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Journal of Student Affairs • Volume XX • 2011



Journal *of* Student Affairs
Volume XX 2011

Colorado State University

20th Edition

Colorado State University

Journal of Student Affairs

Mission Statement

The mission of the Colorado State University *Journal of Student Affairs* is to develop and produce a scholarly publication that reflects current national and international education issues and the professional interests of student affairs practitioners.

Goals

- The *Journal* will promote scholarly work and perspectives from graduate students and student affairs professionals, reflecting the importance of professional and academic research and writing in higher education.
- The Editorial Board of the *Journal* will offer opportunities for students to develop editorial skills, critical thinking, and writing skills while producing a professional publication.

Colorado State University *Journal of Student Affairs*

Volume XX, 2010 – 2011

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The *Journal* can be found on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.sahe.colostate.edu>

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Managing Editors' Perspective

Tyler D. Cegler, Managing Editor – Training & Development
Jennifer C. David, Managing Editor – Technical
Helen Kang, Managing Editor – Content
Lisa A. LaPoint, Managing Editor – Coordination

This year marks an exciting and important milestone as the *Journal of Student Affairs* celebrates its 20th year of annual publication. For the past two decades, the *Journal* has continued to work toward its charge to develop a scholarly publication where graduate students and new student affairs professionals contribute articles that focus on current educational issues and interests of our field. The *Journal* continues to reflect the values of our profession through encouraging dialogue and conversation around timely research and trends presented within these pages.

It has been an honoring and inspiring experience to serve on the Editorial Board these two years. During this time, we particularly have been expanding the *Journal* to reach a wider range of readers through incorporating a diverse group of voices and perspectives focused on national and international issues. To help us achieve our mission and goals, we have intentionally implemented a series of changes.

First, we created a new role within our Editorial Board for a second-year student in the Student Affairs in Higher Education program to serve as the Associate Editor for Marketing & Outreach. We are appreciative of the leadership this Associate Editor has provided. The Board now has a position focused on reaching out to other student affairs graduate preparation programs and creating a database of contacts to solicit articles from students, professionals, institutions, and associations.

Second, we intentionally contacted the committees that serve graduate students and new professionals within ACPA and NASPA. Through this, we built a connection to solicit articles for publication, resulting in six of this year's articles written by authors from other institutions. Last, we created a *Journal of Student Affairs* Facebook group to inform readers, authors, and professionals of news related to the *Journal*, including opportunities to submit articles for future publication.

The *Journal* is also proud to feature an article written by Flo Guido and Matthew Birnbaum. Dr. Guido is an Associate Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership at the University of Northern Colorado and co-author of *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Dr. Birnbaum is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at the University of Northern Colorado. As we continue to publish timely articles and best practices in the field, we hope to engage our readers through connecting the fresh ideas of graduate students and new professionals with the experience and accumulated knowledge of seasoned professionals.

With these changes, we continue to acknowledge the support of particular individuals in the field. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the *Journal* we are honored and grateful to publish the reflection of Dr. Keith Miser who has been instrumental in creating and providing direction for the *Journal*.

We hope through these changes that led to this year's *Journal*, you will find relevant, timely, and engaging articles that grow and deepen your own knowledge and practice. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in our roles as managing editors of the *Journal*. We look forward to the future research and perspectives that will arise from the ideas and perspectives contained in this publication.

Past Leadership

As we produce the 20th edition of the Colorado State University *Journal of Student Affairs*, we acknowledge those who have laid the foundation for our success.

MANAGING EDITORS

- 2009-2010 Jordan Alexander '10, Kinsey Holloway '10, Joe Levy '10, and Nicole Scheer '10
2008-2009 Kyle Carpenter '09, Jeff Rosenberry '09, and David Vale '09
2007-2008 Travis Mears '08, Neal Oliver '08, and Gretchen Streiff '08
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2002-2003 Lea Hanson '03
2001-2002 Jody Jessup '02
2000-2001 Chris Bryner '01
1999-2000 Greg Kish '00
1998-1999 Kirsten Peterson '99
1997-1998 Beth Yohe '98
1996-1997 Ray Gasser '97 and Jocelyn Lowry '97
1995-1996 DeEtta Jones '96 and Michael Karpinski '96
1994-1995 Jeremy Eaves '95 and Alicia Vik '95
1993-1994 Mary Frank '94 and Keith Robinder '94
1992-1993 Jodi Berman '93 and Brad Lau '93
1991-1992 Marie E. Oamek '92

FACULTY ADVISORS

- 2004-2007 Jennifer Williams Mollock,
Director of Black Student Services, Colorado State University
2003-2006 David A. McKelfresh,
Executive Director of Assessment & Research, Colorado State University
2000-2003 Paul Shang,
former Director of HELP/Success Center, Colorado State University
1996-2000 Martha Fosdick ('95),
former Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs,
Colorado State University
1991-1998 Keith M. Miser,
former Vice President for Student Affairs, Colorado State University

Advisors' Perspective

On the occasion of celebrating the 20th anniversary of the *Journal of Student Affairs*, we congratulate the Editorial Board on their outstanding publication. Their organization, hard work and dedication, and outreach efforts are evident in a scholarly publication reflecting a broad range of contemporary topics, research interests, and contributors. Twenty years ago, Dr. Keith Miser had a vision for a scholarly publication that would provide Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) students the opportunity to apply their graduate program research, editing, writing and management skills. This year's *Journal* Editorial Board added to the foundation and contributions of past editors and implemented new goals: re-wording of mission, broadening participation through marketing and outreach, and integrating current media technologies.

As advisors, it is always fulfilling to work so closely with the *Journal* Editorial Board. This year's Board was highly organized, efficient, and focused on producing a quality publication. To accomplish this goal, they refined job descriptions, adding an associate editor of marketing and outreach and fine-tuned the internal review process to streamline *Journal* procedures. Successfully extending outreach to a broad national audience to solicit articles, including NASPA and ACPA graduate communities, resulted in a record number of articles for review. And, the Board continues to involve and provide training for SAHE students on APA Style and peer editing.

We are grateful for the opportunity to work with this outstanding group of SAHE graduate students, and look forward to celebrating the 20th *Journal of Student Affairs* anniversary with the Editorial Board, SAHE students and alumni, SAHE faculty, authors, readers and friends. Congratulations!

Oscar Felix, Executive Director
The Access Center
Colorado State University

Andrea Takemoto Reeve, Director
Academic Advancement Center
Colorado State University

State of the Program

David A. McKelfresh, Ph.D.
Program Chair

This is an exciting time for the Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) Master's Program. I am especially pleased to provide an update on the "state of the program." The SAHE program has made significant strides this past year. We have added new faculty, new courses and new international experiences. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Journal of Student Affairs, congratulations are due to all of the Editorial Board members, and content and style readers over the past twenty years, and especially to Dr. Keith Miser who was responsible for initiating the *Journal* and providing its foundation.

The SAHE program experienced a record number of applicants this year—275 applicants for the 20 slots available for the 2011 cohort. Our applicants were from 42 states and four countries. The SAHE program continues to be the most diverse master's program at Colorado State University in every respect.

We have an excellent group of new faculty teaching and advising in the program. Beau Johnson teaches the Spirituality and Faith Development workshop, Jennifer Johnson and Bobby Kunstman co-teach the Leadership and Service workshop, and Kacee Collard Jarnot co-teaches the Working with Parents and Families workshop with Jody Donovan. Kyle Oldham and Rene Couture have joined the faculty as co-advisors. Jody Donovan was recognized this year as the "Outstanding Faculty Member" by National Association of Student Personnel Administrators region IV-West.

Oscar Felix and Andrea Reeve are providing strong leadership for the ISAHE (international) student group. In addition to coordinating an international field experience for students travelling to Toronto this spring, they are also coordinating an international field experience to Qatar slated for January 2012. This past summer three students participated in practicum or internships at the University of Leicester in England, at Franklin College in Switzerland, and at the University of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

This spring the SAHE program successfully launched the online SAHE Certificate Program consisting of four foundational courses: College Student Development Theory taught by Jody Donovan, Introduction to College Student Personnel Administration taught by Mike Ellis and Kris Binard, Campus Ecology taught by Jim Banning, and Financial Management in Student Affairs taught by Allison Dineen. The SAHE Certificate program is a prelude to the online SAHE Master's Program we will be introducing in Fall 2012.

It is with sadness that we observe the passing of Dr. James M. Kuder. Jim served at CSU for 18 years, where he was the Program Chair for the College Student Personnel Administration graduate program, and a Director in the Division of Student Affairs. Jim served as the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Kentucky from 1987 until his retirement in 2002. In memory of Jim, we have created a memorial fund at CSU in the Division of Student Affairs. The fund has been set up to support the operation of the CSPA/SAHE graduate program Jim so dearly loved.

The program maintains its strong relationship with the Division of Student Affairs and the CSU Graduate School. The Student Affairs Division contributes over \$1 million dollars through the 45 graduate assistantships available for SAHE students, and the Graduate School provides considerable support for non-resident tuition premiums for students in their first

year in the program. Graduate assistantships and assistantship supervisors continue to provide excellent experiences for students. A special thanks goes to Jody Donovan who has coordinated the assistantship process for a number of years and has passed the torch to Kacee Collard Jarnot.

The CSU SAHE Program continues to evolve to meet the needs and challenges of our profession. The job placement rate for SAHE graduates is excellent and our alumni continue to report that the program has prepared them very well for working and contributing in the student affairs profession. I would like to thank our faculty, staff, assistantship supervisors, and alumni who all combine to provide a high quality experience for students.

Acknowledgements

The Editorial Board wishes to thank the following individuals for their contributions toward the success of the 2010-2011 *Journal of Student Affairs*:

- Andrea Takemoto Reeve, Director of the Academic Advancement Center and SAHE faculty member at Colorado State University, for her commitment to making this year's *Journal of Student Affairs* a quality publication, for sharing her experience with professional journals with us, for encouraging the editorial board to broaden the accessibility of the *Journal*, and for her guidance in implementing a more successful editorial process.
- Dr. Oscar Felix, Executive Director of the Access Center and SAHE faculty member at Colorado State University, for providing the *Journal of Student Affairs* with a professional perspective, a supportive approach, and a willingness to improve the *Journal* and all who contribute to its success.
- Dr. David A. McKelfresh, Program Chair for the SAHE program at Colorado State University, for being so supportive and encouraging for those who participate in the *Journal of Student Affairs*.
- SAHE Faculty, for preparing and serving as guides to several authors and Editorial Board members during this process.
- Members of the Editorial Board for dedicating a tremendous level of professionalism and passion to the success of the *Journal of Student Affairs*, and for their commitment to making the *Journal* a better and more available publication than ever before.
- Members of the Reader Board for their hard work and dedication to editing and analyzing articles.
- Those authors and contributors who chose to submit articles to the 20th Annual *Journal of Student Affairs*. Your research, dedication, and quality contributions made it possible to produce this edition.
- Shaun Geisert, Webmaster for the Division of Student Affairs, for his diligent efforts in updating and overseeing the *Journal of Student Affairs* website.
- Carl Kichinko, Communications Specialist for Communications and Creative Services, for his commitment in printing professional quality copies of the *Journal of Student Affairs*.
- Amanda Lubow, graphic designer for Apartment Life 2010-11, for designing the cover of the *Journal of Student Affairs*.
- Dr. Michael De Miranda, Professor in the CSU School of Education, for his willingness to help the *Journal of Student Affairs* thoroughly vet this year's submitted articles.
- NASPA and ACPA for assisting the *Journal of Student Affairs* in reaching out to a broader audience of graduate students and new professionals who wish to submit articles for publication.
- Andrea Jordan, in CSU Central Receiving, for her dedication in assisting in the proper and timely advertising of the *Journal of Student Affairs*' release and publication.
- Kim Okamoto, for her tireless encouragement and guidance for all associated with the *Journal of Student Affairs* and the CSU SAHE program.

The Journal of Student Affairs: A Twenty-Year Reflection

Keith M. Miser, Ph.D.
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

It is a great honor to be invited to write a short reflection on the creation of the *Journal of Student Affairs* as a premier publication of the Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) master's degree program at Colorado State University (CSU).

Discussions about the *Journal* began in the 1991-92 academic year, which also was a milestone year for the SAHE program at CSU. By that year, the graduate program moved from a respected regional program to one with national prominence, as many outstanding candidates were applying for admission from states across the nation. Colorado State University just installed a new president, Dr. Albert C. Yates, who had great regard for the SAHE program. A proposal was advanced during his first few months as president to change the M.Ed. degree in Student Personnel Administration to an M.S. degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education. The faculty and students in the program were elated by the approval of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education for this change and equally excited about a broader philosophy and curriculum changes that would come from changing to a M.S. degree.

With this change underway, faculty and students together were brainstorming changes to the program. There was talk about new ways to involve students, how to become a more ethnically and culturally diverse program, and ways to enhance research and scholarship. We also were searching for new avenues to build a stronger graduate program on the solid foundation at Colorado State University. Against this backdrop of change and enhancement the *Journal of Student Affairs* was created.

It was a beautiful, crisp, blue-sky autumn afternoon at Colorado State University when a group of students were meeting at the Lory Student Center. They were discussing the current SAHE program when the idea of a journal was born. After the discussion, I volunteered to meet with an interested group to discuss the idea further. At that time, I was a faculty member of the SAHE program, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and had also just served for six years as the editor of the *NASPA Journal*.

Numerous graduate students came to the organizational meeting and expressed interest in helping create and develop a national-level, high-quality journal for the CSU program. After word spread about that first meeting, many more students expressed excitement and desire to have a journal. From those discussions an organizational structure emerged and position roles were defined. Dialogue ensued regarding editorial policy and the content of the journal. Hours of debates continued: what standards would we adhere to? Who could submit manuscripts for possible publication? How long could each article be? How could the cover for the journal be designed? Should the journal contain poetry, opinion pieces, book reviews, and drawings as well as serious concept papers and research? These and other challenging questions came from the dialogue, and as discussion evolved, these issues were addressed and answered, at least for the first publication.

About that time, an editorial board was created and Marie Oamek was chosen to be the inaugural editor for the new journal. Grant Sherwood, Manny Cunard, Martha Fosdick, and Guy Arneson also all agreed to help with the publication. Soon manuscripts began arriving, and the editorial process began unfolding. Marie and the editorial board performed exceptionally well, laying the ground work so the first edition could be developed in a timely way and serve as a model for how the *Journal of Student Affairs* could continue to thrive.

The first edition was completed and distributed in the spring semester of 1992. By the next academic year, 1992-1993, the *Journal* was established, roles were evaluated and re-defined where necessary, and Volume II was on its way.

In many ways the SAHE program was prepared to foster, develop, and publish the *Journal of Student Affairs* for Colorado State University. The care of those pioneer members of the *Journal* staff, the support of the University, and the SAHE program laid the foundation to ensure a strong and viable publication for the future. The program has become ever stronger for having a professional journal, and the *Journal* has benefitted from the staff reaching out to current students, alumni, friends, and faculty.

This is the context and the story of how the *Journal of Student Affairs* began. As with many great ideas, it started with the energy, creativity, enthusiasm, and pooled skills of a group of SAHE graduate students, members of the Division of Student Affairs, and the faculty of the program. The accomplishment came about through the contributions, ideas, and work of many.

Where are we today? Only a handful of graduate student affairs preparation programs have a journal, and within that group, only several are high-quality, professional publications. The impact of the *Journal* on the Colorado State University Student Affairs and Higher Education program has been significant. The *Journal* has given many graduate students a unique professional opportunity to participate in the management and editorial process. Few graduate students across the nation have a journal that has helped them in this way.

The *Journal* also has helped define and brand the CSU program and the experience of being a SAHE graduate student at Colorado State University. Also, it gave the program other avenues to develop pride and synergy. Finally, it created a natural opportunity for graduate students to build new skills that will be useful to them as they develop as professionals in student affairs. The *Journal* provided an opportunity to add friends of the program, to unite alumni, and to communicate about the program throughout the nation.

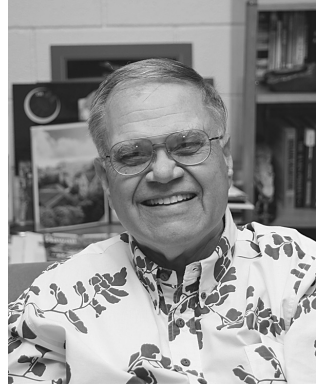
Another significant aspect of the growth and development of the *Journal* is the exceptionally strong vision and scope of the publication. In early days, the *Journal* was seen primarily as a vehicle for graduate students in the program to publish articles. As the *Journal* grew in quality, faculty and alumni were welcomed to submit manuscripts for consideration. On occasion, articles were submitted to address a special subject or topic. Soon the reputation of the *Journal* spread outside Colorado State University and enlightened a national and global audience. The reach of the *Journal* was reinforced by the fact that every edition of the *Journal*, since inception, is part of the Colorado State University library collection and reaches scholars on a global level. The *Journal of Student Affairs* has a bright future. From humble beginnings, the *Journal* is now, through technology, a global publication. It is recognized for high quality, published articles from global authors. It circulates through a major university library and is continuing to be a learning laboratory for SAHE students. The charge for future generations of SAHE students is to continue to develop and reinvent the *Journal*, building on the work of past generations of SAHE students that created a foundation for future change. The SAHE program and its journal are mature, strong, and innovative. The future is bright for each. Colorado State and the SAHE program can be proud of the *Journal* as a unique, excellent, and global publication.

There are many lessons that all professionals can learn from the development, growth, and advancement of the *Journal of Student Affairs* at Colorado State. The most significant lesson is that graduate students working with faculty, student affairs professional staff, alumni, and friends have the potential to create high-quality professional activities, publications, and

programs. It shows the potential, power, and accomplishments that can occur at the hands of a committed group of students when they are given opportunities like the *Journal* has been for SAHE students at CSU.

Twenty years have passed swiftly. The *Journal* is now poised to thrive for 20 more stimulating and influential years. In the year 2031, when the *Journal* staff gathers for the 40th year anniversary of this *Journal*, they will be celebrating with pride how the *Journal* has continued to be a thought-provoking publication and a hallmark of CSU's dynamic Student Affairs program.

Dr. Keith M. Miser currently serves as Special Assistant to the Chancellor for International Programs and Executive Director of the Center for Global Education and Exchange at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. His career in education spans over four decades and includes appointments at Indiana University, the University of Vermont, and Colorado State University. Dr. Miser is the 2007 recipient of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' Scott M. Goodnight Award for Outstanding Service as Dean.



21st Century Data: Using Photography as a Method in Student Affairs Assessment

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University of Northern Colorado

Matthew Birnbaum, Ph.D.
University of Northern Colorado

Abstract

Student affairs units are increasingly required to justify their existence by conducting assessments of their programming efforts. Ethnographers in anthropology and sociology have long known the value and uses of photography in research to illustrate student behaviors and campus cultural phenomena. In this manuscript, two scholar-practitioners highlight the use of photographs for assessment purposes and offer advice to student affairs practitioners. Photography as a research method is framed for its variability and contribution for more meaningful findings in higher education and student affairs assessment. Theoretical and practical matters related to the making of photographs are considered, as are the differences between assessment and research. Examples of photography in student affairs, higher education, and campus climate studies are highlighted to illustrate how to implement this unconventional tool for effective multi-dimensional assessment. These include three photographs used in recent assessment and research efforts. Implications are focused primarily on selected ethical considerations of this descriptive, sometimes activist, method.

Keywords: assessment, photography, student affairs, visual methods

Increasingly, state budgetary deficits and institutional-level conversations about resource allocations are once again putting student affairs units in the unsavory position of having to justify their existence (Keeling, Wall, Underhile, & Dungy, 2008). One way units are encouraged to justify their resources is to conduct assessments to determine the effectiveness, or changes in effectiveness, of programs along educational dimensions or learning outcomes (Seagraves & Dean, 2010; Upcraft, 2003). Assessment in higher education is part of a larger social phenomenon driven by political pressures, public demands for accountability, and practices of measurement (Erwin, 1991; Schuh & Upcraft, 2001). On a more local level, assessment can be viewed as a “high-risk, high-reward” (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000, p. 21) activity with a significant campus political component.

Student affairs practitioners (Banning, 1992a; Banning, 1996; Banning & Bartels, 1997; Brown, Petersen, & Sanstead, 1980) and social scientists (Stanczak, 2007) have long used visual images to illustrate student behaviors and campus cultural phenomena. Images help researchers question what is known about the social world and how it is known (Stanczak, 2007). The advent of technology to create and transmit digital photographs makes the time ripe for a broad attitude change in the academy about photography as a legitimate data collection technique and its centrality in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Ignoring the power of visual research is manifest by “habit, custom, old norms, and limited views of the

nature of knowledge” (Eisner, 1991, p. 188), however visual images are integral to 21st century United States (U.S.) culture. Social science remains largely limited to numbers and words.

This article focuses on the use of photographs for assessment purposes and offers advice for practitioners. First, we discuss how employing photography as a research method can be used in meaningful higher education and student affairs assessment. Next, we highlight examples of photography in student affairs and higher education research and campus climate studies to help practitioners think about another tool for effective multi-dimensional assessment. Implications are highlighted for use of photography as an important assessment tool to give richer meaning to student affairs work. Finally, attention to ethical considerations provides insight for implementation.

Research Tools for Assessment: A Case for Photography

Student affairs practitioners interested in using photographs for assessment purposes should have a solid understanding of the origins of visual methods for at least two reasons (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). First, as educators, student affairs professionals have a responsibility for understanding what they are doing and asking questions informed by their choice of methods. In addition to researcher-produced interview and/or survey data, photographs come about by several means including “subject-produced, researcher-created; or preexisting” (Warren & Karner, 2005, p. 171), each adding credibility in distinct ways to the research and assessment process. Second, student affairs practitioners should prepare to engage in discussions with campus constituents about this unconventional method, especially with those whose disciplines and training give primacy to the written word (Eisner, 1991; Mead, 1995). Practitioners interested in using visual methods for assessment purposes are encouraged to become familiar with their uses and the questions raised when visual technologies are at play.

The Basics: Assessment and Research

Student affairs practitioners are likely to interact with a variety of campus constituents, with varying familiarity for conducting social research, so framing an important distinction between socially-based research and assessment is appropriate. To some degree, the differences are arbitrary, but with two distinct purposes requiring different practical and theoretical considerations (Schuh & Upcraft, 2001). In this paper, research as advancement of knowledge and theory is assumed (Kaplan, 1964). Among other characteristics, research can be differentiated from assessment by the researcher’s proximity to the researched (i.e., called epistemology) and data, whether the data is generalizable to the population or transferable to similar contexts (i.e., criteria for rigor), or how social justice plays out in the selection of participants, subjects, or informants (Guido, Chávez, & Lincoln, 2010).

Different from research as theory, assessment is more concerned with examination of practical, often programmatic, matters with a focus on collected data “which describes institutional, divisional, or agency effectiveness” (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996, p. 18). Used often for decision-making purposes, assessment can be a tool for making programmatic improvements, assessing campus climates, or structural changes to specific units (Brown & Gortmaker, 2009). Implicit in these different purposes are the degrees to which politics and organizational decision making guide processes, especially when the structural and budgetary decisions can be informed by assessment data (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000).

Many student affairs practitioners only use surveys or standardized instruments, which adds to the controversy over photography’s legitimacy as a research method. Some institutional leaders only value quantitative data and do not tolerate much that deviates from it for institutional decision making (Keeling et al., 2008). Yet, photographs can enhance campus

assessment efforts and often highlight a problem campus climate (Banning, 1992a; 1992b; 1993; 1996; Banning & Luna, 1992; Greene, 1996) that may be difficult to identify and describe with numbers or words. Ultimately, photographs can be used to enhance interview (i.e., called photo-elicitation) and survey data (Daniels, 2008), or even stand alone to tell a story. Importantly, qualitative researchers in diverse academic disciplines “have explored how visual methods grounded in photographic techniques can be used to enhance inquiry into complex human phenomenon” (Branch, 2003, p. 115). Photography can add to the multifaceted enterprise of assessment when practitioners and scholars use it as a legitimate data source, enriching the meaning of qualitative and quantitative data in multi-method collaborative assessment projects (Banta, 1993; Musil, 1992; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996).

These different purposes (i.e., research and assessment) require different approaches, with certain elements appearing similar. For example, socially-based research usually requires researchers to consider epistemological matters and ground their studies in one or more theoretical frameworks (Guido, Chávez, & Lincoln, 2010). Research frames, in turn, also have implications for methodology and methods, data collection and analysis, and rigor (Brown & Gortmaker, 2009). In short, choice of epistemology affects chosen methodology in research, although to a much lesser degree, if at all, in assessment. The strengths and limitations of the method in turn “act[s] on the ways of thinking about the way we generate valid social knowledge” (Stanczak, 2007, p. 9). As the most concrete aspects of the research process, those unfamiliar with conducting research often focus solely on data collection and analysis, which are both also used in assessment. Student affairs practitioners do not need to have expert knowledge of the research process to conduct assessment; however, unfamiliarity with the difference will make it difficult to answer questions often raised by social researchers.

