informed consent (Appendix C) during the introduction day began participation in the study the first week of May 2001. At that time, participants
were given a Leadership Skills Inventory with a specific number. Pre- and posttests were labeled with coinciding numbers. The informed consent was attached to the participants’ pretest to ensure each one received the posttest with the same number. No names were used on the inventory - only sex, age, race, and previous leadership classes (see Appendix D for participant profiles).

**Instruments**

Participants were given the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) as a pre- and posttest to determine changes that had taken place as a result of the WEA Stewardship course. The pretests were administered on the introduction day of class. The posttests were given upon return from the field portion of the trip.

The LSI is an un-timed, self-rating, self-scoring instrument measuring skills of leadership. The form is in a 125-item Likert-type measure that takes approximately 20-40 minutes to complete. The test can be administered to a group or individually, with no special training required for the examiner. Participants rate their strengths and weaknesses in nine leadership categories. The following is a list of the nine areas of the LSI: Fundamentals of Leadership, Written Communication Skills, Speech Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills, Decision-Making Skills, Group Dynamic Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Personal Development Skills and Planning Skills.

According to Meyer (1996) "student self-rating scales provide valid, reliable data which is relevant in determining the effectiveness of leadership skills training" (p. 56). Edmunds (1998) sought to determine validity of the LSI and did so in his study. The LSI was found to have content, concurrent and construct validity. D’Illo and Karnes (1988)
conducted a study involving 113 students and 55 community leaders. The study was to assess criterion-related validity of the LSI. The resulting data supported its validity.

The Leadership Skills Inventory was used in this study based on the relevancy of the LSI categories to the WEA course. Category 1 of the LSI focuses on Fundamentals of Leadership. This section includes terms and identifies various leadership styles. The WEA course was an experiential leadership course. The course manual (Spencer, 2000) states leadership will be stressed and all students had leadership of the day responsibilities as well as group leadership activities. The category 2 is Written Communication Skills. Focus in this area is on organizing thoughts on paper, writing, outlining and research. Although written communication skills were not listed in the WEA course field manual, all students are involved in writing during the course. As leader of the day, students were required to teach lessons on specific topics that require summaries from The Backcountry Classroom (Drury & Bonney, 1992) and other sources. Journal entries and written evaluations of the course, peers and self were also required. The category 3 in the LSI is Speech Communication Skills. The skills included speech delivery and developing and sharing a viewpoint in public. Throughout the course the leader of the day assignment and teaching opportunities required students to speak publicly and to interact in a variety of outdoor situations. Category 4 is Character-Building Skills. Included in these skills are learning to identify values, defending beliefs, and accepting others. Working and living with other students for 10 consecutive days while being involved in various leadership scenarios provided opportunities for character-building. Category 5 is Decision-Making Skills. Decision-making and evaluation were stressed in the course outline. Students were required to enter a daily minimum of 3
journal entries on the most important decisions for each day. The LSI’s sixth category is Group Dynamic Skills. Skills evaluated include topics on group facilitating, compromise and achieving consensus. Because the course involves uninterrupted field experience, the setup allows for group dynamic skills to be practiced, without specific mention in the course outline. Problem-Solving Skills is the seventh category of the LSI. Identifying problems, evaluating strategies and accepting decisions are all inventoried. In a course involving field experience, there were a number of opportunities for students to practice problem-solving skills. Category 8 is Personal Skills. Grooming, and self-confidence are some of the skills included. The WEA course allows for students to make their own choices without being told what to do or how to do things. On the field portion of the course, individuals made decisions about hygiene issues and where to bed down for the night. Each student must be comfortable with his or her decision and must have the confidence to follow through with the decision made. The final category, 9, involves Planning Skills. Developing strategies and setting goals are topics in this category. The WEA course required students to plan and direct the day’s activities and to evaluate the outcome.

The LSI focuses on all aspects of the WEA course. Although all of the components of the LSI were not mentioned in the course outline or description, the nature of the course permitted all area requirements to be met. Therefore, the LSI was a worthwhile tool in determining the effect the WEA course had on leadership skill development.
Design

A pretest, posttest, randomized group design was used in this study. The participants were not selected for the class; they registered on their own volition.

