

Student Affairs Profession in Higher Education
ELPS 425
Fall 2008

Wednesdays, 4:15 to 6:45 pm
Lewis Towers, Room 914

Instructor

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Required Course Readings

1. Komives, S. R., & Woodard, Jr., D. B. (Eds.). (2003). *Student services: A handbook for the profession*, 4th edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers.
2. Hirt, J.B. (2006). *Where you work matters: Student affairs administration at different types of institutions*. Washington, D.C.: American College Personnel Association.
3. Additional required readings will be assigned. These will be available to you electronically through Blackboard, the university's web-based course management system.
4. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (APA) 5th Edition* (available in many bookstores).

Course Description

This course serves to provide students with an introduction to the professional field of student affairs administration in higher education. Student affairs staff has, as their primary responsibility, the professional obligation and challenge to advance the full development and learning of all students with whom they work and serve in the higher education arena. Accordingly, this course emphasizes the educational and other roles that student affairs staff serve on the campus in promoting the intellectual, social, moral, ethical, spiritual, emotional, and physical development of students. With this vision in mind, student affairs staff also has a professional responsibility to their institutions to advance their institution's unique mission and educational goals. In large measure, student affairs staff carry out their professional obligations by actively seeking collaborative relationships with each other across units, with students, with faculty, and with others on the campus in order to design, support and maintain campus environments that optimally support student learning and development.

This course is designed to facilitate open, systematic and scholarly exploration of professional identity within the broad and diverse student affairs field. Students will be

challenged to examine together and to personally reflect on the basic "Who, What, Why, How and Where" questions that, when taken together, provide a comprehensive portrait of the student affairs profession in higher education.

The questions that each student is asked to critically explore and personally reflect upon in this course include:

1. Who are student affairs professionals? What pathways have they followed into the profession and why? What factors contribute to the vast diversity that exists among professionals in this field? What strengths and limitations are inherent in this diversity? How would you describe your own journey into the field? What attracts you to working with students? What strengths, talents, and unique skills do you bring?
2. What functions do student affairs professionals typically perform on the campus? How might their work vary both from one functional unit to another on the same campus and from one campus to another? What types of student affairs positions most appeal to you? Why? What kinds of institutions of higher learning most attract you? Why?
3. Why do these professionals strive to do what it is they do? What principles inform and drive their professional practice? What goals, values, beliefs, and assumptions are deeply held? What values and beliefs do you hold important that will shape or influence your work with students? What factors have influenced these beliefs? What currently motivates you to consider a career in the field of student affairs administration?
4. How do student affairs staff members perform their duties and achieve their goals? What competencies, skills, and dispositions (i.e., values, attitudes, etc.) are needed to effectively advise, counsel, lead, advocate, manage, and educate? What roles are a good fit for you? Why? What "gaps" exist in your own knowledge and skills that you hope to address?
5. Where does the important work of student affairs professionals get accomplished? With whom? With what resources and tools? How can student affairs staff collaborate effectively with each other and with faculty on the campus? What leadership is required? With what groups on campus are you currently most comfortable working? Why? How do you assess your own level of team work skills at this point in your career?

While there are, of course, no absolute right or wrong pathways to the exploration of professional identity in this class, systematically exploring the above sets of questions can assist students in this class to construct a richer and fuller appreciation for and understanding of the work of student affairs professionals in higher education. Each student will be challenged throughout the course to reflect on what professional identity may mean for you. It is important to remember that your past, current, and your future experiences will collectively shape your evolving understanding of your professional role. Hopefully, this course will support you in developing and refining the skills and dispositions needed to continuously reflect on your own values and beliefs as they relate to the critical work of student affairs professionals.

