

“MAKING THEM MY OWN”: STUDENT AFFAIRS MASTER’S STUDENTS  
SOCIALIZATION TO PROFESSIONAL VALUES

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This dissertation is dedicated to the most important people in my world - my wife, Amanda, and my parents, Doris and George. The unconditional support of a partner as you seek the doctoral degree is an amazing blessing! Amanda believed in me and provided encouragement during those times when I questioned if I was good enough to finish this difficult task. Amanda is the love of my life. I am forever grateful.

My parents worked at a college, but never attended. Throughout my life, they have supported my educational and professional goals, even if they did not always understand what it is I was studying, the work I was doing, or the entire process of moving from doctoral student to candidate to completing the dissertation. I hope they read this knowing that this work is something of which I am very proud, but being their son is something in which I will always take the most pride.

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## **Preface: Reaffirming My Faith in New Student Affairs Professionals**

I had become cynical. It was not deep, dark cynicism, but it was a sense that those entering student affairs work were not properly prepared nor did they have the right ideas about what it takes to conduct student affairs work. My feelings stemmed from a lot of places: when I entered graduate work I was hardly prepared to take on tough issues such as connecting people across differences, managing crises, or navigating politics. I thought student affairs was going to be fun work. I had no idea it was going to be hard work. Because I entered the profession with questionable priorities, I always sensed that others likely do as well.

I have had the opportunity to work alongside amazing professionals who are committed to students. I like to think I am one of those professionals, but to be honest, I think too often student affairs professionals define ourselves by relations with students. That is not good; they will fail, they will hate us, they will disregard advice all too often. This sense that we are valued only when our students succeed or tell us they appreciate us had made me a little bit cynical as well. I found this sense of external sense of self particularly manifested in those entering the profession. That worried me.

Student affairs literature has talked about learning, assessment, creating partnerships with academic affairs, and connecting people across differences for some time now. I had become a believer that these needed to be priorities of the profession; however, I was hearing master's students talk about putting research aside once they are a professional or how planning the best residence hall program or advising Greek Week were vital functions of their work. I was not hearing them articulate the emerging priorities in the literature. I continued to grow cynical that while graduate preparation programs, mid-level managers, and senior student affairs officers were promoting one thing, entering professionals sought something else. I kept wondering

“what will it take for new professionals to understand that our work has to be done differently for us to be valued contributors to the educational enterprise?”

Over the course of the last 14 years I have worked at four different institutions, consulted on more than 30 campuses, conducted hundreds of workshops, wrote numerous articles, and served in four different higher education associations, including holding the role of president in one of them. I have been in awe of many who work in student affairs, but I have also witnessed people making bad decisions in their relations with students, crossing ethical lines. I have talked with colleagues who espouse high ideals, most of whom live by those ideals, but there are some whose espoused values did not align with what I saw in practice. It is hard work to serve as a role model but student affairs professionals signed up for that job. It does not take a perfect person to do this work and people should have fun, live their lives, and be who they truly are; however, grounding our work in a set of values and aiming to attend to those values each day, while failing sometimes, must be at the core of student affairs work. I have been the person in ethical conflicts. I have made mistakes. That said I hope that my student affairs legacy is that I sought to do this work grounded in a set of values and demonstrate those values to others. This passion is what drove my dissertation research, but I was not sure what I would find.

While there are certainly predispositions that brought 17 graduate students to decide to spend time with me talking about professional values, what I found inspired me. They shared ideas about learning and educating students. They talked about student affairs aligning with the institution’s academic mission. They believed that responsibility must be fostered so that students can interact in their organizations and campus communities. They held up diversity and inclusion as the essential value of student affairs – each saying that the distinct needs of students must be met in order for them to be successful. I left interviews inspired and the cynicism has

diminished.

I think I will always go through life wondering if people are “authentic.” I have a sarcastic and cynical side that makes me think no one is as good as they come across. However, I have spent much of my adult life keeping that cynicism in check: there is more “good” in the world than I will ever know. There is more “good” in student affairs than I will ever know. I was not disillusioned but I was questioning this work, mainly how entering professionals are prepared and willing to enact emerging priorities. However, as a result of this research I feel confident that there is hope for student affairs professionals. I still have questions, but I know 17 people who entered student affairs with a sense of professional values. I hope they continue to examine and improve the demonstration of values they perceive as important to student affairs.

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Master’s students’ perceptions of and approaches to enacting student affairs values are not examined in the literature. Because students will be professionals in student affairs, it is important they can explain how they came to learn and demonstrate values core to this work. This study addressed four aspects of socialization to student affairs’ values: graduate students’ perceptions of essential student affairs values, the extent to which perceptions aligned with literature on student affairs’ values (Young, 2003), how perceptions differ across functional areas, and socialization agents and processes that influenced views of values and their enactment.

Through a qualitative study combining aspects of phenomenology and narrative inquiry, impressions about student affairs values development were collected from 17 master’s students. Students were second-semester, second-year participants in one of three distinct student affairs graduate preparation programs. Between February and April 2010, two separate interviews were conducted with each student. From transcriptions, narratives were developed to tell the story from each interview. Participants reviewed each narrative. The second interview included individualized questions based on participants’ first-interview and narrative review.

Through analysis, the researcher interpreted 13 shared values of student affairs: diversity and inclusion, collaboration, learning, student centeredness, change and responsiveness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, community, service, professional development, caring, and responsibility. These values were mostly aligned with the literature on student affairs



values (Young, 2003); however, some differences existed. Values not described by Young are change and responsiveness, collaboration, learning, and professional development. Participants perceived values appear to be shared across student affairs, but functional areas prioritize and enact them differently. Participants learned student affairs values and their enactment through 11 factors categorized as program-structured or self-directed. Program-structured included: assistantships and practica, supervisors, course work, faculty, guiding documents and professional standards, lessons on the historical role of student affairs, and cohort members. Self-directed included: participants' previous experiences, emerging approaches to enacting student affairs work, involvement in the broad student affairs profession, and the job search.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

A primary goal of graduate education is socializing students to a profession.

Socialization agents and processes in graduate programs help students understand norms of their future profession (Bragg, 1976; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Weidman, Twale & Stein, 2001). One part of the socialization process is learning, internalizing, and demonstrating professional values. It is presumed students develop and learn to demonstrate these values as a result of graduate education (Bragg, 1976; Conrad, Duren & Haworth, 1998; Poock, 2001; Weidman et al., 2001).

Student affairs master's programs are one kind of graduate education. While programs have different emphases such as counseling or administration (Council for the Advancement of Standards [CAS], 2009b; Keim, 1991b; McEwen & Talbot, 1998), they collectively support professional socialization into student affairs work (Bradley, Coomes & Kuh, 1985; Collins, 2009; CAS, 2009b; Hunter & Comey, 1991; Keim, 1991b; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Manning, 1993; McEwen & Talbot, 1998). Structured socialization in student affairs programs generally consists of course work and supervised practice (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009); each provides insight into the profession's goals, values, ethics, and necessary competencies (Ignelzi, 2009; Komives, 1998; Saunders & Cooper, 2002; Woodard & Komives, 1990). As a result of student affairs graduate education, students develop a professional philosophy, which evolves throughout their career (Carpenter, 2003; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Manning, 1993). One's professional philosophy of student affairs work can greatly influence their interpretation of the profession's values (Carpenter, 2003; Dalton, 1993; Young, 2003).

Different models provide a framework for examining graduate student professional socialization (Beeler, 1991; Bragg, 1976; Weidman et al., 2001). Based on years of empirical

research, Weidman et al. (2001) conceptualized a four-stage model: Stage one, anticipatory socialization, is when “an individual becomes aware of the behavioral, attitudinal, and cognitive expectations held for a role incumbent. This stage covers the preparatory and recruitment phases as the student enters the program with stereotypes and preconceived expectations” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 12). The formal stage follows as the student observes socialization agents and learns graduate program and profession priorities. Students accept the task to learn and practice their professional role through course work and practical experiences (Weidman et al., 2001).

In the informal stage, students still aspire to model appropriate professional behavior as demonstrated by socialization agents; however, they come to understand flexible approaches to enacting professional expectations (Weidman et al., 2001). As students become increasingly competent and confident, they move into the personal stage and begin to internalize ideas of their life as a professional. Students “mature and experience compliance with values and attitudes, [have] higher expectations of themselves as well as from the faculty, and [experience] more freedom; they eventually evolve into the ultimate role as scholar and colleague” (Weidman et al. 2001, p. 15). The model explains graduate school socialization holistically; therefore, it is an appropriate framework through which to examine professional values development as a result of graduate student socialization. The model has been conceptualized in student affairs (Hirschy & Wilson, 2008) and appears to be applicable for future research on student affairs socialization.

Similar to Weidman et al.’s (2001) socialization model, student affairs graduate students and professionals follow a stage-based model of professional development (Carpenter, 2003). During the pursuit of a student affairs master’s degree, students are likely in the formative stage. The other stages, application and additive, occur as professionals. The formative stage consists of events in the graduate program and activities such as attending association conferences, which

introduce students to life as a professional (Carpenter, 2003; Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007). Experiences can reinforce or counter existing impressions of professional life. Collectively, experiences help students develop skills, learn professional values, and imagine work in diverse student affairs settings (Carpenter, 2003; CAS, 2009b; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Strayhorn, 2009).

Learning, internalizing, and demonstrating professional values as a part of socialization into the student affairs profession was the focus of this research. Through the research process, I explored student affairs graduate program participants' perceptions of the profession's values, how they formed those views, and how perceptions compare to those espoused in the literature (Young, 2003). The research also examined how socialization agents and students' experiences in diverse functional areas supported shared notions of student affairs values development.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Little empirical research considers graduate students' views on socialization into student affairs (Goodman, 1984; Helm, 2004; Richmond & Sherman, 1991; Young & Coldwell, 1993). While socialization is a process with many objectives, particularly important is learning, internalizing, and demonstrating the profession's values. Students' impressions about becoming socialized to student affairs values during graduate education have not been studied and merits examination (Strayhorn, 2009; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; 1991b). Research on student affairs values development during graduate education is important because during this time students internalize messages about the philosophical underpinnings of the profession and how to conduct work. Values are part of the foundation of student affairs work (Young, 2003). Therefore one must develop an idea of professional values and create an approach to their enactment (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 2003).



Four areas of existing research have been augmented as a result of this research: understanding perceptions of values, determining the extent to which perceptions are aligned with existing literature, learning about how values are practiced across diverse institutional contexts and functional areas, and discovering influential factors in values development.

### **Perceptions of Student Affairs Values**

It is important to consider how those who will one day work in the field understand the profession's values (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 2003). While adopting the profession's values is espoused as an important outcome of student affairs graduate education (Carpenter, 2003; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Love, Kuh, McKay, & Hardy, 1993; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Young & Elfrink, 1991a), recent studies have not considered students' interpretation of student affairs' values and how they came to make these values their own. Two studies (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young & Elfrink, 1991a) have examined perceptions of student affairs values; however, Young and Elfrink (1991a) did not include graduate students in their quantitative study of perceptions of student affairs' essential values. Tull and Medrano (2008) included graduate students in a quantitative study about perceptions of important professional values; however, students' perceptions about student affairs' values was not analyzed outside the general sample.

### **Literature vs. Perceptions**

While the student affairs profession has a documented values base (Young, 2003), literature on organizations indicates that espoused values are oftentimes different than those enacted (Kuh, 2003; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Whitt & Kuh, 1991). Because it is important to have an understanding of the guiding principles of student affairs work prior to life as a professional (Evans & Reason, 2001; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003) there are implications about what messages graduate students hear about values of the

profession. While this research did not primarily seek to determine alignment between espoused and enacted student affairs values, analyzing participants' perceptions of values and comparing them to those espoused by Young (2003) provided insight into students' perceptions of shared professional priorities versus what has been documented in the current literature. Such differentiation had not been previously considered in the student affairs literature.

### **Contextualizing Student Affairs Values**

The context in which graduate education occurs influences students' socialization process (Conrad, Haworth & Millar, 1993; Weidman et al., 2001). Explaining professional socialization within student affairs can be difficult as it is an applied field, enacted in diverse contexts, and with individuals who perform a range of functions (Carpenter, 1996; Dungy, 2003; Hirt, 2006; Komives, 1998; Kuk, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Within student affairs, most graduate programs are hosted at research institutions, which influences students' perceptions of how student affairs is enacted within diverse institutional types and functional areas (Hirt, 2006; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Students' shared perceptions of student affairs work could also be influenced by different curriculum priorities and levels of standardization across graduate programs (Bloland, Stamatakos & Rogers, 1994; CAS, 2009c; Creamer & Winston, 2002; Ebbers & Kruempel, 1992; Hirt, 2006; Hunter & Comey, 1991; Kuk & Cuyjet; Miller, 1991; McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Upcraft, 1998). If there is a need to understand and practice shared student affairs values (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 2003) then program differences may influence such lessons.