Procedures

On May 7th, 2001, the first day of the WEA course, participants involved were given an informed consent by the researcher. Information was given to the participants regarding the purpose of the study. Participants who signed the informed consent were then given the LSI by the researcher. Participants were given one (1) inventory and asked to answer all questions honestly. The participants were given as much time as needed to complete the inventory. When all inventories were completed, the researcher collected the data. The posttest LSI was given to the group during the final debriefing day of the course May 20th.

The course time frame was a total of fifteen (15) days. It consisted of 1 initial meeting 1 month prior to the start of the field experience, 1 classroom day, 2 shakedown days, 10 days of field experience, and 1 final debriefing day. Participants were pretested and posttested without interruption from outside sources.

Analysis

The posttest composite scores of the treatment group were then analyzed in comparison to the pretest composite scores of the treatment group. This analysis determined whether there was any difference attributable to the independent variable the WEA/WKU Wilderness Stewardship Course. The findings will be presented in chapter 4.
Pilot Study

A pilot study to this one was conducted with students involved in REC 230, a Recreation Skills course offered at WKU. This class focuses on outdoor leadership concepts including environmental values and basic outdoor recreation activities. The study was necessary to determine the time needed for the LSI, the appropriateness of the questions and for determining whether more information should be required from the participants involved.

Summary

This chapter detailed the necessary methods and procedures used to conduct this study. The findings will be presented in chapter 4.
Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects the Wilderness Education Association Wilderness Stewardship course had on perceived leadership skill development. It was hypothesized that the WEA course affected a student’s perception of his or her leadership soft skills. The Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI), developed by Frances Karnes and Jane Chauvin (2000), was used as a tool to determine the change. This chapter includes the results of the inventory.

Procedure

Participants involved in WEA course were given the LSI the first day of class. They were allowed as much time as need to complete the inventory and asked to do so honestly. Upon return from the 10-day field experience, on the final debriefing day of the course, participants were given the LSI as a posttest. The posttest composite score of the treatment group was then analyzed in comparison to the pretest composite scores of the treatment group. Results were analyzed using a paired-samples t test.

Findings

Results were analyzed using a paired-samples t test. Raw scores were analyzed and T-scores, obtained from the LSI profile sheet (Karnes & Chauvin, 2000), were also analyzed. A significant ($p<0.05$) difference was found between pre- and posttest in the areas of Fundamentals of Leadership, Speech Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills and Group Dynamic Skills. Table 4.1 includes a list of abbreviations for all subsequent figures. Table 4.2 lists T-scores for all LSI areas.
Table 4.1

Abbreviations for LSI Categories

FL = Fundamentals of Leadership
WCS = Written Communication Skills
SCS = Speech Communication Skills
CBS = Character-Building Skills
DMS = Decision-Making Skills
GDS = Group Dynamic Skills
PSS = Problem-Solving Skills
PERS = Personal Skills
PS = Planning Skills

Table 4.2

T-scores

| Variable | N  | Mean | Std Error  | t Value | Pr > |t| |
|----------|----|------|------------|---------|------|---|
| FL       | 12 | -8.5 | 3.5685919  | -2.38   | 0.0364 |
| WCS      | 12 | -3.75| 3.2406626  | -1.16   | 0.2717 |
| SCS      | 12 | -4.053| 1.3372348 | -2.45   | 0.0323 |
| CBS      | 12 | -2.083| 0.9570974 | -2.18   | 0.0522 |
| DMS      | 12 | -2.833| 1.9377953 | -1.46   | 0.1717 |
| GDS      | 12 | -3.9166| 1.5148674 | -2.59   | 0.0253 |
| PSS      | 12 | -3.000| 1.8708287 | -1.60   | 0.1371 |
| PERS     | 12 | -2.25 | 2.0893851  | -1.08   | 0.3046 |
| PS       | 12 | -5.583| 2.6327147  | -2.12   | 0.0575 |
Figure 4.1- Mean difference from pre-test score to post-test score for each Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) category.