Ethnographers in anthropology and sociology have long known the value and uses of photography in research (Pink, 2007; Harper, 1988). Until the recent explosion of digital photography, few higher education scholars and student affairs practitioners have taken advantage of this deeply descriptive medium. Credible student affairs researchers identified four purposes for using a camera in evaluation, a relative of assessment, including: “recording data; evoking responses; reporting results; and structuring the evaluation” (Brown, Sanstead, Schlake, & Story, 1982, p. 7). Each of these applications adds colorful dimensions to assessment and research (Brown et al., 1980).

A reliable student affairs source describes assessment as “the formal or informal process of observing and assigning value or worth to an event or an activity” (Keeling et al., 2008, p. 10). Observation is what is seen and yet:

We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are. (Berger, 1972, p. 9)

The process of observation is pivotal in assessing higher education and student affairs and is also paramount in conducting rigorous qualitative research. Thick description, for example, can mean recording the details of a situation or context in order for the reader to be clear about the possibility of transferability of the inquiry context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In higher education research, transferability means the applicability of a study’s findings at other institutions or, in student affairs research, may mean its applicability to other college students. Photography, observation in pictorial form, is just another method of observing and recording phenomena.

The Basics: Some Difficulties to Avoid

The difficulties of conducting meaningful and useful assessment are well documented in the student affairs literature (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000). Often, locally developed instruments are haphazardly constructed and administered, and the questionable data they produce focuses more on what students report rather than their actual behavior (Brown & Gortmaker, 2009; Kuh, 1990). Method selection itself is wrought with controversy around the symbolic and political implications of assessment (Keeling et al., 2008). Discounting the types of knowledge valued by institutional stakeholders might limit assessment success (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000). Finally, to gather, analyze, and report on an assessment project requires time and energy added to an already time-starved student affairs schedule (Keeling et al., 2008).

One especially important area of potential questioning often raised by both researchers and practitioners involves the empirical nature of photographs (Stanczak, 2007). Put simply, the issue involves the degree to which photographs represent a situated reality (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). Ultimately, reading photographs and images is a moving target between subjectivism (i.e., socially constructed image) and realism (i.e., “reality” of image) (Stanczak, 2007). With such ambiguity, interpretations without a clear explanation of content and context will not produce a robust view of an examined phenomenon (Wright, 1999).

All data involving social interaction is interpretive and therefore have different meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rose, 2007). Clearly, social science research and assessment share the notion of multiple meanings revealed in most qualitative inquiry. Yet, researchers begin to address epistemology when they proactively engage the critics of their research in development of an epistemological framework for a study. An epistemological stance is of less importance in assessment, however, as long as the assessor recognizes that photographs reflect some degree of “inventiveness by investigators, not just in making photographs, or putting words on a page, or quantifying variables but also in linking observations of any sort to concepts, theories, or narratives” (Wagner, 2007, p. 34). This is true of most data collected for socially-oriented research purposes. As a research or assessment tool, photography offers another option for understanding culture, climate, content, or context, and complements a wide array of assessment data, which deepens understanding beyond the scope of words and numbers (Pink, 2007).

Photography in Student Affairs and Higher Education Research

A variety of visual methods are vital to creating a deeper understanding of student development and how to use today’s rapidly changing visual technologies to increase learning and development to transform the lives of all students (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Examples of assessment using photographs as a data collection method are limited in student affairs and higher education, but a tradition of such use is documented in the *Campus Ecologist*. Banning (1992a, 1992b, 1993) and other scholars addressing visual methods (e.g., Branch, 2003) and photography in evaluation (e.g., Brown, 1980) are among the early student affairs advocates for the use of photography in research and evaluation.

Photographs and other visual media have been categorized as a way to encompass their varied creators and uses as follows: scientific (i.e., researchers catalogue photographs), narrative (i.e., researcher photographs tell a story), phenomenological (i.e., researcher photographs reveal subjective nature of daily life), and reflexive (i.e., photographs taken and interpreted by study participants) images (Harper, 1988). These options give viable choices for ways in which photography can be integrated into a more comprehensive assessment and/or research plan. Several examples of photography, used primarily, but not exclusively, as photo elicitation, enriched the student affairs and higher education research, and as illustrations to emulate, are described below.

Photography as a Data Collection Tool

A study of community, culture, and leadership at a rural community college in Northern New Mexico used photoethnography, autoethnography, photo-elicitation, observation, and interviewing data collection techniques with students, faculty, and staff in groups and individually. An interconnected relationship between the multicultural roots of the college and the 250 year-old mountain community it serves was identified (Chávez & Guido, 2010; Guido-DiBrito & Chávez, 2006). Using varied and multiple data collection sources created rich descriptive data of an institution in transition, while photography further enriched the words and gave meaning that numbers could not (see Photograph 1). As an illustration of ‘photographer as storyteller’ (see above), this study models the inclusiveness of outsider-researcher photographer and insider-participant photo-elicitation among other techniques to document how culture is manifest in this vibrant, diverse community, and university.

Photograph 1



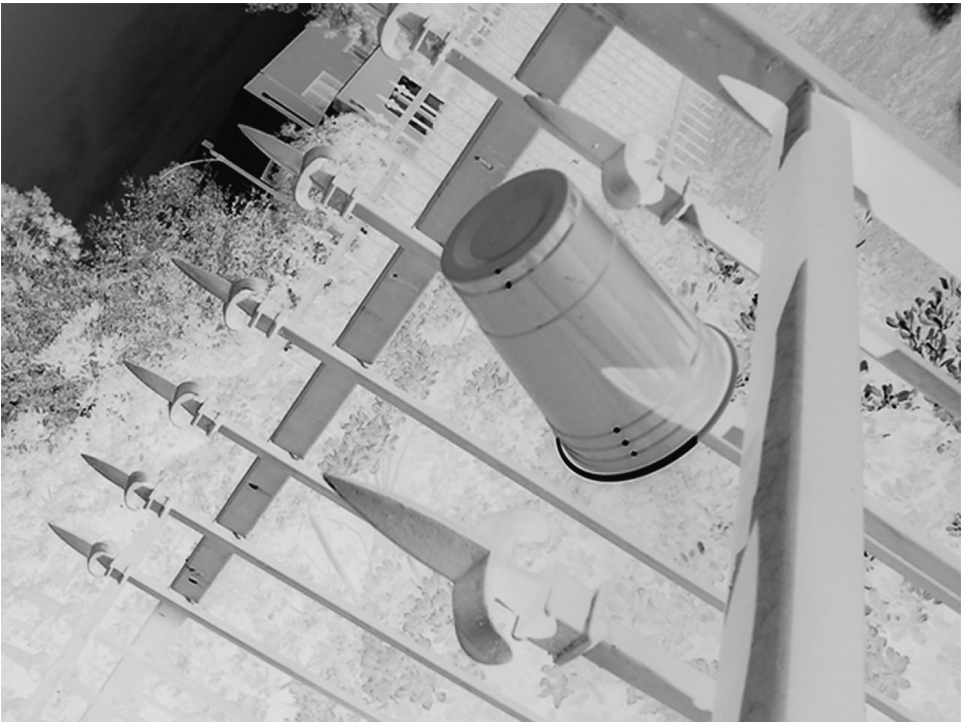
Photograph 1: Photographs can help student affairs practitioners document programmatic successes and the connections between an institution and its unique, local community. This photograph of a ceremony illustrates the rich diversity of students in a graduating class, capturing in an image the efforts of administrators to ensure that the student body is representative of the local community (Chávez & Guido, 2010; Guido-DiBrito & Chávez, 2006). *Photograph taken by:* Florence M. Guido

A study using photo-elicitation techniques provided 10 first year, full-time degree-seeking students with disposable cameras and asked them to take pictures illustrating their impressions of the institution and record their thoughts in a notebook (Harrington & Lindy, 1999). The images the students collected were then used to conduct photo-elicitation interviews to add

richness and contextual meaning to their pictorial images. The study's findings suggest that the participants had five primary perceptions of the institution and students formed these impressions from their daily interactions with peers, faculty, and support staff.

Another researcher employed photographs produced and uploaded by undergraduate students on Facebook to produce a taxonomy of impressions students want their peers to form of them (Birnbaum, 2007). Data from photo-elicitation interviews, content analysis, and participant observation revealed undergraduate students were keenly aware of the impressions their peers might form of them and developed techniques to help ensure the 'right' impressions were produced. For example, the appearance of red plastic cups throughout students' Facebook profiles gives the impression they are *partiers* to their peers (see Photograph 2). Now more than ever, student affairs researchers and practitioners have access to Facebook, the revolutionary social network which is transforming daily life, and a prime forum for future research and assessment data collection.

Photograph 2



Photograph 2: A symbol for alcohol, red plastic cups regularly appear in the photographs of Facebook profiles. Undergraduate students are keenly aware of the cups intended meaning and form specific impressions based on images in which they appear (Birnbaum, 2007). In this photograph, a red plastic cup appears on a fence near a location where undergraduate students are known to drink alcohol regularly. *Photograph taken by:* Matt Birnbaum

Finally, 20 non-traditional international students were provided digital cameras and asked to take photographs exemplifying their impressions of campus and community life in a photo-elicitation study (Birnbaum, Cardona, Gonzalez, & Millian, 2010). These images helped

participants introduce and explain significant experiences during their U.S. visit at their interviews. While participant's photographs largely captured social interaction and passages of time, the images were powerful assistants for clear, meaningful descriptions of possible future program improvements. Thus, some parallels between evaluation and assessment appear evident.

Implications of Photography in Student Affairs Assessment

Several implications for photography in student affairs assessment and some ethical considerations are discussed to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of this unorthodox method for those who wish to implement it. First, assessment stakeholders with high capacity to learn from the visual are likely to find it easier to interpret photography than other types of data sources (Gardner, 2006). Images may help learners with a preference for the visual find increased encouragement to conduct assessment as well as read a photograph for meaning. Second, consumers of assessment reports may likely read them with more intent, and judge the effectiveness of the unit, program, or division more favorably if photographs are included. For example, if visual images of successes of a unit can be center stage in an assessment report, more external resources might be forthcoming. In this regard, photographs included in a Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership (HESAL) Ph.D. program review report brought attention to the successes of the HESAL graduate students (See Photograph 3).

Photograph 3



Photograph 3: Demonstrating students' ability to apply classroom-acquired knowledge to practical settings was required for an academic program review. The program augmented its text-based report with visual images like Photograph 3, in which graduate students present a hypothetical enrollment management plan to the university's Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management. *Photograph taken by:* Matt Birnbaum

Among other college administrators, the Dean remarked that these photographs clearly demonstrated HESAL student outcomes by showing images of graduate students presenting

their research and said he was considering making it mandatory for every academic department in the college. Third, photographs can enhance interview data through a photo-elicitation process or used as a way to categorize artifacts in the research process (Daniels, 2008). Thus, as an assessment and research tool, photography can enhance data and speak to the context and content of an activity, event, or program or division in student affairs and higher education.

Some Ethical Considerations

Like all qualitative inquiry, using photographs or images as a research method carries ethical challenges (Prosser, 1998). Local photographic conventions and personal meanings influence “both economic and exchange values that photographs might have in any given research context” (Pink, 2007, p. 41). Ultimately, attention to the needs of the photographed is paramount for those conducting assessment and research. In fact, some would argue that the primary ethical imperative of the photographer in educational research, after gaining the trust of participants/informants/subjects, is the protection of their rights and anonymity (Daniels, 2008).

Researcher-produced photographs require these inquirers to pay special attention to those who can be identified in an image and respect their privacy and anonymity, and obtain their consent (Daniels, 2008; Liamputtong, 2007). Permission of those photographed should always be obtained, although exceptions may exist for images taken at public events. Unlike photojournalists, research photographers have an ethical responsibility to keep their participants safe and to ask their permission in writing for the photograph to be incorporated into disseminated research. While photographs taken for assessment purposes may not have the same constraints, as they are not normally disseminated beyond a single campus, it is the practitioner’s responsibility to consider these issues. Every college and university in the U.S. that conducts any form of research must have a Human Subjects Review Board oversee their research plans including the purpose of the research and how the data collected will be disseminated (e.g., national conferences, nationally-juried research articles, included in a dissertation, and so on) in order to protect research participants. Consultation with an institution’s Review Board prior to the start of data collection for assessment purposes may be warranted.

Participant-produced reflexive images offer powerful representational meaning and a host of ethical challenges in assessment and research (Branch, 2003). Obtaining permission from those captured in participant-produced photographs to use their image in publications and presentations can sometimes be difficult. In order to secure permission, ethical photographers offer consent forms to participants to sign before the camera clicks (Brown et al., 1980). If the researcher does not seek permission at the time the photograph is taken, those producing reflexive images containing identifiable people must painfully find and seek permission after the fact. Another ethical issue related to images is the ability for photographers to easily alter their digital work (Branch, 2003). Assessment and research photographers must divulge any modifications made to the original photograph and why these alterations were made to the image. As the technology to manipulate images becomes more sophisticated and widely available, researchers have a special responsibility to police themselves in order to sustain credibility in the research process.

Concluding Thoughts

Using the metaphor of an artist as the role of the evaluator, Brown (1980) estimates that “the communication value of a painting is potentially greater than a 50 page report, replete with tables and statistical tests” (p. 5). Though a painting and a photograph do not depict the same kind of image, both can give a visual representation of phenomenon under study in social

research. As such, using photography in assessment in various types of higher education and student affairs contexts such as integrating visual images throughout a written annual program review, identifying student needs for program improvements, or supplementing a university self-study gives a more thorough and deeper look at the phenomenon under a microscope.

The pressures placed on student affairs units to assess their centrality to institutional missions and effectiveness is likely to further increase into the foreseeable future (Seagraves & Dean, 2010). At institutions whose senior leaders are open to assessment practices that offer insight into the experiences of students and campus cultures, the incorporation of visual methods may offer *high-reward data* (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000, p. 21). The increase of digital technology in the coming decades is hard to imagine and is likely to make photography as an assessment tool more commonplace. Visual images in many forms will help inform and improve student affairs and higher education organizational practice, as well as learning and development opportunities and services offered to students. The time has come to integrate this method into mainstream data collection and use this versatile tool for better understanding complex social phenomena.

Florence M. Guido is Professor and Program Coordinator of Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership at the University of Northern Colorado. Her past professional positions include: hall director at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, director of career planning and placement at St. Francis and Manchester Colleges in Indiana, and Dean of Students at Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. She is co-author of Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice, 2nd ed. and also contributed the magnolia photograph on the book cover. In addition to including a chapter on becoming an Italian American Feminist, Guido's most recent cover photograph graces the book Empowering Women in Higher Education and Student Affairs: Theory, Research, Narratives, and Practice from Feminist Perspectives. In May 2011, she is honored with an invitation to serve as an artist (i.e., photographer) in residence at the Luxembourg conference, Transatlantic Dialogue: Living Culture in the University – Developing Citizens of the World. Her photographs have appeared at exhibits in Taos, New Mexico, and Loveland, Colorado and in magazines such as Terrain.Org: A Journal of Natural and Built Environments (www.terrain.org/articles/19/guido-dibrito_chavez.htm) and Stimulus Respond: Creative Urban Culture (www.stimulusrespond.com/index.html). Her research interests are many and varied including college students and social class, paradigms in student affairs research and practice, and how social identity manifests itself in leadership and teaching. In her spare time, Guido takes her camera abroad to record eye candy, or photographs Sophia, her yellow lab, in Taos, NM.



Matt Birnbaum is Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership at the University of Northern Colorado. After earning his B.A. from Colorado College in 1989, Matt worked with incarcerated teenagers for three years at an outdoor program in the Southern Arizona desert. He earned his M.A. (2003) and Ph.D. (2009) from the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Arizona. Between these years, Matt served as a counselor at Rock Valley College, director of Colorado College's Career Center, and president of the Rocky Mountain Association of Colleges and Employers. Matt's dissertation topic examined



the self-presentation techniques undergraduate students employ on their Facebook profiles to ensure peers form particular impressions of them. It was while collecting and analyzing thousands of photographs from Facebook profiles that he began considering the potential uses of photographs for assessment purposes. Matt is currently an inaugural member of UNC's Faculty-in-Residence program and in 2010 co-led a trip to Kenya with a group of student affairs graduate students. His current research interests include the legality of male-benefiting admissions policies, Colorado's changing policies on carrying concealed weapons on campus, the affects of party-school rankings on admissions characteristics.

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Wired: Embracing Social Media on Campus

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Abstract

Today's neo-millennial college student is truly wired for success. With an increase in the use of social media by college students, there is a trend among administrators, faculty, and staff in higher education to adopt and integrate social media into recruitment and retention efforts. Before arriving on campus, students are connecting with universities across the country and creating relationships with current students and admissions staff. Additionally, the use of social media is transforming the educational curriculum both inside the traditional classroom and through distance education programs. Through the power of blogging, social media sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and live chat portals, students, faculty, and college administrators worldwide are discovering the power of social media outlets. This article examines the use of social media as a recruitment and retention tool at universities. Additionally, the use of social media in both academic and student affairs areas is reviewed. At the conclusion of the article, considerations for future use of social media in higher education are discussed.

Keywords: Facebook, recruitment, retention, social media, social networking

In the last decade, higher education administrators have recognized the growth in the use of social media among college students. In response to this growing trend, several new initiatives are in place at colleges across the country in an effort to better serve students. In an article detailing campus community recruitment efforts at Mars Hill College (MHC) in North Carolina, recruiters are using the convenience of social networking tools to share important messages and announcements to communities of students within minutes (Linh, 2007). Through the MHC You Tube page, the school markets events, publishes news releases, and uploads videos about campus activities (Linh, 2007). Similarly, building unique, self-maintained personal social networking sites is something MHC administrators are pursuing (Linh, 2007). Last year, administrators created tvMHC, an online tool streaming homemade student videos featuring details of student life (Linh, 2007). Many higher education institutions like MHC are embracing neo-millennial students' communication preferences. The neo-millennial student is able to use technology in multiple forms to master concepts, surpassing the learning abilities of millennial students through the use of multiple mediums, communal learning, and experiential learning concepts (Dede, 2005). As a result, administrators are creating and engaging in online, interactive outreach solutions to recruit, retain, and engage today's college students.

This article examines initiatives for recruitment and retention of students through the use of social media tools. A review of recruitment methods used by both admissions staff and prospective students is discussed, followed by an exploration of retention methods used inside and outside of the classroom. Finally, the article suggests implications of the use of social media tools among student affairs practitioners and recommends future considerations for the use of social media by college administrators.

Literature Review

Currently, students have expanded communication vehicles to include a wide range of online tools including blogs, social networking sites, and audio and video podcasts (Gray, Thompson, Sheard, Clerehan, & Hamilton, 2010). Social media, in particular, has increased in use, with over three million Facebook users between the ages of 25 and 34 (Wandel, 2008). One suggested reason for the increase in social media among college students is the ability to connect and remain connected with people “from college recruitment to student retention to graduation” (Wandel, 2008, p. 36). Wandel’s statement reiterates the importance of a student’s ability to feel connected to his or her institution. For a prospective or newly-admitted student, the ability to connect before the first day of class is valuable. Once on campus, the connections created assist with relationship building, something that college students greatly value (Wandel, 2008). To continue the positive effects of social media, campus administrators are implementing social media efforts. Admissions counselors at State University of New York at New Paltz created an online active forum to host questions from prospective students (Lipka, 2009). Similarly, Texas A&M University uses Facebook as a message board for student comments, and Lewis & Clark College uses social media as a publicity tool for student information (Lipka, 2009). The use of social media varies, but recruitment and retention of students are two strong themes associated with it. The next sections of this article investigate these two themes in further detail.

Social Media as a Recruitment Tool

Student use of social media in college searches is increasing in popularity. Social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn are new trends among prospective students because they are tools used to showcase accomplishments to college recruiters (Wood, 2008). Some colleges leverage Facebook to create invite-only lists for prospective students as a way to discuss campus life and connect with current students, instilling a sense of community among prospective students (Wood, 2008). Newly admitted students use Facebook to decrease feelings of anxiety toward future roommates (Millar, 2007) by researching them prior to move-in. Additionally, sites such as You Tube allow students to virtually tour universities without setting foot on campus.

Universities use online networking tools to keep constant contact with prospective students and recruit those interested in attending specific institutions. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system uses RightNow Technologies, a web-based system used to interface with students before submitting applications (Linh, 2007). Through the online tool, a student enters questions in a chat window or through e-mail and an instant response is sent to the student from an administrator (Linh, 2007). Because the tool only has been instituted in the last few years, enrollment data has yet to be collected (Linh, 2007). However, top administrators at Minnesota universities report student reactions to be positive (Linh, 2007).

More and more students prefer networking sites as communication portals with admissions offices. *Campus Technology* discussed a study conducted by the National Research Center for College and University Admissions (Linh, 2007). Out of 1,000 high school juniors surveyed, 72% prefer to interact with admissions departments through instant messaging (Linh, 2007). In a recent survey conducted by the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research, 61% of the 453 college admissions representatives surveyed used at least one form of social media (Wood, 2008). Social media has demonstrated that it is a popular tool for outreach to prospective students, and has also proven valuable as a retention tool once a student is enrolled at a university.

Social Media as a Retention Tool

From an academic affairs perspective, social media remains a valuable tool among academic departments as a contributor to student retention efforts. Research reveals the use of social media in a classroom and within departments of Student Affairs as a strong contributor to student retention (Baird & Fisher, 2006). Specifically, social media use in curricula and with distance learning are two examples of social media contributing to the retention of students.

Social Media in Curricula

Social networking media is used in curricula to support learning styles, assist in the creation of learning communities, and support student engagement and reflection (Baird & Fisher, 2006). As a result, social media is quickly becoming a catalyst for student learning in the classroom by fostering student involvement through the use of online communication tools such as web forums (Robbins-Bell, 2008). In a study completed at Pepperdine University, students were placed into learning communities and used social media technologies and online dialogue tools (Fisher & Baird, 2005). The results revealed a significant sense of community experienced by the participants (Fisher & Baird, 2005).

Beyond the classroom, some faculty members believe social networking provides ways for students to build a network of shared work, resulting in the distribution of class assignments through an online medium (Violino, 2009). In the same way, the use of social media has also had a significant influence on distance learning (Fisher & Baird, 2005).

Social Media in Distance Learning

Support of social media and online learning tools in distance learning courses is also evident. According to Fisher and Baird (2005), courses built online can contribute to a learning environment by providing students “the freedom to construct new knowledge, while at the same time providing them the support needed to succeed” (p. 93). Motivation is also a factor for the success of online learning tools in class curricula. For example, students participating in online courses are able to quickly apply new information to a workplace, whereas in the traditional classroom there are limited opportunities for applications of new skills and information (Fisher & Baird, 2005). Thus, relating learned materials to practical application positively impacts and sustains students’ participation in a course.

Social media tools encourage group interaction between distance learning students through collaboration of students using social media. In support, Fisher and Baird (2005) state, “students utilize social technologies to share their thought processes with their peers and are able to help each other work through cognitive roadblocks, while also building a collaborative peer support system” (p. 98). While evidence of the positive impact of social media is seen within academic affairs, social media is evolving equally within student affairs.

Implications for Social Media in Student Affairs

In an effort to create stronger relationships with students, campus personnel in student affairs are investigating social media tools. More specifically, they are investigating the ways in which social media can improve campus services (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007). These services include enrollment, advising, student involvement, and personal development offices such as wellness and recreation departments (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007). Increased communication between students and college personnel contributes to the strength of relationships between both parties.

Social Media to Foster Communication

Increasingly, social media technologies are being created specifically for the purpose of fostering communication between students and personnel (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007). For example, a study at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2007 identified a student desire for campus personnel to provide anonymous e-chats with counselors and pop-up safety alerts for campus crises (2007), two possible future university initiatives (2007) (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007). Similarly, students noted additional areas where social media can be utilized to improve communication. Examples include implementing blogs with the Dean of Students as a means of providing information to students, sending an e-mail or “poking” students with approaching deadlines from Housing and Dining Services, and generating electronic pop-ups from Information Technology offices on social media sites about privacy alerts (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007).