In addition to course work, students are socialized into the profession through supervised practice in a specific functional area of student affairs work (Dungy, 2003; Hirt, 2006; Upcraft, 1998; Winston & Creamer, 2002). Not all functional areas within student affairs reflect the same

level of attention to widely espoused values of the collective profession (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Upcraft, 1998). Therefore, understanding how different contexts and functional areas within student affairs promulgate the profession's values may be important to the future training of graduate students.

### **Factors Influencing the Socialization to Student Affairs Values**

Developing competence for effective work in a profession is another outcome of graduate education (Conrad et al., 1998; Poock, 2001), and such competencies have been described in the student affairs literature (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], 2007; Bradley et al., 1985; Burkard, Cole, Ott & Stoflet, 2005; CAS, 2009b; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Richmond & Sherman, 1991). Expected competencies are often based on a profession's values (Weidman et al., 2001; Young, 2003). For example, as equality is important to student affairs (Young, 2003), multicultural competence has become a priority in the training future student affairs professionals (ACPA, 2007; Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice & Molina, 2009). Despite research on student affairs professionals' development of competencies (Burkard et al, 2005; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Herdlein, 2004; Strayhorn, 2009; Young & Coldwell, 1993) no studies have examined how students develop values.

Assistantships, internships, and practica provide an opportunity to connect classroom lessons to a supervised setting (Komives, 1998; Creamer & Winston, 2002; Tull, 2006). In practical settings students are confronted by situations that challenge existing and emerging values (Janosik & Hirt, 2002; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Young, 2003). How a student responds can influence professional credibility (Janosik, 2007). Subsequent reflection on one's student affairs work can reshape appropriate future approaches (Cutler, 2003; Creamer & Winston, 2002). Phelps Tobin (1998) conceptually addressed reconciling personal and professional values

during student affairs graduate education and in the context of supervised practice; however, she did not empirically capture students' perceptions of this process. No research exists on how students use student affairs values to inform approaches to supervised practical experiences and then use such lessons to refine approaches to overall student affairs work.

Individuals influence the degree to which a graduate student becomes socialized to conduct work in a given profession. These agents include faculty, professional supervisors, fellow colleagues, and cohort members (Mullen, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). While student affairs graduate education also emphasizes these agents as important to a student's professional development (Carpenter, 2003; Creamer & Winston, 2002; Evans & Williams, 1998; Forney & Davis, 2002; Goodman, 1984; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009), it is unclear how students interpret these specific relationships as influential in transmitting the profession's values. Goodman (1984) spent a year studying participants in one student affairs graduate program. He found relationships with cohort members, faculty, supervisors, and professional mentors - within the institution and across the profession - positively influenced students' growing sense of student affairs work. Goodman did not specifically explain students' perceptions of or their process used to develop professional values.

Faculty and supervisors send mixed messages about the extent to which course work and supervised practice influence an emerging sense of becoming a professional (Barham & Winston, 2006; Evans & Williams, 1998; Helm, 2004; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Keim, 1991). For students, this can cause dissonance about student affairs priorities, including its values (Upcraft, 1998). Student success in student affairs graduate school appears to be dependent on multiple agents working together (Hirt & Strayhorn, 2010; Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009;

Saunders & Cooper, 2002); therefore, it may be helpful to consider how graduate students perceive that these agents send common or divergent messages about professional values.

Student affairs values are also promulgated through involvement in professional associations (Janosik, 2009). Through associations, students create relationships with colleagues and mentors, which inform perceptions of how to conduct work and demonstrate student affairs values (Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Nuss, 1993). While the literature includes benefits of associations conceptually (Janosik, 2009; Moore & Newberger, 1998; Reesor, Bagunu & Hazley, 2009) and empirically (Chernow, Cooper & Winston, 2003; Roberts, 2007), how involvement influences the development of student affairs values has not been considered.

### **Summary**

Forney (1994) states, “[Graduate student] opinions about the academic environment and the field in general have implications for both professional preparation and practice” (p. 337). These future student affairs professionals look to student affairs graduate education to prepare them to serve the profession. One aspect of the profession is its professional values base. To this end, the research at hand prioritized student perceptions of how they learned, internalized, and demonstrated the profession’s values.

This section provided the warrant for the study. Gaps in the literature presented a need to research how student affairs graduate education influences how students learn, internalize, and demonstrate the profession’s values. The next section builds on these gaps, describing the purpose and potential implications of this research.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Broadly, I examined student affairs graduate student socialization. Specifically, I emphasized students' perceptions of the profession's values and interpreted how agents of socialization, including faculty, staff, cohort members, and colleagues influence perceived values. I examined how shared perceptions of student affairs values were developed through experiences within three distinct graduate programs and across diverse functional areas. Through analyzing identified values against the literature, I examined overlap between student perceptions and espoused values of student affairs (Young, 2003). Examining graduate student socialization with an emphasis on values through the perspectives of students had not been previously examined in the empirical student affairs literature.

## **Implications for Research and Practice**

Within the literature on broad graduate education, most research has emphasized socialization through the doctorate (Conrad et al., 1993; Hirt & Muffo, 1998). Referenced earlier as a well-known model, Weidman et al.'s (2002) model was developed based on socialization through the doctoral degree. Conrad et al. (1993) identified components of high quality master's graduate education; however they did not explain students' perceptions of socialization nor emphasize values inculcation as essential to professional work. Research in social work and nursing has provided limited insight into student values (Schank & Weis, 2002, Reamer, 1998); however, the research is limited. It appeared that little master's student socialization literature empirically addressed learning, internalizing, and demonstrating professional values. While conducted in one professional context, this study will expand the research to help others conceptualize how master's programs support professional values development.

While aspects of the socialization process for student affairs master's students had been captured through empirical research (Goodman, 1984; Richmond & Benton, 1988; Richmond & Sherman, 1991), conceptualized by Kuk and Cuyjet (2009) and Hirschy and Wilson (2008), examined with attention to specific competencies and skills (Flowers & Howard-Hamilton, 2002; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; McEwen & Roper, 1994b; St. Clair, 2007) and explained reflectively through the impressions of new professionals (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008), the research had not examined students' perceptions of values development, which is a part of professional socialization (Weidman et al, 2001). The study filled a research gap on the socialization experiences of student affairs master's students and specifically identified how students develop values that serve as a basis for enacting student affairs work (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003).

This lack of research primarily impacts the student affairs profession, presenting four practical considerations for the profession as a whole, graduate program leadership, and divisions of student affairs. First, the research can influence how graduate students and others conceptualize values as a part of student affairs work. I came to understand students' sense of the profession's values and how perceptions align with widely espoused professional values. Also, advancing on the research of Tull and Medrano (2008), who found that functional areas prioritize values differently, I explored how students in diverse functional areas came to develop shared impressions of the profession's values. A greater understanding of the role of values in conducting student affairs work emerged from this research.

Second, graduate program leadership can learn, directly from students, how program socialization processes and agents influence these perceptions of values. The existing literature explains the need to emphasize student affairs values within graduate education (Herdlein, 2004;

Hunter, 1992; Komives, 1998; Kuh, Whitt, & Shedd, 1987; Love et al. 1993; Meaborn & Owens, 1984; McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Penn & Trow, 1987; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006; Upcraft, 1998; Young, 2007; Young, 1987; 1993; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; Young & Coldwell, 1993); however, perceptions of the learning process and the emphasis on values has not been considered from the student perspective. This research was distinctive in that it revealed what activities, experiences, and interactions are perceived as influential in creating impressions of student affairs values. Program faculty and professional supervisors may use findings to explain how students learn, internalize, and demonstrate professional values, connect espoused values to practice, and use values to form an evolving professional philosophy.

Additionally, it was important to examine how socialization to student affairs begins in graduate school (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). One part of the socialization process is values development. Examining students' perceptions of the profession's values can inform practices by divisions of student affairs to reconcile incoming expectations with work realities (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Young & Elfrink, 1991b), inform efforts to improve issues of staff retention (Lorden, 1998) and life-work balance (Grube, Cedarholm, Jones & Dunn, 2005; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008), and indicate the extent to which students are prepared to advance student affairs values as one-day professionals (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Young, 2003).

Finally, the study increases the understanding of the role of reflection on values in student affairs work. Reflection starts upon entrance to the student affairs program (Brown, 1987; Forney, 1994; Hunter, 1992; Phelps Tobin, 1998) and continues through immersion in the graduate school environment. Within broad graduate education, as well as student affairs education, reflection positively impacts the socialization experience (Hunter & Comey, 1991;



Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Weidman et al., 2002), particularly as students examine how course work and day-to-day work in student affairs overlap (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Komives, 1998).

Through the impressions of student affairs graduate students, I learned how they used reflection as a tool to examine values development while in graduate school. Such lessons provide insight into how reflection may be used as a professional practice.

## **Summary**

This research yielded insights that can be used to augment existing research, improve socialization in graduate education, strengthen current and future professional practice of students, and inform supervision of students while in graduate school and within the professional context. The research was guided by four questions and a predetermined methodological approach. In the next section, I provide these questions and explain the research approach.

## **Research Questions and Methodology**

I used the framework of graduate student socialization (Weidman et al., 2001) to study how students learn, internalize and demonstrate values within student affairs graduate education. Four questions guided the research:

1. What do second-year students in a student affairs graduate program perceive to be the professional values of student affairs?
2. How do perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?
3. What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?

4. How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate the values of the student affairs profession? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?

Because I sought to understand students' personal interpretation of professional values development in student affairs graduate education, I used qualitative inquiry. My methodology used aspects of narrative inquiry and phenomenology to capture the narratives of participants. These methodological approaches were blended because I aimed to collect individual interpretations of the process of developing values (narrative inquiry) and then interpret a shared process across participants of how they approached values development (phenomenology).

### **Participants, Study Context, and Time Period**

Participants were students in two-year student affairs graduate programs at three different institutions. Because I was using phenomenology as a methodological foundation for this study, three sites were chosen to strengthen my interpretation that there is indeed a shared experience across multiple contexts (Husserl, 1970; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Institutions with student affairs graduate programs were selected based on a listing in *The 2006-2009 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in Student Affairs* (ACPA, 2009) and ease of access during the research period. Across the programs, 17 students were interviewed.

As student affairs master's graduate education for full-time students typically takes place over two years (McEwen & Talbot, 1998), program participants' impressions of student affairs, including its values, are evolving (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Manning, 1993; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Therefore, when the research is conducted was perceived to likely influence students'

perceptions of the profession's values. Because the professional socialization literature indicates the first-year offers a steep learning curve as students reconcile previous and emerging values (Weidman, et al., 2001), I chose the second-year to study this phenomenon.

During the second-year, student affairs graduate students are immersed in coursework and supervised practice and have a more informed sense of what work in student affairs “looks like” based on increased awareness of the larger profession (Carpenter, 2003; Janosik, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). They also had the opportunity to reflect on and assess their skills and how they will approach the search for a full-time professional position (Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Paterson & Coffey, 2009). Because students reflected on professional values and demonstration of said values, conducting my study during this time helped me learn what values are important to students and their views on using values as they prepare to enter the student affairs workforce.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Two areas of research created the conceptual framework for this study: graduate education as a socialization process and student affairs as a profession for which one becomes socialized, particularly through participation in a graduate programs. There are specific objectives of socialization that occur during graduate education (CAS, 2009a; Conrad et al., 1993; Maher, 2005; Poock, 2001; Weidman et al., 2001). These objectives are explained in the socialization model of Weidman et al. (2001) during which students move through four distinct but non-linear stages of socialization. These stages are anticipatory, formal, informal and personal. During each stage, students acquire knowledge, become increasingly involved in the profession, and develop an investment in the work they will one day conduct. Students experience these stages individually and in concert with others. One part of socialization within graduate education is helping students learn, internalize, and demonstrate a profession's values

(Weidman et al., 2001). Because I examined literature on graduate education as a socialization process during which students learn, internalize, and demonstrate professional values, I was able to analyze student affairs values development using a model accepted in broad graduate education and compare student affairs practices to other fields.

Student affairs and graduate education within the profession is the second construct. The student affairs literature emphasizes the profession's history (Evans & Reason, 2001; Nuss, 2003), values (Young, 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a), competencies (ACPA, 2007; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Richmond & Sherman, 1991) and contextual considerations (Hirt, 2006). Additionally, the experiences of professionals have been widely examined (Collins, 2009; Lorden, 1998; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). Student affairs values are central to its history and are demonstrated through competencies (ACPA, 2007; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). Lessons on the profession's values often begin during graduate school (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Young, 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991b) and evolve over the career span (Carpenter, 2003). Young's (2003) work on student affairs values served as a guide in this research process because of the length and span of his research on professional values development (Young, 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991b), grounding his interpretation in perspectives on the historical literature and guiding documents of student affairs work (e.g. Evans & Reason, 2001).

Students pursue graduate study to become prepared for student affairs work (Carpenter, 2003; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McEwen & Talbot, 1998). Participation in student affairs graduate education is likely the most influential factor in understanding the profession's values (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Young, 2003). The literature on graduate education in student

affairs informed my methodological approach to studying how students learn, develop, and demonstrate the profession's values (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998).