Each category had a higher post-test rating than pre-test rating. Figures 4.2 – 4.10 present the change for each participant in pre-test t-score and the post-test t-score for all categories.
Figure 4.2
Fundamentals of Leadership

Figure 4.3
Written Communication Skills
Figure 4.4
Speech Communication Skills

Figure 4.5
Character-Building Skills
Figure 4.6
Decision-Making Skills

Figure 4.7
Group Dynamic Skills
Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the study. As noted, all categories of the LSI reported a mean gain in posttest scores over pretest scores. Four categories, Fundamentals of Leadership, Speech Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills and Group Dynamic Skills, reported a significant change in scores. Chapter 5 focuses on conclusions derived from the study and possible implications.
Chapter 5
Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects the Wilderness Education Association Wilderness Stewardship course had on perceived leadership skill development. It was hypothesized that the WEA course affected students’ perception of leadership soft skills.

Summary of Procedures

Students were enrolled in the WEA course through Western Kentucky University. Enrollment consisted of 12 students, as determined by the course instructor. After project review and authorization by the Human Subjects Review Board, students signed an informed consent during the introduction day of the course. At that time the students were given the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI). Upon return from the 10-day field experience portion of the course, students were again given the LSI. The results were then analyzed using a paired-samples $t$ test.

The procedures used in this study to determine whether students’ perceptions of their leadership skills were affected as a result of the course were followed. It was found that they provided the data necessary in determining whether the hypothesis was true or false. If testing were conducted with future WEA courses, the same procedures would be followed.

Summary of Findings

The results of this study were analyzed using a paired-samples $t$ test. Raw scores and T-scores, obtained from the LSI profile sheet, were analyzed. The LSI categories included Fundamentals of Leadership, Written Communication Skills, Speech...
Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills, Decision-Making Skills, Group-Dynamic Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Personal Skills, and Planning Skills. Four categories reported a significant change from pre- to posttest score. Those categories include Fundamentals of Leadership, Speech Communication Skills, Character-Building Skills and Group Dynamic Skills.

Conclusions

On the average students rated their knowledge and skills in the 9 leadership areas of the LSI as higher after taking the WEA Wilderness Stewardship Course. Mean scores were higher in all LSI categories upon posttesting, although only 4 categories reported differences significant at the 0.05 level. Those categories included Fundamentals of Leadership, Speech Communication Skills, Group Dynamic Skills and Character Building Skills.

Discussion

The WEA Stewardship Course provided an opportunity for students to begin recognizing their leadership abilities and limitations. The results of the study indicated students did notice a change in their abilities. Four categories of the LSI reported significant change in pre- and posttest ratings. The LSI includes knowledge and skills of leadership that the WEA course taught. Why did only four categories report significant change? Possibly the course length was a factor. Additional time in the field may encourage the development of skills and thus change the scores even more. Students would have further opportunities to practice the skills they know and also work on those they have not yet developed.
Significant change was also found in the category of Fundamentals of Leadership. Course teaching may have played a role in this change. A lesson plan from the Backcountry Classroom (Drury and Bonney, 1992) was taught; the focus was background of leadership theory. This LSI category determined the ability of the participant to identify his or her leadership style, styles of other leaders and positive and negative aspects of being a leader. The course focused on participants leading the group and on the evaluation of that leadership. Participants were also instructed to evaluate the leadership of the other group members.

Change in the category of Speech Communication Skills may have occurred as a result of daily opportunities to speak in front of the group. The opportunity to practice the skill may have affected participant’s perception of their ability.

The final two categories showing significant change, Character-Building Skills and Group Dynamic Skills, were not specifically listed in the course outline. The change was possibly a result of the nature of the course. Extended time with others in a semi-wilderness setting may foster development of group dynamic skills and character-building skills.

Implications

This study provides useful information about the WEA Stewardship Course. It has shown that the WEA course offered at WKU did affect how students rated themselves as leaders in 9 different categories. The instructor can now use this information and evaluate the course for next year. Evaluation of the results may determine the need for placing more emphasis on those leadership skills that did not exhibit significant change. For future classes, the strengths and weaknesses of each
student can be determined prior to the field experience portion of the course, and the assigned teaching opportunities could be modified to address areas of leadership that need improving for the group.