School of Education and Course Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework that emphasizes *Professionalism in the Service of Social Justice* guides instructional, extracurricular, and professional activities in Loyola's School of Education. This course contributes to an understanding of this framework in a number of ways. For example, through discovery and the pursuit of new knowledge about the student affairs profession in higher education, students will be asked to reflect on key aspects of professionalism and what it means to be a professional and to serve within a profession. An important part of this discovery will be reflection on the goals of social service and moral and ethical practice that are integrally associated with professionalism within all fields. Additionally, the course will challenge students to thoughtfully consider social justice and ethical issues with which student affairs staff are involved in their work with students. To illustrate, if students explore the professional arena of college admission and financial aid policy they will examine key social justice issues related to the relationship of gender, race/ethnicity and economic class on student access, choice and financial support (e.g., merit aid versus need-based aid) that all admission and financial aid staff (and their institutions) must consider. Student affairs staffs share with others on the campus responsibility for retaining students from year to year so that students can achieve academic success. Social justice questions can and do arise around why it is that on many campuses large proportions of students who hold membership in lower socio-economic classes depart institutions often without achieving their educational goals. These examples, to cite only a few, are a sampling of the issues and questions addressed in this course that contribute to student understanding and appreciation for the conceptual framework that guides all School of Education programs.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe factors that contribute to the United State's diverse system of higher education including differences that exist among institutional missions, organizational patterns and control, funding sources, faculty orientations, student characteristics and goals, and teaching and learning climates. These differences can impact in significant ways the focus of student affairs staff and their work on the campus.
2. Articulate factors that contribute to the diversity that exists among student affairs professionals who work in higher education. This includes understanding and appreciating the different pathways for entrance into and for movement within the profession including foundational beliefs that often motivate individuals to pursue this profession.
3. Identify key trends and events that over its history have shaped the evolution of the student affairs profession from its infancy in the late 19th century to its current state in the 21st century.
4. Identify key professional associations within the field including the role, function, and the diverse contributions that these organizations may provide both to you and to the broader profession.

5. Articulate core values advanced by student affairs professionals that contribute to the development of a philosophy for the profession and reflect on the critical implications that this philosophy may have on your own professional practice within the field. This includes reflection on your own evolving educational philosophy that grounds your work (or anticipated work) with students.
6. Identify and describe key roles and functions served on the campus by student affairs professionals including the overarching educational goals and objectives they seek to achieve across functional areas.
7. Develop a personal understanding of what it means to you to serve as a professional within the field and, more generally, to reflect on the characteristics that contribute to the development of professionals.
8. Reveal an understanding and appreciation for the moral, ethical, and social justice dimensions of the work of student affairs professionals.
9. Identify key issues that student affairs practitioners face in their roles on the campus in advancing their own goals for student learning and development as well as those of their institutions.
10. Identify the personal and professional issues that early career professionals may face upon entering the profession as master's prepared graduates.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. Academic dishonesty is one of several possible reasons why a student may be dismissed from the Graduate School of Education. For specific policies and procedures see: http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies.shtml#honesty

Accessibility

Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. More information is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/register.shtml>

Harassment

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the

aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. For specific definitions of discrimination, abuse, and harassment refer p. 25-26 in the Loyola University Chicago Student Handbook, located at:

<http://www.luc.edu/studentaffairs/pdfs/LoyolaStudentHandbook2006.pdf>

If you believe you are subject to such harassment, you should notify your instructor. If you believe you are subject to harassment by your instructor, contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at 312-915-6464.

Class Policies on Written Work and Deadlines

All written work for this class is to conform to the requirements of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (APA) 5th Edition*. A copy of this manual can be purchased at many bookstores. Rare exceptions to this policy may be considered for students from other divisions of the university who are asked by their faculty to use another format (such as MLA). Students are also reminded to utilize a grammar/spell check feature when they prepare reports for the class. One inch margins are required; print font should be set at 12; all reports are to be double spaced; number each page according to APA style. Please give each report a title page (with a project title of some kind) also according to APA style (no running head needed).

Important Note: Please remember that failure to appropriately cite and reference other authors' work may lead to charges of academic dishonesty which can result in either a failure on the assignment and/or in the course. This action may also lead to academic dismissal from the program. It is each student's responsibility to know how to appropriately incorporate the work of other scholars into your own work and to cite and reference these other sources appropriately.

As a matter of fairness and courtesy to all class participants, I will assess penalties for late papers, except in the case of emergencies, whereupon I must be notified in advance. First, I will not provide extensive written feedback on papers that are submitted late. Second, I will deduct one point for each day that an assignment is submitted past the due date. **All written work is to be submitted electronically (as an e-mail attachment); exceptions must be cleared with me in advance.**

Confidentiality

If in this class, any personal information is shared within the groups or to the class, it should be considered a gift from the person who is sharing. This information was provided to help us relate to, understand, and further our knowledge of whatever we may be discussing. It is expected that this personal information be kept confidential.

A Final Note Regarding the Course Schedule

This course syllabus is subject to change. Such changes will be related during class as well as posted on Blackboard (Bb). If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to find out about such changes.

Topical Outline of the Course

A detailed course schedule, complete with assigned readings and assignment due dates, is available on the course Blackboard site (<http://blackboard.luc.edu/>).