Social Media in Student Life Departments

Departments concerned with students’ personal development can play a significant role in the success of college students. Thus, providing students with resources they need to succeed, such as social media technologies, is becoming increasingly important (Berg, Berquam, & Christoph, 2007). Once students are enrolled at a university, it becomes vital to provide constant streams of information (Wandel, 2008). One tactic utilized by residence life staff is to create profiles of groups to encourage attendance at hall events (Wandel, 2008). Similarly, Greek life uses groups on social media sites to promote recruitment events (Wandel, 2008).

According to Wandel (2008), more than 83% of 1,000 administrators surveyed in a recent study said they use social networking sites to communicate organizational or programming events to students, specifically with regard to student organizations (p. 39). Additionally, over half of the 1,000 respondents reported using social networking tools to “monitor student activities, trends, and interests” (Wandel, 2008, p. 39). Colorado State University is an institution currently using Facebook to promote career matters (Wandel, 2008). Wandel stated:

Online social networking sites may become one of the most effective ways to engage today’s student and to strengthen their bonds to the university in a way that improves enrollment, increases retention, and establishing the foundation for strong and committed alumni relations. (2008, p. 45)

With the burgeoning trend of social networking sites on college campuses, it is equally important to consider the future of social networking use by college administrators.

Recommendations for the Future of Social Media

As research suggests, the use of social media in higher education is beneficial to student success in several ways (Santovec, 2006). In particular, two contributing themes, connection to students and academic engagement of students, are beneficial results of social media use (Santovec, 2006). Mansfield University in Pennsylvania is one university using social media to engage and connect to students (Santovec, 2006). In the spring of 2006, Mansfield created a Facebook page on which university officials could list bulleted announcements about activities on campus for students (Santovec, 2006). The communication method is fast and can reach numerous students at one time.

Strategic Planning, Target Marketing, and Continued Training

Though some universities have already started using social media tools as recruitment and retention tools, it is important to continue to strengthen these practices on individual campuses throughout the country. Strategic planning for the implementation of social

networking sites is crucial. Santovec (2006) suggested creating a comprehensive e-recruiting campaign to develop outreach initiatives through social media tools.

In an article published in *Brandweek*, author Paul Gunning (2009) suggests four phases of social media strategy that include listening to an audience, understanding the audience, participating actively in social media, and using qualitative and quantitative methods of assessment to evaluate social media efforts. Gunning (2009) offers these four strategic approaches as a way to contribute to a long, impactful relationship with a desired audience.

An additional strategy for continued use of social media is to target special-interest groups at universities (Santovec, 2006). Groups such as athletes, parents, alumni, and first-year students can benefit from information geared directly to them. An emphasis on personalized, direct communication can set an institution apart from others when a student is searching for the right college. Social networks allow for this type of targeted information and can contribute to enrollment and recruitment of students (Santovec, 2006). Fritz McDonald (2009) describes the powerful relationship-building capabilities of social media, specifically when targeting groups such as prospective/current students and parents, prospective/current faculty, prospective/current donors and alumni, and friends of the university such as community business leaders. When used effectively, social media tools can transform relationships with these groups of people (McDonald, 2009). For example, effective social media tools can expand contact for admissions offices, track prospective students along a recruitment continuum, bring alumni to campus and integrate them into recruitment and fundraising initiatives, and expand donor pools for annual funding (McDonald, 2009). As McDonald (2009) states, “Successful social networks are built by people, not the latest gadget” (p. 2).

Once an audience is identified and understood, it is imperative to discover how the audience is using social media. Maddock and Vitn (2009) surveyed a sample population from a company interested in implementing social media in communication efforts. The survey results revealed a variety of purposes for the different social media sites (Maddock & Vitn, 2009). This information gave researchers a better understanding of how to strategically align social media tools to reach the desired audience (Maddock & Vitn, 2009).

Another strategy to ensure integration of social media is to offer trainings and workshops for academic faculty or student affairs staff members (Santovec, 2006). Training administrators and faculty to be familiar with these types of tools encourages the use of social media inside and outside of the classroom. Santovec (2006) says these discussions should happen continuously to promote current information about trends.

In an article about social media training efforts, Daniel Bixby (2010) suggests training should also extend to young professionals and students. Bixby (2010) suggests allowing students to construct knowledge in groups rather than dictating as an instructor. This method may appeal to young professionals and students attending trainings with prior knowledge and experience with social media tools (Bixby, 2010). Additionally, Bixby (2010) discusses the importance of explaining the benefits of training not only to the group, but also to individual participants. Structuring the training to the type of learner also can assure higher attendance numbers (Bixby, 2010).

Conclusion

Today’s higher education faculty and staff cannot afford to dismiss the ever-evolving social media trend. A review of the current literature suggests the importance of social media tools as valuable instruments in the academic and social success of today’s college students. The use of social media in the recruitment and retention of students is an effective and innovative

approach to reaching a large population of students. More specifically, as faculty and staff embrace social media on campuses nation-wide, innovative approaches to connecting with and engaging prospective and current students will continue to emerge. Social media has the ability to communicate quickly in a society valuing immediacy. It also has the capacity to create social groups and communities, which benefits both student affairs and academic affairs and will continue to play a large role in the future of higher education.

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Predicting Academic Probation: Exploring Freshmen Identified as Deficient upon University Acceptance

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Abstract

This study explores predictors of academic probation for college freshmen using binary logistic regression, with specific attention to students who are identified as academically deficient upon acceptance into a university. Binary logistic regression is a generalized linear model used to calculate the likelihood/odds of a dichotomous dependent variable from a set of independent variables. Data were drawn from the fall 2009 cohort of freshmen from a public university in Southern Colorado. This study found that students who are identified as academically deficient are significantly more likely to be placed on academic probation their second semester of college. It is clear that pre-emptive curricula that target the improvement of core academic competencies and non-cognitive skills need greater attention before students receive a permanent scar on their academic record or experience the frustration and embarrassment of academic probation. Providing multiple pathways for students to become academically engaged is important for academic success, but providing students with opportunities to improve their academic abilities is also an important element in reducing academic probation rates.

Keywords: academic probation, college freshmen, deficient students

This study explores predictors of academic probation for freshmen using binary logistic regression, with specific attention to students who are identified as academically deficient upon university acceptance. The academic performance of college freshmen has long been a concern for colleges and universities, and various studies have sought to explore potential predictors of probationary status for this population of students (Braxton, Duster, & Pascarella, 1988; Ishitani, 2003, 2006; Ishitani & DesJardins, 2002; Moore, 2005; Stage, 1988; Warburton, Burgarin, & Nuñez, 2001; Zwick & Sklar, 2005). Predicting academic probation is a growing concern because of the increasingly flexible and fluctuating admissions criteria for university admissions and lack of student preparedness (Balduf, 2009).

The academic skills and achievement attitudes students bring to college influence their academic success, persistence, and attainment in higher education. Allen (2009) suggested that a student's capacity to enter and thrive in college depends largely on four factors: content knowledge and basic skills; core academic skills; non-cognitive skills, including time management; and knowledge of the college selection and application processes. Past performance variables such as the quality and rigor of a high school curriculum, high school grade point average (GPA), class rank, and ACT/SAT scores yielded a fairly consistent relationship with academic success, as measured by persistence and graduation. Each of these cognitive variables was considered in conjunction with non-cognitive background variables, such as gender and socioeconomic background (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Ishitani, 2006; Warburton et al., 2001; Zwick & Sklar, 2005). Researchers are finding all too often that students are unlikely to be academically equipped for college, partly due to a lack of appropriate

high school coursework which decreases students' probability of academic success their first semester of college (Braxton et al., 1988; Pascarella, Wolniak, Pierson, & Terenzini, 2003).

Tinto's (1993) Model of Student Persistence emphasizes both academic and social cultural integration as the most important factor in college retention. This integration is indicative of persistence. Students who do not assimilate into the classroom and institutional culture are more apt to struggle academically and/or leave the institution (Astin, 1999; Chaney, Muraskin, Cahalan, & Goodwin, 1998; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1988, 1993, 1997). As students transition from high school to college, they must learn new customs and behaviors, and when they cannot accomplish this, they are more likely to stop-out or drop-out. Higher education institutions have the ability to aid in student retention by providing transitional programs, such as mentoring programs, freshmen seminars, and learning communities, and by actively incorporating students into college life through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (Astin, 1999; Baker & Pomerantz, 2000; Balduf, 2009; Campbell & Campbell, 2007).

Method

Research Site

This study was conducted at a public university in Southern Colorado. The university is considered a mixed residential-commuter campus and is one of the fastest growing institutions in the country. The student body includes nearly 20% students of color and an almost equal female-to-male student ratio. Additionally, 30% of students are eligible for Federal Pell Grants.

Data Source and Sample

In 2010, the research site's Institutional Review Board granted approval for the investigators to pursue this study, and data were gathered from the university's Institutional Research Office. Data for this study were drawn from the fall 2009 cohort of all freshmen (N = 1097). Valid course enrollment numbers and variables of interest data were available for 73% of these students (N = 801).

Outcome Variable: Academic Probation

The outcome variable was a given student's placement on academic probation the second semester of college by his or her respective academic college (N = 126; 15.7% of the sample).

Explanatory Variable: Deficient at Acceptance to the University

The primary explanatory variable of interest is the identification of a student as deficient upon acceptance to the University (N = 201; 25.1% of the sample). The University considers students deficient if they do not meet minimum academic preparation standards from high school, which include four years of English, three years of college preparatory mathematics, three years of natural science, two years of the same foreign language, and at least one year of additional academic elective credit. Additionally, students must meet the admission criteria set by each academic college. Generally, a student must rank in the top 40% of his or her graduating class and must achieve an ACT composite score of 24 or an SAT combined score of 1080. Admittance into the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences requires a student to rank in the top 30% of his or her class and achieve an ACT composite score of 25 or an SAT combined score of 1120.

Other Independent Variables

A number of other independent variables previously found to be predictors of academic probation were also included in this study. These variables included gender, ethnicity, age, completion of fewer credits than attempted, residential status, major declared, University index score (calculated by the institution using a formula which employs high school percentile rank

and GPA with ACT/SAT score), low income status (as measured by Pell-eligibility), freshmen seminar course grade, and county of origin (Baker & Pomerantz, 2000; Balduf, 2009; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Ishitani, 2003, 2006; Ishitani & DesJardins, 2002; Moore, 2005; Stage, 1988; Warburton et al., 2001; Zwick & Sklar, 2005). Gender, ethnicity, completion of fewer credits than attempted, residential status, major declared, low income status, and county of origin are treated as dichotomous variables. Age and University index scores are treated as continuous variables. Lastly, a student's freshmen seminar grade is treated as a categorical variable. Refer to Table 1 for descriptive statistics of each variable.

Statistical Analysis

The current study utilizes binary logistic regression to understand how admitting students identified as deficient affected the likelihood of being placed on academic probation. Binary logistic regression is a particular example of a generalized linear model; it allows one to calculate the likelihood/odds of a dichotomous dependent variable using the most parsimonious model (Menard, 2001). In this case, "placed on academic probation" versus "not placed on academic probation" were formulated from a set of independent variables that do not have to be normally distributed, linearly related, or of equal variance. The dependent variable is expressed as the log of $p/(1-p)$ (the logit), and a weighted least squares procedure was used to correct for heteroscedasticity (Menard, 2001).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Study Variables

Academic probation	15.7%
Identified as deficient	25.1%
Gender (female)	47.6%
Ethnicity (white)	75.2%
Completed fewer credits than attempted	29.8%
Residential status (on campus)	41.9%
Major declared	79.5%
Low income status	31.1%
County of origin (same as University)	49.9%
Age	Mean = 19 (range = 17-37)
University index score	Mean = 108 (range = 78-142)
Freshmen seminar grade earned	A = 64.6% B = 21.2% C = 8.6% D = 2.7% F = 2.9%

Results

Binary logistic regression was utilized to understand the factors that increased the likelihood of academic probation. The full model was statistically different from the null model, $\chi^2(11) = 252.994$, $p < .001$, indicating that the presence of the predictor variables had some impact on whether students were placed on academic probation. The -2 likelihood was 238.301 with a pseudo Cox and Snell R^2 value of .347 and a pseudo Nagelkerke R^2 value of .616. Additionally, 91.8% of the cases were classified correctly for academic probation by this model, which is a strong classification rate. Refer to Table 2 for the logistic regression model.

Table 2

Logistic Regression for Model for Predicting Academic Probation

Independent variables	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	Exp(B)
Identified as deficient	.779	.383	4.143	.042*	2.180
Gender	-.026	.344	.006	.940	.974
Ethnicity	.236	.371	.403	.525	1.266
Age	-.148	.145	1.038	.308	.863
Completed fewer credits than attempted	2.312	.357	41.955	.000**	10.096
Residential student	-1.411	.350	16.230	.000**	.244
Major declared	-.119	.437	.074	.785	.888
University index score	-.068	.016	18.919	.000**	.934
Low income	.070	.374	.035	.852	1.072
Freshmen seminar grade	.253	.207	1.494	.222	1.288
County of origin	-4.674	1.041	21.173	.000**	.009
Constant	9.636	3.816	6.377	.012	15307.251

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

The explanatory variable of interest—academically deficient upon university acceptance—was statistically significant and did have an appreciable influence on the prediction of academic probation ($B = .779$, $S.E. = .383$, $\chi^2(1) = 4.143$, $p = .042$, $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.180$). The odds ratio for this variable indicated that students who were identified as deficient were over two times more likely to be placed on academic probation than those who were not identified as deficient. Other significant variables in the model included the following: completing fewer credits than attempted ($B = 2.312$, $S.E. = .357$, $\chi^2(1) = 41.955$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = 10.096$), residential student ($B = -1.411$, $S.E. = .350$, $\chi^2(1) = 16.230$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = .244$), University index score ($B = -.068$, $S.E. = .016$, $\chi^2(1) = 18.919$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = .934$), and county of origin ($B = -4.674$, $S.E. = 1.041$, $\chi^2(1) = 20.173$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = .009$). Thus, students who completed fewer credits than attempted their first semester were 10 times more likely to be on academic probation their second semester of college. Students who resided on campus,

achieved higher University index scores, and were from the county in which the institution was located were significantly less likely to be on academic probation.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study found that freshmen who are identified as academically deficient upon university acceptance are significantly more likely to be placed on academic probation their second semester of college than those not identified as academically deficient. Presently, the University does not track or follow students who are identified as academically deficient, but utilizes an early alert program and a freshmen seminar program to provide early identification of freshmen students who are experiencing academic difficulties. The Early Alert program requests professors to assist in identifying students exhibiting at-risk behaviors, such as failing tests and frequent absenteeism, so students can be directed to appropriate resources. Also, all students are encouraged to enroll in a freshman seminar class, which offers depth in a topic of their choosing but may not necessarily include academic coaching. Both of these programs rely heavily on faculty members to recognize students displaying at-risk behaviors and to be proactive in providing academic skill building in courses. This provides an opportunity for student affairs practitioners to educate faculty about the college transitional needs of students and about providing fidelity in designing their courses to improve the successful academic performance of their students. Utilizing Tinto's (1993) Model of Student Persistence, student affairs practitioners can engage faculty members about the personal and educational needs of college freshmen and students' desires to be incorporated into the social and academic communities of the institution.

The other significant variable that increased the likelihood for academic probation was completing fewer credits than attempted during the first semester. Thus, students who dropped courses their first semester were significantly less likely to achieve minimum successful GPAs. This factor may be connected to effective first-year advising, as students who completed their first semester successfully were more likely to have enrolled in appropriate courses.

As noted by Ender and Wilkie (2000), students who struggle academically often display low academic self-concept and uncertainty in the college major decision, which makes academic advising difficult. Students who display these characteristics require a more hands-on, individualized approach to advising, and attention to students' self-confidence so they feel that they are a part of and matter in the decision-making process on course selection.

There were also several independent variables that decreased the likelihood for academic probation. Students who resided on campus were significantly less likely than their peers who lived off campus to be on academic probation. This finding is consistent with previous research on the topic; students who reside on campus have more opportunities to be involved in college life, and, thus, display greater academic achievement (Astin, 1999; Tinto, 1997). Also, students who are academically prepared for admission into four-year institutions, as measured by the University index score, are more likely to achieve academically their first semester of college, as other studies have concluded (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Ishtanti, 2006; Warburton et al., 2001; Zwick & Sklar, 2005). Lastly, students who are from the county in which the University is located were also more likely to be academically successful than students who were from outside the county. Perhaps the familiarity and connections in the community contribute to this factor; yet, more research is needed in this area.

As Tinto (1993, 1997) has suggested, it is within the university environment where student affairs administrators and faculty members may affect change in promoting student success and retention, particularly with college freshmen. It is clear that pre-emptive curricula that

target the improvement of core academic competencies and non-cognitive skills need greater attention before students receive permanent scars on their academic record or experience the frustration and embarrassment of academic probation. Purposeful development of academic support programs and courses would benefit not only students who are identified as deficient but other students as well. Providing multiple pathways for students to become academically engaged is important for academic success, but providing students with opportunities to improve their academic abilities is also an important element in reducing academic probation rates across colleges and universities.

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Borderline Personality Disorder and Higher Education

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Abstract

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) constitutes a significant barrier to success in college for students struggling with it. This article provides an overview of BPD, its causes, and developments in treatment. It then describes the symptoms of BPD in parallel with barriers BPD can create in student development, with a particular focus on Chickering's theory of identity development. The article then discusses ramifications of BPD that are unique to a university setting. Finally, the article explores applications for student affairs professionals in responding to BPD on campus.

Keywords: borderline personality disorder, college students, student development

Although many young adults grapple with issues of personal identity, moodiness, relationship insecurities, and impulse control, these issues can be crippling for people suffering from borderline personality disorder (BPD) (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). BPD is the most common personality disorder found in clinical studies and is also extremely difficult to live with (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). As “borderline behavior” is often observed for the first time in young adulthood (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004), this severe mental health issue can have a significant impact on college campuses. This article explores common signs and symptoms of BPD, current research surrounding causes of BPD, and effective treatment options. In addition, it explores the relationship BPD has with Arthur Chickering’s theory of identity development as it pertains to college students. Finally, the article explores possible ramifications of BPD for higher education institutions.

Overview and Causes of BPD

According to Kreisman and Strauss (2004), the word *borderline* in BPD refers not to the degree of disorder, but to the historical belief that it lies on the border between psychotic and neurotic. While this is no longer the way BPD is understood, it provides perspective on both the name of the disorder, and beliefs about the severity of the disorder. BPD is believed to affect around 2% of the population (Cartwright, 2008). It is more prevalent in women than in men, with up to 70% of clinical BPD cases occurring in women (Cartwright, 2008; Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) defines BPD as “a pervasive pattern of instability in self-image, relationships, affects and impulsivity beginning in early adulthood” (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). For a diagnosis, a person must display five of the nine following criteria: fears of abandonment, unstable interpersonal relationships, trouble establishing a stable sense of self, destructive impulsivity, suicidal behaviors and self-mutilation, mood instability, emptiness, paranoia and dissociation, and overreactive anger (Cartwright, 2008; Kreisman & Strauss, 2004).

One often cited factor linked to the development of BPD is childhood trauma, especially child sexual abuse (Cartwright, 2008; Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). In fact, one study showed that 90% of the participants with BPD reported some sort of childhood abuse (Cartwright, 2008). However, Cartwright (2008) suggests that trauma is not in itself a cause of BPD, but a trigger

inducing BPD in already vulnerable populations. Still others (Paris, 2005) have suggested that this is merely a coincidental, insignificant correlation. Studies have also suggested that both over-involved parents and parental abandonment can contribute to the development of BPD (Cartwright, 2008). However, Cartwright (2008) argues these environmental factors, cited as causes of BPD, may not be as significant as less controllable factors such as genetics and neurochemistry. Clearly, a great deal of research remains to illuminate and clarify the true causes of BPD.

Although there are no known genetic markers specific to BPD, Cartwright (2008) and Kreissman and Strauss (2004) assert that a genetic predisposition for BPD can be directly inherited from family members. Cartwright (2008) bases his assertion on family studies showing strong links specific to BPD and personality traits such as instability, impulsivity, and aggression. Paris (2005) further explains in addition to a close genetic link to these traits, family members of those with BPD show signs of impulsivity and substance abuse at a rate possibly significantly linked to BPD. Additionally, recent research suggests neuro-chemical causes for BPD behavior and has shown some response to medication (Cartwright, 2008). As understanding of BPD develops, so does our ability to develop effective treatment, although there is still significant room for improvement of understanding and treatment.

Treatment for BPD

Resources for BPD discuss the difficult and long process treatment may take (Kreissman & Strauss, 2004; Shick Tryon, DeVito, Halligan, Kane, & Shea, 1988; Wastell, 1993). However, recent research indicates prognoses for patients with BPD may be more hopeful than previously believed (Cartwright, 2008; Kreissman & Strauss, 2004). A combination of psychotherapy and symptom-focused medication can be effective (Kreissman & Strauss, 2004). In fact, many people are able to make a full recovery or improve significantly, often within a period of five to six years (Cartwright, 2008; Kreissman & Strauss, 2004). However, BPD continues to be a very dangerous condition; Kreissman and Strauss (2004) contend that 8 to 10 percent of people with BPD actually commit suicide. For this reason alone, BPD is an important mental health issue of which student affairs professionals must be aware and knowledgeable.

One barrier to effective treatment is the difficulty of diagnosis. There are thousands of combinations of criteria that can result in a diagnosis of BPD, it can easily be mistaken for other disorders, and co-morbidity with other disorders can confuse diagnoses and makes misdiagnoses common (Cartwright, 2008; Kreissman & Strauss, 2004). BPD is found in combination with mood disorders, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and substance abuse (Cartwright, 2008). As a result, it can be difficult for practitioners to identify symptoms and determine if BPD is a factor. This is coupled with a professional stigma in which people with BPD are often considered among the most difficult and demanding patients (Kreissman & Strauss, 2004). People struggling with BPD often demonstrate a fear of abandonment, extreme attachment, and a tendency to use splitting in relationships, which can cause them to be extremely demanding and difficult-to-please in counselor-client relationships. The complexity and intensity of symptoms, including a high likelihood of suicidal ideations, furthers this stigma.

A Theoretical Approach to Understanding BPD in College Students

Schick Tryon et al. (1988) identified strong parallels between the presence of BPD criteria and failure to progress through Arthur Chickering's vectors of development. These parallels are described alongside a more thorough discussion of the BPD criteria below.

For a person living with BPD, relationships may alternate between an intense closeness and the idealization of the other person, and an extreme dislike, devaluation, or frustration with the other person (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004; Schick Tryon et al., 1988; Wastell, 1993). Some experts attribute this to intense needs for nurturing and an inability to tolerate minor frustrations common in people with BPD (Schick Tryon et al., 1988). Through a defense mechanism described as *splitting*, those with BPD may find it impossible to deal with ambiguity and may see all things and people as either all-good or all-bad at any given time (Schick Tryon et al., 1988). A relationship characterized by splitting contrasts strongly with observations about relationships for which college students may develop a capacity. Arthur Chickering observed that in young adulthood, people develop mature interpersonal relationships characterized by healthy, lasting intimate relationships and an appreciation for interpersonal difference (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). With an inability to embrace difference and to understand people and relationships as complicated, building lasting, healthy relationships can be an extreme challenge for a person suffering from BPD.

Developmental difficulties with Chickering's second vector, managing emotions, can be seen in the expression of several criteria of BPD (Evans et al., 1998). These include destructive impulsivity, which may involve substance abuse, eating disorders, self-harm without suicidal intentions, and sexual promiscuity (Schick Tryon et al., 1988). Persons with BPD may also have mood instability and inappropriate anger, which would also indicate a failure to develop an ability to manage emotions (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004; Schick Tryon et al., 1988).

The inability to form a cohesive sense of self that is indicative of BPD can also represent a development setback in Chickering's vectors concerning identity, purpose, and integrity (Evans et al., 1998; Schick Tryon et al., 1988). Although many young adults struggle to form a cohesive identity, people with BPD may try an entirely new activity, pursue it with an absolute passion, and abandon it as suddenly as it was pursued (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). In a college setting, this may be observed through instability of major, research interests, activities, relationships, and potentially peer groups.

Finally, persons living with BPD may struggle with intense fear of real or imagined abandonment (Kreisman & Strauss, 2004). In his third vector, moving through autonomy into interdependence, Chickering described the importance of gaining awareness of the interconnectedness students share with others. In addition, he emphasized the importance of increasing emotional intelligence that allows them freedom from a constant need for reassurance, affection, and approval from others (Evans et al., 1998). As students move along this vector, they begin to develop the ability to seek advice from others without requiring approval. They are able to successfully navigate relationships and strike a balance between individual and community needs. For people struggling with BPD, development in this vector can be hindered by intense fears of abandonment.

