# **Leadership Academy for Student Success Module 8:** **Leading Strong Teams for Transformational Change**

## Facilitation Guide

This guide provides an overview of the eighth module in the Leadership Academy for Student Success, originally led by the Success Center for Ohio Community Colleges. This curriculum is developed in partnership with the National Center for Inquiry and Improvement and the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program and draws from Aspen’s fellowship curriculum and additional modules developed for and by the OACC Leadership Academy.

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### *Thank you to the Ascendium Education Group, the ECMC Foundation, and The Kresge Foundation for their support of scaling the Leadership Academy for Student Success.*

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# Introduction

## Curriculum Overview

The curriculum is based on findings from the [Aspen Institute College Excellence Program](https://highered.aspeninstitute.org/) with aligned small group discussion activities and prompts to deepen and apply learning. This version of the curriculum is designed to provide mid-level community college staff and faculty with an understanding of critical student success and change management concepts. The goal is to prepare them to advance to more senior-level positions at their institutions or more effectively lead from their current role.

This curriculum is designed with 10 modules in a progressive sequence, though modules may be delivered individually for targeted learning. The full sequence is included at the end of this module as a reference.

This curriculum is designed to help meet the following overarching Module 8 goals:

* Articulate strategies to build and manage effective teams to drive change
* Apply strategies for leading and being a member of a strong team

## Facilitation Overview

This guide includes module details with facilitation guidance and suggestions for pre-work. A customizable PowerPoint deck and Participant Toolkit are included. This module is designed for in-person delivery; however, it can be adapted for the virtual environment. General virtual facilitation guidance is at the end of this document.

This module will take 2-3 hours to deliver. We recommend that you take time in advance to adapt the suggested agenda and make any necessary customizations to curricular materials to fit your context. Facilitators with experience or knowledge of the module content will deliver the curriculum with the greatest impact. Talking points are included throughout the PowerPoint deck, though we encourage facilitators to put these notes into their own words and bring an institutional perspective to the curriculum where possible.

# Suggested Pre-work

### Consider having your participants complete this reading prior to your session:

Read: [*“The Role of Presidents, Trustees, and College Leaders in Student Success”*](https://highered.aspeninstitute.org/media/72) by Josh Wyner (excerpted from *Student Success in the Community College. What Really Works?*, edited by Terry U. O’Banion and Marguerite M. Culp and published by Rowman & Littlefield in 2021)

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# Suggested Detailed Agenda

# Leadership Academy for Student Success

## Module 8

***Note****: This agenda provides the suggested structure and timing of the module. Adjust timing and add breaks as necessary for your delivery. Be aware that the referenced slide numbers and Participant Toolkit page numbers may change as you adapt materials for your context.*