Fostering professionalism must be considered a primary goal of student affairs graduate programs (Carpenter, 2003; Komives, 1998; Manning, 1993). This process begins during graduate school and continues throughout the career (Carpenter, 2003). One framework through which to understand professional growth is that of Carpenter (1996; 2003) who provided a model to explain the professional stages of a student affairs career. Most students experience graduate education while in the Formative Stage. One goal of the formative stage is for individuals to understand the profession's values (Carpenter, 2003). Examining the multiple objectives of Carpenter's (2003) formative stage helped me explain the socialization processes during which students are oriented to the profession's values.

This section explained the conceptual framework of the study. Graduate education is a socialization process during which students are taught how to be a professional (Conrad et al., 1993; Weidman et al., 2001). To conduct professional work, one must understand and demonstrate the profession's values (Weidman et al., 2001). As students progress through different stages of graduate education socialization (Carpenter, 2003; Weidman et al., 2001), they are thought to begin the process of internalizing a profession's values. This research used the context of student affairs graduate education to explain how a profession's values are learned, internalized, and demonstrated.

### **Definition of Terms**

This section provides an explanation, based on the literature, of often-used terms.

A *Profession* is work that has shared goals, outlines appropriate behaviors, provides a sense of community for those who do the work, and attends to socialization and regeneration to properly train for entrance into the field and continued skill development (Carpenter, 2003). Student affairs has been and continues to be questioned about its status as a profession (Bloland et al., 1994; Carpenter, 2003); however, student affairs work has been referred to as professional practice (Carpenter, 2003).

*Professional socialization* is a developmental process during which individuals internalize “behavioral norms and standards and form a sense of identity and commitment to a professional field” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 6). At the conclusion of the socialization process, students should have a sense of what to do with the skills learned, what they are supposed to act like in their professional capacity and how they appear to other professionals in their line of work (Weidman et al., 2001). During student affairs graduate school, the formative stage of one’s overall professional socialization occurs (Carpenter, 2003).

*Socializing agents* are individuals or groups that influence the collective socialization experience. Within graduate education, these agents include faculty, staff, cohort members, and professional colleagues within and external to the graduate program (Weidman et al., 2001). Students’ inclination for building relationships, institutional culture, program diversity, and the professionalization of the field influences how these agents inform emerging perceptions of professional work (Hirt & Muffo, 1998; Weidman et al., 2001).

*Student affairs* is a composite label for a collection of functions that exist to support the academic mission of colleges and universities through the provision of student services (Nuss, 2003). Such services promote learning through both in and out of classroom activities (Dungy &

Gordon, 2010; Nuss, 2003). The provision of such services stems back to the late 1800s as faculty abandoned duties outside of the classroom (Nuss, 2003; Rudolph, 1990; Thelin, 2003).

*Student affairs graduate education* consists of graduate programs specifically created to prepare persons to work in the student affairs profession (McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Nuss, 2003). At times known by other names, including student personnel (Keim, 1991b), programs originated at Columbia University Teacher's College in 1914 (McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Nuss, 2003). *The 2006-2009 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in Student Affairs* lists 123 programs (ACPA, 2009). Programs are typically hosted within a department of the school of education such as counseling or educational psychology, educational leadership and policy studies, or higher education (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McEwen & Talbot, 1998).

*Professional values* are “abstract ideals that are centrally located in our [professional] belief system and tell us how we ought to behave” (Young, 2003, p. 97). Values are individually and professionally driven. A profession's values can be learned, internalized, and demonstrated in graduate education (Antony, 2002; Weidman et al., 2001; Young, 1993; 2003).

*Professional competencies* are skills needed to enact professional practice (Weidman et al., 2001). Student affairs work requires numerous competencies, most of which are introduced and fostered during graduate education (Collins, 2009; Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). There are differing opinions as to necessary student affairs skills and their overall importance and utility (Burkard et al., 2005; Carpenter, 2003; Herdlein, 2004); however, for this research, the ACPA Core Competencies (ACPA, 2007) was used due to my familiarity with the document and the methodology used in its development.

*Professional philosophy* is an emerging idea of work developed through socialization activities during graduate school that evolves throughout one's career (Bloland et al., 1994; Collins, 2009; Manning, 1993; Young, 1985). Professional norms are based on a shared philosophy of student affairs work (Bradley et al., 1985; Manning, 1993).

*Professional development* is participation in activities that augment one's work-related competence as she or he evolves through their careers (Carpenter, 2003; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Roberts, 2007). Professional development in student affairs often begins by participation in a student affairs graduate program and continues through activities such as association involvement (Evans & Ranero, 2009; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Nuss, 1993; Roberts, 2007).

*Professional associations* are organizations that advance the interests of the profession at the functional level, such as the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) and the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA) and at more comprehensive levels (e.g. ACPA or NASPA; Dungy, 2003; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Moore & Neuberger, 1998; Nuss, 1993). Associations serve various roles including professional advocacy, enhancing scholarship, and supporting professional socialization with other colleagues across campuses (Chernow et al., 2003; Janosik, 2007; Moore & Neuberger, 1998; Nuss, 2003; Roberts, 2007).

*Course work* is in-class or class-related learning about work in student affairs. Examples include lectures or class discussions, as well as research conducted as a part of a class project. Through course work, participants often learn the foundations of student affairs (Evans & Williams, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McEwen & Talbot, 1998).



*Supervised practice* is hands-on experience that helps students become prepared for work required of them as professionals (Creamer & Winston, 2002). These include assistantships, which are often required by the graduate program (Creamer & Winston, 2003), and practica, internships, work-study, or other experiences that position the student as working in the student affairs environment (Cooper & Saunders, 2003). In these experiences, students are likely supervised by professional staff. Programs often emphasize such experiences due to the applied nature of student affairs work (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009).

*Cohort* is a collection of students “who begin a program of study together, proceed together through a series of developmental experiences in the context of that program of study, and end the program at approximately the same time” (Maher, 2005, p. 195). Cohort models in student affairs graduate programs have been shown to be effective socializing agents (Forney & Davis, 2002), particularly if the cohort reflects the diversity of the profession (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Each of the three programs examined in this research use a cohort model.

*Theory into Practice* is an emphasis of most student affairs programs: lessons from course work, often grounded in student development theory (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton & Renn, 2010; Hamrick, Evans & Schuh, 2002), are applied in the supervised practice setting (Cooper & Saunders, 2003; Komives, 1998) and reflection occurs to connect course work to supervised practice (Creamer & Winston, 2002).

### **Limitations of the study**

Any research includes potential limitations. This section explains broad methodological and contextual challenges of the methodological approach and topic. Limitations specific to the

research protocol are explained in chapter three. Those for the applicability of the research are provided in chapter six.

Methodologically, qualitative research seeks to describe experiences rather than prove a hypothesis (Creswell, 2007a; 2007b). This research examined student affairs graduate education programs at three research sites. I limited the research to a maximum of seven individuals from each graduate program and conducted two interviews with each student during a period of three months in the second-semester of their second year. Data may have differed if I included more sites, chose different programs, interviewed more students, increased the number of interviews, spent more time with each student under different methods (e.g. observation), and conducted the research during a different period of time.

Qualitative research relies heavily on the researcher to inform the process (Creswell, 2007b; Stewart, 2010). I cannot dismiss my experiences in student affairs, as a former graduate program participant, a professional for eight years, a doctoral student in a nationally known student affairs program, and as someone who has mentored master's students. My biases informed the methodology, question development, and interpretation of results (Stewart, 2010). In chapter three, I outline tactics used to minimize my subjectivity in explaining the students' experiences (Creswell, 2007b; Patton, 2002).

In addition to methodological considerations, student affairs is a large and diverse profession informed by multiple disciplines and serving many functions (Dungy, 2003; McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Nuss, 2003). Numerous factors likely influence student affairs professional socialization and values development as an objective. For example, people enter student affairs with different goals and aspirations (Phelps Tobin, 1998). Student affairs work is also conducted

in diverse institutional contexts (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie & Schuh, 2006). Also, experiences in the profession but outside of the graduate program may sway impressions (Carpenter, 2003; Janosik, 2009). These factors influence how students come to a shared understanding of the profession's values. Each factor also influenced each participant differently. While I have determined shared processes through which students learn, internalize, and demonstrate student affairs values, it is unlikely I have captured how this journey evolves for all students in over 100 graduate programs.

### **Overview of dissertation**

This chapter outlined the intent of the research. I aimed to capture how student affairs graduate students learn, internalize, and demonstrate student affairs values. Part of the research process is learning students' perceptions of the profession's values. I explored how students learn values in diverse functional areas and with different socialization agents, which I found influences perceptions of values development. I also examined how students' perceptions of the profession's values connect to literature on espoused values.

In the pages that follow, I explain the research process beginning with summarizing the reviewed literature in chapter two. Chapter three focuses on the methodology and procedures used to collect participants' impressions on learning, internalizing and demonstrating professional values in student affairs. I have two results chapters: chapter four introduces the 17 participants and their background coming into student affairs graduate education. Chapter five presents themes that emerged through data analysis. Finally, chapter six summarizes findings, compares them against the literature, and presents implications for practice and future research.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

Helping students “become” a professional is a primary goal of graduate education (Conrad et al., 1993; Weidman et al., 2001). Student affairs is one type of graduate education (McEwen & Talbot, 1998). A part of becoming a professional is learning, internalizing, and demonstrating the profession’s values (Weidman et al., 2001). This research examined student affairs graduate students’ perceptions of how they learned, internalized, and demonstrated professional values as they were socialized to the profession. This chapter explains literature relative to this research, which is broken into two broad research areas: graduate student education and the student affairs profession. Graduate education is a process of socialization into a profession. Student affairs is a profession with identifiable socialization processes, including graduate education and ongoing professional development. I also address professional values development in each area.

### **Graduate Education as a Socialization Process**

This section addresses broad graduate school education as a socialization process and consists of three parts: graduate education socialization objectives, professional values development as a part of socialization, and an overview of the Weidman et al. (2001) model of socialization that has been widely applied in the graduate education context. Understanding graduate school as a socialization process and values development as an outcome of that process informed my research. This literature review does not provide a history of master’s graduate education and its diverse attributes, though one may pursue such interests by reading Conrad et al. (1993).

## **Graduate Education and Professional Socialization**

Graduate education is conducted at diverse institutional types, includes applied and theoretical fields, and varies in academic and practical emphases (Conrad et al., 1993; Hirt & Muffo, 1998; Weidman et al., 2001). Conrad et al. (1993) conducted interviews with over 800 faculty, administrators, employees, program alumni, and students in 47 master's programs covering 11 fields. They found programs differed primarily in terms of approach to teaching and learning, orientation towards practice and academics, the extent of departmental and institutional support, and the student culture.

Program differences influenced students' perceptions of their graduate school experience and socialization to a professional role (Conrad et al., 1993). Faculty that engaged students in a partnership for learning were more apt to be viewed as supporting socialization to and continued development within the profession. Students who participated in programs with a high combination of course work and supervised practice perceived their abilities to be stronger when enacting professional work. Graduate programs that had high levels of institutional and departmental support were perceived by students to be a valued profession. Finally, programs with opportunities for individual and cohort work were viewed as supportive learning environments in which students could apply lessons learned in practice and use faculty, supervisor, and peer feedback to improve future work (Conrad et al., 1993).

Graduate programs provide opportunities for participants to develop competence for entrance to a profession and continual professional development (Bragg, 1976; Conrad et al., 1993, 1998; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). These objectives can be accomplished through formal and informal interactions with peers, colleagues, program administrators, faculty and staff. The extent of the interactions depends on program structure

and students' involvement and investment in the process. Through these experiences, students receive feedback, reflect on performance, and apply lessons from course work to practical settings (Conrad et al., 1998; Lehker & Furlong, 2006).

Typically, graduate programs provide the most structure early on. As competence and confidence increases, the student often seeks opportunities to personalize the educational experience (Beeler, 1991; Weidman et al., 2001). Winston and Polkosnik (1985) explained how students move from dependency to autonomy:

Entering students (especially master's level) have a high need for structure, low need for autonomy, and a high need for achievement with an external orientation. As students progress in their program, they develop a more internal orientation, greater acceptance of responsibility for self and program of study, and increased integration of professional and personal roles (Winston & Polkosnik, 1985, p. 293).

Through this documented path, students prepare to enter the professional realm and become socialized to the roles and responsibilities of their future profession.

**Socialization in graduate education.** Weidman et al. (2001) specify graduate student socialization as "...a subconscious process whereby persons internalize behavioral norms and standards and form a sense of identity and commitment to a professional field" (p. 6). Gardner and Barnes (2007) consider socialization as "the process through which an individual learns to adopt the values, skills, attitudes, norms, and knowledge needed for membership in a given society, group or organization" (p. 371). Lehker and Furlong (2006) explain how professionalism is a result of master's education: "...significant emphasis [is placed] on the

development of professional identity, which is joining a community of professionals” (p. 81). Through socialization activities, one internalizes shared standards of a professional community.

Adler and Adler (2005) examined reflective essays about the socialization experience during pursuit of the doctoral degree from a dozen current and former students. Progressing through distinct stages during graduate education, students formed ideas about professional competencies and values through their interaction with faculty, staff and other students. Movement from absorbing knowledge from faculty to creating knowledge with faculty allowed students to reflect on lessons and understand work in their future profession. This is consistent with the research of Weidman et al. (2001) who explained, “The outcome of socialization is not the transfer of a social role, but identification with and commitment to a role that has been both normatively and individually defined” (p.36).

