

December 7, 2022

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Anne D'Alleva, Ph.D.  
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Graduate Certificate in Emerging Women's Leadership



RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve a Graduate Certificate in Emerging Women's Leadership.

BACKGROUND:

According to the U.S. Census, women make up almost 51% of the U.S. population, and currently earn 60% of undergraduate degrees and 60% of all master's degrees (NCES, 2018). Yet, American women continue to lag substantially behind men when it comes to their representation in leadership positions and in their creative and scholarly output. Also, significant racial and ethnic differences exist in women's success in moving into leadership positions across various industries. For example, in 2020, women held 7% of CEO positions, while only 3 CEOs were women of color.

The aim of this graduate certificate is to address the issue of leadership inequity by training young, emerging women leaders to bridge the gap between theory and practice in their respective career fields. The coursework will focus on contemporary issues that influence women's leadership and will provide a theoretical foundation for emerging leaders to engage in continued scholarship and/or their career field with expertise in understanding and dismantling the systematic barriers that exacerbate inequities in leadership opportunities for women. Unlike most programs that are offered for individuals who are well embarked on their career pathway, the target audience for the program is emerging leaders concerned with inequality and gender barriers in the workplace who have recently completed their undergraduate degree (0-5 years of work experience beyond their undergraduate degree). These students will have an interest in developing their leadership skills as they develop as professionals. Unlike the majority of women's leadership courses which are offered in business schools or that have a commercial focus, this program is offered through the Neag School of Education and is aimed to support a full range of career trajectories.

Offered entirely online, the coursework will be taken in conjunction with a practicum placement. Throughout the program, students will draw on their experiences in their practicum placement and knowledge gained through program coursework to consider how they are developing their leadership skills and how their early leadership experiences are aligned or potentially diverge from course content.

## Request for New UConn Academic Degree Program

### General Information

Name of degree program:	Graduate Certificate in Emerging Women's Leadership
Name of sponsoring department:	Educational Leadership, Neag School of Education
Type of Proposal:	New
Type of Program:	Graduate Certificate
Location:	Online
Anticipated Start Date:	Fall 2022
Program Payment Type:	Fee-based
CIP Code:	13.0401

### Justification for New Program:

Simply stated, women are still falling behind on leadership attainment in the United States and across the globe. According to the US Census, women make up a majority, almost 51% of the U.S. population, and currently earn 60 percent of undergraduate degrees and 60 percent of all master's degrees (NCES, 2018). Increasingly, they are earning more law and medical degrees (47 percent of all law degrees and 48 percent of all medical degrees), as well as 38 percent of MBAs and 48 percent of specialized master's degrees. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, they account for 47 percent of the U.S. labor force and 49 percent of the college-educated workforce, yet American women continue to lag substantially behind men when it comes to their representation in leadership positions and in their creative and scholarly output. Also, significant racial and ethnic differences exist in women's success in moving into leadership positions across various industries. For example, in 2020, women held 7 percent of CEO positions, while only 3 CEOs are women of color. In academia, less than 30 percent of full professors and 27 percent of college presidents are women, while women holding under representative minority identities hold only 3 percent of full professor roles. In 2020, women are underrepresented in educational leadership holding 28 percent of superintendent roles with women of color holding less than 5 percent of those positions. Women were only 6 percent of partners in venture capital firms in 2013—down from 10 percent in 1999. In 2014, women were just 20 percent of executives, senior officers, and management in U.S. high-tech industries. In the entertainment industry, women accounted for just 17 percent of all the directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors who worked on recent top-grossing 250 domestic films.

The last decades of the 20th century brought considerable progress in women's professional advancement in the United States. The gender wage gap narrowed, but the progress was uneven and is currently slowing. As demonstrated in the above data, there is a critical need for programs for exceptional young women holding diverse social identities who want to further develop their creative and critical thinking as well as their leadership potential in order to expand their opportunities.