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| **Estimated Timing** | **Session Details and Facilitator Notes** | **Materials** |
| **10-15 minutes** | **Welcome and Overview**   * Welcome participants to the session * Review:   + Module learning goals   + Agenda for the full module   + Overview of the materials: handouts, maps, contact list, etc. * Pre-work assignments | *Slides 1-4 Participant Toolkit p. 2* |
| **25-30 minutes** | **Kickoff Activity: Setting the Context for Institutional Change**  *Facilitation notes:*   * *Facilitators will need a copy of the book* [*Zoom*](https://www.amazon.com/Picture-Puffin-Books-Istvan-Banyai/dp/0140557741/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2TC461FP9HB4J&keywords=zoom+book&qid=1701959970&sprefix=zoom+book%2Caps%2C139&sr=8-1) *or* [*Re-Zoom*](https://www.amazon.com/Re-Zoom-Istvan-Banyai/dp/014055694X/ref=pd_bxgy_d_sccl_1/139-4924536-2531869?pd_rd_w=DYIRG&content-id=amzn1.sym.839d7715-b862-4989-8f65-c6f9502d15f9&pf_rd_p=839d7715-b862-4989-8f65-c6f9502d15f9&pf_rd_r=6F2162D10SQ30XJK6VG4&pd_rd_wg=145ZJ&pd_rd_r=063b3579-9e90-43dd-9fa4-e6be3c807c05&pd_rd_i=014055694X&psc=1) *by Istvan Banyai with the pages removed. The books feature a series of pictures that are connected to one another, as each illustration zooms out on the last, providing a new perspective. The goal of the activity is for participants, each with a page with a picture (and with an assigned leader), to line up in order. This experience raises important issues about working together as a team under a leader’s vision (e.g., Did participants understand the leader’s vision and what they were working toward? Did they understand how their piece contributed to the overall picture? How did they work with and communicate with one another?). To facilitate the activity, each participant should receive one page in no particular order. We recommend mixing up the pages and then distributing them at participants’ seats prior to kickoff. (Note: If you do not have enough pages for each participant, have some participants partner up and share a page. If you have additional pages, you may give some participants two consecutive pages.) Additionally, you will need to have space in your meeting room or a nearby area for participants to form a long line (or a large circle) and have space to move along the line or the circle.* * *Virtual facilitation: As the in-person activity would be challenging to replicate virtually, we recommend replacing the kickoff activity with an independent reflection and small group discussion. Provide participants five minutes to reflect independently on the following questions before moving into small group breakout rooms to discuss for 5-10 minutes.*    + *Reflect on a time you were part of a highly effective team (in your professional or personal life).*   + *What made the team effective? What were the results?*   Kickoff Activity (20 minutes)   * Spend two-three minutes introducing the activity and providing context for participants.   + You might say: *At each of your colleges, the work consists of a collection of efforts moving toward one mission. When you are working on one project, you may lose sight of the big picture. Today, we’re going to work on putting a puzzle together, but each of you has only one piece.* * Choose one participant to lead the group in organizing their individual pieces. * Then, provide 10-15 minutes for participants, under the leadership of the assigned leader, to organize their pages in sequential order. * Once participants have organized their pages from zoomed in to zoomed out, have participants place their pictures on the floor (still in order) and provide five minutes for participants to walk around and view the relationship between all the pages and the bigger picture.   Independent Reflection (5 minutes)   * What was the experience like?   + What was it like to know only your image?   + In what ways did you work well together? * How did the leader’s role help? * What are key lessons we can take away from this activity?   Group Debrief (5 minutes)  Invite two or three participants to share their reflections with the group. | *Copy of the book* Zoom *or* Re-Zoom *by Istvan Banyai with the pages removed*  *Slides 5-6 Participant Toolkit p. 3* |
| **25-30 minutes** | **Leading Strong Teams: Composition and Common Purpose**  *Facilitation note: Talking points for the presentation are provided in the notes section of the PowerPoint.*  Presentation (25 minutes)   * What levers for change exist at the cabinet level? * Methodology for curriculum development * Application to institution-wide challenges and current teams * Composition   + Does the college have the right team with the right attributes to advance reform? * Common Purpose   + How can the cabinet develop and foster a common understanding of purpose?     - Use consistent, compelling language     - Emphasize common data     - Replicate communications, data, and resource processes in divisions | *Slides 7-16 Participant Toolkit pp. 4-6* |
| **30-35 minutes** | **Common Purpose—Small Group Discussion**  In small groups, participants will discuss:   * Think about the last meeting you were in where a major reform was discussed. Did everyone at the meeting understand the common purpose of the reform? If yes, how did you know? If not, why do you think the common understanding was missing? * How could you build a sense of common purpose within your current team around a major reform? * What strategies from this section of the module could you adapt in your current role? Which might be most helpful in a time of crisis? | *Slide 17 Participant Toolkit p. 7* |
| **45-50 minutes** | **Panel—Presidential Perspectives on Building Strong Teams**  *Facilitation notes: There are no standardized curricular materials for the panel discussion. We recommend you invite presidents from institutions with strong outcomes from your state context who represent a variety of perspectives (e.g., institution size/location/urbanicity, race and ethnicity, gender, years of experience). This panel is a good opportunity to include both sitting and retired presidents, who may be able to be more candid about their experiences building and leading a team. We encourage moderators to share the Aspen curricular materials for Leading Strong Teams with panelists ahead of time via email. We also recommend setting up a meeting either in person or via Zoom with panelists to address any questions they may have on the curriculum and develop a series of interview questions and responses. We recommend selecting the key ideas from the Leading Strong Teams for Transformational Change module and using them to create question prompts. This will ensure alignment between panelists’ reflections and the curricular materials. For example, question prompts for panelists could be:*   * *How did you build the right team to advance your institutional priorities?*   + *If your cabinet was already established by the previous administration, how did you get to know your team and their strengths and areas for growth?*   + *If you had the opportunity to recruit/hire some or all of your cabinet, how did you approach that work?*   + *How did you, or do you, ensure you have the right balance of attributes and strengths across the cabinet?* * *How did you, or do you, develop an understanding of and commitment to your institutional priorities among your cabinet?*   + *How do you ensure your cabinet members are fostering that same understanding of and commitment to institutional priorities within their divisions?*   + *How do you ensure there is effective collaboration, aligned to common purpose, across divisions?* * *How do you ensure accountability systems—for cabinet members and their teams—support strong implementation?* * *[For former/retired presidents, if appropriate] Can you share any challenges you faced building and leading your senior team?*   + *What was the challenge?*   + *Why did it have to be addressed?*   + *How did you address it? What was the result?*   *We recommend limiting the panel discussion to 35-40 minutes. This will allow 10-15 minutes for participant questions.* | *Slide 18 Participant Toolkit p. 8* |
| **25-30 minutes** | **Leading Strong Teams: Collaboration and Implementation**  *Facilitation note: Talking points for the presentation are provided in the notes section of the PowerPoint.*  Presentation (25 minutes)   * Collaboration + Implementation   + How can leaders create the conditions for collaboration across units?     - Create the conditions for honest and open feedback     - Ensure appropriate leadership of the initiative     - Signal the importance of collaboration through performance review and improvement processes   + What systems can support strong implementation?     - Ensure divisions have accountability systems in place for follow-through     - Typical goal vs. SMART goal   Walk & Talk (5 minutes)  Participants will find a partner and discuss:   * Where do these strategies show up in the structures and practices at your college? What might be missing? * Are there things you could introduce or implement from your current role? | *Slide 19-25*  *Participant Toolkit p. 9* |
| **10-15 minutes** | **Module Closing: Debrief and Reflections**  Independent reflection (5 minutes)  Participants reflect:   * What are your takeaways from the module? * What questions do you have? * As a result of this learning, what might you:   + …keep doing?   + …stop doing?   + …start doing?   Walk & Talk (5 minutes)  Participants find a partner and discuss their reflections.  Group Debrief (5 minutes)  Allow a few participants to share closing reflections.   * What learning might you take back to your current role based on this module? * What might you share with others at your institution? | *Slides 26-29 Participant Toolkit p. 10* |