Most of the literature on professional socialization has addressed doctoral education (Antony, 2002; Bragg, 1976; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001), therefore the extent to which socialization occurs in the master’s environment has only been minimally explored and rarely empirically (Conrad et al., 1993; Conrad et al., 1998; Lehker & Furlong, 2006). This may be because master’s education was historically relegated to preparing students for the doctorate; however, over time, the master’s degree became an important credential for professional fields such as business education, engineering, and health sciences (Conrad et al., 1993). Increasingly for many, the master’s is a terminal degree and viewed as means to enter into or advance in a profession; particularly those who in professions such as nursing and social work that have a high orientation toward practice (Conrad et al., 1993). Therefore, it is vital to consider how socialization occurs and values are imparted from socializing agents to students in a master’s program context (Conrad et al., 1998; Hirt & Muffo, 1998; Lehker & Furlong, 2006).

Socialization begins before and continues post preparation (Weidman et al., 2001). Because of the research focus, socialization is explained here strictly in the graduate context. It is important to note that socialization, as a process that is simultaneously individualized and shared, takes many forms: efforts to embrace individuality in course work and practical aspects should be prioritized (Antony, 2002). However, specific socialization tactics have demonstrated efficacy across programs and are now explained.

**Tactics of graduate school socialization.** Entrance into graduate programs can create anxiety and cause students to question their abilities (Caple, 1995; Gansemer-Topf, Ross, & Johnson, 2006; Nesheim, Guentzel, Gansemer-Topf, Ross, & Turrentine, 2006; Smart, 1987). This is particularly true for master's students (Conrad et al., 1993; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Winston & Polkosnik, 1985). Program leaders can increase student confidence and competence and emphasize concurrent integration into graduate work and the professional environment through specific tactics (Beeler, 1991; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Nesheim et al., 2006). This section covers socialization tactics including orientation programs (Poock, 2004), faculty and staff mentoring (Caple, 1995; Mullen, 2006; Wong, Selke, & Thomas, 1995), program cohorts (Maher, 2005), the provision of varied learning experiences (Weidman et al., 2001) and program standardization (CAS, 2009a). Additionally, I address how student effort influences the graduate experience (Conrad et al., 1993); therefore, tactics must consider the capacity and inclination of students.

***Orientation programs.*** Research indicates successful orientation programs explain graduate school expectations and, in turn, increase the likelihood of student success (Owen, 1999; Poock, 2004). Programs help students navigate the academic department and institution and include sessions about the importance of course work (CAS, 2009a; Owen, 1999; Poock,



2004). Such skills are important given that research indicates new graduate students are not prepared for the rigor of a program and may be inadequately informed about the selected profession (Brown, 2004; Costello, 2005; Konstam, 2007; Luzzo, 1993; Smart, 1987).

Additionally, orientation programs often explain how faculty and staff view students as partners in developing professional competence, not simply passive recipients (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Owen, 1999; Poock, 2004). Because orientation can help students understand their new environment and learn graduate school expectations, programs often become the first step in socializing students to expectations as professionals.

***Faculty and staff mentoring.*** Faculty and staff provide support through advising and mentoring and influence student success and persistence to completion (Antony, 2002; Caple, 1995; Jackson, 2007; Mullen, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001; Wong et al., 1995). Jackson (2007) examined multiple graduate programs at one institution and found that interacting with faculty and staff, together and separately, is the primary way one learns to be a professional. Faculty and staff ultimately serve as socializing agents as they transmit perceptions of a profession's values through mentoring (Bragg, 1976). This relationship is enacted in a safe environment for students to practice lessons learned (Antony, 2002; Bragg, 1976; Weidman et al., 2001).

The support of faculty and staff mentors who understand the student's background is crucial to support underrepresented populations (Antony, 2002; Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Costello, 2005; Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Patton & Harper, 2003; Tillman, 2001). Patton and Harper (2003) found African American women graduate students needed a mentor who "looks like them, who has similar personal, professional, and scholarly interests and is devoted to their holistic success as a graduate student in their chosen field" (p. 68). However, Tillman (2001) acknowledged that vocal and visible faculty support of students' professional

pursuits was most important to students in a mentor-protégé relationship, regardless of shared ethnicity or gender. Students of color whose mentor did not identify as the same ethnicity often found support systems through informal relationships with other faculty, staff, or fellow students but saw value in the relationship they shared with the faculty mentor (Tillman, 2001).

***Varied learning experiences.*** Providing a range of learning experiences can help meet the specific needs of students. While often needing direction upon entrance to graduate work, students gradually develop increased confidence and seek to demonstrate competence in different forums outside of course work and supervised practice (Beeler, 1991; Weidman et al., 2001; Winston & Polkosnik, 1985). Learning is realized through formal and informal experiences: Formal experiences accomplish specific graduate program goals, while informal socialization activities are often sought and coordinated by the student, sometimes outside the program, to achieve individual student goals (Conrad et al., 1993; Weidman et al., 2001). The extent to which formal and informal experiences influence socialization depends on each student's reflection and integration of lessons into evolving ideas of the profession (Costello, 2005; Weidman et al., 2001).

***Cohorts.*** Whereas individual level socialization consists of student-initiated events (Weidman et al., 2001), in cohort socialization it is intended that all participants have some shared experience (Bragg, 1976; Maher, 2005). Widely used, particularly in master's degrees or professional programs such as law or medicine, cohorts can provide interpersonal connections to help students adjust (Eraut, 1994; Maher, 2005). Maher (2005), through a 10-month qualitative study of one cohort in a master's degree program for K-12 teachers, found while some conflict arose, socialization as a cohort allowed students to feel supported and created a learning

environment that emphasized self-exploration, shared meaning making, and an appreciation for diverse learning styles.

Cohorts and other student peer groups heavily influence socialization activities and can influence how students learn, internalize and demonstrate the profession's values (Bragg, 1976; Weidman et al., 2001). Conrad et al., (1993) found the cohort experience helped shape personal and professional values and provided opportunities for students to nurture values through individual and cohort-oriented projects. Research indicates cohorts with demographic diversity are most supportive of underrepresented populations and provide opportunities to explore how shared values may be embraced while respecting diverse approaches to their enactment (Antony, 2002; Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Costello, 2005; Eraut, 1994; Patton & Harper, 2003).

***Professional standardization.*** Professional standardization increases the likelihood of accomplishing shared graduate education objectives and provides a common language for current and future professionals (CAS, 2009a; Isaac, Pruitt-Logan, & Upcraft, 1995). Standards also allow for program self-assessment to examine compliance with widely held professional values and competencies (CAS, 2009c). Many believe standardization practices must consider the context in which the graduate program is managed (Eraut, 1994; Isaac et al., 1995). Certification and accreditation are also tactics used by professions such as medicine and law to ensure common knowledge and the maintenance of credentials after degree completion (Isaac et al., 1995; Weidman et al., 2001).

**Student investment.** While program and profession tactics influence socialization, students' investment is also a factor (Conrad et al., 1993; 1998; Hirt & Muffo, 1998; Weidman et al., 2001). Students must want to complete the program requirements and do so in such a way

that they become proficient to serve the profession and society (Brown, 2004; McGuire & Phye, 2006). Additionally, professional choice and socialization is influenced prior to graduate school (Brown, 2004; Costello, 2005; Keller, Piotrowski & Rabold, 1990; Konstam, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). Costello (2005) found identity consonance with a profession begins prior to matriculation and influenced graduate school socialization: “Part of the successful expression of an appropriate professional identity is a matter of conscious identity. An individual must want to embrace the professional role to internalize it in identity” (p. 23). This in mind, socialization tactics must consider students’ varied propensity for graduate work while acclimating the student to the profession through shared experiences that are central and peripheral to the graduate program (Caple, 1995; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; McGuire & Phye, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001).

### **Adopting Professional Values as an Outcome of Socialization Activities**

One aspect of the socialization process is the transmission of values. In graduate school, students join others in learning a profession’s values, understanding them theoretically and in practice, internalizing them as a part of their belief system, and demonstrating them through experiences that allow students to become competent professionals once they leave the graduate program (Antony, 2002; Bragg, 1976; Conrad et al., 1993; Egan, 1989; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). Adopting the profession’s values is both a cognitive function, in that the student learns and can recite the profession’s values, and an affective function, as the student is able to internalize the values and understand how they influence their day-to-day work (Bragg, 1976). Some believe internalization is vital in order for the student to develop a self-image consistent with that of the profession (Bragg, 1976; McGuire & Phye, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). Through the graduate education context, students are able to demonstrate their growing capacity to enact the profession’s espoused values (Egan, 1989; Weidman et al., 2001).

Bragg (1976) posited the educational setting and its agents convey messages of the profession's espoused values. These values become increasingly explicit as role models demonstrate value enactment for students. Faculty members "transmit appropriate professional values and beliefs to students through role modeling and mentoring" (Bragg, 1976, p. 200). Values patterns that are shared between with the mentor allow for the student to reconcile how she may be prepared to work within a profession (Bragg, 1976; Costello, 2005; Egan, 1989). Should values align, the student voluntarily internalizes a new professional self-image. Conversely, when values structures are not shared, the student may question her ability to perform work. This process of examination occurs throughout the duration of graduate education (Bragg, 1976). Egan (1989) explained that the entering identity of the student is likely not completely consistent with the profession and graduate school allows them to become increasingly confident in a new identity of professional.

Research indicates professional values development likely begins prior to graduate education and lasts into one's professional practice. Using a survey, Erlanger and Klegon (1978) examined socialization in one law program. The authors found students often understood the field's values prior to matriculation. However, the program had at least a minimal effect on personal values and helped the student become more aware of what work within the profession will entail. Therefore, educational structures helped ensure the procurement of values.

Research on nursing and social work has examined values as a part of the socialization process. Professional values socialization begins in undergraduate courses and continues through graduate education (Schank & Weis, 2002, Reamer, 1998). Schank and Weis (2002) found values internalization and demonstration begins for nursing students during undergraduate education and continues past graduate work into their professional lives. Gradually as the novice

moves to expert, they become more in tune with the profession's values. Findings from studies considering undergraduate studies (Martin, Yarbrough, & Alfred, 2003), the pursuit of the master's, professional, or doctoral degree (Adler & Adler, 2005; Anderson & Swazey, 1998; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Manzo & Ross-Gordon, 1990; McGuire & Phye, 2006), and perceptions of graduate education by employers (Conrad et al., 1993) offer consistent messages: over the course of the program, students strengthen knowledge of, create an internal foundation for, and begin to feel confident in the display of a profession's espoused values.

Bragg (1976) believed incorporating group values into one's self-image is essential during socialization. However, others have questioned such expectations. Antony (2002) viewed doctoral student socialization in the arts and sciences, which aimed to socialize all students to a prescribed way of being, as problematic. Because everyone does not follow the same path to a profession and experiences socialization differently, Antony (2002) believed expectations to assimilate to a profession's recommended values system might be inappropriate. Antony (2002) argued such objectives must be reconsidered in order to retain one's identity and intellectual individuality currently valued within professions. He believed this was particularly salient for historically underrepresented populations. Antony (2002) wrote, "Socialization should instill an awareness of a field's values and norms, without expecting a student to accept those values and norms as one's own" (p. 373). Antony (2002) believed values do not need to be adopted as much as they need to be instilled and practiced in the context of work.

### **A Model of Socialization**

Weidman et al. (2001) explain graduate student socialization based on previous research and models (Bragg, 1976; Stein & Weidman, 1989). Their model may be helpful in considering student affairs values development, as it has been applied in the student affairs graduate

education context addressing competency growth (Hirschy & Wilson, 2008). This section provides an overview of how socialization objectives of knowledge acquisition, involvement, and investment occur during the four-stage model. Appendix A is a representation of the model emphasizing core elements and outcomes of socialization as explained by Weidman et al. (2001). Also explained is how students experience socialization differently; therefore Weidman et al. (2001) posit student characteristics interact with environments to form an individualized socialization process. Appendix B is a representation, formed by Weidman et al. (2001) of a holistic process of student and environment interaction during entrance to, participation in, and graduation from the program.

**Model objectives.** Within each stage, three primary objectives occur: knowledge acquisition, investment, and involvement (Weidman et al., 2001). During knowledge acquisition, the emphasis is on learning how to do the work, internalizing lessons, and demonstrating proficiency. Knowledge acquisition occurs through organizational structures such as course work, supervised practice, and culminating experiences such as theses or dissertation requirements. Lessons are learned in informal and formal learning experiences. Faculty members most often lead learning experiences, oversee student research and projects, and help manage student perceptions of professional practice. Interaction with program peers helps students refine work skills (Bragg, 1976; Stein & Weidman, 1989; Weidman et al., 2001).