### Are there similar programs in CT or elsewhere?

Many educational institutions, as well as non-profit and for-profit organizations, offer women's leadership certificates, course work, and/or institutes. We found that the current offerings have two commonalities:

- Existing women's leadership certificate programs/institutes are primarily offered to mid-late career professionals.
- Existing women's leadership certificate programs/institutes are primarily housed in schools of business and/or focus on women in business/corporate contexts.

*Cornell University-Executive Leadership Women in Leadership Certificate:* This program is the most similar to the model we propose. It is an online certificate focusing on the specific issues pertaining to women in leadership roles. This program, however, does not rely on a cohort model and is individually paced. Learning is done independently and, while it is designed for working professionals, it does not include the practicum component and corresponding group reflection. Further, it is housed in a school of business and does not employ an interdisciplinary approach to leadership.

*Institutes and Seminars:* Many institutions of higher education offer “Women’s Leadership Certificates” in contained, short-duration institutes and seminars. Harvard University, Babson College, Yale University, and Simmons College all offer certificates in women’s leadership through in-person or online coursework that ranges in duration from 4 days to 8 weeks. Harvard University offers several women’s leadership-focused certificates in 4-day institutes in various graduate schools including the Schools of Education, Business, and Government. Yale’s certificate program is housed in the School of Management. These certificate programs are not offered in an interdisciplinary context. Further, they are marketed to mid-career level professionals rather than new graduates and emerging leaders. As such, there is a need for a women’s leadership certificate program that focuses on:

- New graduates who are emerging leaders in their respective fields
- Women’s leadership in careers working for social change, education, politics, etc.
- An interdisciplinary approach to women’s leadership development

### **What are the desired learning outcomes of the program?**

Through this proposed certificate program, we aim to address the issue of leadership inequity by training young, emerging women leaders to bridge the gap between theory and practice in their respective career fields. We propose to do this through a program that blends online learning/coursework with practical experience in a practicum placement that is related to their career aspirations. The coursework will focus on contemporary issues that influence women’s leadership and will provide a theoretical foundation for emerging leaders to engage in continued scholarship and/or their career field with expertise in understanding and dismantling the systematic barriers that exacerbate inequities in leadership opportunities for women. Offered entirely online, the coursework will be taken in conjunction with a practicum placement. The practicum placement will be coordinated by the student in collaboration with the certificate program coordinator and instructor of the practicum seminar. Throughout the program, students will draw on their experiences in their practicum placement and knowledge gained through program coursework to consider how they are developing their leadership skills and how their early leadership experiences are aligned or potentially diverge from course content.

At the conclusion of this program, students will:

- Understand the ways in which leadership is traditionally understood and enacted in a racialized and gendered framework (i.e., White and male).
- Identify and explore the structural discrimination operating in organizations, their field, and society.
- Develop a toolkit of skills/strategies to build momentum around organizational change (i.e., leadership) that prepares them to challenge current concepts of “good” or “effective” leadership in their field.
- Strengthen their courage and resilience to engage in change leadership by increasing close connections with women engaged in this work.

## Program Description

The target audience for the program is emerging leaders concerned with inequality and gender barriers in the workplace who have recently completed their undergraduate degree (0-5 years of work experience beyond their undergraduate degree) and have an interest in developing their leadership skills as they develop as professionals.

Potential students must have an established 'practicum site' (organization) prior to enrollment in the program. The practicum site selection is driven based on student interest. The practicum site could include their current place of employment or can be a new organization for which the student has interest in working or interning. Students must be engaged in the practicum site for a minimum of 10 hours/week. The program will not establish practicum sites for students. Students working full-time can (and are encouraged) to use their place of employment as their practicum site. Students will complete a practicum site form which will solicit the following information including name of the organization, designated site supervisor, and the following:

- Please describe the contact you have had with this organization (e.g., your current place of employment). What work responsibilities are/would you be doing at this organization?
- Do/would you work onsite, remote, or hybrid? What resources does/will the organization provide so that you can accomplish your work?

