

"My best experiences at Stony Brook are related to my involvement as a Resident Assistant. It is a demanding position, if taken seriously, but it brought me many joys, many friendships, wonderful memories and a thousand opportunities to help the campus community."

—AUDREY, STONY BROOK STUDENT

Introduction



College is not only an opportunity to expand your intellect, but also your skills and experiences. While at Stony Brook, you may expand your academic knowledge, for example in calculus, beyond what you already learned in high school. Or you may acquire a completely new academic experience, perhaps in Art History, that you never experienced in high school. The same is true of your skills and activities. You may wish to continue to develop activities that you did in high school, such as in student government or gospel choir, or you may choose to embark on a completely new arena, such as academic judiciary or ballroom dancing. Regardless, your out-of-class experiences will shape your college experience nearly as much as your in-class experiences. These are opportunities to gain new skills, develop your existing skills, and meet new people. You will learn to work with and motivate others, manage projects, set goals and accomplish objectives. These are the traits of a strong leader.

Leadership is something that anyone can develop. Some students enter college with leadership experiences from their high school, church, or community. Others enter college without leadership experience, but with skills in other areas such as communication, logic, athletics, or the arts. Stony Brook University takes a proactive approach to leadership development on campus. We believe that all students should take the opportunity to assess themselves and get involved in those activities or organizations that interest them. Those who wish to become an effective leader will use this involvement as a stepping stone. The additional steps as well as our University's vision of leadership are outlined in this chapter.

Vision Statement

Stony Brook University aims to provide a wide range of opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills. Leadership is creating a vision, establishing compelling goals, and gaining the commitment of others to help accomplish these goals. It is assessing needs and managing and monitoring tasks, including delegating responsibilities, forming teams, negotiating, and resolving conflicts.

At Stony Brook, students create their own organizations, serve in elected office, and organize activities and events. They apply what they learn in classes to test their leadership skills in an environment that encourages experimentation, problem solving, and critical thinking. Stony Brook students build professional relationships with faculty, staff, and fellow students in ways to achieve shared goals. Through feedback and reinforcement, they acquire insight about their leadership skills and knowledge, while learning what they do well and what areas need improvement. Students become continuous learners who value and respect the contributions of colleagues from diverse backgrounds and start a long-term process of leadership growth that will prepare them for a successful career no matter what their profession.