Weidman et al. (2001) explain investment as “The degree of time and energy that graduate students put forth in meeting program requirements....” (p. 63). As students progress beyond matriculation, enroll in courses, interact with faculty and peers, learn through supervised practice, and proceed through each semester, their investment deepens. Investment increases largely as a result of student interaction with faculty, as the student aims to meet faculty

standards and expectations. Faculty members help students become invested in their future work through teaching, advising, and mentoring (Weidman et al., 2001).

Students experience investment differently depending on previous professional experience. Each student also has different priorities external to the program that can influence their level of investment in the curricular and cocurricular aspects of graduate education (Weidman et al., 2001). Organizational structures such as lockstep programs in law or medicine require students to go through similar experiences, often times in a cohort manner, which can increase investment (McGuire & Phye, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). Cohorts play a significant role in increasing student investment: “synergy generated among strong cohorts produces not only shared experiences during their time together but also starts an evolutionary growth process that extends beyond graduation and helps sustain longer-term professional development” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 70). Professional standards, often attended to through graduate program entrance exams and subsequently board exams, also influence investment (Eraut, 1994; McGuire & Phye, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001).

Involvement in the profession is the third core function of socialization. Involvement increases through opportunities to practice professional work in graduate school and associations and through internships and certifications (Weidman et al., 2001). As the student acquires knowledge and becomes invested in the idea of work, they eventually become engaged in a way that strengthens their commitment to the profession (Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). Involvement stresses students’ loyalty and participation in the profession or discipline while still under supervision by faculty and staff. Part or full-time attendance influences student participation. As involvement increases, students become more competent and confident (Beeler, 1991; Gardner & Barnes, 2007). Work becomes more autonomous, as students watch



faculty, supervisors and colleagues display practices and adopt the tactics or other means to accomplish similar goals. Associations influence involvement, particularly those that require exams or licensing (Eraut, 1994; McGuire & Phye, 2006).

Each element of the socialization process reflects efforts to become an idealized sense of a professional (Weidman et al., 2001). The student must participate in activities that increase knowledge acquisition, involvement, and investment in the graduate education experience. These activities occur across four stages of socialization as explained by Weidman et al. (2001).

**Model stages.** Prior to entrance to the program, students participate in the Anticipatory Stage of socialization (Antony, 2002; Stein & Weidman, 1989; Weidman et al., 2001). During this stage, an individual “becomes aware of the behavioral, attitudinal, and cognitive expectations held for a role incumbent” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 12). Anticipatory socialization begins during the undergraduate experience and is influenced by the messages received from family, friends, and the professional community in which the student one day aspires to work (Costello, 2005; Konstam, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). The student enters into the graduate environment as a novice and quickly learns to readjust incorrect perceptions. Students are uncertain in all aspects of conducting work in the selected profession and look to faculty to provide direction as to how to be a professional (Weidman et al., 2001).

During the Formal Stage of socialization, graduate students gain professional knowledge through course work and practical application and conceptualize day-to-day life as a professional (Weidman et al., 2001). Program faculty and staff provide direction and support as students become socialized to the skills needed for the line of work (Conrad et al., 1998; Gansemer-Topf et al., 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). Students begin to accept their role as future professionals

but continue to seek mentors to learn normative role expectations and how they should be enacted. Gradually, the student becomes more confident in their role and accepts greater responsibility, which often comes as a reward for demonstrating increased professional competence (Beeler, 1991; Weidman et al., 2001). At this stage, “preparation is a function of the type and range of activities in which incumbents participate, how clearly standards and expectations of them are state, and the time that is allotted for role-playing opportunities” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 13). As students acquire increased knowledge and demonstrate efficacy through supervised practice, they become more involved and invested in the profession.

During the Informal Stage, students internalize lessons about the profession (Antony, 2002; Weidman et al., 2001). They become more confident in enacting the profession’s expectations. While faculty and staff remain important role models, students begin to conceptualize individualized ways to perform work that align with professional expectations but also set them apart from faculty, staff, and fellow students (Antony, 2002; Weidman et al., 2001). They begin to demonstrate emerging concepts of work within the supervised setting and through course work (Antony, 2002; Weidman et al., 2001). Involvement in the program varies depending on how students balance educational pursuits with other priorities such as work and personal relationships (Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001).

The fourth and final stage, Personal, is when students begin to internalize professional roles, refine knowledge about work, and demonstrate competence within multiple areas of the profession. Because they increase their interaction with role models external to the program through associations and supervised practice, they form a professional identity and conceptualize a personal philosophy about work (Antony, 2002; Weidman et al., 2001). They exhibit a pattern of growth that demonstrates to faculty, staff, and fellow students that they are ready to become a

professional. The students' involvement and investment heightens and they become increasingly compliant with values and attitudes of the selected profession. Immersed in a job search, students in this stage often experience some degree of separation from the cohort as they become more self-focused and assess their career marketability (Weidman et al., 2001).

**Environment and socialization.** As explained, Weidman et al. (2001) conceptualize socialization as a process consisting of multiple stages during which three primary objectives – knowledge acquisition, investment and involvement – are constantly sought. The environments in which a student practices how to be a professional and the persons with whom they interact also impact socialization. Weidman et al. (2001) explained socialization is heavily influenced by individual and environmental factors categorized within the process of pre-entry and entry to the graduate program, participation within program, participation outside of program and entrance into professional practice. Ultimately, commitment and identity emerge.

Weidman et al. (2001) believe students experience all aspects of the model as they progress through each socialization stage. Appendix B is a visualization of the model. This model may be insightful for the student affairs context, because graduate students experience high levels of influence from both the program and colleagues external to the program such as those in professional associations (Janosik, 2009).

Based on the model of Weidman et al. (2001) and other literature (Adler & Adler, 2005; Antony, 2002; Bragg, 1976; Eraut, 1994; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; McGuire & Phye, 2006), one may conceptualize professional values development as a process that begins by comparing student dispositions as they interact with the new graduate environment. In the graduate environment, students examine the messages sent from socializing agents. While the student

participates in the graduate community, they also interface with the larger professional community and their personal communities. This in mind, the student hears messages about, increases awareness of, and becomes more aligned with the profession's values, which she or he internalizes as part of an emerging professional identity (Weidman et al., 2001).

## **Summary**

This section provided an overview of broad graduate education as a socialization process, which can inform the study of professional socialization experiences within student affairs programs. During graduate education, students become informed of and begin to adopt professional values. When graduate program faculty and staff partner to create developmental experiences, the socialization process is likely to be successful. However, student propensity for learning and active engagement in the educational process influences professional socialization. The literature reflects that faculty, staff, and students should work collaboratively to address students' emerging needs, while meeting standardized objectives of similar graduate programs. One need is to support professional values development in graduate education. A model of socialization was provided (Weidman et al., 2001). The model considers values development as an outcome of successful socialization. Applied in the student affairs context for examining graduate student competence (Hirschy & Wilson, 2008), the Weidman et al. (2001) model is relevant for examining values development within student affairs beginning in graduate school.

## **The Student Affairs Profession**

Student affairs is a composite label for various functions in higher education that primarily serve the needs of students outside the classroom (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Nuss, 2003). This section addresses relevant literature on socializing students to student affairs values. I provide an overview of the profession's history and philosophy, espoused values, and necessary

competencies. Additionally, literature on the experiences of professionals in student affairs is explained, as the experiences these persons have can inform how graduate student socialization and values development might occur. Finally, student affairs graduate education and ongoing professional development as socializing factors are examined.

## **History and Philosophy**

Student affairs emerged in the late 1800s when faculty began to focus primarily on teaching and research, leaving out of classroom experiences unattended (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Hirt, 2006; Nuss, 2003). During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, growing enrollments (Hirt, 2006) and increased numbers of students involved in fraternities and sororities and athletics (Rudolph, 1990) influenced the need for persons to deal specifically with out of classroom life. Student affairs provided oversight to the growing residential campus and the issues that came with caring for students during their time out of the classroom (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Nuss, 2003; Rudolph, 1990; Thelin, 2003).

Student affairs evolved with an overarching philosophy of a "...consistent and persistent emphasis and commitment to the development of the whole person" (Nuss, 2003, p. 65). However, student behavior was originally the focal point of student affairs work and was regulated through staff acting in loco parentis (Carpenter, 1996; Nuss, 2003; Rudolph, 1990). Monitoring student behavior positioned student affairs as primarily supporting the work of faculty (Carpenter, 1996; Hirt, 2006; Nuss, 2003). While the profession has evolved through foci including student development (Bloland et al., 1994; Carpenter, 1996; Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Reason & Broido, 2010) and student learning (American Association of Higher Education (AAHE), ACPA, & NASPA, 1998; Carpenter, 1996; Dungy, 2009; Keeling, 2004), the profession's basic principles have remained relatively constant (American Council on Education

(ACE), 1994a; 1994b; Evans & Reason, 2001; Keeling, 2004; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). These principles have been reflected in the profession's guiding documents (Evans & Reason, 2001; Reason & Broido, 2010).

Guiding documents explain how a profession evolved and priorities throughout its history (Evans & Reason, 2001). Documents inform readers of a shared professional philosophy and "...provide a foundation for identity and practice and a framework for interpretation and understanding" (Whitt, Carnaghi, Matkin, Scalese-Love & Nestor, 1990, p. 179). Evans and Reason (2001) reviewed 13 foundational documents that spanned six decades and found consistent expectations of student affairs practice: promote an holistic approach to the student experience, provide attention to individual differences, emphasize student agency, consider context, act intentionally, base practice on empirical data, accept a role in instruction and learning, foster collaboration (particularly with faculty), promote education for citizenship, and emphasize accountability. Since Evans and Reason (2001), *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004) emerged to guide student affairs priorities, mainly emphasizing learning (Dungy, 2009).

Guiding documents support the socialization of student affairs graduate students, reinforcing professional values (Reason & Broido, 2010). Documents can guide work, create connectedness for professionals and offer a common language and philosophy (Evans & Reason, 2001; Whitt et al, 1990): "[Documents] underscore the centrality of the student affairs field in higher education...[and] revisiting and confirming [the profession's] values is healthy" (Evans and Reason, p. 375). However, to what extent this occurs is unclear (Bloland et al., 1994; Evans and Reason, 2001). To support student affairs socialization, Evans and Reason (2001) posit programs should use these documents within course work and supervised practice to launch discussions with students on widely held professional values.

## **Professional Values**

Young (2003) defines values as “abstract ideals that are centrally located within our belief system and tell us how we ought to behave” (p. 97). Tull and Medrano (2008) explain “values in student affairs administration have broadly been described in the literature as beliefs and knowledge that influence the ways in which student affairs staff work with individuals and groups” (p. 2). While values exist at individual and professional levels (Elfrink & Coldwell, 1993; Ellis, 2009; Love et al., 1993; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 2003), guiding documents provide evidence of core values espoused throughout student affairs history that inform how persons should conduct work (Evans & Reason, 2001; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 1993; 2003).

Student affairs work serves diverse functions. Such diversity has influenced the perceptions of some that it is difficult to have consensus on core values (Carpenter, 2003; Young, 1993; 2003). Some have argued this undermines student affairs as a profession (Bloland et al., 1994; Carpenter, 2003; Young, 1985). Others contend common values exist but their demonstration must reflect the diversity of the individuals who do the work and the diverse areas in which the work occurs (Dalton, 1993; 2003; Love et al, 1993; Whitt et al, 1990). Additionally, society influences views on and the relevance of values (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 1993; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a). For example, as college campuses have become increasingly diverse, issues of social justice, advocacy, and inclusion have become a foremost priority for student affairs work (McEwen, 2003; McEwen & Roper, 1994a; 1994b). How those in student affairs, an applied field, have adopted and demonstrated its core values may be similar to fields such as social work (Reamer, 1998) and nursing (Schank & Weis, 2001; Young & Elfrink, 1991a); espoused student affairs values are personalized in enactment but values core to

the profession's heritage and function should be properly demonstrated by professionals (AAHE et al., 1998; Dalton, 1993; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003).

Tull and Medrano (2008) examined core student affairs values using a population of NASPA members, including some graduate students, within two regions of the organization. Using the Character Values Scale (CVS), which examines cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of one's character, participants were asked to choose ten values, among 44 provided, that they feel are most important to their work. The authors found consistency of value selection across institutional type and demographics including gender. Minor differences existed across functional areas; however, consistency emerged for the most part.

Tull and Medrano (2008) also examined percentages of responses for each value compared to Young and Elfrink (1991a), who reported the results of a survey in which scholars and practitioners identified essential values of the profession. Sixteen values identified by Young and Elfrink (1991a) were included within the 44 listed on the CVS. Tull and Medrano (2008) found these 16 values to be identified as essential by survey respondents almost two decades after Young and Elfrink's research. These values, in order of ranking in Tull and Medrano (2008), are honesty (70 percent), fairness (53), caring (49), commitment (49), compassion (45), cooperation (38), empathy (32), imaginative (29), reflective (24), tolerant (20), rational (19), independent (19), courageous (15), generous (13), altruistic (11), and hopeful (10).

It appears values congruence within a student affairs work environment can lead to easier socialization into the profession (McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Tull & Medrano, 2008). As a result, long-term professional commitment may be fostered. Supervisors have an important role



in expressing the profession's values and supporting new professionals' internalization and development of values (Hirt & Strayhorn, 2010; Strayhorn, 2009; Tull, 2006).