Continuing this type of evaluation in the future would provide participants an objective look at their abilities. A survey administered to members of the Association of Experiential Education conducted by Priest (1984) found that effective outdoor leadership “was needed to assure that participants realized their own abilities...” The LSI provided immediate feedback on those abilities that would allow students to place immediate attention on those areas.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that this study be conducted in the future with a larger sample size. It is also recommended that the study be conducted with WEA Stewardship Courses offered at different institutions and with varying instructors. This approach will help determine the role that course content and course instructor play.

Evaluating a WEA course with a longer field experience portion would also be recommended. The extended course length may effect how participants feel about skill development.

In conclusion, this study provided useful information on the effects of the WKU WEA Stewardship course on leadership development. The results provide the beginning framework for future evaluation of WEA Course and student leadership strengths and weaknesses, all of which are a necessary function in training future outdoor leaders.
References


Simon, M. (November 2000). 3-5 year vision for WEA. Personal Communication [e-mail].


Appendixes
Appendix A

Course Outline
Course Outline: WEA Wilderness Stewardship  
Rec 482-482G (3 hours credit)  
Summer 2001  
Instructor: Steve Spencer  
e-mail: steve.spencer@wku.edu  

Course Description:  
This course emphasizes experiential teaching/learning using the Wilderness Education Association curriculum under field conditions which builds upon the student’s prior outdoor study and experience. The result is a practical group experience in the outdoors spent enjoyably and safely with minimum harm to the environment. This environmental stewardship course stresses leadership, decision making, low impact camping, sound expedition behavior and environmental ethics.

Course Prerequisites: REC 230 or Instructor Permission  

Course Objectives:  
Students completing the WKU/WEA stewardship course will:

A. Use and enjoy the wilderness with minimum impact.  
B. Apply safe practices for groups in outdoor recreation activities.  
C. Begin to recognize his or her leadership abilities and limitations.  
D. Demonstrate a basic standard of outdoor user knowledge and experience based on the WEA curriculum.  
E. Receive WEA Wilderness Stewardship certificate for course completion.

Course Design:  
The 15-day course will include approximately 9 classroom hours, a two-day shakedown and a 10-day field experience canoeing and hiking in the Big South Fork National Recreation Area. Course members will keep a decision-making journal during the field portion of the course and participate in daily debriefings. The course will conclude with check in and clean up of equipment and an exit interview.

Regarding this course:  
1. This is a leadership training experience held in a semi-wilderness setting. It is not a pure wilderness adventure. You will spend considerable time evaluating your decision-making ability both orally, in group sessions and throughout journal entries.

2. Parts of this course may be perceived as a physical, mental and emotional
challenge. A significant aspect of learning comes through challenge. However, no activities are designed for failure. The emphasis is on experiential learning in a challenging environment. It is essential that all students be in good physical condition. A current physical examination is advised and immunizations should be current.

3. All participants must realize that any form of wilderness travel involves risk. The group will be on a whitewater river and traveling on a variety of terrain both on and off of trails. During most of the course we will be isolated with no mechanical transportation and no outside communication except in the case of extreme emergency. No electronic aids will be taken on this course unless serving as a prosthesis. In realizing these dangers, there will be a continual emphasis on safety procedures. Students should have insurance.

4. Participants will teach lessons during the course. The Backcountry Classroom provides lesson plans for many of these assignments.

5. Bulk rations will be supplied. Meal / ration planning will be completed by students. The WEA philosophy is to travel lightly, safely, and as economically as possible.

6. Student behavior will be in accordance with normal WKU courses. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited. Tobacco is discouraged. Coed tenting will be avoided.

Meeting Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Classroom (1 day)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Classroom (1 day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8-9</td>
<td>Shakedown (2 days)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 11-20</td>
<td>Field Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Gear check-in / Clean-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Final debriefing (1 day)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Texts

**Wilderness Stewardship Field Manual** – Spencer

**The Backcountry Classroom** – Drury and Bonney

**NOLS Outdoor Cookery** – Richards
Enrollment:

15 students
clearance by instructor required

Course Fees – over normal course tuition

$150 ( $50 deposit and $100 balance). Includes WEA membership ($50), food, equipment, field manual, and supplies. Fees must be received by the instructor in the following manner:

By April 20: $50 deposit
By April 30: $100 balance

Student Evaluation

A. Expedition Journal
   Students are required to keep a journal beginning with the shakedown phase of the course. The purpose is to identify and express their developmental decision making and record field notes. Journal “helps” may be found in the “Journal Section” of this book.