In addition to affecting college student development, BPD has the potential to negatively impact a student's success in college. Studies have shown young adults with BPD report more problems with depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and interpersonal problems (Paris, 2005; Trull, Ueda, Conforti, & Doan, 1997). Additionally, BPD has been associated with academic problems characterized by lower grade point average (GPA), more semesters spent on academic probation, and other academic struggles. This means these students may be more at risk for problems beyond those specific to BPD and may require more academic assistance than the average student.

BPD in the University Setting

BPD can cause severe disruption in the lives of those with the disorder and those who surround them. This can have important ramifications on a college campus where people are living and working in close proximity. The effect of BPD is compounded by the barriers BPD can pose to young adult development. This necessitates the attention and understanding of student affairs professionals.

Researchers have identified many ways college students may present BPD. Schick Tyron et al. (1988) point out that people with unstable emotions, poor impulse control, and poor interpersonal skills are likely to be involved in roommate conflicts or the student conduct system. Professionals may find themselves working with students who display an extreme difficulty with ambiguity and interpersonal relationships. This has the potential to create harmful environments for the students nearest a student with BPD, such as a roommate, neighbors, or study groups. These students may find themselves in intense relationships with students with BPD that drastically alternate between idealization and alienation with little cause. Students who struggle to manage emotions and impulses may become violent, may vandalize buildings on campus, and may injure themselves (Schick Tyron et al., 1988). Therefore, attention must be directed both at helping a student with BPD be successful and creating a supportive and positive environment for all students in the community. In addition to acting out, students with BPD may be less successful in college in both academic and social atmospheres (Trull et al., 1997). For student affairs divisions emphasizing student retention and success, students with BPD constitute an at-risk population who are less likely to successfully continue at the institution.

Additionally, as mental health issues among students represent a growing concern in student affairs literature, the high rate of self-harm and suicide among students with BPD can be considered a significant concern for student affairs professionals. One study at a hospital showed that as many as 41% of those patients who attempted suicide multiple times met the criteria for BPD (Paris, 2005). This staggering statistic, combined with the observed fact that one in ten people with diagnosed BPD will eventually complete a suicide (Paris, 2005) demonstrates as student affairs professionals respond to emergency mental health situations, they are likely to eventually encounter one or more students with BPD. Student affairs professionals who interact with a student suffering from BPD may expend a relatively large amount of energy assessing the safety of the individual and trying to determine whether additional action must be taken to protect the student and the community. This need can significantly impact the well-being of the student, of the professional, and of the surrounding community.

Professionals who suspect students' behaviors may be the result of any mental health issues should consult with on-campus counselors and refer students of concern. However, BPD can provide unique challenges for the student affairs professionals. Schick Tyron et al. (1988) describe how students working with BPD can drain professional staff members who work with them. People with BPD can be very demanding in relationships; for example, they may latch onto professionals, demanding more attention and time than is reasonable and creating an unhealthily intense relationship with the professional. Unfortunately, this can be draining for the professional, have a negative effect on the student, and result in a monopolization of the professional's time and attention (Schick Tyron et al., 1988). This situation can exceed the ability of a professional and may also cause the professional to ignore or fail to meet the needs of other students within the community, to the detriment of all. Ultimately, it is essential for professionals to set and keep boundaries with all students, and be extremely intentional in cases where a professional may be working with a student with BPD.

Knowledge of BPD can provide a student affairs professional with the power to effectively work with and refer students who may be suffering from BPD. By helping students identify a need for assistance and connecting them with resources, professionals can help students be successful in college and life. Getting students connected with resources can help; with treatment, close to 75% of sufferers of BPD can regain “close to normal functioning” by the age of 35-40 (Paris, 2005, p. 1581). An awareness of the disorder can also aid professionals in protecting themselves and other students through effective use of boundaries and consultation with mental health professionals. Finally, by having a basic knowledge of BPD, its symptoms, and its possible affects on college students, student affairs professionals can identify and support students who may be at risk of academic, social, and emotional difficulties.

Conclusion

Borderline personality disorder is an extremely painful disorder that can have a serious effect on a university community. While research continues to improve the effectiveness of treatment for people with BPD, research on college intervention strategies is outdated and lacking. College campuses are seeing a rise in students arriving on campus with already diagnosed mental health issues and must adapt to address these issues effectively. This response is essential to the success of the sufferer, his or her roommates, classmates, and others close to the person with BPD. In addition to campus-wide strategies for more effective responses to BPD and other mental health issues, student affairs professionals must continually educate themselves to assist students who may be suffering from mental issues and recognize when to refer students to university counseling services.

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Closing the Gap: Historical Values and Modern Characteristics of Greek-Letter Organizations

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Abstract

Within the past few decades, Greek-letter organizations have come under increased scrutiny from higher education scholars (Pascarella et al., 1994; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996; Wechsler, Kuh, & Davenport, 2009; Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). Numerous studies have indicated that fraternity and sorority members continue to engage in unhealthy decision-making with negative cognitive affects (Pascarella et al., 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996; Kuh & Arnold, 1992; Wechsler et al., 2009). While research shows fraternities and sororities positively contributing to the campus environment, research on the effects of membership in a Greek-letter organization also fails to document consistent student development benefits (Hayek, Carini, O'Day, & Kuh, 2002; Sermersheim, 1996; Winston & Saunders, 1987). This article addresses the challenge fraternities and sororities face in closing the gap between the high standards they profess and the detrimental behavior of their members. First, this article reviews the literature about the original values of fraternities and sororities and examines the student culture that characterizes modern day Greek-letter organizations. Highlighting the unrealized potential that fraternities and sororities possess for positively impacting the personal development of students, implications for student affairs professionals working with Greek-letter organizations are addressed. Finally, this article provides recommendations for future research and practice.

Keywords: assessment, fraternities, Greek-letter organizations, higher education, sororities, student learning

Historically, college students have shown a tendency to form themselves into societies, clubs, and organizations (Baird, 1949) with the hope of attaining a sense of belonging (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). The desire to be part of a community that shares common interests and values led to the development of the Greek-letter organizations currently present on college campuses (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). Although today's fraternities and sororities exist as some of the oldest organizations in North America (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998), American higher education scholars have recently begun to question and scrutinize the need for and value of Greek-letter organizations (Pascarella et al., 1994; Pascarella et al., 1996; Wechsler, Kuh, & Davenport, 2009; Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). A major concern about fraternities and sororities is the widening discrepancy between the historical values of these organizations and the values being reflected by their membership. While fraternities and sororities continuously claim a commitment to strong values and high moral and ethical standards, the current actions and behavior of their members do not often reflect these ideals and purposes (Shonrock, 1998).

This article addresses the expanding gap between historical values and modern day characteristics of Greek-letter organizations. First, the early history of Greek-letter organizations is described,

including important founding principles and values. This article then reviews current positive and negative characteristics of modern day Greek-letter organizations. Emphasizing the strong potential influence fraternity and sorority chapters possess, key implications for student affairs professionals working with Greek-letter organizations are addressed. Finally, recommendations for practice and direction for possible future research on Greek-letter organizations are expressed.

Early History and Purpose of Greek-Letter Organizations

In 1776 at William and Mary College, the first secret Greek-letter fraternity in the United States, Phi Beta Kappa, was founded on the principles of “personal freedom, scientific inquiry, liberty of conscience, and creative endeavor” (Phi Beta Kappa, 2010, para. 1). Nearly one century following the founding of Phi Beta Kappa, Kappa Alpha Theta was founded in 1870 as one of the first Greek letter fraternities for women (Turk, 2004). Both men’s and women’s fraternities were founded as organizations for academic and social support, under the belief that “collective rather than individual action would help them be successful in their educational endeavors” (Turk, 2004, p. 3). Considering the strict policies, harsh discipline standards, and lack of freedom that characterized colonial colleges in the eighteenth century (Rudolph, 1962), the first Greek-letter organizations formed under an oath of secrecy, as well as united under a common badge, motto, code of laws, elaborate initiation, seal, and special handshake (Phi Beta Kappa, 2010). Engrained in these trademark elements of Greek-letter organizations was a commitment to high moral ideals, scholastic achievement, and friendship amongst members.

These commitments to moral values, scholastic standards, and enduring friendships can still be seen in the fraternity and sorority charters. A charter is a document outlining the conditions under which a fraternity or sorority is founded, stating the purpose, beliefs, and values of the organization. For instance, Sigma Phi Epsilon’s charter states, “its purpose shall be to intensify and perpetuate friendship and promote happiness among its members, to encourage literature and education, and to ... perform such deeds as shall conduce to the building of a noble and pure manhood” (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, 2007, p. 67). Furthermore, two additional key principles are seen in the vision and mission of numerous fraternities and sororities: leadership and community service. For example, one of the five components of Alpha Xi Delta sorority’s mission statement is to “instill community responsibility” (Alpha Xi Delta, 2010, para. 2). Around 1920, after years of struggling to define their purpose, vision, and mission, fraternities and sororities established their presence in the social and extracurricular lives of students (Turk, 2004), where they remain today.

Characteristics of Modern Day Greek-Letter Organizations

Despite membership in Greek organizations continuously rising (National Panhellenic Council, 2009; Kuh & Arnold, 1992), there is an ongoing debate about whether Greek-letter organization members are positive contributors to the college and university environment. Owen and Owen (1976) summed up this debate by stating:

What needs to be determined is the essential, enduring worth of the fraternity. The measure of that worth is not quantity—numbers of chapters and members, rates of growth, corporate holdings—but quality as evidenced in the values, purposes and experiences that strongly affect human lives. (p. 2)

While the foundations of Greek-letter organizations hold values that complement the educational mission of universities, it is often questionable whether the current behaviors of fraternity and sorority members reflects these values.

Intellectual Development

Typically, one of the key principles of Greek-letter organizations is an emphasis on the importance of scholarship and academic achievement. However, Pascarella et al. (1994) found during their first year of membership, Greek-affiliated men scored significantly lower than non-Greek-affiliated men in all four cognitive areas researched: reading comprehension, mathematics, critical thinking, and composite achievement. In addition, Pascarella et al. (1994) found that joining a sorority in the first year of college negatively influenced the cognitive areas of reading comprehension and composite achievement, although the results were less dramatic than the results seen for the men. To fulfill their commitment to the principle of scholarship, fraternities and sororities “need to demonstrate that they contribute to, or at least support, the academic mission of the institution and the advancement of learning” (Winston & Saunders, 1987, p. 7). This research indicates a commitment to scholarship may not be as highly emphasized in modern day Greek-letter organizations.

Openness to Diversity

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse (Pascarella et al., 1996), it is important for higher education institutions to prepare students for success in a multicultural world, which requires openness to diversity in their peer organizations. When considering the social experiences of first year students, Pascarella et al. (1996) found living on-campus, participating in cultural awareness activities, and involvement with diverse peers had a positive effect on students’ openness to diversity. However, membership in a Greek-letter fraternity or sorority was one of two student social experiences, the other being participation in intercollegiate athletics, that had a significantly negative effect on a students’ openness to diversity (Pascarella et al., 1996). This can be contributed to the homogeneous and isolating environments of Greek-letter organizations, which minimize students’ opportunities to interact with other students of diverse backgrounds (Pascarella et al., 1996), including racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class diversity. Although fraternities and sororities do not discriminate in offering membership to diverse peers, they also tend to make fewer efforts to diversify their membership. While many Greek organizations will not directly state openness to diversity as a founding principle, they value building friendships, which should include all their peers, not only those with the same racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic background.

Alcohol Abuse and Hazing

As one of the most prominent criticisms of fraternity and sorority life, instances of binge drinking and hazing frequently occur (Marklein, 2002). Studies on college drinking habits indicate fraternity members tend to drink more heavily and more frequently than non-members (Kuh & Arnold, 1992; Wechsler et al., 2009). Wechsler et al. (2009) stated, “fraternity and sorority house environments appear to tolerate hazardous use of alcohol and other irresponsible behaviors” (p. 407). In addition, despite 44 states enacting anti-hazing laws (Education Commission of the States, 2010), the practice of hazing and abuse of fraternity and sorority members still continues today (Ibrahim, 2010; Nuwer, 1999). These negative behaviors directly contradict the founding commitment to high moral ideals and the building of a strong noble character amongst fraternity and sorority members.

Leadership and Community Service

Strong leadership skills and community involvement have been consistent positive characteristics of fraternities and sororities. Greek-letter organizations provide their members with numerous leadership development opportunities, including practicing self-governance and holding a variety of leadership positions, such as chapter president. These leadership opportunities help develop necessary life skills, including conflict management, time

management, and consensus building. Sermersheim (1996) found 95% of study participants self-reported that their undergraduate Greek leadership positions were extremely beneficial and prepared them for their chosen profession. In addition, Astin (1977) indicated higher levels of leadership skills, as well as greater self-confidence and assertiveness amongst Greek members. Furthermore, fraternities and sororities offer numerous volunteer opportunities for their members, usually in the form of community service projects and philanthropy events (Sermersheim, 1996). Hayek, et al. (2002) discussed, among many other forms of engagement, that members of Greek-letter organizations appear to be more engaged in community service than non-members. This research indicates that Greek-letter organizations are maintaining their commitment to principles of leadership and community engagement.

Retention

Looking outside of individual Greek-letter organizations, fraternities and sororities can make a positive difference at the university level. Numerous studies have shown a positive connection between involvement with Greek-letter organizations and college student retention and degree completion (Rullman, 2002; Winston & Saunders, 1987). In addition, Astin (1995) indicated Greek members are less likely to withdraw from the university experience, stating fraternities and sororities “enhance the student’s chances of finishing college” (p. 173). Thus, although such organizations pose substantial risks and effort for colleges, they also offer retention gains.

Implications for Higher Education Institutions

As Whipple and Sullivan (1998) stated, “Greek-letter organizations constitute a powerful student culture, with powerful implications for their members’ learning” (p. 10). Considering fraternity and sorority members only exhibit a fraction of their stated principles and values in their behavior, this powerful culture has the potential to cause more negative than positive effects. Weighing the positive and negative effects, student affairs professionals and university administration must make a choice: either remove Greek-letter organizations or invest further resources in closing the values gap reflected in today’s fraternities and sororities.

The inability of Greek-letter organizations to contribute to the educational mission of institutions has led to unfavorable reviews by university administration and faculty (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998), leading to some universities making the former choice and removing Greek-letter organizations from their campuses. For example, several universities, such as Colby College and Bowdoin College, have indicated that Greek-letter organizations are no longer valuable to the institution by completely removing Greek systems from their campuses (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). In addition, decreased funding, less administrative support, and a lack of university endorsement for fraternity and sorority organizations may lead to the inevitable one-by-one removal of Greek-letter organizations from these campuses.

The latter choice, which involves investing further resources into fraternities and sororities, focuses on the unrealized potential of Greek-letter organizations. University administration and student affairs professionals may choose to work in conjunction with Greek students, the international or national Greek organizations, and alumni to develop a plan of action that will align the organization’s historical values with the behavior of current members. This could potentially require an investment in additional staff time and additional programming costs. If student affairs professionals are able to understand the potential and work with members of Greek-letter organizations, universities may be better able to provide direction to these groups toward the institution’s educational mission.

Recommendations for Practice and Research

Greek-letter organizations were founded on principles of scholastic achievement, high moral and ethical standards, friendship amongst members, and unselfish service for a greater good. By adhering to these principles and values, fraternities and sororities have the potential to make a great contribution to the educational mission of a university. The question becomes whether Greek-letter organizations are capable of aligning the behavior of their members with their stated values. As Whipple & Sullivan (1998) stated, the challenge “rests on Greek leadership members to evaluate their chapter and make the commitment to change” (p. 12). As this is not an easy change to make, college administration and student affairs professionals should provide continuous challenge and support for the leaders of Greek-letter organizations.

An important support student affairs professionals can provide Greek leaders is consistent communication and contact focused on the educational experience of Greek-letter organizations. Winston and Saunders (1987) suggest frequent contact between chapter advisors, student affairs professionals, alumni advisors, national officers, and student leaders. Through this communication, student affairs professionals should convey the core values of the institution, as well as provide awareness of institutional policies governing behavior. In addition, these conversations should reflect the principles of the various Greek-letter organizations, including the kinds of behaviors chapters should reward and the activities they should promote. The behaviors and activities rewarded and promoted might include scholastic programming, high academic achievement, relevant risk management programming, community service and philanthropy efforts, and successful self-governance.

In addition to supportive contact, student affairs professionals need to challenge Greek leaders to hold each other accountable and empower responsible decision making amongst leadership. Recognizing college students have a difficult time holding each other accountable, Shonrock (1998) suggests, “it is essential that student affairs administrators articulate to fraternity and sorority members the importance of confrontation” (p. 83). Additionally, while peer accountability is important, it is equally important for student affairs administrators to hold Greek-letter organizations accountable to institution-wide and Greek-wide standards. These expectations should complement the institution’s educational mission, as well as emphasize the values and ideals expressed in the founding principles of Greek organizations.

The issues surrounding Greek-letter organizations are not new. Since the beginning of their existence over two centuries ago, fraternities and sororities have continuously faced scrutiny and disapproval from university administration, faculty, students, and the general community. Yet, Greek-letter organizations are still present today, showing they possess the necessary survival skills to potentially continue into the future (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). As the references of this paper suggest, there has been little research on the impact of fraternities and sororities in the past decade. Further research surrounding the impact of Greek-letter organizations on student members, specifically the potential of fraternities and sororities as learning communities, would be beneficial for determining the future outlook of these ever-growing organizations.

Conclusion

This article discussed the gap between the stated principles of Greek-letter organizations and the actions and behaviors reflected by their membership. A review of the early history, as well as founding principles and values, compared to the modern characteristics associated with Greek-letter organizations demonstrates the potential for this gap to grow wider. By examining the implications of this discrepancy, student affairs professionals and university administration have a prominent role to play in the future outlook for fraternities and sororities. While institutions

may choose to formally or informally remove Greek-letter organizations from their campuses, administrators also may choose to harness the potential of these groups and provide guidance for aligning their current behaviors with the educational mission of the university through challenge and support. Either way, it is essential for Greek-letter organizations to reflect on their stated ideals and values, as well as those of their respective institutions, and work to align their organizations with the educational mission of their universities.

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Multiracial Students in Higher Education: Thinking Outside of the Box

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Abstract

This article discusses the demographics of multiracial students, the community's rise in attendance in higher education systems, and need for further support. As the 2000 census illustrates, the percentage of multiracial individuals in the United States is steadily increasing, especially among the younger population. Many of these individuals are currently in the university system or will be within the next few years. Multiracial students bring a unique background and perspective and are searching for support from universities. However, there are few support networks in place for the multiracial student population, particularly due to the absence of research on this community and lack of awareness of their specific needs. Thus, to appropriately serve this student population, there is a need for more research, as well as the establishment of a stronger support system through multiracial advocacy offices and mixed-race student organizations. Some universities have incorporated the needs of multiracial students into different diversity organizations and offices, but there is still significant work to be done in this area.

Keywords: higher education, multiracial students, student organizations, support systems

Imagine an involvement fair during the first day of school at a local university. Hundreds of student organizations are advertising for their clubs and recruiting new members at this event. Sam, a multiracial student at the university, is excited for the opportunity to get involved on campus. Sam walks around the entire plaza and is not approached once by any ethnic organizations because the people staffing the tables are not sure how to categorize her. The experience of Jeff, another multiracial student on campus, is a bit different. He decides to attend the involvement fair because he already has a few organizations in mind he wants to join. After approaching the Black Student Union (BSU) table for more information, he receives some confused and inquisitive stares and is questioned about his interest in the BSU. He feels judged by the members and pressured to justify his multiracial, African-American background. Later in the day, both Sam and Jeff seek out support to overcome their awkward experiences. They are both frustrated to discover the university does not have an advocacy office or cultural center for multiracial student support.

This scenario depicts what many multiracial students may experience on university campuses. These students are part of a growing demographic within higher education and may soon represent the typical college student (Brown, 2009). This population is essential in the movement towards diversity exploration and acceptance, yet many universities lack the knowledge or resources to support the growing multiracial community. This article will discuss the rise of multiracial student populations on university campuses and will highlight some of the experiences and needs of these students.

Multiracial Student Demographics

The demographic landscape of the United States (U.S.) is changing and the number of those who identify as multiracial is increasing. As specified in the 2000 U.S. Census, 6.8 million people out of 281.4 million indicated their background consisted of more than one race (Grieco, Cassidy, & Bureau of the Census, 2001). The statistics gathered by the 2000 U.S. Census provided many multiracial individuals with a sense of legitimacy in terms of their racial identity. It was the first time in U.S. history when people had the option to identify with one or more racial categories: Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino (Renn & Lunceford, 2004). The availability of this option encouraged multiracial individuals to select multiple racial identity boxes. Similar to the opportunities presented with the U.S. Census, student services units ask questions with regard to race. Within the education and government realm, there is a specific focus on racial categories rather than ethnic identities.

The 2000 census illustrates the higher number of multiracial individuals and embraces this community as a legitimate demographic group in the United States. Nearly 3 million of the respondents within the “two or more races” population on the 2000 census were under the age of 18 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2001). This statistic highlights the increase in multiracial self-identification and serves as an alert to educational systems to prepare for the admission of more multiracial students. Harris (2003) suggested the multiracial population in the school setting will continue to increase as the population of the nation becomes more diverse. This implies more multiracial individuals will be within the higher education system in the future and higher education professionals must be prepared to support their arrival.

Multiracial students are currently represented in the university system; however, it is difficult to assess the current demographic across the higher educational system because they remain relatively unnoted. As stated by Renn (1998), “despite significant and increasing numbers of biracial and multiracial students, almost nothing is known about their development and interactions in the college environment” (p. 1). Due to this lack of research and complications with data collection, it is difficult to document the percentage of multiracial students within the university setting. In a 2005 survey with 298 U.S. colleges and universities, only 27% of schools provided the option for students to self-identify multiracial heritage on admission applications, while 3% collected data that fully encodes multiracial students in the way they self-report (Padilla & Kelley, 2005). This data reveals the lack of opportunities provided for students to share multiple racial identities. Furthermore, this absence of data minimizes students’ multiracial backgrounds and negates the effects multiple racial identities may have on the college experience.

Nevertheless, changes to the U.S. Census have sparked modification within the educational realm regarding racial and ethnic data methods. The U. S. Department of Education issued the “Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting and Reporting Data on Racial and Ethnic Data” in 2007, which allows students to mark two or more races on their school information (Kellogg & Niskode, 2008). Institutions were required to implement these changes before Fall 2010 and report the data for the 2010-2011 academic year (Kellogg & Niskode, 2008). New statistical data will be released relatively soon and will provide additional representation for multiracial students. Ten years after the census, which recognized the potential growth of multiracial college students, universities are beginning to initiate tracking systems for these individuals. Monitoring these percentages eventually will aid in the continued research, knowledge, and support for multiracial college students.

Experiences of Multiracial Students

The minimal research on the multiracial student population indicates college experiences vary for students in this community. According to Brown (2009), multiracial students may experience poor mental health and difficulty in adjusting to college due to social isolation and lack of support. Although monoracial students may share similar feelings in regards to limited social interactions and minimal support, there is disconnect in experiences because multiracial students have the additional element of navigating experiences based on their different racial backgrounds. In general, students are more likely to thrive in an environment where they feel accepted, supported, and understood; it can be isolating when these factors are not present in multiracial students' college experience.

Multiracial students may seek support from others as a way to combat feelings of isolation. Although they may be marginalized, students can seek interaction with various individuals because they do not belong to just one racial group (Brown, 2009). This is beneficial because rather than being confined to one monoracial group, they have multiple opportunities and outlets for involvement. In her research on the experience of multiracial college students, Renn (1998) found the existence of a "permeable boundary between the students of color and the majority group," (p. 8) which affects how multiracial people interact with monoracial individuals. At times, this boundary either permits multiracial students to flow from one group to another or rigidly prevents this easy movement (Renn, 1998, p. 8). Sometimes mixed-race students are welcomed into a group and other times they are disregarded or challenged about their interest in certain group participation. According to Wong and Buckner (2008), "multiracial people often face societal pressure to claim one primary heritage, yet experience exclusion when they attempt to do so" (p. 44). As a way to cope with this, multiracial students may experience situational identities in which various aspects of their ethnic identity are shown at different times (Potter, 2009). Thus, some multiracial students experience problems in relation to group membership, which may lead to stress regarding a sense of belonging within a university.