The students will secure a practicum site agreement approved by the Neag School of Education.

The Emerging Women's Leadership Graduate Certificate Program will introduce enrolled students to concepts and theories of leadership, how leadership is both gendered and racialized as predominately White and male, and how that impacts the experiences of women (including women holding minoritized racial/ethnic identities) accessing and thriving in leadership. Students will also explore leadership within practicum placements allowing them to reflect upon what they are learning in their coursework as they are exercising leadership in those placements.

The two courses foundational to the certificate program are EDLR 6464 and EDLR 5343.

*Leadership in Organizations (EDLR 6464)* 1<sup>st</sup> semester (Fall) This course introduces students to leadership and how leadership can be most effective within organizations. Students will consider, investigate, and critique various models of leadership; develop an understanding of the multiple dimensions of leadership; and examine how organizational structures enhance and hinder leadership effectiveness. Further, students will analyze and self-assess leadership strategies and skills. Through an interactive, online platform, students will explore leadership using the case-based method of instruction. This will include individual case analyses, small group discussions, and development of a new leadership case applying leadership theories explored during the course.

*Gender in Organizational Leadership (EDLR 5343)* 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (Spring) Students will explore why women are disproportionately underrepresented in leadership broadly and how social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual identity) impact women's access to, success and longevity in leadership roles. Students will also consider how individual and organizational (and organizational policies) conditions place women in precarious leadership positions (i.e., the glass cliff). Through an interactive, online platform, students will explore leadership and gender using cases, peer reviewed research articles, and current readings/podcasts exploring women's experiences in leadership. Students will engage in

individual case analyses, small group discussions, and development of a new leadership case specifically examining women's experiences as leaders and using materials explored during the course.

The *Practicum 1 Seminar (EDLR 6092)* 1<sup>st</sup> semester (Fall) will focus on the implementation and application of theory in the student's area of specialization. Practicums offer hands-on learning opportunities for students and, when coupled with a seminar, enable students to apply the theories they learn in their coursework with intentionality and support. Through an interactive, online platform, this course will engage students in critical thinking and reflection around the application of theory into practice.

Students will have opportunities to share and gain knowledge from their peers. As students will be new to their practica sites in the 1st semester, the topics to be discussed in Practicum 1 will focus on topics such as, how navigate workplace relationships, establishing goals for the practicum experience, prioritizing work and non-work commitments, and identifying work-life and work-work conflict.

The final element of the Emerging Women's Leadership Graduate Certificate Program is the *Practicum 2 Seminar (EDLR 6092)* 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (Spring). Students will develop a capstone project that focuses on identifying a problem of practice in their experience and using the learnings from the coursework to develop recommendations for improvement. This capstone project will provide evidence of their competence to apply the theoretical frameworks of women's leadership to their next phase of research and/or practice. In addition to the capstone project, students will continue to engage in critical thinking and reflection around the application of theory to practice. The topics covered in Practicum 2 will build on the areas discussed in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, but delve more deeply into the intersection of social identities and leadership - including navigating a gendered and racialized work environment, how to engage in organization level change as an emerging leader, and how to develop network and sponsor connections to continue leadership development.

Learning will occur in several layers:

- In the virtual classroom via eCampus
- Through a practice-based work experience
- Through shared reflection and multimodal cohort engagement

Explicit language for inclusion in the Graduate Catalog (describing all program requirements, including total number of credits, required courses, restrictions on electives, and all other required milestones)

### **Proposed Graduate Catalog copy**

The Emerging Women's Leadership graduate certificate program is a 12-credit online program designed to educate and prepare emerging leaders concerned with gender inequality and gender barriers in the workplace to serve as catalysts for change in their field of choice through the translation of leadership theory to practice. Taking an intersectional approach, students of all identities who seek gender equality in society are immersed in a practicum leadership experience for the duration of the program, providing an organizational context for the application of theory and the development of a capstone project that addresses a problem of practice. The program consists of four online courses.