B. Student Observation Tool (SOT)
   The WEA 18-point curriculum will provide the guiding areas for student evaluation. The SOT will be utilized by peers and instructor.

C. Ability Assessment
   The Ability Assessment form provides students an opportunity to state abilities and limitations in planning a trip and leading a group in the outdoors.

D. Grading
   Students will earn letter grades based upon instructor assessment of the criteria listed above. Following is a list of relative importance.

   Expedition Journal  (25%)
   Instructor SOT  (50%)
   Peer Evaluation SOT (20%)
   Ability Assessment  (5%)
   Total  100%
Schedule: WKU/WEA May 2001

Big South Fork National Recreation Area

Wilderness Stewardship REC 482-482G

Date Activities
April 3 Tue Clothing/Equipment (Review lists)

*Campsite in Boldface*
May 7m NOLS “Soft Paths” Video
Day 1 Classroom WEA Introduction
       WEA -- Evaluation process
       Trip planning/Logistics/Groups
       Emergency planning procedures
       Equipment/gear Check
       Group/Personal Equipment Issue
       Ration Planning/Nutrition
       Ration Division

May 8t (Whitewater River Canoe Review)
Day 2 Canoe safety at put-in
       Canoe Strokes/maneuvers
       Canoe Packing/waterproofing
       Shakedown Camp (Barren Tailrace)
       Stove operation/Cooking Area Safety
       Food Identification and preparation
       Cooking introduction --examples
       Debriefing
       Food waste disposal
       Food Protection
       Water Purification
       WEA History

May 9w Shakedown Camp
Day 3 Canoe shuttle
       Heat illness/hypothermia
       Bathing & Washing
       Personal Hygiene
       Environmental Ethics
       Cathole use
       Cook flys
       Fire site/building prep. & care
       Map & Compass review

MAY 10th **OFF DAY**--(CLASS RESUMES ON MAY 11)
The following lessons will be presented during the week when the “opportunity arises”

- Campsite selection
- Register Use
- Wild plants
- Weather
- Trail Techniques
- Expedition Behavior (day 2-3)
- Decision Making (day 1-2)
- Debriefing/Reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 11f</td>
<td><strong>Camp ASAP after Angel Falls</strong></td>
<td>Run Shuttle</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Put-in @ Leatherwood Ford</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Portage Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BSF Rules &amp; Regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Register Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 12s</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Bill Branch</strong></td>
<td>Hike #1 Grand Gap</td>
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<td>Map &amp; Compass</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Time Control Plan</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Bush Push</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13s</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Station Camp Is.</strong></td>
<td>Hike #2 Charit Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14m</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Big Branch</strong></td>
<td>Hike #3 Terry Cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15t</td>
<td><strong>Camp on/near Big Is.</strong></td>
<td>Hike #4 Ransom Boyette Homestead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16w</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Big Is. (Different site)</strong></td>
<td>Hike #5 Miller Branch Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17th</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Bear Creek</strong></td>
<td>Hike #6 Bear Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18f</td>
<td><strong>Camp near Laurel Branch</strong></td>
<td>Hike #7 Blue Heron Trail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leadership- at overlook</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food Pooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potluck supper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
May 19s  
Day 12  
**Camp Blue Heron Group Site**  
Take out at Blue Heron  
Run Shuttle: wash canoes @ take out  
Hike #8 Blue Heron Community and Peer Evaluation (3 hours)  
Sat. PM-- Barthell (mining town)