It is important to remember that multiracial students should not be defined by unhappiness and identity struggles. According to a report compiled by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) in 1999, research focusing on multiracial individuals has indicated multiracial children have similar levels of self-esteem compared to their monoracial peers. Children may not notice differences between their peers in regards to race because their racial identity may develop over time at various ages. The AACAP explained the racial identity of children is influenced by several factors: family support and attachment, interactions and connections with diverse racial and ethnic groups, and individual physical features.

Those who identify with a strong multiracial identity were raised in an inclusive environment that incorporated values and beliefs of all parts of one's racial background (AACAP, 1999). This exposure is important because it provides the individual with a stronger historical background and greater sense of self. Research indicates individuals who accept their entire racial background are happier compared to their multiracial counterparts who identify solely with the race of one parent (AACAP, 1999). Furthermore, children raised with more than one culture are perceived as more empathetic and "cognitively flexible" (Stephan & Stephan, 1991, p. 243) compared to children raised in monoracial homes. This happiness may translate to their overall well-being, approachability, and success in relationships.

Due to their distinctive developmental history, multiracial individuals may be more perceptive to sensitivity amongst racial groups compared to their monoracial peers. This may be a result of their ability to personally identify with the implications of each racial identity

(Harris, 2003). Individuals who actively participate in multiple cultures may have the ability to enhance diversity and reduce possible conflict between groups (Phinney & Alipuria, 1996, p. 153). The strengths offered by multiracial individuals may encourage stronger dialogues about diversity and acceptance. In addition, multiracial individuals may operate as a “bridge between groups” (Phinney & Alipuria, 1996, p. 153) due to their dual heritage and likelihood of close contact with multiple cultures. Through his Marginal Man Theory, Park (1950) argued an individual between multiple cultures has sharper intelligence and more rational viewpoints. These individuals often serve as a link between others and help establish mutual respect and understanding.

Implications for Multiracial Students within Higher Education

Like most college students, multiracial students are searching to find themselves and are craving a sense of belonging. There is much to learn about mixed-race students and the first step is to recognize the legitimacy of the population and to educate the general community. Thus, it is important for student affairs professionals to treat multiracial students as individuals and refrain from engaging in false assumptions often associated with membership in the multiracial community (Harris, 2003). Multiracial students are unique individuals and should be treated as such, not grouped into classifications others have set for them.

Furthermore, it is important for educators to seek relevant information and strive to understand the multi-dimensionality of the mixed-race students they serve (Brown, 2009; Ozaki & Johnson, 2008). Student affairs professionals should strive to educate themselves about the emotional needs of multiracial students by reviewing research, attending workshops, and talking with multiracial students about their experiences (Harris, 2003). Knowledge and advocacy for the multiracial population will provide the tools to establish more support for students on campus. According to Shang (2008), leaders within higher education must examine the impact of services and institutional policies on students, initiate new approaches to serve students, and “consider new ways of thinking about the fluidity of race” (p. 10). Student affairs professionals must initiate conversations amongst faculty, staff, and students. These conversations can facilitate important focus and legitimacy towards the multiracial student population. For example, although no one in the office identifies as multiracial, the staff at the Chicano Latino Student Programs office at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles was interested in exploring multiracial student issues and offered programming about these concepts (Wong & Buckner, 2008). This demonstrates how student affairs professionals can become involved and educate themselves while bringing awareness to students. University staff members are encouraged to seek more information about the multiracial population and ultimately have the ability to influence multiracial-centered programming.

Multiracial students need to be challenged and educated as well. This can be achieved through programs and services that provide dialogue about racial equity, legal and historical information about multiracial people, and changing demographic patterns (Shang, 2008). Also, students should be validated and have their voices heard with regard to their experiences (Potter, 2009). Engaging multiracial students in dialogue and encouraging them to share their experiences will hopefully create a sense of community and understanding within the multiracial university population.

Programs framed specifically for multiracial students are great ways to include them into the university community and connect them to resources. Services geared towards multiracial students are making recent appearances on college campuses and range from cultural centers that program for multiracial specific issues, to the establishment of multiracial student organizations (Wong & Buckner, 2008). These services are becoming more popular among

college campuses, illustrating the intentionality of inclusiveness for the multiracial student population. For example, the Multicultural Affairs Center at The University of Colorado at Boulder (CU) pairs staff members assigned to programming for multiracial students with student leadership involvement (Wong & Buckner, 2008). Originally named the Educational Opportunity Program, the Multicultural Affairs Center underwent changes, rewrote their mission statement to include multiracial students, and assigned staff members to connect with multiracial students as mentors (Wong & Buckner, 2008). This demonstrates how a center can be more inclusive of mixed-race students rather than engaging in separation and appeal to only monoracial students of color. Another example of an office incorporating multiracial students is the Office of Black Student Programs at the University of Southern California (USC) because it utilizes programming to address multiracial student issues (Wong & Buckner, 2008). Last, the Third World Center (TWC) at Brown University has an orientation program geared towards students of color and includes opportunities for multiracial students to “validate their multiracial identity” (Wong & Buckner, 2008, p. 48). These programs effectively appeal to the needs of multiracial students and encourage a collaborative environment to work alongside other student of color populations.

While it is beneficial for offices to aim programs toward multiracial students, it is important for them to have separate organizations to serve their specific needs. Many mixed-race students feel unwelcome in other groups and want a venue to express issues related to their own group identities (Ozaki, 2004). A multiracial student-focused organization essentially establishes “a forum for students to advocate, engage in dialogue with the institution and serve one another” (Wong & Buckner, 2008, p. 50). A safe space for multiracial students to gather and create community is an important factor for higher education systems to consider. In research by Ozaki (2004), members of multiracial student organizations said they wanted a space where they could share common experiences. This highlights the crucial need for a sense of community for multiracial students. Multiracial student organizations are essential for student support because they provide mixed-race students with a sense of connection and belonging on campus. Colorado State University is home to SHADES, a multiracial organization that has been on the campus for four years (K. Wormus, personal communication, September 29, 2010). It has a three-part mission to provide space for multiracial students, educate others about the experiences of multiracial students, and provide a place for all races to come together in dialogue (K. Wormus, personal communication, September 29, 2010). This organization creates a sense of community for multiracial students and provides them with an outlet. According to Wong and Buckner (2008), the presence of an active student organization and formal staff advisors establishes a symbiotic relationship with the university and creates strong mentorship roles, which in turn affects student leadership. Ozaki and Johnston (2008) highlight 10 ways in which student affairs professionals can support multiracial students and their organizations. These points address the importance of assisting students to focus on vision and goals for organizations, advocating for multiracial issues rather than just for the organization, creating opportunities for dialogue between leaders of multiracial and monoracial student organizations, developing an awareness of resources, and supporting change (Ozaki & Johnston, p. 58). Thus, there are a variety of ways in which multiracial students can be supported within higher education systems.

Recommendations for the Future

More attention must be paid to the multiracial community because it is a growing population within higher education. Many student affairs professionals are unsure of how to properly assist multiracial students, due to a lack of understanding related to the experiences of these individuals. Additionally, there is hesitation about how to address the multiracial student

community because people do not want the multiracial individual to be embarrassed or feel targeted if they ask identity-related questions. More research needs to be done on multiracial individuals' experiences. This research should be shared with student affairs professionals and educators to further expand their cultural competence surrounding multiracial students. Additionally, more effective support strategies must be developed for the multiracial community. For example, many universities lack student organizations or advocacy offices specifically for multiracial students. Enhanced awareness of the multiracial community and established support systems will aid in multiracial students' sense of belonging at the university level. Although some research has been done about multiracial students, there is still more research needed to effectively serve them.

Conclusion

The percentage of multiracial students is steadily increasing on college campuses. However, the higher education system is not yet equipped to serve this community. There is a lack of knowledge about the needs and experiences of multiracial students and few services exist on campuses to support this community. Multiracial students are often marginalized and few individuals intentionally focus attention on this population. More research needs to be conducted about the experiences of multiracial students to establish their specific campus needs. Some institutions of higher education have included programming for multiracial students while others have slowly implemented active multiracial student organizations. More services, such as advocacy offices and student organizations, need to be established on campuses to provide a safe space and a sense of community for this unique student population.

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Tracking Trends in Student Service

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Abstract

To effectively challenge and support students who seek to transform altruistic impulses into action, student affairs professionals need to be aware of what is currently influencing how students conceptualize service. This article begins by reviewing current definitions of different forms of service activities and explores their expressions in college and university settings. Shifting political climates, technological advances, and the prevalence of service-learning courses are examples of important influences that shape the trends in student service today. The central question raised in this article is how colleges and universities should respond to these trends. To expand on this point, there is a discussion of how service activities relate to student development. This important theme is discussed throughout the article. Theories of Chickering and Reisser, along with Maslow are referenced in order to highlight the potential developmental benefits service activities offer students. Through a brief literature review, recommendations are offered regarding how student affairs professionals can incorporate the knowledge of developing student service trends into their everyday work.

Keywords: altruism, civic engagement, community service, service-learning, volunteerism

There are many university-funded programs, student-led conferences, and faith-based service initiatives on college campuses spanning the spectrum of service work (Stamm, 2009). Today's college students care about social change and want to take action. Hollander and Longo (2008) stated, "[t]he millennial generation—those born after 1982—are certainly not apathetic...as we have seen in the rising numbers of students involved in community service" (p. 2). Yet, the question remains, what trends are developing concerning how and why students pursue service activities?

In the context of this article the term *service* is used inclusively to encompass a range of activities students may engage in because of altruistic or personal motives. Altruism means an "unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others" (Merriam Webster, 2003, p. 37). These activities include, but are not limited to, the following: community service, supporting non-profit organizations, online volunteerism, political organizing, service-learning projects, social justice oriented initiatives, volunteering abroad, supporting faith-based charity work, etc. The analysis of current service trends is followed by a discussion of what new challenges and rewards these trends may offer, and how student affairs professionals can adapt their programs to match emerging service trends. An exploration of how service work can potentially be an expression of a student's developmental process concludes this article.

Literature Review and Research Implications

Hynes (2009) stated, "as the profession [of higher education] progresses into the new millennium, one of the trends is the renewed emphasis on service-learning, civic engagement, and servant leadership" (p. 6). A shift has occurred in recent years related to how students

view certain forms of service work. Direct community engagement and activism are now more appealing to students than purely political service work (Hollander & Longo, 2008). In their research, Hollander and Longo (2008) asked a group of students to speak about their community and political engagement. The students responded eloquently and passionately about their community work—some of which directly dealt with heated political social issues, such as the rights of illegal immigrants—but they did not speak positively about political or civic engagement. It seems this aversion stems from students perceiving modern politics as removed from everyday life, largely partisan, and confrontational in nature. The research found that “students do not want to be asked to participate in the system as it is, but would rather strive to be part of creating a public life that is more open, participatory, relational, and inclusive” (Hollander & Longo, 2008, p. 2).

A potential application of this insight could be the need for more programs that aim at destigmatizing political work and making it more accessible. For example, Portland State University in Oregon hosts a program titled the National Education for Women’s (N.E.W.) Leadership. N.E.W. Leadership is an organization with chapters throughout the country that recruit college women to take part in intensive weeklong trainings, in which they learn how to become an elected official or part of a political campaign. Many college women who participate in this program may have been active in community organizing, but were not necessarily interested in being an elected official before the training. Such a program promotes the idea that politics can be open and inclusive to women.

Alternatively, student affairs professionals could choose to cater to this trend of students avoiding the political realm. For example, administrators could provide resources and support for students who are passionate about grassroots or community organizing. University offices could collaborate with local non-profits and agencies to train individuals on how to conduct outreach, organize volunteers, and implement successful educational campaigns. In providing such programs, student affairs professionals would ensure students had access to the service opportunities that most interested them.

Today’s students’ desire for personal agency and creativity is also manifested in a second service work trend. Students do not just find service opportunities through resources online; they actually create service opportunities that are entirely Internet-dependent (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008). Due to advances in technology, online volunteerism is on the rise. Students can now connect with communities they previously were not able to serve (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008). It seems that “many of the online volunteer projects are based on knowledge management” (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008, p. 558). Students are involved with fundraising efforts, marketing campaigns, organizing databases for organizations, updating websites, translating documents, and many other information-based tasks. This is an important development that shapes how students perceive and engage in service work; no longer does service work only connote in-person engagement with a community or organization. As student affairs professionals advise students engaging in online service work, it could be beneficial to consider what unique challenges and rewards these students may experience. Future research in this area could explore whether students experience the same amount of personal growth and development when they do not have direct contact with the populations they are serving.

Another trend that continues to gain strength is the institutional and student interest in “service-learning” experiences (Hynes, 2009, p. 21). Service-learning can be defined as “a pedagogical practice that integrates service and academic learning to promote increased

understanding of course content while helping students develop knowledge, skills, and cognitive capacities to deal effectively with complex social issues and problems” (Hurd, 2007, p. 1). These courses usually have academic credit attached to them, along with the expectation that students will do assigned readings about service or the social issues their service work addresses. In his article titled, *What’s in it for me?*, author Michael Hynes (2009) asserted that service-learning courses encourage students to stop asking themselves what personal rewards they may gain from service work. By participating in challenging service work in tandem with a classroom experience, Hynes hopes students will instead start to ask, “how can I help?” (Hynes, 2009, p. 21). It is important to note that the language Hynes uses here is not ideal. There has been significant professional dialogue around the difference between helping and serving. Rachel Naomi Remen (1999) explains the difference in the following way: “Serving is different from helping. Helping is not a relationship between equals. A helper may see others as weaker than they are, and people often feel this inequality” (para. 3). Following this argument, perhaps a better way to capture the ethos Hynes sought to express is to encourage students to ask themselves, “How can I serve?”

Research on service-learning courses shows that individual reflection and group dialogue can have a positive impact on how students make meaning of their experiences (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000). Other benefits service-learning offers students include, “an increased sense of personal efficacy, an increased awareness of the world, an increased awareness of one’s personal values, and increased engagement in the classroom experience” (Astin et al., 2000, p. 4). Such benefits are well worth the effort, especially when considering the more pragmatic and goal-focused mindset often attributed to millennial students (Schroeder, 2000). Charles Schroeder (2000) described this mindset in the context of a generational learning style; describing today’s students as “concrete active learners” (p. 7). Concrete active learners have a harder time with ambiguity and abstract concepts; they prefer specific and definable parameters for their academic work. Schroeder (2000) noted students may ask questions such as, “‘Is that going to be on the test?’, [or] ‘How long does the paper have to be?’” which could lead to frustration among educators who value student reflection on abstract concepts (p. 8).

Yet, anecdotal evidence suggests this student pragmatism can be beneficial and fuel altruistic work. In 1999, there was a trend on U.S. campuses of students advocating for higher pay for classified staff and for their universities to not buy goods produced by sweatshop labor. “The protests [were] the biggest wave of campus activism since the anti-apartheid movement in the early 1980s” (Greenhouse, 1999, para. 4). The president of Duke University at the time, Nannerl Keohane, stated the following in an interview with *The New York Times*:

This generation is one where there’s a very strong sense of personal responsibility to make a difference for immediate, real people you can see and touch . . . My own hunch, as a political theorist, is this sweatshop movement is a direct outgrowth of this practical mindset. (Greenhouse, 1999, para. 22)

This is a powerful insight about how today’s students engage in service, and yet, it seems contradictory to the trend of students pursuing service work that is solely Internet-based, where they have no in-person interactions with the populations they are serving. Perhaps it is best to view these divergent trends as simultaneous, but different expressions of the same altruistic impulse among student populations with diverse interests.

Relating Service to Student Development

As student affairs professionals support students engaging in service activities, it is important to be aware of this less political and more practical mindset that students may display. By better understanding the motives behind students' interests in service, student affairs professionals may be better informed when advising students pursuing service opportunities. In their interviews with students participating in different community service programs, Gillmor, Leavitt, Seider, and Rabinowicz (2009) found the following:

Many of the college students [participated in community service] out of a desire to do work that felt meaningful and real. Others explicitly expressed their hope that community service would help them break out of the "bubble" of their respective college campuses and to get out into the "real world." (p. 6)

It follows that service activities may attract students who are grappling with their personal responsibility concerning social inequality, unnecessary human suffering, or environmental degradation. To better understand the implications of this phenomenon it is helpful to frame this topic in the context of student development theory.

Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs provides a context for how service work is linked to student development. Self-actualization for Maslow is the highest form of development for an individual (Maslow, 1973). Maslow (1973) stated, "the self-actualized person sees reality more clearly: [they] see human nature as it is and not as they would prefer it to be" (p. 183). Reflecting on this point, one can see how the findings of Gillmor et al. (2009) could relate to Maslow's idea of self-actualization (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008). Some students engaging in service activities may want to clarify and add to their understanding of the world by having broader experiences. It is exciting to think these experiences are not limited to in-person service work since "many online volunteers referred to their volunteering task as an expression of the self-actualization" (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008, p. 558).

Another way student affairs professionals can better understand the important connection between service and student development is by reviewing the last vector in Chickering and Reisser's seven vectors of student development. The vector of developing integrity is especially salient in this discussion because it involves "humanizing values, personalizing values, and developing congruence" (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010, p. 69). In this vector, "students progress from rigid, moralistic thinking to the development of a more humanized value system in which the interests of others are balanced with their own interests" (Evans et al., 2010, p. 69). Encouraging students to engage in service would be a good step for student affairs professionals who are interested in supporting students' progress along this vector. Service activities have the potential to introduce students to a wider range of opportunities to develop congruence between their expressed beliefs and their actions.

From a developmental standpoint, there are some definite benefits to providing a range of service opportunities for students to choose from that represent their interests. The challenge remains for student affairs professionals to determine how best to do so. Research in this area could examine different models for facilitating service activities that follow these trends of community-oriented, pragmatic, goal-focused, and potentially online.

Conclusion

Shifting political climates, technological advances, and the prevalence of service-learning courses have all shaped trends in today's student service activities. Student affairs professionals have the opportunity to explore the implications of these changes and how new service trends may affect student development. Future scholarship and inquiry in this research area should

focus on what approaches are the most effective in engaging today's students in service activities. By furthering this research and implementing findings, students will hopefully continue to access opportunities and programs that engage them in expressing their altruistic impulses through action.

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Application of the Providing Access Through Holistic Support (P.A.T.H.S.) Program: Qualitative Investigation

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Abstract

Qualitative research methodology was used to explore the utility of Providing Access Through Holistic Support (P.A.T.H.S.) program. P.A.T.H.S. is a comprehensive program that applies the Stages of the Sophomore Year model to aid students in their academic and career aspirations. In particular, the program provides valuable experiences to low-income students, first-generation students, and students of color, to develop a personal strategic plan for their career values or graduate school interests. There were a total of 66 students from a large Midwestern university who participated in the P.A.T.H.S. Certificate Experience program. Each participant was required to complete Focused Exploration Activities (FEAs), campus advising sessions, and online reflections. Phenomenological analysis guided by grounded theory was used to analyze the data. Analyses of students' responses from their P.A.T.H.S. Roadmaps and P.A.T.H.S. Ports were conducted. Results are discussed with recommendations for student affairs. In addition, recommendations for future research and practice for P.A.T.H.S. are provided.

Keywords: higher education, P.A.T.H.S., stages of the sophomore year, student services

Recently in the student affairs literature, a considerable number of scholars have taken a special interest in the sophomore slump (Pattengale & Schreiner, 2000; Sanchez-Leguinel, 2008; Schaller, 2005). Sophomore slump is a term coined by Freedman in 1959 to describe the experience of second-year students who tend to disengage from college academically and socially (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006; Graunke & Woosley, 2005; Gump, 2007; Tobolowsky, 2008). The sophomore year is a developmental time in a student's life when deciding on a major and questioning life values become salient (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006).

One model that has received recent attention in the literature on the sophomore slump is the Stages of the Sophomore Year (Schaller, 2005). Schaller posited that sophomores move through four developmental stages during their college experience: random exploration; focused exploration; tentative choices; and commitment. According to Schaller (2005), the first stage, *random exploration*, is defined as a time of exuberance in which students tend to be enthusiastic about their college experience, but are not reflective about their career choices. When students begin to question their experiences, Schaller believes that they move into the *focused exploration* stage and develop feelings of anxiety about college life. The third stage, *tentative choices*, is described as a time when students begin to make exploratory choices about their career. Finally, Schaller identified the *commitment stage* as students moving beyond their anxiety to feeling confident in their occupational goals. Ultimately, Schaller's theoretical model focuses on *self-authorship* and the developmental challenges that students face moving through their second year of college (Gahagan & Hunter, 2006). Within this context, *self-authorship* means to gain control over and set goals toward one's career aspirations.

The Providing Access through Holistic Support (P.A.T.H.S.) Program

Drawing upon the work of Schaller (2005), P.A.T.H.S. was initiated in an effort to address the sophomore slump. P.A.T.H.S. incorporated Schaller's model in its program components and provided structured exploration activities to second-year students. Similar to the Stages of the Sophomore Year, P.A.T.H.S. assumed the dilemma faced by sophomores is related to students not staying in the Focused Exploration stage long enough, thereby forcing others to make decisions for them (Helkowski & Sheahan, 2004; Schaller, 2005). The ultimate goal of P.A.T.H.S. is to provide students with an opportunity to develop personal career or graduate school plans through reflections, advising, and exploration (see Table 1).

Table 1: P.A.T.H.S. Learning Domains and Goals

Learning Domain 1: Career and Graduate School Awareness Domain

- Goal 1. Increasing students' awareness of their graduate school options or career goals;
- Goal 2. Providing students with career counseling to increase their graduate school or career awareness.

Learning Domain 2: Major Declaration and Advising Domain

- Goal 1. Helping students to reflect on their vocation identity by declaring a major and understanding influences on their choice(s);
- Goal 2. Providing students with academic advising so that they can fully articulate their major of choice.

Learning Domain 3: Financial Fitness Domain

- Goal 1. Identifying two ways to better manage money during college;
- Goal 2. Articulating how to create a financial plan to better manage debt after graduation;
- Goal 3. Describing how two resources provided by the Financial Fitness Office help to increase students' ability to financially plan for college and beyond.

Learning Domain 4: Socially Responsible Leadership Domain

- Goal 1. Articulating what it means to be a socially responsible leader;
 - Goal 2. Describing how social responsibility relates to students' graduate or career success track choice(s).
-

The P.A.T.H.S. program is available for low-income students, first-generation students, and students of color beginning their sophomore year. Over the course of the 2009-2010 academic year, there were a total of 66 students from a Midwestern university who participated in P.A.T.H.S. Certificate Experience program. The P.A.T.H.S. Certificate Experience (see Figure 1) provides students with a structured set of Focused Exploration Activities

(FEAs) related to career placement or graduate school transition. These FEAs focus on four learning domains across nine university departments: Career and Graduate School Awareness; Major Declaration and Advising; Financial Fitness; and Socially Responsible Leadership. Each participant completed a total of 10 FEAs, including three campus advising sessions, and three online reflections from each learning domain. Students posted their reflections on Demon Direct, an online student reflection tracking system.

In addition, students received a P.A.T.H.S. Roadmap, which served as a visual guide to help them through the P.A.T.H.S. Certificate Experience. Each participant gained access to the

P.A.T.H.S. Roadmap online which contained a list of the FEAs (see Table 2), advisor meetings, and online reflections. Equally important, students obtained a P.A.T.H.S. Port or personal reflection journal while completing the certificate program. Finally, all students received training throughout the academic year on how to complete the 16 requirements and where to return their P.A.T.H.S. Port to confirm their certificate.

Table 2: P.A.T.H.S. FEAs

Major Declaration and Advising	Graduate School and Career Awareness	Financial Fitness	Socially Responsible Leadership
Know Your Academic Strengths & Weaknesses (1)	FIRO-B Workshop (3)	Debt 101: Credit Card & Loan (2)	Women as Leaders (1)
Major Decision Workshop (1)	Interviewing Skills (3)	Managing Your Paycheck (1)	Understanding Privilege Workshop (1)
Prepare for Finals (1)	How to work a Job and Internship Fair (5)	Money Management 101 (2)	Reflective Practice (1)
What are you going to do with that major? (1)	Resume Writing Workshop (1)	Create Your Money Plan (2)	Leadership Practices (1)
Advisor meeting (1)	Work Values (2)	Advisor meeting (1)	Inspiring Voices (1)
Quarterly Plan for Academic Success (1)	Prepare for Graduate School (2)		Discovering the Leader in You: MBTI (1)
	Find an Internship (5)		Goal Setting Workshop (1)
	Advisor meeting (1)		

Note: This table is one quarter worth of FEA activities.

