

Life Worth Living (LWL): The Leadership Anthology Project

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The 4 Key Principles of LWL Pedagogy

1. Pursuit of Existential Meaning
2. Commitment to Truth-Seeking Pluralism
3. First-Person Engagement
4. Participation in a Community of Practice

Leadership & the Good Life

What makes a good life?

What does it mean to live a flourishing life?

What does leadership have to do with a life well lived?

Leadership and the Good Life, a “Life Worth Living” course is designed to:

- Have students engage with various philosophical and spiritual traditions
- Feature visits from contemporary practitioners who live out these traditions and take on leadership roles in their communities
- Relate representative texts to the role of a leader in cultivating a good life for one’s individual benefit as well as for the sake of a community
- Utilize a flexible, inclusive and interdisciplinary approach
- Pay special attention to issues of religious privilege, inter-tradition (and non-tradition) dialogue, and spiritual expression and influence

The Leadership Anthology Project

Students create a leadership anthology highlighting campus leaders and in the wider community. The *Anthology* aims to celebrate community leaders who enrich the lives of others and inform emerging leaders of exemplars in their midst.

The activity links leadership theory and practice, encourages conversations around living life well, and fosters appreciation for campus and community members.

Elements of the Assignment

Step 1: Students reflect on who around them demonstrates the qualities of a leader and request an interview.

Step 2: Students interview their selected leader. Potential Questions include:

- What is leadership? How would you describe the way that you lead?
- According to you, what does it mean for life...
 - *to go well?* (What is important in terms of life’s circumstances?)
 - *to be led well?* (What do we need to do in order to *lead* a life worth living?)
 - *to feel good?* (and does it matter? Might the life worth living be miserable?)
- What reasons and/or motivations do you have to live a good life?
- What resources do you utilize to lead a good life?
- As a leader, to whom are you responsible for living life well?
- As a leader, there are times that we fall short. What do you do when you make a mistake or fail to live life well?

Step 3: Students compose a 500-1,000 word “feature article” about their leader from their interview notes and submit for peer review.

Step 4: Students submit a short reflection paper addressing how their interviewed leader’s understanding of leadership and vision of the good life relates to their own.

Step 5: Students revise “feature article” after peer review and submit a final draft.

Step 6: Students format and publish a *WCU Leadership & the Good Life Anthology* from the “featured articles.”

Step 7: Students celebrate and recognize their interviewees at the *WCU Leadership & the Good Life Anthology Reception*.

Step 8: Students work in designated groups to compose a sociological synthesis group paper, identifying major themes, gaps, and contradictions.

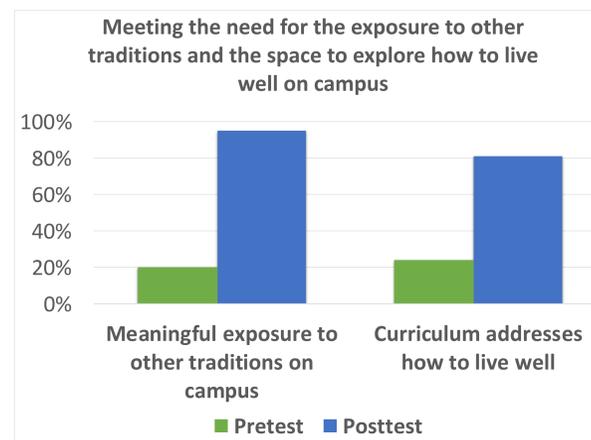
Our Goals

The interpersonal and collaborative nature of this extended assignment will help students:

- 1) clarify their understanding of what it means to be a leader, and
- 2) deepen their appreciation of differing visions of the good life with an interfaith mindset

Assessment Results

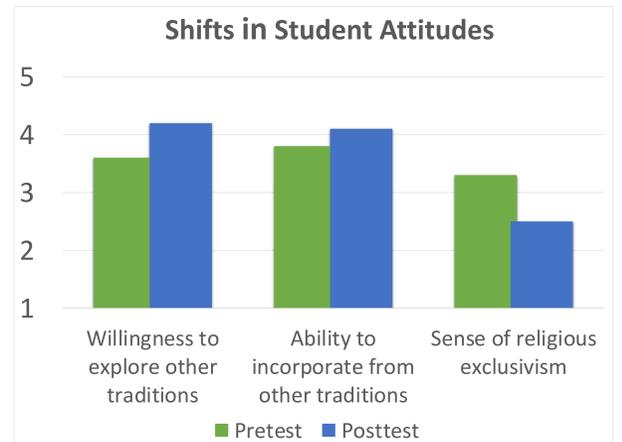
Students reported clear gains for Goal 2.



n=21. Bars show the number who “agree” or “strongly agree” to statements about their WCU courses: average for “exposure” item increased from 2.7 to a 4.8; average for “living well” item increased from 2.8 to a 4.1.

The biggest win is that course exposed students to ordinary people putting their beliefs into practice with a vision of how to live well. Student excitement for the course centers on this dimension.

Additionally, we saw changes toward an interfaith mindset reflected in student attitudes:



n=21 (1=strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). Bars show the average response on a 5-point Likert scale to items about the student’s own attitudes: the “willingness” item increased 3.6 to 4.2; the “ability” item increased from 3.8 to 4.1; the “exclusivity” item decreased from 3.3 to 2.5.

Want to Learn More about LWL?

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Thanks!

Special appreciation for support goes to:
Interfaith America, for their Campus Innovation Grant

Yale Center for Faith and Culture and the *Life Worth Living* initiative