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MOTIVATION

- In 2024, Bakermans and Dehner collected data from 11 environmental leadership programs, and 4 undergraduate and graduate WPI student focus groups.
- Students worry:**
 - That their environmental interests and activities are siloed, extracurricular, and ad hoc.
 - That an engineering or tech-heavy school places a stigma on them that they are not environmentally aware, literate, or committed.
- Interest in LEAF:** Students expressed strong interest and enthusiasm for a multi-term environmental leadership course that combines nature immersion, leadership training, networking, and certification and credentialing opportunities.

RESULTS: *Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF) Initiative*

<https://oblcs.wixsite.com/wpileaf>

Created
3 new
courses

Engaged ~80
students in
professional
networking

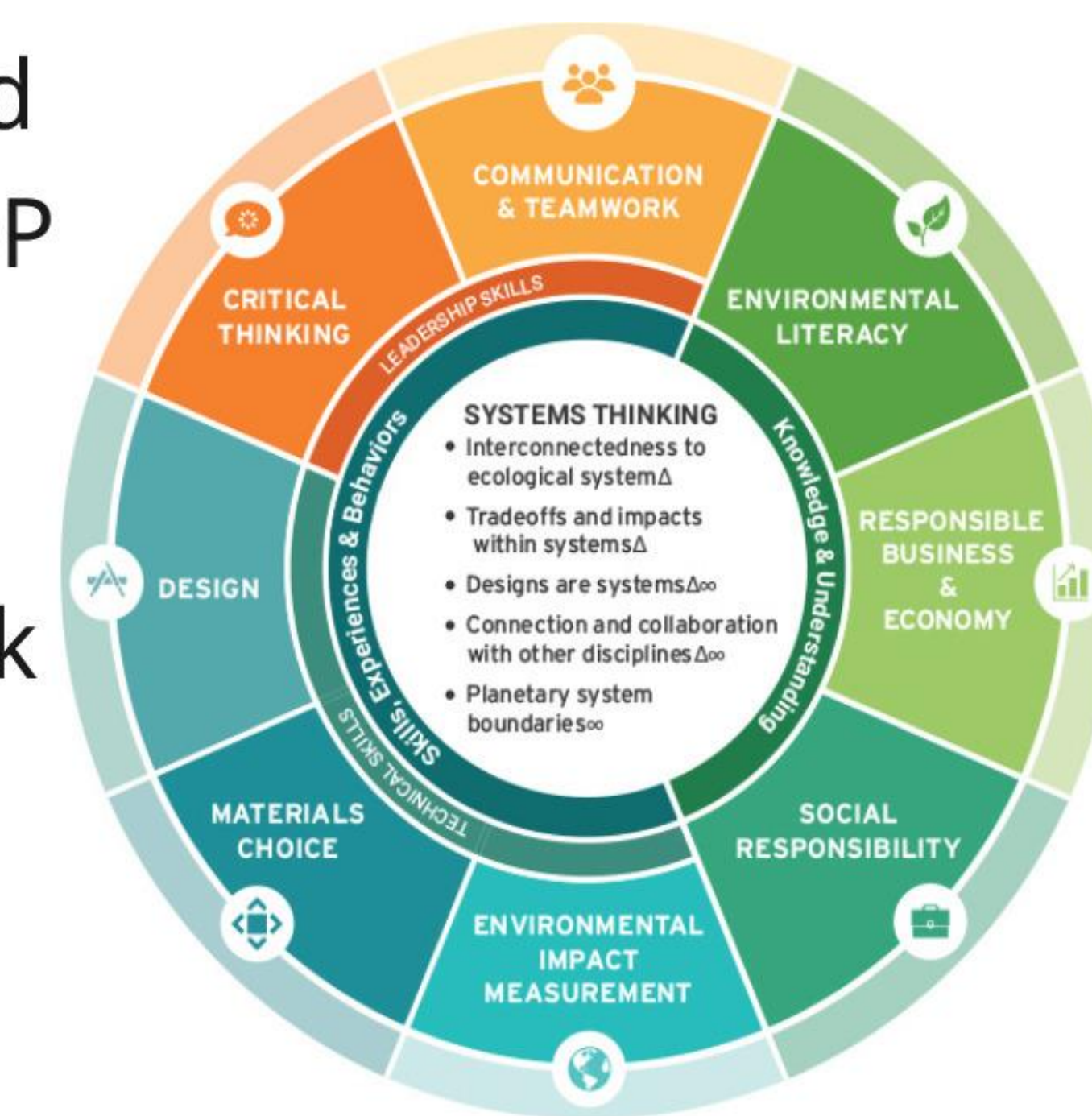
Connected
with >15
professionals
as guests or
partners