August 27, 2008	Student Introductions; Course Overview/Themes
September 3, 2008	America's Diverse Student Affairs Community <u>Note:</u> "How Did I Get Here" Essay Due Tonight (ungraded diagnostic)
September 10, 2008	Influences on the Development of the Profession
September 17, 2008	Role and Importance of Institutional Mission & Culture on Student Affairs Work <u>Note:</u> 4 Sector Impact Reports Due Tonight
September 24, 2008	Mission & Culture Impact <u>Note:</u> 3 Sector Impact Reports Due Tonight
October 1, 2008	Philosophical Foundations of the Profession
October 8, 2008	Holiday (No Class)
October 15, 2008	Organizing the Campus for Student Affairs: Communities of Practice <u>Note:</u> Dean of Students Panel Tonight
October 22, 2008	Student Affairs Functions <u>Note:</u> 4 Unit Reports Due Tonight
October 29, 2008	Student Affairs Functions (Continued) <u>Note:</u> 3 Unit Reports Due Tonight
November 5, 2008	Ethical Standards and Good Practice in the Field
November 12, 2008	New Institution, New Position, New Roles <u>Note:</u> Early Career Panel Tonight

November 19, 2008	Student Activism and Student Affairs <u>Note:</u> Student Activism Presentation/Paper Due Tonight
November 26, 2008	Holiday (No Class)
December 3, 2008	Course Wrap-Up: Themes, Conclusions, Implications Student Course Evaluation Tonight
December 10, 2008	No Class <u>Note:</u> Integrative Philosophy Essays Due Tonight by 4:15 p.m.

Engagement in the Class

Instructional approaches will be utilized with a goal to provide both a challenging and supportive teaching and learning environment in this course. The responsibility for creating a dynamic teaching and learning environment rests both with the instructor and with each student enrolled.

In recognition of varied learning preferences, different instructional approaches will be utilized with a goal to provide both a challenging and supportive teaching and learning environment in this course.

While several learning outcomes have been identified for this course, above all I strive to share with you my own interest, enthusiasm, commitment and experience with the student affairs profession. I believe optimal learning occurs when we are engaged in dialogue with each other rather than lengthy lecture. It is in the act of sharing with one another—our experiences, beliefs, assumptions, points of view, and questions—that we come to rich and lasting forms of knowing. Like you, I too am a learner in this course and look forward to learning from you.

As you prepare for each class, I ask that you consider the following questions in order to facilitate your reflection on the topics to be discussed.

1. In your opinion, what are most important ideas or themes expressed in each of the readings? How do these ideas relate to the topic to be discussed?
2. Do ideas gleaned from the reading match your own personal experiences while a student and/or staff member in higher education? Why or why not?
3. As you have read and prepared for class, what ideas have you personally found to be interesting, new, surprising, or even perplexing? Why?
4. What questions do the readings raise for you that you would like to discuss further with your peers and instructor?

Assignments

“How Did I Get Here” Essay [Due September 3; ungraded diagnostic]

In this short essay (3-5 pages) you will demonstrate your current writing ability. In this paper I would like you to elaborate on your answers to the questions we shared with each other during the first class. In the form of a personal narrative please address:

Where did you attend college; When did you first become aware of the professional field known as student affairs and how did you first learn about it; Describe one positive experience you had as an undergrad with a student affairs/student services unit; Describe one negative experience you had as an undergrad with a student affairs/student services unit; As an undergrad, what student affairs/student services units did you rely on the most; As a graduate student, what student affairs/student services units do you rely on (or believe you will rely on) the most; What (or who) led you to enroll in Loyola’s graduate program in Higher Education; What functional area(s) in student affairs interests you for professional employment at this point in your educational journey.

Sector Impact Report [Due September 17 and September 24; 20 Points]

Note: Unlike the sector impact report for your History class, this report will focus on how the various sectors impact the work of student affairs professionals.

Students will be grouped according to their interest in examining and reporting on a particular sector of higher education for an oral ‘Teach Us’ presentation to the class that essentially focuses on how the characteristics of that sector may impact the work of student affairs professionals. Students may select one specific institution by name that “typically” represents the sector/type on which they are reporting (i.e., a small liberal arts college, a large research university, etc.) and in the oral report present information about that institution’s mission, student characteristics, and organizational structure for student affairs units.

The primary focus of the report (where most time should be spent) should be how the character and mission of the institution may influence the range and depth of programs, activities, and services the institution's division of student affairs offers students. For example, how might the mission of a small, selective, liberal arts college impact the mission and roles of student affairs professionals on that campus? In addition to the research summarized in your textbook (e.g., chapters focused on the sectors will be assigned reading), you are expected to consult institutional websites, print documents, and talk with professional staff and/or students on a representative campus (either in person or via email/telephone) to gather information for your report.