May 20s  
Day 13  
Stearns Museum  
Back to BG  
Check-in/Clean up equipment

May 21m  
Day 14  
Exit interview/individual meetings

---

**Teaching Assignments**  
**Wilderness Stewardship 482-482G**

1. *(L)* Astronomy  
2. *(S)* BSF Rules/Regulations  
3. *(S)* Baking  
4. *(L)* Bathing & Washing  
5. *(L)* Bushpushing  
6. *(S)* Campsite Selection  
7. *(L)* • Canoe Maneuvers  
8. *(S)* Canoe Packing  
9. *(S)* Canoe Portaging  
10. *(L)* Canoe Safety/Rescue  
11. *(S)* Canoe Shuttle  
12. *(L)* • Canoe Strokes  
13. *(L)* Cat-hole Construction & use  
14. *(L)* Cook Area Safety & Stoves  
15. *(S)* Cook Fly Rigging  
16. *(L)* • Cooking & Granola Prep  
17. *(L)* Debriefing  
18. *(L)* Decision Making  
19. *(L)* Environmental Ethics
20. (L) Expedition Behavior
21. (S) Fire Building
22. (S) Fire Site Preparation & Care
23. (S) Food Identification
24. (S) Food Protection
25. (S) Food Waste Disposal
26. (L) Heat Illness/hypothermia
27. (L) Leader of the Day (LOD)
28. (L) Leadership
29. (S) Lightening
30. (L) Map & Compass Use
31. (S) Map Folding & Interpretation
32. (S) Personal Hygiene
33. (L) Survival
34. (L) Time Control Plan (trail)
35. (S) Trail Register Use
36. (S) Trail Techniques
37. (L) Water Purification
38. (L) Weather
39. (L) • Wild plants
40. (S) WEA History
41. (S) Wildlife ID

All Students should have one initiative game, fun/mixer or closer activity ready.

• Team taught

**Leader of the Day (LOD): Guidelines**

1. **Take Charge** - Let people know you are LOD

2. **Lead By Example** - Make sure everyone is awake and punctual to gatherings.

3. **Expect nothing but be prepared for anything** - Plan ahead and meet with the staff to plan the day's activities. Select individuals to teach classes when a "window of opportunity learning" occurs.

4. **Communicate** - Let everyone know what the day's (or next day's) plans are.
5. **Decisions Making 101** - Make decisions utilizing an appropriate leadership style relating to: Taking breaks, campsite selection, fishing, etc.

6. **Bed Down the Horses** - Make sure you know where everyone is camped and that it is safe and environmentally sound - Food Bags are secure - canoes and other equipment are secure

7. **Pollution, Proximity, Privacy, Depth**

8. **Sick Call** - Check how the group and individuals are doing, physically and emotionally

9. **Protection from the Elements** – rain-flys set up as necessary.


11. **Processing** – Help debrief / reflect at a level you are comfortable

12. **Repair Person** – Fix equipment as needed.

13. **Leave it better than you found it** – when camp is broken, you are the last one to personally check all campsites.

14. **Rules are for fools** – This list is not comprehensive nor does it replace good judgment. As LOD, relax! Do your best and learn from you own and other’s experiences.

15. **Evacuation Routes** – if necessary

16. **Water levels** – if necessary

Appendix B

Leadership Skills Inventory
LEADERSHIP SKILLS INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL FORM

Frances A. Karnes, Ph.D.
Jane C. Chauvin, Ph.D.

Age     Gender     Race     Date

Previous Leadership Courses

This inventory is made up of statements that focus on the knowledge and skills of leadership. Please understand that this is an inventory and not a test. Its purpose is to help you learn about your abilities in leadership skills. There are no right or wrong answers. For each statement, mark the response that is true for you. Do not skip an item. Read each statement carefully, and then check (✓) the one response which best describes your skills.

Check ALMOST ALWAYS if you usually possess this knowledge or skill.

Check ON MANY OCCASIONS if you frequently possess this knowledge or skill.

Check ONCE IN A WHILE if you occasionally possess this knowledge or skill.

Check ALMOST NEVER if you rarely possess this knowledge or skill.

This inventory is designed to be used as both a pre-assessment and a post-assessment instrument. By taking the inventory first and then doing the activities presented in the accompanying Leadership Development Manual, it is possible to increase your specific leadership skills in any or all of the nine areas presented. By taking the inventory again after completing the activities, you can measure the progress you have made in your leadership ability.