Supported
students in
outreach and
expanding
credentials

Partnered with
NWF for
additional
career support
for students

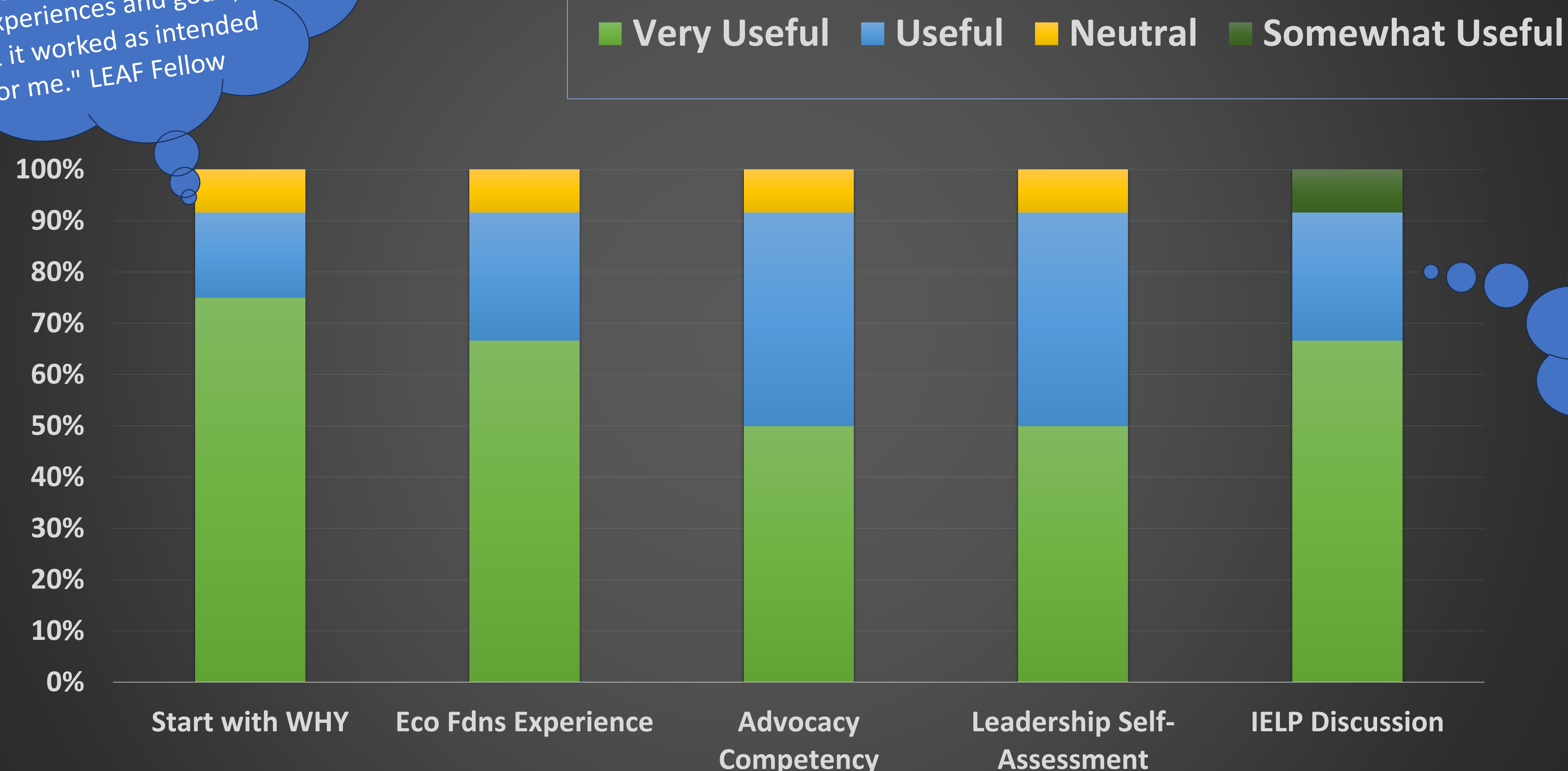
Current Program Objectives and Components draw upon the EOP Framework, especially

- Leadership,
- Communication & Teamwork
- Environmental Literacy,
- Critical thinking,
- Social responsibility



RESULTS: *Student Report on Usefulness of LEAF Coursework*

"The IELP helped organize relevant experiences and goals, & it worked as intended for me." LEAF Fellow



"I really like the IELP and everything about it. Is it bad to ask for more work on it haha" LEAF Fellow



Bog hike with LEAF Fellows



Sustainable Careers Networking Event

NEXT STEPS

- Faculty governance approval of Envntl Leadership courses
- Pilot new course: Environmental Leadership Practicum
- Partnering with additional faculty and staff for further expansion (e.g., Sustainable Careers Pathway; modules for other courses)
- Expand integration of EOP Framework (e.g., Materials Choice, Design, Technical Skills)

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REFERENCES: The Lemelson Foundation (2022). The Engineering for One Planet Framework: Essential Sustainability-focused Learning Outcomes for Engineering Education (2022). Retrieved [November 15, 2025] from EOP_Framework.pdf

Whitburn, J., Linklater, W., & Abrahamse, W. (2020). Meta-analysis of human connection to nature and pro environmental behavior. *Conservation Biology*, 34(1), 180-193.