

HERS Leadership Institute *Leadership Project Description*

Throughout the Leadership Institute, participants apply knowledge to a self-designed **Leadership Project**, a personal case study that pursues organizational change on campus, potentially impacting a range of areas. Thinking about the leadership project begins with your leadership institute preparation and continues beyond a participant's institute experience.

How does this project help me?

The anticipated learning outcome is for you to understand how to lead a change process or initiative. Many participants in the institute have experienced earning awards, accolades, and various forms of recognition for their professional work; but many have not had the experience of leading a change initiative within higher education. The key distinction between this leadership project and other self-designed projects is that this project cannot be implemented/completed on your own. The leadership project requires that you create buy-in, motivate the efforts of others, and *lead* your colleagues in a collective effort to achieve and sustain some kind of change, intended to improve conditions on your campus. Successful projects and initiatives are essential for leadership development and career advancement.

Important elements of the leadership project:

- Manageable and relevant to your job responsibilities but not a specific duty that is currently assigned to you
- Recognizable as an opportunity or issue/problem in which others can engage; **if you can implement this project all by yourself, it's not a leadership project**
- Aligned with your organization's strategic goals and objectives
- Translates the "problem/issue" into a leadership action plan
- Articulates a vision for innovation or transformation
- Requires collaboration and identifying allies to bolster your efforts
- Meaningful to you; you are invested in the outcome
- Encompasses an equity lens by attending to the impact on and outcomes for marginalized and underserved populations

During the HLI, the goal is to workshop and refine your project, then develop a comprehensive plan for implementation. There will be time dedicated throughout the HLI to work on your leadership project with peers and mentors. We encourage participants to begin implementing their projects within the next academic year, recognizing that some participants may have projects that are multi-year, comprehensive transformation initiatives.

