

Welcome to the first annual

Student Leadership Development Day

Presented by



September 30, 2026

Special Thanks to:

- **The CISL Advisory Board:** Anita Rivers, Craig Mourton, Luz Flores, Laura Reynolds, Mary Sakin, Rashard Mills, Rosa Hanco, Ashley Robinson, Bruce Peabody, Ian Mercer, Michael DeStefano, Otito Iwuchukwu, Robert McGrath, Stacie Lents, William Toms, and Agie Markiewicz-Hocking
- **FDU Leadership:** Benjamin Rifkin, University Provost, James Almeida, Dean, Silberman College of Business, Patty Durso, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Scott Parsons, Executive Director, Institute for Character and Leadership
- All participating offices and presenters
- All FDU students, faculty staff, and leadership who supported this event
- You, for attending!

In partnership with:



STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT DAY SCHEDULE

Title	Presenters	Description	Room
	10:00 – 11:00 AM		
Develop your Empathy Skills	Center for Empathy Research and Training. Dean of Students, Dr. Juhi Bhatt & Associate Professor of Psychology, Dr. Ben Johnson	Empathy isn't being soft – it's an essential skill for positive relationships and leadership success. In this fun, interactive session, you'll learn and practice some of the skills of, and roadblocks to, empathy.	1142
Bridging Generations: Communication, Body Language & Your Professional Presence	Career Development Specialist, Denice Jacob Maldonado & Hispanic Center Associate Director, Luz Helena Flores	This hands-on workshop focuses on several important topics for student leadership and professional development, including cultural differences and generational communication gaps; body language and the importance of first impressions; professional communication and workplace interactions; the importance of a strong résumé and LinkedIn presence.	1143
Finding Your Why: Purpose Driven Values and Leadership	Knights Athletics Senior Associate AD, Jen Quirk	Knowing what is important to you and WHY may be the key to unlocking fulfillment in many ways, yet many times we don't take time to ask ourselves who we are and what we want. Throughout this presentation, we will provide participants an opportunity to help discover and hone their WHY and how they can integrate into their collegiate experience, search for employment, and leadership opportunities.	1104
	11:15AM-12:15pm		
Confidently Communicating When Faced with Misinformation	Metro Library. Research & Instruction Librarians Colleen Fischer and Patty Miraglilo	This workshop will instill confidence in attendees' ability to confront misinformation at work. It will focus on developing skills in verifying and communicating information. Through hands-on activities, attendees will learn when and how to navigate awkward situations with empathy and confidence—building core leadership skills.	1142

What Does Professionalism Look Like?	Executive Director, EOF Program & First-Generation Scholars, Lissette Garcia	This workshop explores the difference between professional and unprofessional workplace behavior. We will examine how communication, appearance, attitude, reliability, accountability, and respect shape professional reputation. We'll address habits that can damage credibility, explore the difference between a victim and creator mindsets, and learn how solution-focused thinking supports workplace success. Through role-playing scenarios, students will demonstrate professional and unprofessional behaviors and practice responding appropriately to common workplace situations.	1143
Leading Without Burning Out: How Your Greatest Strengths Can Become Your Biggest Leadership Blind Spots	Center for Character Development, Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Candidate Ryan Primrose	Sustainable leadership isn't just about using your strengths; it's about learning when, where, how, and how much to use them. You'll identify the character strengths you bring to leadership, examine how those same strengths can misfire when overused (perfectionism, burnout, avoidance, taking on too much), work through leadership case scenarios in small groups, and leave with a personal Leadership Sustainability Plan.	1104
Demystifying The E-Board Process: How to Get a Club Leadership Position on Campus	University Honors Program Director Allison Smagin and FDU students: Muhammad Arif, Lillian Gorguis, Kayla McCormick, Ana Ochoa Rivera, Benedetto Russo, Noemi Vasquez	A panel of club e-board members will discuss how they got into their positions, what they look for in their fellow e-board members, and what helped them be successful in their positions. Attendees will assess and reflect on their skillsets and interests, helping them realize they have many strengths and qualities that are suitable for being a club leader on campus. Q&A and open discussion will follow.	1150
	12:30 – 1:30 PM		
Mental Health Training: How to Question, Persuade, and Refer Those in Need	Mental Health Association of NJ, in partnership with Student Health & Wellness Services. Presenters Julia Wieczorek and Adriana D'Alleman, from MHA	FDU Student Health Services, in partnership with the Mental Health Association of NJ, is offering hands-on QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training. After the training, participants are better prepared to address warning signs of suicide and equipped with tools to respond. (session attendance is capped at 30)	1142

Leadership Lessons from FDU Team Captains	Division 1 Knights Athletics. Three team captains: Marina Burzaco (Women's Soccer), Gabriel Le Guen (Men's Soccer), Lane Mintchwarner (Women's Lacrosse)	Three Division 1 Team Captains will discuss how they approach peer leadership and lead attendees through a variety of exercises to explore and develop their leadership potential, including how to become a formal or informal leader in teams and clubs with their fellow students.	1143
"Playing the Game": Learning Communication and Leadership Skills	Professor of Theater and Communication Stacie Lents; Director of the BAIS Professional Studies Program; playwright and actor	If you ever get nervous before an interview, presentation, or professional conversation, this workshop is for you! This workshop is made up of actual games, many derived from theater and improv exercises. We'll have fun playing our way into stronger communication as leaders. Participants will be introduced to practical communication and observation skills and to strategies for collaborating with colleagues. Absolutely no theater training or performance background is necessary. This workshop is a low-key, low-pressure way to learn to "play the game."	1104
Be a Leader Among Leaders: Finding Your Voice in a College Classroom	Academic Support Center Assistant Director Shawn Harr and Reading/Writing Specialist Jessie Gorant	The session will focus on various classroom communication skills, including overcoming participation anxiety, learning to listen, sharing the spotlight, and contributing effectively to group projects.	1150
	2:00 – 2:45 PM		
A Conversation on Leadership with Provost Rifkin and Coach Gaitley	Women's Basketball Coach Stephanie Gaitley & University Provost, Dr. Benjamin Rifkin	Knights Women's Basketball Coach Stephanie Gaitley will reflect on her incredible career in coaching, including becoming the 14th Winningest Coach All-Time in NCAA Division I history, leading her teams to 22 postseason bids. In her two years at FDU, WBB has gone 59-9, won 2 NEC titles, and earned 2 NCAA tournament berths. In a fun conversation (with time for Q&A), she'll discuss her perspective on leadership with University Provost Benjamin Rifkin. https://www.fdu.edu/fdumagazine/fall-2026/crown-secured/	Live in Wilson Auditorium