Professional values development as a part of graduate preparation to work within student affairs has been addressed conceptually (Collins, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009) and as factor in the decision to enter the profession after completing graduate work (Phelps Tobin, 1998; Richmond & Benton, 1988). We also know students entering student affairs graduate education are likely to agree with the profession's values (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Cutler, 2003; Ellis, 2009; Hirt, 2006; Hunter, 1992; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006) and likely strengthen professional values during graduate school (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Love et al, 1993; Manning, 1993; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Reybold, Halx, Jimenez, 2008; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; 1991b). However, this is not always the case: Exposure to complex issues and comparing individual to student affairs values may "alter the way the graduate student sees her or his world. Both the cognitive and affective aspects of these complex plans... cause them to question prior beliefs and knowledge" (Creamer & Winston, p. 26). If values systems do not align, students may not enter the profession even after degree completion (Hunter, 1992; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Richmond & Benton, 1988). However, for some, aligning personal and professional values is an ongoing process through their professional lives (Carpenter, 2003; Collins, 2009; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Janosik, 2007).

As student affairs professionals must teach and demonstrate values for the students with whom they work, ensuring professionals are aware of and adopt the profession's values should be a priority of graduate education (Dalton, 1993; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Whitt & Blimling, 2000; Young & Coldwell, 1993). From the literature, it is unclear as to how students interpret values and how they learn, internalize, and demonstrate student affairs

values during student affairs graduate education. To inform my research process, it was important to be clear as to student affairs' espoused values. Young, who conceptually and empirically examined professional values for more than a decade (1991; 1993; 2001; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; 1991b), explained student affairs values that guided this research (Young, 2003). He identified student affairs values as individuation, caring, service, community, equality, justice, caring-based ethics, and student contribution. These values are now described.

**Individuation.** The value of individuation is central to student affairs history (Evans & Reason, 2001; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Reason & Broido, 2010; Winston & Saunders, 1991; Young, 2003) as student affairs professionals are trained to approach the unique needs of students, respecting their human dignity (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Young, 1993; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a). Individuation is also practiced in diverse contexts and influences a student's sense of comfort and support (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2006). During graduate education, professionals must be trained to serve the individual needs of students and uphold this important value (Hirt, 2006; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McEwen & Roper, 1994a).

**Caring.** Young (2003) first discussed caring as service (1985) but expanded its meaning to separate the care portion of serving from the value of service itself (see next paragraph). Young and Elfrink (1991a) addressed caring as altruism, consistent with Young's recent interpretation (2003). Altruism describes the value of caring as "concern for human betterment over benign attention to one's context" (Young, 2003, p. 101). "Caring" has long been an important attribute for student affairs professionals (ACE, 1994a; 1994b; Evans & Reason, 2001; Reason & Broido, 2010). Many individuals who enter student affairs often identify with this value (Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006; Tull & Medrano, 2008).

**Service.** Connected to caring, service is the value “behind the provision of student services” (Young, 2003, p. 102). Its demonstration in the history of student affairs has varied (AAHE, ACPA & NASPA, 1998; Keeling, 2004; Manning et al., 2006); however, it remains one of the profession’s most steadfast values (Evans & Reason, 2001; Young, 2003). Studies indicate one of the main reasons for entering the profession is the person’s desire to serve and the profession’s inclination to do so (Reybold et al., 2008; Forney, 1994; McEwen & Taub, 2006; Richmond & Sherman, 1991). Adopting the value of service results in a commitment to the greater good, enacted in a diverse campus community.

**Community.** Young (2003) characterizes community as “...an organic conception of social relationships” (p. 100). Community is a long-enduring value of the profession (ACE, 1994b; Young, 1993; Young & Elfrink, 1991a). Roberts (2003) explained when professionals support the value of community, they conduct practice that unites the campus and in turn improves their professional competency of pluralism and inclusion. As this occurs, professionals can support equal opportunity for success within multiple campus communities.

**Equality.** Within a community, a goal is that each person feels valued. Considering the last 25 years of research within the *Journal of College Student Development* and *NASPA Journal*, one can find equality - often addressed as multicultural competence, diversity, social justice or inclusion - as a widely studied value (Castellanos, Gloria, Mayorga & Salas, 2007; Love & Yousney, 2001; McEwen & Roper, 1994a; 1994b; Turrentine & Conley, 2001). Young (2003) discussed the use of equality early in the profession as attentive to “individual talents” (p. 100); however, the “status of groups in college and broader culture” (p. 100) is now how it is considered. Aligned with the ACPA core competency of pluralism and inclusion (ACPA, 2007),

equality has moved to the forefront of student affairs values system as demonstrated by programs to increase the presence of historically underrepresented populations (NASPA, 2009a).

**Justice.** While considered when addressing the needs of diverse students, justice also invokes a sense of how student affairs professionals support responsibility, accountability, and the development of character in their work with students and colleagues (Janosik & Hirt, 2002; Kuk & Donovan, 2002; Young, 2003). Young and Elfrink's study (1991a) of essential values of student affairs revealed that justice and truth were two commonly identified values. It appears that Young now positions truth within the value of justice (Young, 2003). This indicates justice has evolved from more than meeting matters of equality and now emphasizes the need to ensure the safety and security of students and the integrity of higher education (Barr, 2003; Janosik & Hirt, 2002).

**Caring-based ethics.** Young (2003) explains caring-based ethics as the internalization of ethics due to concern for others. Ethics can guide student affairs workers' values: basically, "do no harm" (Whitt et al., 1990). The importance of ethics is evident in the statements of various student affairs associations (e.g. ACUI, 2008; AFA, 2009; Dalton, Crosby, Valente & Eberhart, 2009; Ignelzi, 2009). The extent to which professionals display ethics in day-to-day work has been considered in recent studies (Humphrey, Janosik & Creamer, 2004; Janosik, 2007; Janosik, Creamer, & Humphrey, 2004). Professionals often find it challenging to uphold student affairs standards, especially those of an ethical nature (Janosik, 2007; Whitt & Blimling, 2000).

**Student contribution.** Simplified as "students caring for society" (Young, 2003, p. 102), Evans and Reason (2001) found this value in most of the profession's guiding documents dating back to the 1949 *Student Personnel Point of View* (ACE, 1994b). Defined as citizenship,

civic engagement, or community involvement, promoting student contribution has been emphasized as a way for student affairs professionals to work with students to foster a safe community for learning (Baxter-Magolda & King, 2007; Roberts, 2003).

**Summary.** Understanding values is core to professional socialization, whereas “...entering the field, professionals are expected to exhibit a set of basic skills and attributes while adopting a certain value set” (ACPA, 2007 p. 5). Because values form a basis for enacting competencies, it is important to understand the desired skills for student affairs professionals. The next section addresses student affairs professional competencies.

## **Competencies**

Competencies are “how we ought to act” based on commonly held values (Young, 2003, p. 97). Enacting specific competencies can demonstrate that widely held student affairs values have been learned and internalized by graduate students and professionals (ACPA, 2007; AAHE et al., 1998). Competencies for work in student affairs have been explained conceptually (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Bradley et al., 1985; Keeling, 2004; Whitt & Blimling, 2000) and empirically examined using perceptions of faculty and practitioners (Kuk et al., 2007; Young & Elfrink, 1991b), senior student affairs officers (Burkard et al., 2005; Herdlein, 2004), entry-level professionals (Cilente et al., 2007; Cuyjet et al., 2009; DeSawal, 2006; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Waple, 2006; Young & Coldwell, 1993), search committees (Kretovics, 2002), graduate students (Helm, 2004; Hephner LaBanc, 2010) and a meta-analysis of student affairs research (Lovell & Kosten, 2000).

Student affairs values are often reflected through demonstrating competencies (AAHE et al., 1998; ACPA & NASPA, 1997). *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (ACPA &

NASPA, 1997) addressed values and competencies as almost interchangeable. For example, the document identifies teaching and pluralism as values. Both are now acknowledged by ACPA (2007) as needed competencies. Herdlein (2004) addressed the importance senior student affairs officers placed on the development of specific competencies in graduate school and to what extent they thought graduate education supported the development of said competencies. He found that values development, as a part of intrapersonal competence, was recognized as not only essential but also an often-realized outcome of student affairs graduate education. Elfrink and Coldwell (1993) proposed a model for reviewing values enactment in student affairs work: Through reflection on competencies, professionals are able to consider their demonstration of the profession's values.

The literature emphasizes that faculty and professional supervisors may differ in views on the relevance of specific competencies (DeSawal, 2006; Helm, 2004; Herdlein, 2004; Kretovics, 2002; Kuk et al., 2007; Waple, 2006; Young & Coldwell, 1993) and graduate programs may emphasize essential skills, such as theory use, not widely applied in the profession (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Helm, 2004; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Kuk et al., 2007; Love & Yousney, 2001; Upcraft, 1998; Young & Janosik, 2007). Findings also emphasize differences of opinion between graduate students' perceptions and program objectives (Love & Yousney, 2001; Richmond & Sherman, 1991; Young & Coldwell, 1993). Diverse contexts and emphasis on functional areas also influence perceptions of necessary competencies (Hirt, 2006; Kretovics, 2002; Kuk, 2009; Upcraft, 1998). The rich literature on student affairs competencies reflects common and divergent opinions as to what constitutes good student affairs practice.

*The CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* (CAS, 2009c) is a guide for different functions in higher education, most of which are located within traditional student

affairs programs. The Standards have been widely touted for their explanation of needed student affairs competencies (Arminio, 2009; CAS, 2009c; Young & Janosik, 2007). Studies indicate using CAS Standards in student affairs graduate programs positively influences students' inclination to develop expected competencies (CAS, 2009c; Young & Janosik, 2007). While the CAS Standards inform graduate students of necessary skills to work in student affairs (CAS, 2009b; Young & Janosik, 2007), a simplified set of competencies has been needed. To that end, ACPA (2007) created its professional competencies: advising and helping, assessment, evaluation and research, ethics, leadership and administration/management, legal foundations, pluralism and inclusion, student learning and development, and teaching.

**Advising and helping.** ACPA (2007) defines advising as “Skills related to providing support, direction, feedback, critique, and guidance to individuals and groups” (p. 6). Love (2003) defines it as a “helping relationship between two people and a dynamic process of mutual discovery and self-determination” (p. 507). Student affairs graduate students are often predisposed to working with others, have well-developed social and interpersonal skills, and enjoy the college environment (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Cutler, 2003; Forney, 1994; Phelps Tobin, 1998). This propensity allows for future professionals to understand that providing consultation and advice for a wide range of student issues is a core component of work in student affairs (Burkard et al, 2005; DeSawal, 2006; Salter, Evans & Forney, 2006; Scriber, 2005). Approaches to advising depend on the context in which one works and the extent of student interaction (DeSawal, 2006; Hirt, 2006; Manning et al., 2006); however, it is one of the most cited competencies of new professionals (Burkard et al, 2005; Kuk et al., 2007).

**Assessment, evaluation, and research.** ACPA (2007) describes this as “The design and implementation of assessment, evaluation, and research methods focused on student learning and

satisfaction, organizational issues and development, professional development and training, student development, and other emergent issues using both quantitative and qualitative techniques” (p. 7). Upcraft (2003) provided a comprehensive model for enacting these processes in student affairs. Student affairs professionals may face challenges regarding this competency (Love & Estanek, 2004; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Upcraft, 2003; Young & Coldwell, 1993). As student affairs must document its efficacy in supporting institutional mission (Dalton, 2003; Dungy, 2009; Keeling, 2004), promoting assessment, evaluation, and research as a core competency during graduate work is essential (Love & Estanek, 2004; Love & Yousney, 2001; Upcraft, 2003).

**Ethics.** Understanding and applying ethical standards in one’s work is vital (ACPA, 2007; Dalton et al., 2009; Fried, 2003; Ignelzi, 2009; Ortiz & Martinez, 2009). As previously addressed, ethics is also a value (Young, 2003). As a competency, ethics can be demonstrated by adhering to codes of student affairs associations (e.g. ACUI, 2011; AFA, 2011). Various models, based on research, have been developed to guide ethical decision-making for persons in student affairs (Humphrey et al., 2004; Janosik, 2007; Janosik et al., 2004).

Ethical development is a vital component of ongoing professional socialization, specifically as it relates to learning, internalizing, and demonstrating the profession’s values (Ignelzi, 2009; Janosik, 2007). Alignment between a professional’s espoused values and actions can demonstrate congruence with widely held professional standards (Dalton et al., 2009; Fried, 2003; Hotelling, 1990; Ignelzi, 2009; Janosik, 2007; Ortiz & Martinez, 2009). Surveying over 300 student affairs professionals, Janosik (2007) found immediate peers, supervisors, graduate program personnel, and professional associations influence one’s ethical behavior. Addressing



ethical development in graduate education is vital to socializing students to the profession's values (Ignelzi, 2009; Janosik, 2007; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009).