Required courses: Semester 1: EDLR 6464; EDLR 6092 (3 credits); Semester 2: EDLR 5343; EDLR 6092 (3 credits).

## **Faculty Involvement**

Existing faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership have developed and will teach the online courses. They will advise the participating students in collaboration with the certificate program coordinator. All faculty are tenure-track faculty with teaching and scholarly interests and expertise broadly related to issue of equity and inclusion (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity) within leadership and educational administration.

## **Enrollment and graduation projections**

Projected Annual Enrollment: 6-10 students per cohort. 100% graduation projected.

## **Process for program evaluation**

We will follow an evaluation process similar to Sperandio and LaPier (2009) who implemented a yearlong experimental leadership preparation program for women and aimed at confronting gender and ethnic leadership stereotyping and social justice more broadly.

1. At the beginning of the program (Fall semester) we will conduct interviews and/or focus groups (depending on enrollment numbers) of participants. These interviews will follow a protocol focused on perceptions regarding the importance of a consideration of gender and ethnicity as it impacts how leadership is enacted and experienced by self and others (Sperandio & LaPier, 2009).
2. Participants will also keep diaries with specific prompts at regular intervals to assess how their views are evolving. The diary prompts will be integrated into each section (Fall and Spring) of EDLR 6092.
3. At the conclusion of the program (end of Spring semester) participants will again engage in focus groups to help us assess how and in what way program information impacted their views of leadership, themselves as a leaders, and their larger leadership trajectory.
4. We also plan to survey graduates each year after their participation to capture their professional pathways as well as whether and how their learning supported their ongoing development and growth.
5. Faculty and graduate assistants supporting the program will convene at the end of each semester to evaluate the data provided by participants. We will adjust course materials, discussion prompts, and assessments based on information provided.

We will also review the student evaluations of teaching to make further adjustments to course materials. Finally, retention rates, graduation rates, and academic performance will be evaluated as metrics for the program's success.

## **Program Administration**

The Emerging Women's Leadership Graduate Certificate Program will be administered by the Department of Educational Leadership. For the duration of the BOLD Women's Leadership Network grant awarded to UConn and administered by the Office of Undergraduate Research, BOLD staff will provide additional administrative and advisory support for participating students affiliated with the BOLD program.

**Funding and financial resources needed**

The costs of the development of the program will be absorbed by the BOLD Women's Leadership Network Grant awarded to UConn and administered by the Office of Undergraduate Research. This includes support for a 10-hour graduate assistantship in Year 1, and faculty online course development support for EDLR 6464 and EDLR 5343. See attached proposed budget developed by CETL.

**Other Resource Needs**

eCampus

**Consultations with other potentially affected units**

Because of the program's focus on emerging women leaders in contexts of social change (e.g., education), we do not anticipate any negative impact on other units at the University. We consulted with Associate Dean in the School of Business, Lucy Gilson, about this certificate program. We shared ideas regarding how this program could support young, emerging women leaders with an interest in business. We will continue to stay in contact with Associate Dean Gilson as the certificate program begins and find ways to further develop the certificate program.

**Who can apply to this program?**

Any student who will have completed a bachelor's degree prior to beginning the certificate program.

**Anticipated start date**

Fall 2022

**Admission requirements**

Earned bachelor's degree from an accredited IHE prior to Fall of the program year for which they are applying.

**Application process**

- Required materials, in addition to transcripts (such as GRE scores, personal statements, letters of recommendation)
- Personal statement explaining:
  - Applicant's anticipated career goals
  - How the applicant envisions the graduate certificate will better prepare them to achieve those goals
- 2 letters of recommendation
- Practicum Site Form
- Practicum Host Site Agreement

**Terms for which students will be admitted**

Fall only

Program Director Name:

Laura Burton, Department Head, Educational Leadership