The Purpose of this Study

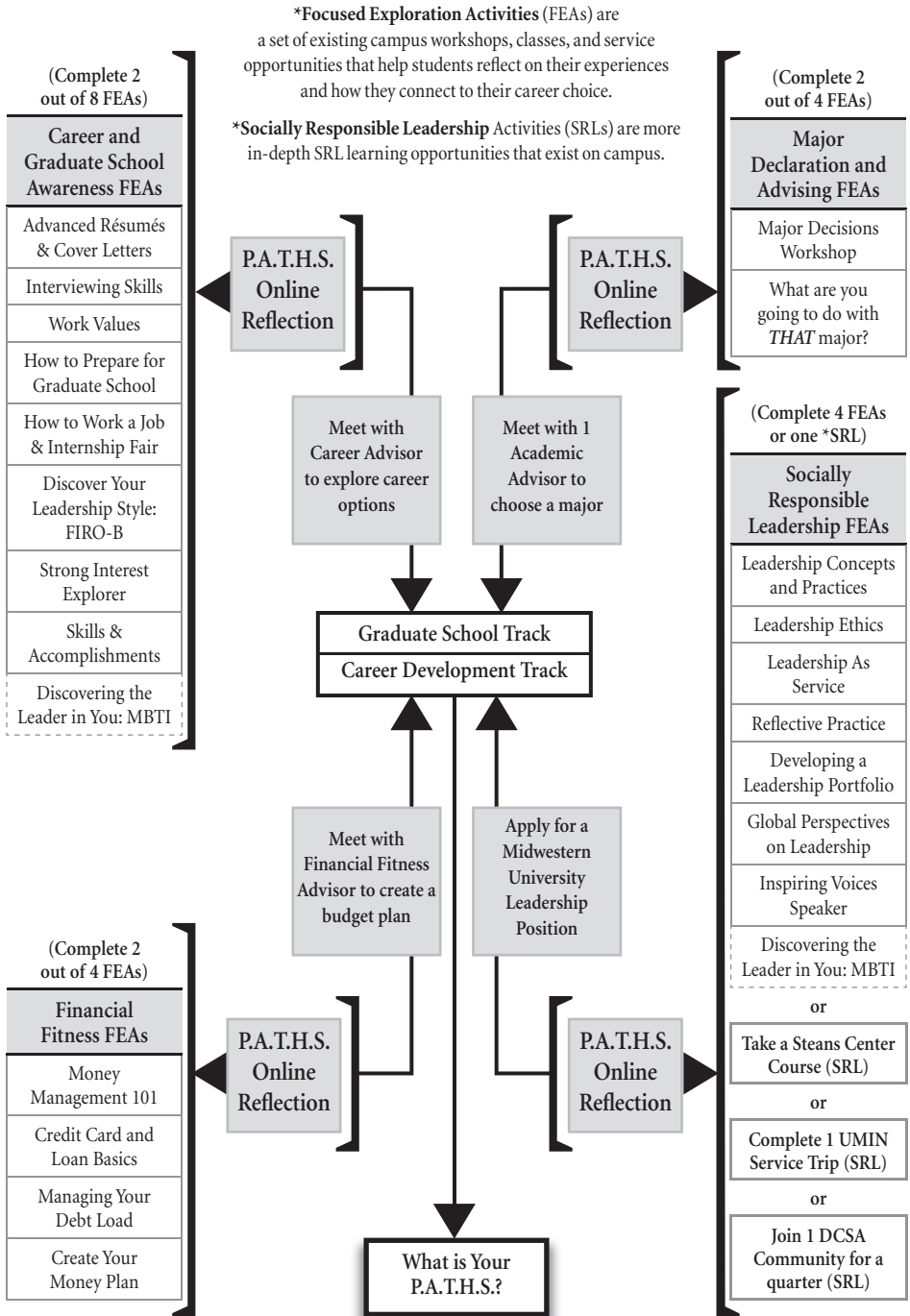
The purpose of this study was to theoretically examine P.A.T.H.S. through students' voices. Qualitative research analysis, expounded by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and Glaser and Strauss (1967), was used to examine the utility of P.A.T.H.S. and its program components. In particular, this study was interested in students' narrative accounts regarding the completion of the four learning domains and how those experiences helped them move into the focused exploration stage.

Method

Qualitative Analysis

A qualitative research design was used to explore the utility of P.A.T.H.S. through participants' narrative accounts. The data was taken from the participants' P.A.T.H.S. Roadmaps and P.A.T.H.S. Ports. A constant comparison method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), was used to construct the core ideas that emerged from the data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), constant comparison method is an inductive process that consists of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. During the first stage of the analysis, the data was

Figure 1: Providing Access Through Holistic Support (P.A.T.H.S.) FEAs* Roadmap



grouped into small units as a means of identifying themes. In the second stage, codes were developed around the themes that emerged from the data and they were placed into core related categories. Finally, one or more themes that expressed the core idea of each group were developed. This process continued until the data reached a point of saturation. Furthermore, to ensure the authenticity and credibility of research findings, the data was triangulated with multiple data sources such as member check, literature reviews, memos, and field notes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Analyses of students' responses from their P.A.T.H.S. Roadmaps and P.A.T.H.S. Ports were also conducted. Sample reflection questions include: What is important to you? What did you learn about your values? What influenced you to choose your vocation?

Results

The data analysis resulted in the identification of primary themes that emerged from students' participation in the P.A.T.H.S. program. The themes were centered on the P.A.T.H.S. learning domains. What emerged from the data was that P.A.T.H.S. interventions helped students to gain a deeper level of career awareness, student-faculty interaction, personal identity-career value correspondence, money management skills, and being a socially responsible leader. What follows are specific examples of each theme from the participants' narratives, P.A.T.H.S. Roadmaps, and P.A.T.H.S. Ports.

Domain 1: Career and Graduate School Awareness

After completing the Career and Graduate School Awareness Domain, students indicated an awareness of their career or graduate school options. Larry (2010), a first generation sophomore student best described this awareness as "the Roadmaps and the FEAs I've completed helped me take the steps toward fulfilling my vocation because I'm learning more about the different choices I have to succeed." Andrew (2010), another first generation student, added to this notion of awareness as he expressed the FEAs' provided him with an "opportunity to practice my interviewing skills and the option of going to graduate school to expand my skills and be more successful in life." The main point is the Career and Graduate School Awareness FEAs helped students to develop a sense of awareness, which in turn lead to a more comprehensive exploration of their career choices.

Pertaining to the Career Center, students in this study believed this portion of the program helped them to reflect in deep ways. According to one student,

I think the Careers portion of the Roadmap has helped secure my major. Talking to my career advisor has made me realize that I can major in Interactive Media, yet do everything else art-related I want by having a website that showcases all my different skills. (Helen, 2010)

Additionally, students thought the approachability and availability of faculty was the most salient part of this domain. All of the students indicated talking to faculty about their major options helped them to explore more about their career possibilities. The basic idea here is that faculty members play an important role in students' focus on exploration and, consequently, a healthy student-faculty interaction can potentially increase sophomores' academic integration on campus.

Domain 2: Major Declaration and Advising

In the second domain, students received academic advising in order to fully articulate their major of choice, reflect on their vocation identity, and understand how external forces might influence their choice. As students reflected on their career choices, the main theme that

emerged from the data was personal identity and career value correspondence. Many of the students posited the Major Declaration and Advising Domain helped them to understand that their personal identities and career values interact with each other and mutually influence their future career choices. According to one student,

Yes, my values are definitely connected with who I want to be or what I want to do after college. Yes, the track I will choose will help fulfill my values. Hopefully, the road or track I choose will help me end up in the field I want to work, and will allow me to use my skills and talents, making decent money, and will allow me to have fun. (Jackie, 2009)

Additionally, many students felt P.A.T.H.S. allowed them to explore the relationship between their personal identity and career values by challenging their past decisions. This point seems consistent with Schaller's (2005) notion that universities need to design academic environments that would allow students to gain self-authorship over their major and career choices.

Domain 3: Financial Fitness

In the third domain, the participants articulated ways to better manage their finances during college and the role money plays in their career aspirations. All of the participants believed money management was very important and was something they needed to exercise in their daily life. It was a surprise to the investigators that many of the participants did not find money to be the most salient part of their career choice. This was best captured in the following narrative,

I think money is essential in our lives. We need it to be able to live and have a good life. However money is not everything, we have to have time for our family and friends and help our community if needed. If we only care about money, I think we will become "workaholics" and lose valuable and special moments in our lives that will help us become better people. (Nathan, 2009)

When it comes to financial fitness, participants indicated P.A.T.H.S. taught them how to manage their money. After completing P.A.T.H.S., many of the participants contemplated a career path that would allow them to make money and spend quality time with family, friends, or significant others.

Domain 4: Socially Responsible Leadership

Finally, students articulated their understanding of social responsibility and how it is related to their future career choice or graduate school awareness. June's narrative best summarized what others thought regarding the meaning of social responsibility. He said,

A socially responsible leader, to me, involves being aware of the issues that currently affect the community (on a small and large scale) and fulfilling one's social obligation by donating money, time, and effort to see a change—whether it be you being the catalyst for that change or cause, or simply contributing to see improvements. (June, 2009)

Cassandra (2009) also provided a good example of social responsibility when she said, "I feel a socially responsible leader is someone who strives to become a better leader by first finding themselves and then by helping others. Becoming a better person, I feel comes from the individual and affects others through interaction." After completing the Socially Responsible Leadership Domain, the students were able to articulate what it means to be a socially responsible leader and related this to their career goals. With this aforementioned finding, many of the students reported it was important to find a major that allowed them to exercise their leadership potential and contribute to their communities.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study explored the utility of P.A.T.H.S. through students' narratives, several limitations are apparent. First, students' narrative accounts of P.A.T.H.S. were used to examine its utility, but given the qualitative nature of this study, it should not be generalized to the larger population of students. Another limitation of the study was that students could have answered the reflective questions based on the expectations of the P.A.T.H.S. researchers. Finally, the FEAs' might not be suitable for all colleges due to possible limited resources. Considering the aforementioned limitations, this article simply captured students' voices at a single institution, and practitioners/researchers in the field of student and academic affairs at other institutions may find this information useful. Therefore, it is recommended that scholars replicate this study at other institutions to determine best practice.

Conclusion

This preliminary investigation explored the utility of P.A.T.H.S. and applied the Stages of the Sophomore Year model (Schaller, 2005) to its program components. In the case of sophomore slump, the results of this study pointed to the importance of P.A.T.H.S. in aiding students in their career aspirations. It was evident from the students' narratives that P.A.T.H.S. was able to address issues related to the sophomore slump and enable them to be more reflective of their graduate school options or career choices. For example, P.A.T.H.S. provided students with an academic environment of FEAs that allowed them to move towards self-authorship and reflection in deep ways. Additionally, the issues of approachability of faculty were also noted as a salient aspect of P.A.T.H.S.' interventions. This result is similar to that of Graunke and Woosley (2005), who found a healthy student-faculty interaction was a unique predictor of sophomore students' academic success. Therefore, it is recommended that other institutions develop a program such as P.A.T.H.S. that will allow sophomore students to self-reflect and learn from prominent leaders within the academic community.

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Outcomes of Peer Education on Student Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract

The role of peer influence is well documented within higher education (Astin, 1993). In particular, research has shown one's peer group is especially influential on one's learning. Peer-to-peer education encounters in higher education institutions are shown to have a positive influence on student learning. When peer interactions involve educational or intellectual activities, the effects are almost always beneficial to the student (Terenzini, Pascarella, & Bliming, 1999). To foster successful undergraduate student learning, it is critical to promote creative mediums that make student learning accessible and effective. Peer-to-peer education programs in higher education can promote capable mechanisms for creating and maintaining such high levels of student learning. This article advances and reviews the affective and cognitive outcomes for both the recipient and for the educator in peer-to-peer learning contexts. Implications for policy, practice, and research are also advanced. The final analysis promotes such peer education programs and experiences in institutions of higher learning.

Keywords: advising, mentoring, peer education, peer learning, student learning

Peer influence is a forceful variable in the evolution of a student's educational experience. Research shows that one's peer group is particularly influential on learning (Annis, 1983; Benware & Deci, 1984; Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000; Goldschmid & Goldschmid, 1976; Moran & Gonyea, 2003). Astin (1993) stated: "The single most powerful source of influence on the undergraduate student's academic and personal development is the peer group. In particular, the amount of interaction among peers has far-reaching effects on nearly all areas of student learning and development" (p. 398). If fostering undergraduate student learning is a major goal of higher education, it is critical to promote creative learning mediums such as peer-to-peer encounters that not only make learning accessible, but also maintain a high level of learning outcomes.

Definitions and Scope

Questions remain as to what student learning is, the effect it has, and where and how it occurs. In many instances, the focus is strictly on cognitive gains (i.e., synthesis, recollection, comprehension, evaluation, and analysis) and demonstrated improvement in academic achievement, commonly measured with grade point average (Astin, 1993; Goldschmid & Goldschmid, 1976). While cognitive outcomes are important, educators and researchers cannot discount the fact learning can and does occur on an affective domain as well (i.e., values, motivations, attitudes, stereotypes, feelings, problem solving, and beliefs). Magolda's (1999) definition of student learning explains that learning occurs on a holistic continuum that integrates both cognitive and affective dimensions. For purposes of this review, *student learning outcomes* will include both cognitive and affective results.

A peer education encounter can happen in a variety of environments. University-sanctioned programs are established at almost every higher education institution and appear in assorted models (Topping, 1996; Winston & Ender, 1988). They range from unstructured, informal student meetings such as a discussion at a coffee shop, to highly structured, deliberate peer-to-peer tutoring programs in an individual class. The studies in this review explore peer education encounters in institutionally-organized programs. These programs are highly structured and deliberate in their learning and teaching approach. Additionally, they all occur outside of the classroom.

Specialized on-campus, living-learning communities and online or technologically enhanced peer learning communities are also influential and relatively new approaches to peer education. While they fit the definition of a peer education encounter, they are not included due to their specialized characteristics and independent body of literature. Therefore, the research question addressed within this article is: what are the cognitive and affective learning outcomes of the student tutor and tutee in a face-to-face, peer-to-peer education encounter?

Theoretical Foundations

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model, Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory and Astin's (1993) peer group influence research all provide useful conceptual frameworks for formulating a theoretical perspective on the outcomes of peer education on student learning. Kolb's experiential learning model states "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). The theory presents a cyclical model for learning consisting of four stages: (a) concrete experience; (b) reflective observation; (c) abstract conceptualization; and (d) active experimentation. Kolb also identifies four learning styles that correspond to these stages: (a) assimilators; (b) convergers; (c) accommodators; and (d) divergers. The theory presents a way of structuring an ideal peer education encounter using a learning cycle. The different stages of the cycle align with distinct learning styles. By recognizing students have different learning styles, Kolb's theory raises awareness of alternative pedagogical methods. It confirms learning outside of the classroom is not only possible, but also preferred.

Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory promotes learning contexts in which students play active roles in learning, much like they do in a peer-to-peer education encounter. University courses traditionally follow a transmissionist or instructionist model where a professor tells students information. Vygotsky's theory, in contrast, promotes collaboration between teachers and students to facilitate learning. Learning becomes a reciprocal experience for the student tutee and peer teacher. Vygotsky even recommends a social context where a more competent learner (tutor) is paired with a less competent one (tutee). Vygotsky explains: students need to work together to construct their learning, teach each other...in a socio-cultural environment. Opportunities for collaboration on difficult problem-solving tasks will offer support to students who are struggling with the material. By interacting with more capable students who continue to mediate transactions between the struggling students and the content, all students will benefit. (1978, pp. 44-45)

Vygotsky states learning occurs in the "Zone of Proximal Development" (1978, p. 86). This is the distance between a student's ability to perform a task with peer collaboration and the student's ability to solve the problem independently.

Astin's (1993) seminal study of peer group influence is one of the most widely cited works with respect to peer group influence on college students. Astin explains "cooperative learning

may be more potent ... because it motivates students to become more active and involved participants in the learning process” (p. 427). Astin’s work shows students tend to change their values, behavior, and academic plans in the direction of the dominant orientation of their peer groups. The frequency of student peer-to-peer interactions correlates with improvement in GPA, academic honors, analytical and problem-solving skills, leadership ability, public speaking skills and general knowledge.

Effects on the Tutee

Cognitive

Goldschmid and Goldschmid’s (1976) groundbreaking study was one of the first systematic reviews of peer education. Their work showed students were more willing to attempt difficult tasks when placed in pairs than when alone. Their research also indicated peer education participants attained higher GPAs and had lower rates of failure compared to untutored students. Furthermore, they found small peer-to-peer interactions, such as student dyads, were particularly effective because they prevented passivity. However, the study also noted that peer education is not a panacea for all instructional and cognitive learning problems. Instead, it is best used in conjunction with other teaching and learning methods.

Havnes’ (2008) report demonstrated peer-mediated learning can promote more creative cognitive processes among participants, which, in turn, can assist students in understanding the curriculum. This is crucial because it promotes students’ comprehension beyond that of what the professor can accomplish independently. Essentially, peers working together can expand a student’s understanding of a subject beyond even the basic comprehension goals expected in an instructorist only environment.

Topping’s (1996) work is influential with regards to the categorical typology of peer tutoring achievement outcomes. Topping explained that in the *personalized system of instruction*-PSI (i.e., students proceed at their own pace through programmed learning material with the goal of mastering each step; tutor involvement is largely for quality control) and *Supplemental Instruction* (i.e., cross-age with one leader working with several tutees usually in high risk courses) has the most cognitive standardization (Zaritsky, 1989). In 93% of studies, the PSI is associated with higher final examination performance as compared to a control group. Additionally, Topping (1996) found that *cross year-small group tutoring* (i.e., upper year students acting as tutors to six or less students) had the least disparate outcome variances. Cognitive gains in learning and critical thinking were all positive. Topping’s research also demonstrated structured tutoring, in addition to smaller groups, had the greatest effect on learning outcomes.

Peer education encounters produce comparable, if not better, student achievement gains than interactions with faculty (Kuh, 1995; Milem, 1998; Moust & Schmidt, 1994; Topping, 1996). Moust and Schmidt (1992, 1994) compared the academic achievement of students guided by peers and students guided by faculty members. They found student guided groups score just as high as faculty guided groups. Moust and Schmidt (1994) theorized that in a setting of more equality and mutuality, “students may feel more free to express opinions, ask questions and speculate about the problem at hand” (p. 480). In addition, Moran and Gonyea (2003) observed that peer interaction is a stronger predictor of student outcomes than are faculty contributions.

Tutees are also likely to evaluate peer education encounters positively with respect to cognitive learning. Luca and Clarkson (2002) showed students who benefited from peer education in a publishing class found lessons more interesting, applicable, and easier to follow. The students also indicated the peer education component helped them learn the subject content more

effectively, eliciting the highest rating on the evaluation. Tutees from a same year dyadic fixed role group reported very positive feedback, more often than students in any other type of peer education format (Topping, 1996).

It is important to recognize that these peer education outcomes are achieved in combination with faculty contribution. Overall, the literature verifies positive cognitive effects on the tutee when combined with other learning interactions. With this in mind, general college involvement seemingly has far less influence on student's perceived intellectual gains than does academically related peer interaction (Moran & Gonyea, 2003).

Affective

Students who use a peer education program have greater affective learning outcomes than those who do not (Topping & Ehly, 1998; Whitman & Fife, 1988). Devlin-Scherer (1984) expressed, "students in helping (educational) roles may serve as role models for successful behaviors" (p. 2). In particular, peer educators have an important influence on the orientation and enculturation of new students. For example, Majnerick's (2002) analysis of a peer referral program established that the program significantly helped incoming students understand the purposes of higher education and develop positive relationships with members of the university community.

Additionally, peer educators positively influence student motivation. Cantrell's (1996) study demonstrated that peer transfer guides positively affect the ability of incoming transfer students to persist to graduation. Similarly, Krause, McInnis, and Welle (2003) showed a significant positive relationship between the frequency of peer interactions outside the classroom and the variables of student satisfaction with the university experience, as well as students' perceptions of how well they are coping academically. Zaritsky (1989) indicated tutoring could serve to "protect" or "guard" students from failure (p. 8). Zaritsky writes, the "peer tutor can be so effective because he [sic] has more experience at being a student than he [sic] has at being anything else...the peer tutor can say, I went through the same thing you are going through" (p. 9). Finally, research indicates that student interaction with peers is positively linked to the quality of student effort. Student tutees demonstrated a higher quality of effort that in turn, is linked to persistence (Krause, McInnis, & Welle, 2003; Moran & Gonyea, 2003; Tinto, 1993).

Effects on the Tutor

Cognitive

Tutors, even more than tutees, experience large positive cognitive gains due to peer education encounters (Annis, 1983; Benware & Deci, 1984; Reed, 1974; Whitman & Fife, 1988). Reed's (1974) early work demonstrated that initial peer education programs (which began in the early 1970s) focused on improving academically deficient students. While Reed articulated that this was and continues to be effective, an even larger (and perhaps unanticipated) cognitive advancement is in the individual carrying out the teaching act (Zaritsky, 1989). As Whitman and Fife (1988) explicated, "to teach is to learn twice" (p. 14). Tutors tend to reinforce their own knowledge when they prepare material to teach someone else (Reed, 1974). Annis' (1983) work demonstrated that tutoring results in significantly greater cognitive gains for the tutor than the tutee. Students who prepare material and then teach it score higher than students who prepare only. This finding emphasizes the importance of the actual teaching process for cognitive learning outcomes. Additionally, Benware and Deci's (1984) research on active versus passive motivational sets in learning, found that students who learn in order to teach are more intrinsically motivated and have higher conceptual-critical thinking skills. They are

perceived to be more actively engaged with the environment than students who learn strictly for an exam or assignment.

Whitman and Fife (1988) expanded on Durling and Schick's (1976) verbalizing phenomenon in a peer education context. They found that students talking with a peer or confederate perform at higher cognitive levels than students speaking with the experimenter. Whitman and Fife (1988) explained "[p]eer-mediated instruction is student-centered, at least for the peer teacher. Their involvement is active, and they feel responsible for learning the material—not to take a test, but to help another person" (p. 76). Verbalizing for the purpose of helping another student understand the material produces cognitive benefits not gained from verbalizing to demonstrate self-mastery.

Moust and Schmid (1994), in their analysis of peer versus faculty teaching outcomes, found while faculty and staff tutors make more extensive use of their subject-matter knowledge, student tutors are more cognitively congruent. This means they make more relevant contributions, ask more stimulating questions, and evaluate the group's functioning more often. Also, peer tutors are better able to understand and express themselves at their tutee's knowledge and social context level.

Affective

Student educator outcomes in the affective learning realm are also positive. Development of skills and core competencies are even more fruitful for the tutor than for the tutee (Annis, 1983; Benware & Deci, 1984; Reed, 1974; Whitman & Fife, 1988). Goldschmid and Goldschmid (1976) explained how student educators profit on an interpersonal, affective level: "their self-esteem increases and their attitude towards the course and the school or teaching and learning in general becomes more positive" (p. 26). The Goldschmid's found that the tutor demonstrated an increase in cooperation, decrease in competitive behavior and increase in motivation, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Similarly, Frisz (1984) studied academic and professional decision making in student peer advisors and found the biggest effect of the program on the tutors-to-be was in their affective skill sets and in career development, especially for psychology and counseling students. Brack, Millard and Shah's (2008) study showed peer educators have higher levels of self-esteem, more leadership skills and less personal risk-taking in regards to drug-use, smoking, and sexual promiscuity than their counterparts. Their findings suggest that peer educators are more successful and careful than the average college student, and they model appropriate choices and actions for their peers.

However, the interactions and transmission of affective outcomes between peer educators and students does not happen smoothly (Colvin, 2007). Colvin's ethnographic study on peer educator social dynamics explained tutors actually spend a lot of time in "impression management" (2007, p. 173). Tutor and student relationships can be filled with misunderstandings and power struggles. Therefore, affective learning outcomes for the tutor do not always happen automatically or instantaneously. Tutors must constantly manage how they are viewed by others and continually establish their credibility.

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Research

At a time when higher education is being pushed to "do more with less" (Luca & Clarkson, 2002, p. 2), peer education models can provide an effective and economical system to increase student learning. The increased use of less expensive, student paraprofessional educators could help offset higher education's dwindling financial resources and provide support to over-burdened faculty and staff (Diambra, 2003). Faculty and staff should inform students of on-campus peer education resources and make peer education encounters available and applicable to all levels.