**Leadership & administration/management.** Developed as a cluster of skills including managing fiscal, material, and human resources, developing organizations, and exhibiting social responsibility, this competency is demonstrated by efforts to involve and influence persons within student affairs and throughout higher education (ACPA, 2007; Amey, Jessup-Anger & Tingsou-Gatuz, 2009; Dalton, 2003; Jackson, Moneta & Nelson, 2009; Rogers, 2003). This can be a difficult assignment given the fragmented culture of student affairs and higher education (Arcelus, 2008; Kuh, Siegel & Thomas, 2001; Love et al, 1993). Numerous skills are necessary within this competency but one that emerges as particularly important is that of collaboration.

The ability to foster and support collaboration, particularly that of student affairs and academic affairs, is an important trait in the student affairs professional's repertoire (Consolvo & Dannell, 2009; Schroeder, 2003; Whitt, 2010; Whitt et al., 2000). The divide between academic affairs and student affairs impairs student affairs practitioners' ability to fulfill their potential role in student learning (Arcelus, 2008; Dungy, 2009; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Schroeder, 2003). Whitt et al (2000) write, "This is particularly distressing given the unequivocal evidence that students learn most effectively in seamless learning environments" (p. 236). Collaboration is difficult and depends on reciprocity from academic affairs (Arcelus, 2008; Consolvo & Dannell, 2009) but it is an important way to demonstrate leadership and management competencies of student affairs practitioners to the larger campus community (Dalton, 2003; Jackson et al., 2009).

**Legal foundations.** Student affairs professionals must understand and be responsive to laws and regulations relative to managing student programs (Barr, 2003; CAS, 2009c; Janosik &

Hirt, 2002). ACPA's (2007) explanation emphasizes understanding law in the context of higher education and as dictated by Federal and State governing bodies. Charged with the "responsibility for the lives of students" (Sandeen & Barr, 2006, p. xii), professionals must understand and comply with the legal foundations of the profession to maintain a safe environment for all (Barr, 2003). Socialization processes during graduate work must stress how the legal environment impacts professional work (Carpenter, 2003) and is a tool to advance the profession's values of justice and equality (CAS, 2009c; Young, 2003). Unfortunately, Hephner LaBanc (2010) found that most graduate students self-reported low levels on legal skills.

**Pluralism and Inclusion.** The confluence of diverse identities on a college campus has presented student affairs with its greatest challenge and opportunity. Increased attention has been given to the identity development of people of color (McEwen, 2003a; Talbot, 2003; Torres & Hernandez, 2008), the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community (Abes & Jones, 2004) and other underrepresented populations (Talbot, 2003). As campuses become more diverse, professionals must have the skills to discuss and promote the benefits of interacting across differences (ACPA, 2007; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Laker & Davis, 2009; Lark, 1998).

Fostering pluralism and inclusion must be a priority and has emerged as a foremost value of student affairs (AAHE et al., 1998; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). This includes connecting stakeholders within a diverse campus community (Roberts, 2003) and supporting students' identity exploration and development (Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Laker & Davis, 2009; McEwen, 2003b). Training for cultural competence must begin during student affairs graduate education (McEwen & Roper, 1994a; 1994b). Additionally, broadly and within student affairs, graduate education should help students foster an appreciation for diversity within the cohort (Antony, 2002; Castellanos et al., 2007; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Lark, 1998). Hephner LaBanc

(2010) reported pluralism and inclusion as one of the most used and developed competencies during graduate education.

**Student learning and development.** Throughout its' history, student affairs has sought to validate its position in the educational enterprise (Nuss, 2003). In the 1960s, numerous theories were developed in the area of psychology and other social sciences that explained young adult and student development. These theories became a foundation on which to base student affairs work (Hamrick et al., 2002). The goals of student development and student learning have recently been connected as a student affairs priority. *The Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1996) called for all involved in student affairs to prioritize their role as educator. Critics claimed student affairs professionals were not equipped or willing to accept this role (Bloland et al., 1994). As learning should be the primary outcome of college participation (Baxter Magolda & King, 2007; Keeling, 2004), student affairs professionals can support the goals of higher education and gain increased credibility by adopting learning as a primary responsibility (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Consolvo & Dannell, 2009; Dungy, 2009; Magolda & Quaye, 2010; Roper, 2003). Graduate programs should emphasize this responsibility (Komives, 1998; Phelps & Tobin, 1998; Sandeen & Barr, 2006).

**Teaching.** Connected to the idea of student learning and development, ACPA (2007) describes the competency of teaching as “Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of teaching, learning, and training theory and how to apply these theories to improve student affairs practice and education” (p. 17). In an effort to better align student affairs with its academic counterparts, Bloland et al., (1996) made the case for student affairs professionals to view themselves as educators and teachers. Unfortunately, this competency continues to be an area of deficiency for most student affairs graduate students (Hephner LaBanc, 2010). Adopting

teaching as a professional paradigm has been a challenge for many, as student affairs is often selected due to one's out of classroom experiences, which are rarely connected to the undergraduate in-class experience (Brown, 1987; Forney, 1994; Young, 1985).

**Summary.** The *ACPA Core Competencies* can shape good student affairs work (ACPA, 2007). These competencies are based on professional values (Young, 2003), which are learned as a part of the larger socialization process (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Developing the profession's values and competencies begins during graduate education (Komives, 1998, Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McClellan & Stringer, 2009), which is addressed in the next section.

### **Student Affairs Professional Socialization through Graduate Programs**

Student affairs graduate programs are the environments in which the proposed research occurs. Therefore, it is important to understand their history and how student affairs graduate programs socialize participants. This section provides an overview of student affairs graduate education, including its origins, purpose, content, and standardization. Additionally, the predispositions of students that influence student affairs graduate education are addressed. The section closes with a review of the literature on the transition from student to professional.

### **Origins and Purpose of Student Affairs Graduate Education**

Student affairs graduate programs began at Columbia University Teacher's College in 1914 (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Nuss, 2003). Early in the profession, practical training was how most learned how to work in student affairs (Creamer & Winston, 2002; McEwen & Talbot, 1998). In 1946, about 50 institutions provided student affairs graduate education (McEwen & Talbot, 1998). In 1980 nearly 100 graduate programs existed (Meaborn & Owens, 1984). In 1994, 74 graduate programs hosted 2816 students (Phelps Tobin, 1998).

The *2006-2009 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in Student Affairs* lists 123 programs (ACPA, 2009). Student affairs work often requires preparation through a graduate program (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Winston, Torres, Carpenter, McIntire, & Petersen, 2001).

Characteristics of quality student affairs graduate education have been extensively examined (Amey et al., 2009; Brown, 1985; 1987; Creamer & Winston, 2002; Helm, 2004; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Hunter & Comey, 1991; Hyman, 1988; Keim, 1991b; Komives, 1998; Kuh et al., 1987; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Meaborn & Owens, 1984; McEwen & Talbot, 1998; Penn & Trow, 1987; Upcraft, 1998; Young, 1987, 1993; Young & Janosik, 2007). Most programs host three categories of learning experiences that appear to be effective in preparing future student affairs professionals: foundational studies, professional studies and supervised practice (Amey et al., 2009; Keim, 1991b; McEwen & Talbot, 1998). Foundational studies consider the profession's evolution, guiding documents, values, competencies and interdisciplinary approach. Professional studies include appropriate theories and frameworks as well as assessment and research. Foundational and professional studies often are emphasized through course work. Supervised practice includes such experiences as assistantships and practica, often occurring outside the classroom (Creamer & Winston, 2002; McEwen & Talbot, 1998).

Socialization is a primary purpose of student affairs graduate education. Student affairs preparation programs support socialization into the norms and values of the profession (Bradley et al., 1985; Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). The overall purpose of programs is to "...prepare competently trained individuals to perform the broad range of practice in student affairs" (McEwen & Talbot, 1998, p. 128). Through this preparation, a professional philosophy and identity evolves (Cutler, 2003; Manning, 1993; Young, 1985). Manning (1993) wrote:

Graduate students benefit from a personal philosophy that is focused enough to guide their work and rich enough to encourage their growth. A personal and professional philosophy also helps student affairs educators to define their work, shape their practice, and align the field with the missions of the institutions they serve (p. 198).

A professional philosophy is often grounded in a set of core values (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). Student affairs graduate students often create a sense of professional philosophy through master's program provided structures.

### **Program Structure and Standardization**

**Course work.** Most student affairs graduate programs include provided course work with faculty and supervised practice (Creamer & Winston, 2002; McEwen & Talbot, 1998). Relationships with faculty through the context of course work influence student perceptions of student affairs (Evans & Williams, 1998; Goodman, 1984; Keim, 1991a; Kuh et al., 1987; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Young & Elfrink, 1991b). This relationship is dependent on faculty and students co-creating knowledge in a supportive environment (Evans & Williams, 1998; Manning, 1993). Manning (1993) wrote that student affairs "...has progressed to such a point now that graduate faculty should move beyond describing what student affairs educators do and work with graduate students to create meaning, understand theory, and build a sense of purpose about the profession" (p. 197). The challenge of balancing schoolwork, assistantship expectations, and relations with peers can prove difficult for even well adjusted individuals (Forney & Davis, 2002; Goodman, 1984; Hyman, 1992). Faculty can be important to helping students navigate the new terrain of graduate work (Evans & Williams, 1998; Manning, 1993).

Through course work, faculty members educate students on theories, models, and concepts that influence work in student affairs, including the values of the profession (Evans & Williams, 1998; Young & Elfrink, 1991b). Lessons learned through course work provide a foundation for the profession (Komives, 1998; Kuh et al., 1987; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Theoretical knowledge has been emphasized in student affairs graduate programs for four decades (Evans et al., 1998; 2010; Hamrick et al., 2002; McEwen, 2003a; Penn & Trow, 1987). McEwen (2003a) explained theory is an important basis from which to guide practice, provides a common language among diverse student affairs professionals, and places student affairs as central to the academic enterprise.

One aspect of course work is education about professional values (Young, 2005). Young and Elfrink (1991b) found 96 percent of student affairs professionals agreed that the field's recognized values should be included in professional education and 85 percent thought that values education was as important as education on the profession's competencies and history. In the same study, a vast majority of faculty respondents believed they taught students about professional values. Two-thirds of faculty included values education as an explicit part of their course syllabus (Young & Elfrink, 1991b). Young (2005) believed that it is from this study that CAS started to recommend values education an important part of the student affairs curriculum. Education on the profession's current and emerging values, as well as how individual student values align with those of the profession, is important to address during student affairs graduate education (Kuk & Donovan, 2002; McClellan & Stringer, 2009; Wiese & Cawthorn, 2009; Young & Elfrink, 1991b).

**Supervised practice.** Professional socialization during graduate education is also often facilitated through supervised practice (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Saunders & Cooper, 2002),

which is an “...intentional effort to infuse experience into formal education, a component absolutely essential to quality learning” (Creamer & Winston, 2002, p. 18). Students often enter programs with little to no professional experience (Phelps Tobin, 1998; Young, 1985). As most students are traditional aged and take little time off before graduate work (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006), limited professional experience may impact the extent to which one can be successful in student affairs graduate education (Amey et al., 2009; Forney, 1994; Keim, 1991b; Young, 1985). Therefore, most students take part in supervised practice to hone professional skills (Cooper & Saunders, 2003; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). Creamer and Winston (2002) conceptualized a model of learning in supervised practice, which includes 300 hours of assistantship, practicum, and internship or teaching experience. The model positions supervision at the center. Direct experience, reflection, ethics and translation are adjacent circles. Creamer and Winston (2002) believe each is important; however supervision is most essential for students to become effective in student affairs.

Supervised practical experience can increase the likelihood that students will immediately apply lessons learned in course work (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). Connecting lessons from course work to the practical setting is essential to prepare students for the “real world” work environment (Hyman, 1988; Jones & Segawa, 2004; Komives, 1998). However, there is often little emphasis on theory by professional supervisors during graduate work (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Komives, 1998; Upcraft, 1998). The tension between theory and practice is not unique to student affairs (Costello, 2005; Eraut, 1994); however, many believe when student affairs graduate programs find the appropriate balance of theory and practice and properly socialize students to connect these concepts, student affairs will be a scholarly discourse



(Carpenter, 2001; Jablonski et al., 2006) and increase its credibility in the academic enterprise (Hirt, 2007; McEwen, 2003a).

Graduate programs provide experiences to inform students' shared interpretations of work within student affairs globally and across diverse functional areas (Carpenter, 2003; Dungy, 2003). However, the diversity of functional areas makes student affairs work complex: one-size fits all approaches to professional training may be inappropriate (Hirt, 2006). Training must prepare students to work in many functional areas, diverse contexts and different student affairs division structures (Dungy, 2009; Hamrick & Hemphill, 2009; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Hirt, 2006; Kuk, 2009; Manning et al., 2006). As supervision supports students' values development (Tull, 2006) and functional areas may influence perceptions of student affairs values (Tull & Medrano, 2008), it appears supervised practice is a forum in which to learn, internalize, and practice the profession's values.