Potentially seven reports will be presented over two class sessions with each report limited to no more than 45 minutes, inclusive of ample time for class discussion. While no formal written narrative is due with this assignment, groups are expected to utilize visual aids and handouts for the class.

Functional Unit Reports [Due October 22 and October 29; 20 Points]

Working in groups, students will prepare a unit report for presentation to the class depicting key aspects of a "functional area" (i.e., multicultural affairs, international student affairs, campus activities, Greek affairs, etc.) within the broad and diverse field of student affairs administration. As a class we will prioritize the types of information you most wish to learn about these functional areas while also leaving discretion to you in determining what you feel are the most important themes and messages you wish to convey in your report.

You may wish to consider the following aspects of the functional area in your presentation (but how you do so is up to you): A short/concise mission statement for the area (in your own words); key functions/tasks performed by professional staff within this area (the CAS standards in the library reference section may be useful); the key educational goals and outcomes for this area; a short description of the skills, knowledge and dispositions typically needed in an entry-level position; issues faced by professionals within this area including those involving a growing and a multi-culturally diverse student population; professional organizations that support this area including major journals, internet resources, etc. that professionals utilize most frequently; and how technology is utilized. See the assignment guide posted on Blackboard under documents for more suggestions.

In addition to the functional area summaries included in your textbook, you are expected to consult institutional and professional association websites, print documents, and talk with professional staff currently working in the functional area (either in person or via email/telephone) to gather information for your report.

How you present the information is up to you but you are encouraged to be creative in your presentation. Your report should also be made available electronically in one file submitted to the class. While no formal written narrative is due, visual aids and handouts are expected.

Potentially seven group reports will be given thus allowing a maximum of 45 minutes for each report, inclusive of class discussion. Keep in mind that your report should be focused on a few key themes/messages.

Reports on Student Activism [Due November 19; 20 Points Total (10 Written & 10 Oral)]

In self-selected pairs, students are asked to research and present a short (maximum of 10 minutes) "Teach Us" session for the class that identifies and describes a current student issue on the campus that you believe has social justice dimensions and implications for students, faculty, and staff and the broader higher education community. For example, students, faculty and staff on many campuses have raised their voices against the government's role in training military officers from Latin American nations at a U.S. military base in Georgia. Other activists have raised campus awareness regarding

institutional economic support for selected products that are manufactured in other nations using impoverished child labor (i.e., sweatshops). A short written essay report (5 pages) is due in addition to a one-page resource guide on the topic presented (which is to be made available to the full class). Topics will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis so as to avoid duplication.

Integrative Essay on Your Philosophy for Professional Practice [Due December 10; 30 Points]

Prepare a written integrative essay (12-15 pages, excluding title page and references) describing your own evolving educational philosophy that currently guides (or you believe will guide) your work with students in higher education. In preparing your essay, you are asked to revisit the 5 sets of “Who, What, Why, How, and Where” reflection questions that are found on page 2 of this syllabus. You will note that within each set of questions there are reflection questions of a more personal nature, which can be used as an organizing frame for your essay. You also are asked to consider the various readings that have been assigned plus in-class discussions in formulating your essay. Specifically, how do certain concepts discussed in the readings inform or influence your own evolving philosophy. For this essay, appropriate use of and citation of sources from the professional literature are key expectations.

Class Participation [10 Points]

Weekly attendance in class is critically important as it is difficult to be fully engaged in this course if one misses class sessions. If students know that personal and/or professional obligations will prevent them from attending 3 or more class sessions, then they should enroll in this class the next time it is offered. Additionally, as professionals an expectation is that students will arrive to each class on time and remain for the entire class. Excessive tardiness and/or absences may impact the points a student receives for in-class participation.

Class engagement does not mean that each student in the class is expected to actively speak up in every class in order to be fully engaged; however, while quality of contributions is valued over quantity, students who seldom offer insights to class discussions over the course of a full semester may receive fewer points than those who do.

Grading Policy

The following protocol will be followed in determining course grades:

<u>Total Points Earned</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
94 - 100	A
90 - 93	A-
87 - 89	B+
84 - 86	B
80 - 83	B-
77 - 79	C+
74 - 76	C
70-73	C-
60 - 69	D
Sector Impact Report	20 points
Functional Unit Report	20 points
Student Activism Report	20 points
Integrative Philosophy Essay	30 points
Class Participation	10 points
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Total	100 points