However, in order to be effective, peer education programs must employ best practices. In designing peer education programs, practitioners should focus on key outcomes and a holistic design that contributes to students' lifelong affective and cognitive development (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 1999). For example, the more students a tutor is responsible for, the lower the positive learning outcomes. Therefore, peer education programs should focus on student cross-year dyads in a structured format. This format, verified over and over again in the research, provides the most optimal environment for positive learning outcomes (Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000; Fantuzzo, Riggio, Connelly, & Dimef, 1989; Topping, 1996). Furthermore, proper training of peer educators is a necessary component of successful peer education models (Ender & Newton, 2000; Whitman & Fife, 1988). Peer educators who are effectively trained and who have input on the structure of the program are more successful than are peer educators who lack formal training or are not allowed input on the process. Therefore, program administrators should have a solid training program in place and be open to changing circumstances and student input. Finally, practitioners must challenge the incorrect assumption that peer assistance or tutoring programs are only for struggling students. Today, most peer education programs are available to any student who wants to increase learning or reinforce ideas and processes. Peer education programs are no longer just for "at-risk" students (Greater University Tutoring Service and UW Peer Learning Association, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010).

In the policy arena, there are several factors influencing a peer education program's effectiveness. First, it is essential to have a permanent physical space (Diambra, 2003; Flores & Weeks, 1988). A "center" provides stability and permanence and helps identify the programs' legitimacy and necessity. Second, consistent assessment methods should be implemented. Systematic assessment and continual data driven decision-making will improve the peer education program and should be at the forefront of policy-making. Finally, tutors should follow clearly defined guidelines. One unforeseen aspect of many peer education programs is the number of contacts peer tutors or advisors make outside of the program center or "official" tutoring time (Flores & Weeks, 1988). Policy regulations should account for this and should address issues such as what is expected as far as assisting students outside their scheduled work time and how to talk to students about boundaries. Compensation and time requirements should be adjusted in anticipation of this "flex-time" tutors will inevitably accrue outside of regular work hours.

Finally, recommendations for further research in the study of peer education are robust. First, further research should focus on the compensation aspect of peer education programs. For instance, would researchers see higher cognitive and affective learning outcomes in both tutees/tutors when peer educators are compensated at a higher rate than those who are not? Few studies explore how learning is tied to peer educator compensation. While almost all university-sanctioned programs compensate their peer educators in some way, it is varied and inconsistent. Second, research is limited in its longitudinal scope. The literature provides a good analysis on learning outcomes in specific programs or classes at a point in time. However, questions remain, such as: what are the longitudinal effects of tutors or tutees outcomes over the course of their tenure at the institution? Does it continue to increase? Or, does complacency or a sense of sameness set in after a certain point where affective and cognitive gains are no longer apparent?

Conclusion

Higher education practitioners, from all areas of expertise, are called upon to intentionally create an environment that enhances student learning and development. University-sanctioned

peer education programs are one of the most reasonable and effective tools in responding to this call. Peer education programs are designed to accomplish good practice principles: active learning, educational partnerships and supportive communities. Additionally, peer education encounters positively influence both the tutors' and the tutees' cognitive and affective learning development. Peer education programs recognize learning is not simply a cognitive process involving the manipulation of constructs and data. Instead, learning is an important social process that is continuously shaped through interaction with others. For these reasons, higher education institutions should continue to develop, support, and evaluate their peer education programs. The face-to-face peer education medium plants a solid and formative foundation for students to develop the cognitive and affective skills they will come to rely on in an ever-increasingly interactive, dynamic, and social world.

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Developing and Implementing Learning Goals for Student Affairs Practitioners

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Abstract

Using document analysis, the purpose of this study is to explore whether a shared set of professional standards could be formulated for student affairs practitioners based on the contents of several documents generated by the leadership of the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA), the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), and the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). The researchers developed a shared set of learning goals from the 19 documents provided by NASPA, ACPA, and CAS including (a) reports from steering committees, (b) PowerPoint presentations, (c) proposals, (d) professional development curricula, (e) assessment and evaluation documents, and (f) a summary of minutes from board meetings. The researchers concluded there were many similarities in the associations' competencies and standards, which the researchers attributed to NASPA, ACPA, and CAS' commitment to defining excellence in student affairs by establishing standards and competencies for student affairs practitioners. The findings from the study include a set of learning goals applicable to institutions and associations. This research may be used to inform the design and refinement of several professional development opportunities for student affairs practitioners as well as higher education administration graduate student curricula.

Keywords: competencies, learning goals, learning outcomes, professional development, standards

Standards serve as the foundational criteria by which many professions choose to ascertain the quality of their professional practice and thus inform how they seek professional development. Student affairs practitioners seek generalized professional development primarily from two student affairs umbrella organizations: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA) and College Student Educators International (ACPE), which offer a variety of resources for educators. ACPA, NASPA, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) serve to inform professional standards for student affairs in combination with discipline-specific organizations (e.g., Association of College Unions International and the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International).

Many individuals within the profession have explored the possibility of a unified set of competencies for student affairs practitioners (Creamer et al., 1992; Janosik, Carpenter, & Creamer, 2006; Kuk & Hughes, 2003). However, a study to combine all of these perspectives has not yet been conducted. This study shares the results of a document analysis that included 19 board-sanctioned official documents generated by leadership in NASPA, ACPA, and CAS, as well as literature previously published.

Methodology and Research Design

During a four-month period, the researchers analyzed documents provided by NASPA, ACPA, and CAS and investigated (a) reports from steering committees, (b) PowerPoint presentations, (c) proposals, (d) professional development curriculum, (e) assessment and evaluation documents, and (f) a summary of minutes from board meetings. The document analysis was informed by specific research questions:

1. What are the expected learning goals for student affairs practitioners?
2. Are there differences in expected levels of achievement of each learning goal for basic or entry, intermediate or mid-level, and advanced or senior levels of student affairs practitioners?

It is hoped that this research may be used to inform the design and refinement of several professional development opportunities for student affairs practitioners as well as higher education administration graduate student curricula.

Findings and Discussion

The purpose of the study was to identify a set of learning goals for all student affairs practitioners. The themes that emerged from the document analysis are written as learning goals in no intended order of preference and include a student affairs practitioners' ability to: (a) provide counseling, facilitation, and/or structures that support and enhance student learning and development, (b) develop and expand students' and colleagues' leadership skills and opportunities, (c) incorporate diversity into curricular and co-curricular experiences, (d) incorporate assessment, evaluation, and research into practice, (e) demonstrate organizational management, resource development, and promote fiscal responsibility, (f) accurately interpret and comply with laws and institutional policies, (g) commit to guiding principles for ethical and collaborative professional practice, and (h) demonstrate sound supervision and conflict resolution skills.

The findings will be shared with institutional leadership to enable them to implement a professional development curriculum on their own campuses. In addition, graduate student affairs program faculty may choose to utilize this information in the development of their curriculum, while NASPA and ACPA may use the information to further define and focus their professional development curricula. Table 1 summarizes eight learning goals that emerged from properties derived from a document analysis of the associations' documents, along with themes that emerged from the literature review.

Table 1

Emergence of Learning Goals

Learning Goal	Properties that Could Inform Outcomes	Original Document Theme	Literature Review
Provide counseling, facilitation, and/or structures that support and enhance student learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling and guidance • Counseling and application of theories • Foundations of student development • Institutional role in student development • Student development and utilization of learning theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising and helping • Student learning and development • Student characteristics, development and learning • Interactive competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising students and student organizations (Waple, 2006) • Helping and interpersonal skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Student development theory (Lovell & Kosten, 2000)

Learning Goal	Properties that Could Inform Outcomes	Original Document Theme	Literature Review
Develop and expand students' and colleagues' leadership skills and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teambuilding techniques • Leadership theories and development • Enhancing campus community • Serving as an advocate • Fostering a connected environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General skills • Leadership, administration, and management • Student outcome domain • Principles of good practice for student affairs • Interactive competencies (with colleagues and the institution) • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration and management (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Management theory, leadership theory (Waple, 2006) • Administrative, management, and leadership skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Leadership (Rybalkina, 2005)
Incorporate diversity into curricular and co-curricular experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness • Expanding cultural knowledge and sensitivity • Designing and supervising cultural programming • Equality and tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pluralism and inclusion • Culture, diversity, environment, and organizational development • Identifying student learning and development outcomes • Student outcome domain • Pluralism, diversity, and inclusive environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Diversity (Rybalkina, 2005) • Multicultural awareness and knowledge (Waple, 2006)
Incorporate assessment, evaluation, and research into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and interpretation of data • Assessment and evaluation of data • Assessment, evaluation, and research • Data strategies • Data collection • Assessing learning and development outcomes • Survey design • Data driven decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, evaluation, and research • Leadership, administration, and management • Assessment design • Integrity of information and research • Surveys used for assessment purposes • Assessment instruments • Politics of assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, evaluation, and assessment (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Assessment and evaluation skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997)
Incorporate diversity into curricular and co-curricular experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness • Expanding cultural knowledge and sensitivity • Designing and supervising cultural programming • Equality and tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pluralism and inclusion • Culture, diversity, environment, and organizational development • Identifying student learning and development outcomes • Student outcome domain • Pluralism, diversity, and inclusive environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Diversity (Rybalkina, 2005) • Multicultural awareness and knowledge (Waple, 2006)

Learning Goal	Properties that Could Inform Outcomes	Original Document Theme	Literature Review
Incorporate assessment, evaluation, and research into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and interpretation of data • Assessment and evaluation of data • Assessment, evaluation, and research • Data strategies • Data collection • Assessing learning and development outcomes • Survey design • Data driven decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, evaluation, and research • Leadership, administration, and management • Assessment design • Integrity of information and research • Surveys used for assessment purposes • Assessment instruments • Politics of assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, evaluation, and assessment (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Assessment and evaluation skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997)
Demonstrate organizational management, resource development, and promote fiscal responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources, development and management • Fiscal management and strategic planning • Technology management • Long-range planning • Supervision and organizational management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership, management, and administration • Student outcome domain • Standards of professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management (Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet, 2005) • Managing organizations and groups (Kuk, Cobb, & Forrest, 2007) • Administration and management (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Budget and fiscal management (Waple, 2006)
Accurately interpret and comply with laws and institutional policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal theories • Identifying and acting on legal issues • Developing and managing legal issues • Legal theories and development • Knowledge and compliance with legal issues • Compliance with campus policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal foundations • Laws, governance and policy • General knowledge • Confidentiality • Principle IV justice • Human resources • Standards of professional practice (institutional policies and procedures) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical and legal knowledge and decision-making skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Human Relations (Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet, 2005) • Federal policies/regulations (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Legal issues in higher education (Waple, 2006)
Commit to guiding principles for ethical and collaborative professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to higher education • Promotes mission statement • Knowledge and standards for professional practice • Student development theories • Ethical conduct • Ethics and integrity • Shared ethical principles • Ethical leadership and commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values, history, and philosophy • Student characteristics, development, and learning • Standards of professional practice (professional responsibility) • Standards of professional practice (institutional policies and procedures) • CAS statement of shared ethical principles • Fidelity • Ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student development (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Professional knowledge content (Kuk, Cobb, & Forrest, 2007) • Student development theory, student demographics and characteristics (Waple, 2006) • Ethical and legal knowledge and decision-making skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997) • Ethics in student affairs work (Waple, 2006)

Learning Goal	Properties that Could Inform Outcomes	Original Document Theme	Literature Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate sound supervision and conflict resolution skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management and resolution • Motivation and building morale • Supervision and organization management • Institutional culture • Fostering a connected environment • Enhancing and applying communication skills • Crisis management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership, management, and administration (human resources) • Leadership • General knowledge • Principle VII affiliation Student outcome domain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human relations, management (Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet, 2005) Leadership, organizational development and behavior (Lovell & Kosten, 2000) • Crisis and conflict management, supervision of staff, student development theory, campus and community relations, and career development (Waple, 2006)

Note: Findings from Document Analysis and Literature Review

The first learning goal—provide counseling, facilitation, and/or structures that support and enhance student learning and development - reflects the significance of advising students and student organizations. It is also noted as a highly essential skill not only in the literature review (Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Rybalkina, 2005), but also in the NASPA, ACPA, and CAS documents.

Based on the results of the study, the second learning goal—develop and expand students’ and colleagues’ leadership skills and opportunities—appears central to the role of a student affairs practitioner. For example, NASPA, ACPA, and CAS place great emphasis on the development of these areas and delineated competencies and/or standards for their members. By creating and enhancing leadership opportunities, student affairs practitioners can help to produce “environments that encourage students to view themselves as having the potential to make meaningful contributions to their communities” (ACPA, 2007, p. 14) while “enhancing the collegiate experience for all students” (NASPA, 2007, p. 3). This learning goal, which encompasses a variety of skills, can provide a broad range of benefits for students.

The third learning goal—incorporating diversity into curricular and co-curricular experiences—reflects the importance of multicultural awareness and knowledge (Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Waple, 2006) as well as diversity (Rybalkina, 2005). The researchers found the associations place significance on “pluralism and inclusion” (ACPA, 2007, p. 14), “culture, diversity, environment, and organization development” (NASPA, 2007, p. 5), and “a cross-cultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people” (CAS Statement on Shared Ethical Principles, 2006, p. 3). In addition, the CAS student outcome domain, humanitarianism and civic engagement, notes the importance of “understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences” (2008, p. 3). Student affairs practitioners may also want to look not only at the campus, but also in the community to add diversity to the learning experiences of students.

The fourth learning goal—incorporate assessment, evaluation, and research into practice - is critical to providing awareness about “student learning and satisfaction, organizational issues and development, professional development and training, student development, and other emergent issues ...” (ACPA, 2007, p. 7). NASPA documents also emphasize assessment and research practices, which call for “evaluations and assessment to determine outcomes and identify areas for improvement” (2007, p. 3). *CAS General Standards* emphasizes the importance

of developing “systematic plans and processes to meet internal and external accountability expectations with regard to program as well as student learning and development outcomes” (2008, p. 9). Thus, assessment, evaluation, and research form the basis for implementing and improving programs and services, reflecting the need for making changes when necessary.

Demonstrate organizational management, resource development, and promote fiscal responsibility, the fifth learning goal, is based on the emphases in the associations’ documents and in the literature. For example, the *ACPA Document on Professional Competencies* devotes five pages to the leadership and management/administration competency. The NASPA leadership, administration, and management matrix cell states that a student affairs professional “manages fiscal, physical, and human resources responsibility and effectively” (2007, p. 4). *CAS General Standards* (2008) also addresses organization, management, and financial resources, noting, “programs and services must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals,” (p. 6). In addition to this document, the researchers also reviewed *CAS Characteristics of Individual Excellence for Professional Practice in Higher Education*.

The sixth learning goal is to accurately interpret and comply with laws and institutional policies. In its legal foundations competency, ACPA (2007) notes the importance of “understanding and applying knowledge of legal issues to one’s work environment and relationships” (p. 9), while the NASPA matrix law, governance, and policy (2009, p. 5) addresses the topic. In addition to reviewing CAS documents, including *CAS Characteristics of Individual Excellence for Professional Practice in Higher Education* (2006) and *CAS General Standards* (2008), the researchers reviewed the literature (Burkard, Cole, Ott & Stoflet, 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2000) in making their decision to incorporate this particular learning goal.

At the foundation of the student affairs profession is the seventh learning goal, commit to the guiding principles for ethical and collaborative professional practice. According to the *ACPA Document on Professional Competencies* (2007), a student affairs professional should know and comprehend the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA as well as “any other professional association directly relevant to one’s working context” (2007, p. 9). NASPA’s matrix encompasses ethics and values in its matrix cell entitled values, history, and philosophy of the profession, while CAS addresses ethics in *CAS Characteristics of Individual Excellence for Professional Practice in Higher Education* and in *CAS General Standards*. The researchers found many references to the importance of collaboration in the associations’ documents and in the literature. For instance, “works collaboratively” (2007, p. 4) is a standard from the NASPA leadership, administration, and management matrix cell and also appeared in *CAS Characteristics of Individual Excellence for Professional Practice in Higher Education* (2006).

The eighth and final learning goal—demonstrate sound supervision and conflict resolution skills—is based on the ACPA human resources sub-competency and the NASPA leadership, administration, and management cell. For example, the ACPA human resource sub-competency encompasses conflict management, teambuilding, motivation, and supervision (2007, p. 11-12) while the NASPA leadership, administration, and management cell notes that a student affairs professional “counsels, advises, supervises, and leads individual groups effectively” (p. 4). *CAS General Standards* (2008) addresses this topic under the campus and external relations section. The importance of sound supervision and conflict resolution skills is reflected in the literature (Burkard et al., 2005; Kuk, Cobb, & Forrest, 2007; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Waple, 2006).

Dimensions of Learning Goals

The researchers explored whether there are differences in expected level of achievement of learning goals for basic/entry, intermediate/mid-level, and advanced/senior levels of student

affairs practitioners. The researchers were not able to answer this question based upon the analysis of the documents since only one document, the ACPA Document on Professional Competencies (2007), differentiated the particulars for each standard in accordance with skill levels.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The researchers recommend the expected levels of achievement of each learning goal be based on the number of years of experience in the profession. Doing so allows professional development opportunities to be intentionally designed to align with various levels of expected learning.

The researchers also recommend all student affairs professional associations align their professional development opportunities with the shared learning goals. Providing professional development opportunities that align with the shared learning goals may enhance the integrity of the profession by providing a body of evidence that informs professional practice. Furthermore, if evaluation of professional development opportunities is also encouraged, the profession of student affairs will embody the very culture it espouses - a learning organization committed to the development of the whole person. In addition, if it is determined that expected levels of achievement of learning goals varies by number of years in the profession, then the shared learning goals may also inform learning outcomes for graduate preparation programs.

Based on findings, the researchers concluded there were many similarities in the associations' competencies or standards. The researchers attributed their findings to NASPA, ACPA, and CAS' commitment to defining excellence in study affairs by establishing standards and competencies for student affairs practitioners. Therefore, in order to create a framework for professional development opportunities, there must first be a shared set of learning goals. After a shared set of learning goals has been adopted, outcomes for each goal can be developed.

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Influence of Virtual Communities on College Students' Psychosocial Development

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Abstract

This article examines the effects of virtual communities on college students' psychosocial development. Using Astin's (1999) Involvement Theory, positive and negative effects of social networks are examined. Virtual communities can positively impact psychosocial development by connecting students more rapidly with each other, helping first-year students adjust to college life, and increasing retention rates. Negative effects of social networks are increased loneliness of introverted students, Internet addiction, unrealistic time demands on professors, and unhealthy and illegal activity. Recent developments such as employers using Facebook as a screening process for candidates and suicide resulting from web posts are considered. Initial research indicates there are differences between online relationships and face-to-face relationships that can result in a lack of interpersonal emotional connection. Student affairs professionals must monitor student emotional health while also learning to use social networks in ways that offer a healthy connection to students. Negative effects of overuse of social networks need to be addressed through offering personality testing and workshops on positive use of virtual communities.

Keywords: college student, involvement theory, psychosocial development, social network, virtual communities

The use of virtual communities among college students today is rising (Heiberger & Harper, 2008). In fact, students now use online mediums to connect socially with others as much as, and possibly more than, actual face-to-face interaction (Heiberger & Harper, 2008). With this new social development, questions arise concerning how virtual communities are affecting college students' psychosocial development. These questions are particularly important for professionals working directly with college students. The opportunity for research and development within the field of student affairs is noteworthy considering the personal contact many student affairs professionals have with college students in environments such as residence halls and student unions, where significant psychosocial development takes place. Major research is currently underway to determine the impact of this new form of communication on college students' psychosocial development (Cotton, 2008; Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Higher Education Research Institute, 2007). Initial research alludes to both positive and negative patterns of behavior related to virtual communities (BBC News, 2006; Conneely, 2006; Cotten, 2008; Haefner, 2009; Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Higher Education Research Institute, 2007; Lowery, 2004; Morgan & Cotten, 2003; Reimer, 2006), and these behavioral patterns have implications for how student affairs professionals interact with college students. Using Alexander Astin's (1999) Involvement Theory as a premise, positive and negative patterns of behavior formed through social networking will be studied in this article. Several suggestions will be offered for how student affairs professionals can foster an environment that teaches and encourages healthy use of virtual communities as part of holistic student development.

Literature Review

Astin described student involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” (1999, p. 518). There are five basic assumptions in Astin’s Involvement Theory. First, as noted in Astin’s definition of involvement, a commitment of physical and psychological energy is required. Second, there are varying degrees to which students become involved in the academic environment. Third, involvement should be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. Fourth, the impact of a program on a student is in direct proportion to the qualitative and quantitative investment of the student in the program. Finally, the success of any educational program or guideline is dependent on that program or guideline’s ability to cause students to become more involved in the academic experience (Astin, 1999). It is from this framework that this article evaluates the positive and negative effects of virtual communities on the psychosocial development of college students.

Positive Impacts of Virtual Communities

There is sustained evidence that first-year students who are substantially engaging in online social networks are also more involved in campus activities and programs, seeking out face-to-face connections on campus, and possessing a sense of security in their college and social life (Higher Education Research Institute, 2007). According to a study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) in 2007, students who spent more time using social networks also reported spending more time socializing with friends, partying, and being involved with student clubs and groups. Interestingly, students who often use social networks also reported spending the same amount of time or more time attending classes and labs and studying as students who used social networks less (HERI, 2007).

This information supports another positive outcome of online socialization. Astin (1999) asserted that the amount of a student’s social interaction serves as an indication of whether that student will stay enrolled at a college. According to a HERI (2007) study, students who frequently engaged in online social interaction had a higher chance of completing a college degree at an institution than students who did not engage in social networks very often. This correlates to Astin’s (1999) theory in that nearly a third of students who spent more time on social network sites (which caused more face-to-face interaction between students) reported being “very satisfied” with their social lives, whereas only 20 percent of those who spent little time on social networks reported the same satisfaction with their social lives (HERI, 2007, p. 2).

Social networks also serve as healthy transitional tools for those starting college. “Decreased uncertainty, improving communication, and fostering social interaction” (Cotten, 2008, p. 67) are all benefits enjoyed by those who engage socially through technology. A study of first-year college students showed Internet use for social networking caused depressive symptoms to decrease. The same study found Internet use for reasons other than social networking caused an increase in depressive symptoms (Morgan & Cotten, 2003). Additionally, Gordon, Juang, and Syed (2007) found college students are primarily using the Internet for social reasons. Gordon et al. (2007) performed a study of undergraduate psychology students in which the top five uses of the Internet were reported to be e-mailing friends, getting help with school work, talking with friends, e-mailing family, and instant messaging. Thus, the potential for social networks aiding in the transition of students to college is high considering the frequent use of these sites among college students.

There also seems to be a connection between the effects of social networks on extroverts and introverts. A study by Kraut et al. (2002) indicated individuals who are extroverted benefit from Internet use that includes social networking. These students reported “increased well-being, ... decreased levels of loneliness, decreased negative affect, decreased time pressure,

and increased self-esteem” (p. 64). Therefore, social networking can provide emotional health benefits to extroverts.

Negative Impacts of Virtual Communities

In contrast, the areas of improvement for extroverts were areas of decline among introverts who use the Internet and social networks extensively. While extroverts who had prior loneliness benefited from Internet use, introverts who had prior loneliness only became more lonely and depressed (Kraut et al., 2002). In a study of predominantly first-year college students, those who had tendencies toward Internet-dependency admitted if they had more friends they would probably be on the Internet less (Kubey, Lavin, & Barrows, 2001). The consequences of this admission are expanded upon by Michael Bugeja, Director of the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University. Bugeja (2005) claims as individuals spend more time in online dialogue with people, they consequently forget how to engage meaningfully face-to-face. If such findings are correct, students who are dependent on the Internet due to a lack of friendships risk becoming even more isolated from other students. Considering the negative effects of Internet dependency, this is an important area for further research.

An increasingly popular form of social networking is *massively multiplayer online role-playing games* (MMORPG). While MMORPG's are still a rather new phenomenon, the addictive nature of the games is becoming evident (Reimer, 2006; BBC News, 2006). Dr. Maressa Hecht Orzack, a clinical psychologist and founder and coordinator of the Computer Addiction Service, claims that up to 40 percent of those who play the MMORPG World of Warcraft are addicted (Reimer, 2006). She states that MMORPG's are designed using variable ratio reinforcement. Players are rewarded for correct behavior, and the number of times this behavior must be exhibited before another reward is given is constantly changing. Dr. Orzack claims this causes players to become addicted, and careers and personal relationships begin to unravel (Reimer, 2006). Addictions to MMORPG's have become so widespread a videogame addiction clinic has opened in the Netherlands (BBC News, 2006). The specialized clinic was opened due to an increasing number of videogame addicts coming to a general addiction clinic for help, according to consultant Keith Bakker (BBC News, 2006). One patient at the videogame addiction clinic came because he was spending up to 17 hours a day playing MMORPG's. He admits his addiction left him with no social life and no friends, only cyber-friends (BBC News, 2006). Bakker notes that videogame addicts have similar symptoms to gambling addicts, jeopardizing relationships, health, education, and careers. He claims the videogame addiction clinic seeks to help patients cope with life struggles in healthy ways and assist patients in developing true self-esteem (BBC News, 2006). Due to the negative effects of Internet dependency, and specifically MMORPG dependency, on psychosocial development, this is an area that will continue to be of importance to student affairs professionals.