Please check one of the following:

☑ Pre-assessment
☑ Post-assessment

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## FUNDAMENTALS OF LEADERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>On Many Occasions</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand the meaning of the term “leader.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I understand the meaning of the term “leadership.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I can tell the difference between the meanings of the terms “leader” and “leadership.”</td>
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<td>4. I am able to identify the various styles of leadership.</td>
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<td>5. I can describe my own style of leadership.</td>
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<td>6. I can identify leadership styles of various leaders.</td>
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<td>7. I can identify various titles of leadership positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I understand the requirements and responsibilities of various leadership positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I can identify the positive and negative aspects of being a leader.</td>
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</table>

Total Points _______
## Written Communication Skills

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I know how to get and use written information.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I can write my ideas so that others can read and understand them</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I can compare and contrast ideas in my writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I can distinguish fact from opinion in writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I can summarize written information in a clear manner.</td>
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<td>6. I can write an outline.</td>
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<td>7. I can write to persuade others to my point of view.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I can write a business letter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I can write a social letter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I can prepare an agenda for a meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I can write a speech.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I can evaluate my writing and the writing of others.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Points ______
### Speech Communication Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>On Many Occasions</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can speak in a clear and concise manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I can tell others how I feel.</td>
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<td>3. I can participate in group discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I can summarize the ideas of the group and express them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I can tell both sides of an argument without allowing my own feelings to show.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can state and defend my viewpoint.</td>
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<td>7. I can offer constructive criticism in a kind manner.</td>
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<td>8. I know the various types of speeches and when each should be used.</td>
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<td>9. I can deliver a prepared speech to a group.</td>
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<td>10. I can deliver an extemporaneous speech to a group.</td>
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<td>11. I can moderate and direct panel discussions.</td>
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<td>12. I listen carefully to others in order to be an effective communicator.</td>
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<td>13. I can use body language effectively as I speak.</td>
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</table>

Total Points __________
# Character-Building Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand my own feelings.</td>
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<td>2. I care about others and treat others fairly.</td>
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<td>3. I try to understand the feelings of others.</td>
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<td>4. I am sensitive to the needs of others.</td>
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<td>5. I am sincere in my interest in other people.</td>
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<td>6. I try to deal honestly with others.</td>
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<td>7. I do what I say I will do.</td>
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<td>8. I have strong beliefs and can defend them when necessary.</td>
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<td>9. I am willing to admit my mistakes.</td>
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<td>10. I have a set of personal standards.</td>
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<td>11. I have free choice in establishing my values.</td>
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<td>12. I know the things in my life that are important to me.</td>
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<td>13. I can state my choices publicly.</td>
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<td>14. I can keep my own standards, even when others disagree with me.</td>
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<td>15. I can accept other people's ideas and choices, even when they are different from mine.</td>
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<td>16. I respect the rights of others.</td>
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<td>17. I am loyal to my superiors and my friends.</td>
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</table>

Total Points
# DECISION-MAKING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>On Many</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand decision-making skills.</td>
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<td>2. I can gather facts for decision-making.</td>
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<td>3. I can accept advice from others.</td>
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<td>4. I can analyze facts before making a decision.</td>
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<td>5. I am aware of how my decisions will affect others.</td>
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<td>6. I know how to reach logical conclusions.</td>
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<td>7. I can reach decisions on my own.</td>
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<td>8. I can make a decision quickly and accurately based on facts.</td>
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<td>9. I can accept the fact that my decisions may not always be popular in my group.</td>
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<td>10. I can support group decisions even though I may not always agree with them.</td>
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**Total Points** ____

### Group Dynamic Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can lead a group discussion.</td>
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<td>2. I enjoy group activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I know what “brainstorming” is and can lead a group in this exercise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I can use parliamentary procedure in leading a group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I use “we” instead of “I” when conducting group sessions on matters that involve the group.</td>
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<td>6. I can lead a group so that people feel safe expressing their opinions.</td>
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<td>7. I usually allow others to express their opinions before I express mine.</td>
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<td>8. I try to understand the viewpoints of others.</td>
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<td>9. I keep in mind the best interests of the group.</td>
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<td>10. I can resolve conflicts within a group.</td>
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<td>11. I recognize and value differences in individuals.</td>
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<td>12. I can distinguish between influence and manipulation.</td>
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<td>13. I do not take it personally when others disagree with my ideas.</td>
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<td>14. I can maintain trust within a group.</td>
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<td>15. I can keep a group on task.</td>
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<td>16. I can incorporate the suggestions of others.</td>
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<td>17. I can work effectively for compromise.</td>
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<td>18. I can help the group agree upon a plan of action.</td>
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<td>19. I can give credit and praise to others for work well done.</td>
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**Total Points:** 