# Techniques for Virtual Facilitation

While originally built for in-person delivery, all our module materials are designed for easy translation to a virtual environment. If you are facilitating this module virtually, it will be helpful to keep the following tips in mind:

* It may save time to create breakout groups randomly. However, if you would like to create specific breakout groups for activities, we recommend you do so ahead of time, so the rooms are ready to deploy immediately after you give instructions.
* Facilitation options for group discussions include sending participants into random Zoom breakout rooms in partners or trios, or facilitating a whole group discussion using a virtual whiteboard, such as Mural, using the chat feature, or using the raise hand feature.
* For virtual delivery, we recommend you omit Walk & Talks/Turn & Talks or turn them into group discussions.

Leadership Academy Module Sequence

This curriculum is designed with 10 modules in a progressive sequence, though modules may be delivered individually for targeted learning. While these modules may be delivered as stand-alone learning sessions, we recommend referencing the sequenced curriculum below and considering if there is any content from other modules that may support your participants’ learning.

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| **Excellence in Student Success at Scale** | | |
| **Session 1: The Essential Roles of Leadership in Student Success** | **Session 2: Keeping Students’ End Goals in Mind** | **Session 3: The Student Experience** |
| Module 1: Defining Student Success | Module 2: Improving Labor Market Outcomes  Module 3: Improving Transfer at Scale | Module 4: Improving Teaching and Learning  Module 5: Aligning Completion Strategies to Post-Graduation Success |
| **Transformational Leadership to Advance Student Success** | | |
| **Session 4: Transformational Leadership for Student Success** | **Session 5: Institutional Capacities to Advance Reform** | **Session 6: Strategic External Partnerships and the Leadership Journey** |
| Module 6: Leadership Qualities for Student Success | Module 7: Leading Finance Strategically to Advance Reforms  Module 8: Leading Strong Teams for Transformational Change | Module 9: Leading Highly Effective Strategic External Partnerships  Module 10: Scaling and Improving Dual Enrollment |