Another adverse effect of online communities is made evident through a study by Lowery (2004), who asserts college students use online mediums of communication so frequently, they have become accustomed to receiving responses to online communication almost instantaneously and see a lack of a quick response as a shortcoming of institutional professionals. Social networks can create unrealistic expectations. Therefore, while a student might expect immediate responses when chatting online with a close friend, this same expectation cannot be transferred to online communication with professionals and acquaintances.

Another negative effect of virtual communities is inappropriate or illegal behavior or information made public through online mediums (Conneely, 2006; Dahne, 2006). On a practical level, inappropriate posts on social networks can affect one's chances for future employment. According to a 2009 CareerBuilder survey, 45 percent of employers used social

networking sites to find out more about potential employees (Haefner, 2009). This was a 23 percent increase from the year before. The most used social networks when screening job applicants were Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, blogs, and Twitter (Haefner, 2009). When looking at social network sites, employers are evaluating more than one would first suspect. According to CareerBuilders' survey, the top consideration of employers when looking at social networks was the candidate's personality and the degree to which a candidate would fit into the culture of an organization. Employers also considered professional qualifications, creativity, communication skills, others' references about the candidate, awards and accolades, and whether the candidate was well-rounded (Haefner, 2009). While some job seekers use social networks to their advantage, there are many who are not being seriously considered for jobs because of the content on their social network pages. Thirty-five percent of employers stated they have passed over a job candidate based on content found on a social networking site. Most often, candidates were dismissed due to inappropriate photographs or information, posts with content about alcohol or drug use, gossip about a previous employer or co-workers, poor communication skills, discriminatory content, false professional qualifications, and sharing of confidential information (Haefner, 2009). Thus the need for appropriate use of social networks is a practical one; college students beginning a successful career can significantly improve their chances by censoring what they post on their social network pages.

The consequences of hurtful or illegal posts also can be much more dramatic. The suicide of Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi serves as a tragic example. Tyler's roommate and another student used Twitter and online video streaming to broadcast an intimate encounter between Tyler and another individual (Foderaro, 2010). This episode of social networking abuse ended with Tyler posting "Jumping off the gw bridge sorry" on his Facebook page and jumping off the George Washington Bridge later that day (Foderaro, 2010). This situation makes clear the need for more research on how to handle illegal posts on social networks.

Implications and Recommendations for Student Affairs Professionals

The influence of social networks on college students' psychosocial development is a complex issue with many questions to be answered. While there are not many studies on the psychosocial effects of social networks on college students, Heiberger and Harper (2008) suggested "Facebook designers seem to understand Astin's Involvement Theory" with regard to how Facebook is structured (p. 24). Heiberger and Harper (2008) specifically examined Facebook through the lens of the five postulates of Astin's (1999) Involvement Theory. They concluded Facebook does indeed meet the criteria of the first postulate, exerting physical and psychological energy, noting in 2007 Facebook received more visits from university students than any other website in the United States (Heiberger & Harper, 2008). However, does Facebook truly fit what Astin meant by physical and psychological energy? Astin (1999) gives the following example of an involved student: "a highly involved student is one who devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (p. 518). Heiberger and Harper (2008) related each of Astin's postulates to an aspect of Facebook. While this could prove to be an accurate pairing of social networking and Involvement Theory, one must also consider that Astin was referring to actual fact-to-face contact when he described Involvement Theory, considering the Internet did not exist when he developed his theory.

It is important for student affairs professionals to continue to study the effects of virtual communities on students' psychosocial development. Especially intriguing and helpful would be a study to determine if Astin's (1999) Involvement Theory postulates are adequately met through virtual communication and whether there are any unique differences between it

and face-to-face communication. Potential research questions could include: Do virtual communities meet the same needs that physical communities do? Do the differences play a significant role in students' psychosocial development? Initial research has begun in this area, and there are implications that there are differences between online communication and face-to-face communication. A small-scale study conducted at a university showed high levels of Internet use resulted in increased emotional loneliness but decreased social loneliness (Moody, 2001). Therefore, those who use social networks frequently satisfy the need for a wide social network but do not satisfy the need for deep relationships with others. This difference is affirmed by a recent study by University of Colorado-Denver doctoral candidate student Christopher Sibona. Sibona conducted a study among 1,500 Facebook users to find out the top reasons why people choose to *unfriend* others on Facebook. One of the top reasons was due to posting about sensitive issues, such as politics and religion (Kelly, 2010). Sibona noted, "They say not to talk about religion or politics at office parties and the same thing is true online" (Kelly, 2010). Commenting on the unfriending culture of Facebook, he continues by saying, "It's a delicate dance with its own rules or 'netiquette,' far different from face-to-face interaction" (Kelly, 2010).

Combined with the study performed by Moody (2001), there is a definite indication that online relationships do not allow for the same level of emotional connection found in face-to-face relationships. Further research will need to be conducted to confirm this implication, but based on research thus far there is reason to be aware of the emotional welfare of students who engage predominantly in virtual relationships. Offering first-year college students a workshop regarding life balance is one way to address this issue. Emphasizing the need to balance online relationships with virtual relationships could offer students a space where they can evaluate their current balance or lack thereof. Suggestions of how to achieve a healthy balance and symptoms of a lack of balance could be incorporated into the workshop.

Student affairs professionals must become familiar with new avenues of student socialization to use these tools as wisely and widely as possible. For example, Heiberger and Harper (2008) believed "as student affairs administrators invest financial and human resources in programs designed to involve students, the parallel universe of social communication on Facebook is an exciting option" (p. 24). Many universities now have social media networks available for their students (through Facebook and other mediums), which offers student affairs professionals the opportunity to engage students in dialogue, or to simply observe and learn from student online interaction.

Along with involvement in virtual communities, it is important for student affairs professionals to respond to the results of research thus far. A study by Kraut et al. (2002) has shown that different personalities are affected by the Internet differently. Extroverts thrive on online communities while introverts who struggle with loneliness can become increasingly lonely through extensive use of online communities (Kraut et al., 2002). Therefore, it is very important for student affairs professionals to be aware of the personalities of incoming college students. One way to be more aware of this is to offer personality testing through student affairs offices. Thorough explanations of the tests would need to be given to students while also communicating to the students the tests are not always accurate. In this way, students can learn more about themselves and become aware of positive and negative tendencies and how to respond to these tendencies. Student affairs professionals can be aware of how online communities will affect a student and can check-in with students periodically to see how they are doing socially and emotionally.

Lowery (2004) found that students expect quick responses from professionals when using online mediums for contact. Student affairs professionals must consider this when engaging students in online dialogue. Additionally, professionals should seek to be available to students while also communicating appropriate boundaries regarding response times. Considering boundaries, students need to realize student affairs professionals have responsibilities outside of responding to online dialogues. However, student affairs professionals also need to realize that when they engage in virtual communities, they have entered the students' worlds and must respond to inquiries in a reasonable amount of time.

A current challenge social networking poses to student affairs professionals is how to handle inappropriate or illegal behavior or information made public through online mediums (Conneely, 2006). As evidenced by the suicide of Tyler Clementi, the effects of posting harmful material online can be fatal. This is a newer area of concern for colleges, and many questions exist concerning whether social networks should be monitored by university staff and how to respond to information posted by students or staff (Conneely, 2006; Dahne, 2006). While these questions may take considerable time to answer, there are current efforts that can be made to educate students concerning positive uses of social networks.

For example, student affairs professionals can immediately engage in proactive efforts to educate students in proper Internet use by providing students with workshops and opportunities for dialogue. Rutgers University is an example of a university providing social networking education to its students. The event of Tyler's death marked the launch of a "two-year, campus-wide project to teach the importance of civility, with special attention to the use and abuse of new technology" (Foderaro, 2010, p. 1). With proper education, students can learn to use social networks in a balanced manner as a tool to create positive experiences for themselves and others while in college.

Summary and Conclusion

While there is still much research to be done, it is clear that online communities have both positive and negative effects. Positive effects include extroverted students becoming even more involved on campus (HERI, 2007), first-year students adjusting holistically to the college experience (Cotten, 2008), and rising retention rates due to more social interaction and adjustment (HERI, 2007). Negative effects include Internet addiction (BBC News, 2006; Kraut et al., 2002; Reimer, 2006), students expecting immediate responses from staff and faculty (Lowery, 2004), and unhealthy sharing and illegal behavior (Conneely, 2006). Current steps student affairs professionals can take to use virtual communities effectively are to join in or observe and learn from the dialogue in these spaces, offer personality tests to students, and offer workshops regarding healthy balance and appropriate expectations and use of social networks. At the same time, researchers must continue to study the effects of virtual communities on college students' psychosocial development so that future college students can experience the positive impact of social networks while not falling into negative patterns.

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Hooking Up May Bring Students Down

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Abstract

Dating has all but disappeared at American universities, and the current trend of hooking up has essentially replaced the act of dating on many college campuses. Hooking up, or participating in sexual activity without the intent for commitment (Bogle, 2008), is popular among students for a variety of reasons and is often experienced differently based on gender. Paul and Hayes (2002) analyzed 187 student responses to a survey about hooking up, exploring emotional response, communication, and the presence of alcohol when hooking up. Because there are risks involved with hooking up, student affairs professionals need to create intentional programming about sex education and healthy decision making. There also should be collaboration with university health centers. In addition to program efforts, this paper explores the history of dating in America, the hooking up phenomenon, the influence of the media, and social learning theory. Recommendations for current practice and future research are also suggested.

Keywords: dating, feminist movement, gender differences, hooking up, in loco parentis, media influences, programming, social learning theory, social scripts

For most students, attending college is an exhilarating and liberating period in life. They are independent adults, able to make their own decisions on everything from homework to time management to social activities. Many students at institutions across the United States have a preconceived notion of what to expect from their college experience. For many, this imagined scenario includes partying, alcohol, and participating in sexual activities. Perpetuated by media portrayals of the college environment, many students believe these activities to be social norms. Historically, the perceived social norms of physical and romantic interaction on college campuses have evolved from innocent events to sometimes scandalous affairs.

In contemporary American society, many college students are engaging in a phenomenon known as hooking up, in which partners participate in sexual activity without the intention of pursuing a romantic relationship (Bogle, 2008). The event may include any form of sexual activity from kissing to intercourse. It is an important issue to research, because most students participate in at least one hookup during their college career (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Though hooking up is most often portrayed in the media as all fun and no consequence, there are severe risks, such as sexual assault and unexpected pregnancy for students to consider. This paper outlines the historical eras of dating, the presence and evolution of social scripts, and the phenomenon of hooking up in the college environment, including risks and gender differences. In addition, social learning theory and media influences are reviewed. Student affairs professionals must create intentional programming to support and educate students about healthy decision making and the potential risks of hooking up.

Social Scripts for Courtship

In the United States, the evolution of courtship throughout the past century has drastically changed the way people approach relationships. Through cyclical power shifts between women and men, the act of initiating contact, developing partnerships, and exploring sexual behavior has gone through revolutionary modifications. Women and men adopt certain scripts when determining how to behave in certain situations (Bogle, 2008). These scripts, much like actors following a plotline, guide the understanding of how one engages in and experiences intimacy (Bailey, 1988). Specifically regarding romantic relationships, there have been three major shifts in social scripts throughout the last century. These stages are: the Calling Era, the Rating and Dating Era, and the Going Steady Era (Bogle, 2008). The eras provide context in understanding college student romantic and sexual interaction.

Calling Era

At the end of the 19th century, seeking significant others and potential spouses was a communal effort, influenced by parents and other family members (Bailey, 1988; Murstein, 1974; Shorter, 1975). At this point in time, young women were in control of pursuing romantic relationships. With the approval of her family, especially her mother, a young woman would invite a young man to her home to engage in conversation and social interaction (Bogle, 2008). The process of a man visiting a woman's home was coined a *call* (Bailey, 1988). Under parental supervision, she would entertain her guest, and if she really liked the gentleman, he would be allotted some private time (Bailey, 1988; Rothman, 1984). Inviting guests to one's home was a luxury of the middle and upper class, because those of low socio-economic status did not have the physical space to engage in such an activity and fulfill the script of calling (Bogle, 2008). As a result, members of the lower class would travel outside the home to get to know one another, away from parental supervision. With this, the pendulum of power began to swing toward the control of men.

Dating Era: Rating and Dating

Without the presence of family members, young people had the freedom to explore casual relationships, especially once they entered universities. Waller (1937) studied the dating script of college students at Penn State in the 1920s and 1930s, and he distinguished the difference between dating and courtship. Courtship included the intent to marry, while dating did not (Waller, 1937). Choosing dates was highly influenced by peers, and both men and women were ranked on desirability (Bogle, 2008). Factors for college men determining ranked status were dependent on clothes, dancing skills, and pick-up lines. College women were ranked higher if they were desired by others (Horowitz, 1987). According to Bogle (2008), "one's popularity as a date was not based on qualities of the individual. Instead, popularity was determined by the peer culture" (p. 15). College students did not desire steady relationships, because they were not ready to marry. World War II (WWII) changed the perception of dating, and the pendulum continued to swing even further in the direction of male dating power.

Dating: Going Steady

During WWII, countless men were lost and dating scripts changed further. As a result, both men and women desired to be in long-term relationships (Bailey, 1988). Due to the booming economy, men could afford to spend more money on dates and gifts for their steady girlfriends (Bogle, 2008). They were also able to marry sooner due to increased financial stability (Bailey, 1988). In the 1950s, due to the dating script, men were expected to ask women out on dates and pay for all activities, because it was thought that women could not afford to pay (Bogle, 2008). In addition, "the dating script, particularly during the 1940s and 1950s dictated a greater degree of sexual intimacy than the calling era allowed" (Bogle, 2008, p. 19). From

this, the liberal initiatives in the following decade were pivotal in the push for the equality of women and the expression of sexual desire.

Emergence of Hooking Up

In the 1960s and 1970s, the feminist movement and introduction of birth control allotted women the exploration of sexuality in a freer manner. Feminists believed women should have the freedom to experience sex outside of marriage (Rubin, 1990). This shift was especially visible on college campuses (Horowitz, 1987; Moffatt, 1989). In 1972, three times the amount of women were attending college than in 1960 (Glick, 1975). Due to increased enrollment of women in universities and increased acceptance of premarital sex, dating subsided and hooking up emerged at institutions across the nation. According to Glenn and Marquardt (2001), “hooking up, a distinctive sex-without-commitment interaction between college women and men, [was] widespread on campuses and profoundly influences campus culture” (p. 4). College students increasingly experienced sexual activity through the emergence of the hooking up script.

Students were highly motivated by the ability to make individual choices free from parental expectation. Bogle (2008) said, “one manifestation of this rise in individualism was college students rebelling against the *in loco parentis* system” (p. 22). *In loco parentis* essentially occurred when administrators acted as an authoritative figure, similar to a parent enforcing rules (Hirt, 2006). For decades, university administration felt it was their expectation to regulate sexual behaviors through requiring separate dormitories and strict curfew (Hirt, 2006). This was especially difficult with the increase of single-sex institutions becoming co-educational (Poulson & Higgins, 2003). Students were instrumental in voicing their opinion on their privacy and sexual freedom. As a result, administrators eventually moved from regulating behavior to informing students about risks for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Bogle, 2008).

Contemporary Experience of College Student Hookups

To gain insight into the social norm, Paul and Hayes (2002) assessed the experiential reality of hooking up. Through a survey of 187 college students at a mid-size, public university, Paul and Hayes (2002) explored the average occurrence of hookups, factors leading up to hookups, location of hookups, precautionary measures, the presence of alcohol and drugs, communication between partners, emotions surrounding hookups, and more. Bogle (2008) conducted qualitative research at a small, religiously affiliated institution and a large, public institution. She noted similar results from students at both institutions; therefore, the results from Paul and Hayes (2002) may be representative of most American students.

Of the 187 participants, 75% of male participants and 84% of female participants participated in at least one hookup, with an average of 10.28 hookup experiences during college (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Of those experiences, 55% of participants stated the two partners were strangers, and leading up to a hookup, the main factors were flirting/attraction (43%) and drinking alcohol (32%) (Paul & Hayes, 2002). According to Paul and Hayes (2002), “alcohol was often described as part of a partying atmosphere conducive to hooking up and an agent for lowering social and sexual inhibitions” (p. 654). Of the participants, 58% stated that drugs and alcohol were typically present in a hookup experience (Paul & Hayes, 2002). The most popular location for a hookup was parties (66.5%) and in a residence hall or a fraternity house (57%) (Paul & Hayes, 2002).

Little communication and precautionary methods were taken during most hookups. Only “one percent thought hookup partners talk about sexual history, STI/pregnancy precautions, or sexual preferences,” and “69% [of] hookup partners do not communicate about what is happening” (Paul & Hayes, 2002, p. 645). Though hookup partners do not often communicate with one another about the experience, 98% talk with their friends about the hookup, and

men are more likely to brag about their conquest (32%) (Paul & Hayes, 2002). The research revealed students were less likely to talk about negative hookups. Therefore, “it appears that the stories through which sexual socialization transpires are positively skewed, creating a glorified college norm that is out of step with the reality of many hookup experiences” (Paul & Hayes, 2002, p. 657). There is a skewed perception among college students of what hookups are really like, and a perceived notion that hooking up is a part of the college experience. According to Bogle (2008), freshman students are eager and excited to be a part of this scene. Students need to be more aware of the risks associated with hooking up. These risks include emotional distress, STIs, unwanted sexual assault, and pregnancy. It is important to note that these risks are experienced differently between genders.

Gender Differences in the Experience of Hooking Up

The most popular feelings before and during a hookup were arousal and excitement (Paul & Hayes, 2002). After the experience, women especially feel regretful or disappointed (35%) and men feel satisfied (20%) and proud (9%) (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Feelings by women were specifically assessed in a study done by Glenn and Marquardt. The top three responses about feelings one to two days after a hookup were awkward, desirable, and confused (Glenn & Marquardt, 2001). Both partners may feel regret or guilt as a result of a hookup, possibly because of pressure or the presence of alcohol and lower inhibitions. Women may feel self-blame and shame, while men stated they would feel bad about a negative choice of partner (Paul & Hayes, 2002). This may be attributed to a preconceived sexual double standard. Paul and Hayes (2002) stated, “according to Western sociocultural expectations, sexual experience is a reinforced aspect of masculinity but a violation of acceptable female sexual behavior” (p. 642). In addition, women also expressed a feeling of pressure to hookup (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Understanding the difference of hookup experience between men and women is crucial to exploring ways to best support and create intentional programming for students struggling with the negative effects of sexual promiscuity.

Discussion

It is important for student affairs professionals to be aware of the hookup culture and how it affects students. There is a great deal of programming on college campuses about alcohol, but there seems to be little about sex education and hooking up. As Bogle (2008) described, first year students enter universities with a preconceived notion that hooking up is a part of the college experience. The media is incredibly influential in creating this ideation. Movies such as *Van Wilder* (National Lampoon, 2002), *Animal House* (Reitman & Simmons, 1978), and *Road Trip* (Goldberg & Medjuck, 2000) all portray students hooking up, and most often, alcohol is present in those films. Another example is *Girls Gone Wild* (Francis, 1998), which captures video of college women exposing themselves (K. Bogle, personal communication, September 30, 2010). According to Comstock and Paik (1991), mass media affects the ideological principles and behaviors of viewers because they model what they see.

The notion is further understood through social learning theory, which assumes people learn through observation of behavior and attitudes (Bandura, 1977). People pay attention to specific actions and retain those images. If they have the proper motivation, those images will be reproduced through their actions (Bandura, 1977). In the context of the media and hooking up, incoming students observe certain behaviors, such as drinking alcohol and sexual activity. These behaviors are thought to be the appropriate way to experience college, and those actions are reproduced. An example of this is a young woman who observed college student behavior via several films. She internalized the observations and believed she needed to hookup and drink alcohol in college in order to fit in socially. When she attended a university, she

immediately replicated the observed behaviors, with fitting in being her primary motivation. Student affairs professionals need to be aware of current student perspectives to provide them with increased understanding and support.

Recommendations for Practice

Intentional programming is vital to educate students on hooking up, healthy decision making, and sex education. This can be achieved in a variety of passive and active ways. Passive programming in public areas and residence halls may include factual posters or free condoms with relevant facts attached. Other forms of programming can include speakers, student panels, video series, or workshops. Intentional programming about sex is especially important for incoming students. Duke University is a good example of a proactive institution addressing sex and hooking up. As a part of the class of 2014's Blue Devil Welcome programming, there was a session called, "Sexpose: Conversations about Sexual Decision Making" (Residence Life & Housing Services, 2010). The program "facilitated conversations exploring women's sexuality, sexual decision-making, and women's experience with Duke's hookup culture" (Residence Life & Housing Services, 2010). In addition, the Duke Student Wellness Center has an ongoing series of "Sexual Health Workshops" (Duke Student Wellness Center, 2010) covering a variety of topics. In essence, the gap between programming and hooking up needs to be closed at more universities, and student affairs professionals are vital to ensuring that success.

Recommendations for Research

Ongoing research needs to occur to fully understand the motives and cognitive development regarding students participating in hookups. With the increase of technological communication, research involving the connection between social media and hookups should be assessed. Paul and Hayes (2002) discovered that there is little communication between hookup partners. There may be a correlation between the increased usage of technology as a communication tool (i.e. text and instant messaging) and the decrease of verbal communication between sexual partners. Additional research may be beneficial for student affairs professionals in the areas of institutional, gender, and global differences.

Conclusion

As made evident by Paul and Hayes (2002), there are countless variables to consider within the context of hooking up. Students have varied reasons for hooking up and different emotional responses to such experiences. As Paul and Hayes (2002) described, it is a phenomenon experienced by a majority of college students, most often without communication about risks. Because so many students are participating in hooking up, it is important to be intentional about education on sexual choices. Hooking up emerged in the 1960s and the current trend in universities today remains the same. There is speculation that the reason for the perpetuated trend is due in large part to media influences. Through films, commercials, and advertisements, viewers are observing hooking up behavior. As evidence by the social learning theory, those observations are translated into behavioral responses to similar situations. It is not the practitioner's role to regulate sexual activity, but rather to provide factual information through intentional programming, with an overall goal of reaching out to students to aid them in making healthy decisions.

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Colorado State University *Journal of Student Affairs* Guidelines for Manuscript Preparation*

Purpose

Manuscripts should be written for the student affairs generalist who has broad responsibility for educational leadership, policy, staff development, and management. Articles with specialized topics, such as harassment, should be written to provide the generalist with an understanding of the importance of the topic to student affairs. Such an article should not take the form of one program specialist writing to another program specialist.

The Editorial Board invites submissions of the following types of articles:

- Quantitative, Qualitative, or Emancipatory Research Articles *
- Editorial Articles
- Historical Articles
- Opinion/Position Pieces
- Book Reviews

Research articles for the *Journal* should stress the underlying issues or problem that stimulated the research. Explain the methodology in a concise manner, and offer a full discussion of the results, implications, and conclusions.

Procedure

Manuscripts should not exceed 3,000 words (approximately 12 pages of double-spaced, typewritten copy, including references, tables, and figures) and should not be fewer than 1,000 words (approximately four pages). Exceptions should be discussed with the editors at the time of submission.

Guidelines for Writing

1. Prepare the manuscript, including title page and reference page, in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition.
2. Include an article abstract and brief description of the author, including professional title and institutional affiliation. The abstract should clearly state the purpose of the article and be concise and specific, ranging from 150-250 words. Refer to page 25 of the Publication Manual for assistance.
3. Double-space all portions of the manuscript, including references, tables, and figures.
4. Avoid bias in language; refer to page 70 of the Publication Manual for assistance.
5. Do not use footnotes; incorporate the information into the text.
6. Use the active voice as much as possible.
7. Check subject/verb agreement.
8. Use verb tense appropriately: past tense for the literature review and description of procedures and present tense for the results and discussion.
9. Proofread and double-check all references and citations before submitting your draft.
10. Use Microsoft Word (2000) or higher so that editors may utilize the “insert comment” function.
11. Never submit manuscripts under consideration by another publication.
12. Lengthy quotations (a total of 300 or more words from one source) require written

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13. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of references, quotations, tables, and figures. Authors should make sure these are complete and correct.

* Adapted from the *Journal of College Student Development's* "Submission Instructions."

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