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### PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I know and use the elements of problem-solving.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I know what to do as a leader in problem-solving situations.</td>
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<td>3. I can identify problems.</td>
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<td>4. I can develop different ways to solve problems.</td>
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<td>5. I can select the best way to solve a problem.</td>
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<td>6. I can judge how effective my strategy is.</td>
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Total Points ______
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Skills</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am self-confident.</td>
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<td>2. I feel comfortable in most situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I can identify my own strengths and weaknesses.</td>
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<td>4. I can acknowledge my mistakes.</td>
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<td>5. I can accept constructive criticism.</td>
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<td>6. I plan self-improvement.</td>
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<td>7. I am persistent.</td>
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<td>8. I try to avoid being overly sensitive.</td>
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<td>9. I am on time.</td>
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<td>10. I am reliable.</td>
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<td>11. I am enthusiastic.</td>
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<td>12. I am ambitious and desire success.</td>
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<td>13. I am a hard worker.</td>
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<td>14. I can deal with abstract concepts.</td>
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<td>15. I am patient with myself and others.</td>
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<td>16. I make friends easily.</td>
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<td>17. I try to be thoughtful about the feelings of others.</td>
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<td>18. I make an effort to remember names and faces.</td>
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<td>19. I can get along with others.</td>
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<td>20. I know how to dress for different occasions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I am neat in my work and appearance.</td>
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Total Points ______
### Planning Skills

1. I have organizational skills.
2. I set reachable goals for myself.
3. I set reachable goals for groups.
4. I can take the lead in group planning.
5. I accept suggestions from other people.
6. I can direct the efforts of the group.
7. I seek advice when necessary.
8. I can set objectives to help accomplish my goals.
9. I can tell the outcomes of certain actions.
10. I can tell what is needed to accomplish certain goals.
11. I can develop and keep to a timeline.
12. I can meet deadlines.
13. I can set up ways to measure whether or not my goals are completed.
15. I am flexible and can accept change.
16. I can delegate authority to others.
17. I review my plans and revise them from time to time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Almost Always (3)</th>
<th>On Many Occasions (2)</th>
<th>Once in a While (1)</th>
<th>Almost Never (0)</th>
<th>Item Value</th>
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Total Points ____
Appendix C

Informed Consent Document
Informed Consent Document

Project Title: The effect of the WEA Wilderness Stewardship course on Perceived leadership skill development

Investigator: Elisabeth Hobbs, Recreation Curriculum graduate student

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask any question you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign on the last page of this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy of this form to keep.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project: The purpose of this project is to determine the effects this WEA course has had on your leadership skill development.
2. Explanation of Procedures: This project is designed to allow you, as participants in REC 482, to rate your leadership skills before and after the course. This will help determine the changes REC 482 has had on your own perception of your skills. You will be asked to answer honestly the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) prior to the 10-day field experience. The LSI is a 125-question inventory dealing with 9 different leadership areas covered in this course. All answers are personal; there is no correct answer. You will again be asked to complete the LSI upon return from the 10-day field experience.
3. Risks: There are no risks involved in this study
4. Benefits: Answering the LSI may help you realize more about yourself as a leader. It may show you areas of strengths and weaknesses.
5. Confidentiality: Your name will not be on the LSI. All inventories will be kept confidential. Only those involved in analysis will see the LSI.
6. Refusal: Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on your grade for this class. Any one who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

I understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and I believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

_________________________       _____________________
Signature of Participant                   Date
Appendix D

Participant Profile
Participant Profile

Participant 1- Female, Age 26, American Indian
Participant 2- Male, Age 22, Caucasian
Participant 3- Male, Age 22, Caucasian
Participant 4- Male, Age 21, Caucasian
Participant 5- Male, Age 21, Caucasian
Participant 6- Male, Age 24, Caucasian
Participant 7- Female, Age 22, Caucasian
Participant 8- Female, Age 20, Caucasian
Participant 9- Female, Age 23, Caucasian
Participant 10- Male, Age 21, Caucasian
Participant 11- Male, Age 25, Caucasian
Participant 12- Female, Age 24, Caucasian