

TITLE: A Study of Freshman Interest Groups and Leadership Practices at Texas Woman's University

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OBJECTIVE: This study investigated the level of leadership practices and retention rates of freshman students at Texas Woman's University.

METHODOLOGY: The sample consisted of 151 freshman students (50+% response rate) placed in one of three control groups: Group A (the treatment) were in the Neighbors Educated Together Program (NET), Group B (control) were in one of two university-sponsored programs and Group C (control) were the residual group of first-time college freshmen. These three groups were surveyed prior to their participation in the NET program or a university-sponsored program and again at the end of 14 weeks. Participants completed the student version of the Leadership Practices Inventory.

KEY FINDINGS: The study found statistically significant differences on the pre- and post-tests between Group C and the other two groups on Enabling, Inspiring and Encouraging. Group C (the residual group) scored lower than the other two groups on all five leadership practices. There were no statistically significant differences between Group A and Group B. The retention rates were not significantly different between the three groups (Group A with 91%, Group B with 97% and Group C with 89%). ANOVAs were performed on the five leadership practices and each of the independent variables (admission status, gender, ethnicity, and age) and no statistically significant differences were found.