**Standardization.** Program standardization has been an ongoing topic among those concerned with student affairs graduate education. Many have written about whether or not graduate education should be standardized and accredited (CAS, 2009b; Ebbers & Kruempel, 1992; Hughley, 2009; Hirt, 2006). Keim (1991b) found varied approaches to how institutions structure student affairs graduate education created confusion by those external to the profession. Diverse approaches continue today; however, guidelines exist (Amey et al., 2009; CAS, 2009b; Hirt, 2006). *The CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* (CAS, 2009c) is widely used to standardize student affairs graduate education (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Ebbers & Kruempel, 1992; Meaborn & Owens, 1984; Young & Janosik, 2007). CAS (2009b; 2009c) emphasizes values education as a part of adherence to its standards. However, there is great

variance in CAS Standards compliance, which impacts how graduate students are socialized to the work of student affairs and its values (Young & Janosik, 2007).

### **Student Characteristics**

While some structured opportunities that promote socialization into student affairs are provided by the graduate program, students often enter student affairs graduate education as a result of their undergraduate experience and involvement in cocurricular activities (DeSawal, 2006; Hunter, 1992; Taub & McEwen, 2006; Wood, Winston, & Polkosnik, 1985). Therefore, perceptions of student affairs are likely based on undergraduate experiences and observations of professional role models and mentors (Cutler, 2003; DeSawal, 2006; Ellingson & Snyder, 2009; Forney, 1994; Hunter, 1992; Richmond & Sherman, 1991; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Students also enter student affairs graduate education from various undergraduate majors, often in the humanities (Forney, 1994; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Students were likely to have been highly involved in cocurricular activities (Collins, 2009; Hunter, 1992; Young, 1985, 1986, 1987), which may have resulted in less attention to academic pursuits (Young, 1985). However, Young (1986) found no correlation between undergraduate grades and graduate school attrition or performance.

Students are often unaware of the demands of student affairs graduate education (Richmond & Sherman, 1991; Wood et al., 1985). Such challenges may frustrate students when confronted with academic realities (Phelps Tobin, 1998; Young, 1985). Students are often equally unaware about different program emphases (Phelps Tobin, 1985; Richmond and Sherman, 1991). As programs differ in focus – student development, counseling, or administration (McEwen & Talbot, 1998) – students must be aware of how programs suit professional interests.

Graduate students tend to have an idea of and share student affairs values (Cutler, 2003; Hunter, 1992; Taub & McEwen, 2006). In a qualitative study, Hunter (1992) found shared values were a contributing factor to the decision to enter student affairs. Taub and McEwen (2006) had similar findings in their study of 300 students from 24 different student affairs programs: persons entering student affairs had “common values” reflected in goals to support student development, make a difference, and work in a learning environment. However, Taub and McEwen (2006) did not explicitly examine nor determine individual or professional values.

The research exposes a need to support graduate students’ personal development. Individual social identity is often examined in the years when traditional aged students attend graduate school (Arminio & McEwen, 1996; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Ignelzi, 2009; McEwen & Roper, 1994a). Social identity is a salient factor in student affairs graduate student socialization (Arminio & McEwen, 1996; Flowers & Howard-Hamilton, 2002; St. Clair, 2007; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Programs with high levels of cultural diversity impact graduate student interaction across differences (Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; McEwen & Roper, 1994a). As students often had homogenous undergraduate experiences (Blackhurst & Hubbard, 1997; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Talbot & Kocarek, 1997), it is important for student affairs programs to be structured with experiences that support students’ efforts to improve multicultural competence (Castellanos et al., 2007; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; McEwen & Roper, 1994a; Morales, Richardson & Wengert, 2002; Talbot & Kocarek, 1997). Relative to values development, Dalton (1993) emphasized internalizing the profession’s values must also respect how diverse persons may choose to enact them. This is consistent with literature about broad graduate education that indicates forced acclimation to a profession may deprive individuals of their sense of self, particularly if they have been historically underrepresented in the profession (Antony, 2002).

## **Transition to new professional**

The literature on new professionals provides insight into how one may have experienced graduate education and came to internalize and demonstrate professional values. Common challenges for new professionals include having to (re) build a life, navigate new environments, integrate professional and personal development, and find mentors to support continued professional socialization after graduate school (Cilente et al., 2007; Ellingson & Snyder, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Paterson & Coffey, 2009; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Strayhorn, 2009). New professionals exhibit a high degree of care about their work and the value of serving others (Boehman, 2007; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Young, 1985) but can quickly become disillusioned with long hours, low pay and minimal “results” from efforts to make a difference in the lives of students (Lorden, 1998; Tull, 2006). This may result in departure from the profession (Lorden, 1998). Professional standardization is also a consideration for the new professional (Carpenter, 2003; Whitt et al., 1990). However, student affairs has diverse functions, influencing the extent to which some believe it can be standardized (Amey et al., 2009; Carpenter, 2001; Hirt, 2006; Jablonski et al., 2006; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Whitt et al). Lacking a shared philosophy can confuse new professionals who aspire to meet professional norms and adopt and demonstrate the profession’s values (Hirt, 2006; Keim, 1991b; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004). Finally, graduate education programs may prepare new professionals to address certain issues while not educating on others (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Helm, 2004; Love & Yousney, 2001). For example, Helm (2004) found programs failed to help future professionals understand how higher education has become “marketized” and the professionals’ role in meeting increasing demands of efficiency and accountability.

New professionals often conduct themselves as they see supervisors and mentors manage work, taking “mental notes” of what they should do within student affairs work (Amey et al., 2009; Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Hirt & Strayhorn, 2010; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Strayhorn, 2009; Tull, 2006). Of particular importance is how supervisors demonstrate the profession’s values (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Marsh, 2001; Strayhorn, 2009; Tull, 2006). As students make sense about student affairs work through supervisors and mentors, there is a need for programs to help students reconcile individual and professional values prior to professional work (Collins, 2009; DeSawal, 2006; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). However, some indicate “muddling through” student affairs work is simply part of early professional life (Collins, 2009; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). Learning how to do student affairs work also includes ongoing examination of personal and professional values during the career span (Boehman, 2007; Carpenter, 2003; Collins; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Tull & Medrano, 2008). A model, developed by Carpenter (1996; 2003) that addresses ongoing professional development is explained in the next section.

### **Continuation of the Student Affairs Profession**

Socializing future professionals to student affairs values through graduate education is one way to ensure the continuation of the long, rich history of student affairs (Komives, 1998; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). This section provides an overview of how student affairs is sustained through ongoing professional development, which begins in graduate school. A model (Carpenter, 2003) illustrates how one may expand professional competence and demonstrate the profession’s values beginning in graduate education and throughout the career span. The model has three stages: formative, application and additive. In this section, I explain

tasks of the formative stage in depth, as students are most often in this stage during graduate education (Carpenter). The application and additive stages are briefly explained.

### **Formative stage**

The first task is learning necessary content for success in student affairs work (Carpenter, 2003). Graduate education consists of formal and informal socialization activities that influence participants' knowledge base and competence. These include course work (Evans & Williams, 1998), supervised practice (Creamer & Winston, 2002), involvement in professional associations (Janosik, 2009; Moore & Neuberger, 1998) and interactions with peers within and outside of program-centric experiences (Forney & Davis, 2002; Reybold et al., 2008). Through these experiences, individuals are educated for a professional role.

The second task is meeting the expectations of teachers and supervisors (Carpenter, 2003). Actions of students in the formative stage are often geared toward meeting teachers or supervisors' criteria and expectations (Carpenter, 2003). Students look externally for answers and seek reaffirmation to make sense of professional expectations (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Evans & Williams, 1998; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). Therefore, faculty and supervisors play important roles in properly validating and challenging the thoughts and impressions of graduate students (Carpenter, 2003; Creamer & Winston, 2002; Evans & Williams, 1998; Komives, 1998). It is important to note that traditional aged students may be exploring their sense of self during graduate school years (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Ignelzi, 2009; Marsh, 2001; Wiese & Cawthorn, 2009). Immersed in this process of reflection, graduate students may balance perceptions of increased competence with a high need for reaffirmation from others (Beeler, 1991; Weise & Cawthorn, 2009).

The third developmental task is learning theory and developing specific competencies (Carpenter, 2003). Understanding the theoretical underpinnings of student affairs is an important part of graduate preparation (Komives, 1998; McEwen, 2003a). Expanding professional competence begins in graduate school and is a lifelong endeavor (Carpenter, 2003; Collins, 2009; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Roberts, 2007). Therefore, in the formative stage, graduate students come to understand how they might utilize theory and enact specific competencies as they progress through their career (Carpenter, 2003).

Carpenter's (2003) fourth task is to become familiar with the literature of the field and understand commonly used approaches to student affairs work. This can occur through review of student affairs research (Roberts, 2007). Often, graduate students, as new members, review student affairs association magazines and research journals to expand knowledge of student affairs practice (Carpenter, 2003; Chernow et al., 2003; Janosik, 2009; Nuss, 2003; Roberts, 2007). Such involvement also exposes students to ideas outside their program or institution (Janosik, 2009).

Carpenter (2003) highlights participation in professional associations as the fifth developmental task. Associations provide professional socialization, ongoing development, and advocacy for members (Carpenter, 2003; Chernow et al., 2003; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Janosik et al., 2006; Moore & Neuberger, 1998; Nuss, 1993; Reesor et al., 2009; Roberts, 2007). Additionally, associations are forums to monitor trends and share ideas within broad student affairs (e.g. ACPA) and/or specific functional areas (e.g. ACUI or AFA; Carpenter, 1998; Dungy, 2003; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Nuss, 1993; Reesor et al., 2009). Janosik (2009) wrote, "Professional associations also help new members establish their own professional identity and help foster a sense of commitment to the profession and one's chosen career" (p.

195). The proliferation of associations based on functional areas has presented graduate students with opportunities to explore both specialist and generalist positions (Dungy, 2003; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Sandeen & Barr, 2006). Members use resources such as magazines and research journals and attend educational experiences such as conferences (Janosik, 2009; Roberts, 2007). Graduate students establish their professional credibility through volunteer roles and conducting conference presentations (Carpenter, 1998; Janosik, 2009; Roberts, 2007) and use associations to find jobs (Carpenter, 2003). Association conferences provide insight into appropriate professional behavior for impressionable graduate students (Janosik, 2009; Moore & Neuberger, 1998). Associations are often a launch pad for a career-long effort to realize professional potential (Boehman, 2007; Chernow et al., 2003; Reesor et al., 2009).

Finally, Carpenter (2003) identifies internalizing the profession's values as the culmination of the formative stage. As a result of the previously mentioned tasks, students are able to conceptualize and practice student affairs values (Carpenter, 2003). Reconciling personal and professional values is integral for student affairs professionals (Ellis, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Richmond & Sherman, 1991; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; Young, 2003). While student affairs consists of diverse functions with different foci (Carpenter, 2003; Dungy, 2003), common values can ground professional practice (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). Internalizing student affairs values in graduate schools is a part of forming a professional philosophy (Manning, 1993; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Young, 2003).

### **Application and Additive Stages**

While students are likely in the formative stage during graduate school, they see professional colleagues and role models conduct their own professional development (Carpenter, 2003; Collins, 2009; Tull, 2006). These observations inform student impressions. While not



happening to them, students watch others participate in a career-long professional development process, explained by Carpenter's (2003) application and additive stages.

During the application stage, the practitioner focuses on doing their job. The application stage often begins once the person obtains a professional position after graduate school (Carpenter, 2003). The practitioner commits to the profession, understands and attempts to live by ethical codes, and contributes through association participation (Carpenter, 2003; Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Janosik, 2009; Janosik, Carpenter & Creamer, 2006). Professionals value support from mentors; however, autonomy is an emerging priority (Carpenter, 2003; Collins, 2009; Ellingson & Snyder, 2009; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). The stage typically ends after four to six years when the practitioner examines contributions, determines long-term career plans and considers different roles in or out of student affairs (Boehman, 2007; Carpenter 1998; 2003).

In the additive stage, practitioners are concerned with professional contributions and nurturing others' competencies and values development (Carpenter, 1998; 2003). Professionals have advanced to mid-management or senior positions and take responsibility for others through increased supervision or mentoring. They are actively involved in professional associations, contribute through scholarship and "strive to be exemplars of the student affairs profession" (Carpenter, 2003, p. 582). The additive stage can involve different phases over the person's career span, reflecting the extent of service and active involvement in student affairs associations and initiatives (Boehman, 2007; Carpenter, 1998, 2003; Komives & Carpenter, 2009).

## **Summary**

Student affairs professionals work in diverse environments under sometimes-difficult conditions. The literature on the profession is expansive. The history and guiding documents of

student affairs provide background for considering student affairs contributions to educational enterprise. The values of the profession socialize future professionals, as students can consider these values in comparison to their own. There are specific competencies, often based on adopted professional values, which must be embraced to properly conduct student affairs work. Such competencies are most often nurtured through pursuing a graduate degree in student affairs.

Contextual considerations influence socialization; however, professional standards can provide a shared understanding about student affairs graduate education and work. The bridge from student to new professional forces one to make decisions about how early perceptions of student affairs work connects to current impressions of the profession. These decisions are often based on graduate education and an emerging professional philosophy, which is informed by the profession's espoused values. Associations provide support and professional advocacy during graduate school and throughout one's professional career, as well as serve as a means to assess and develop competence. Professional development improves effectiveness and continues through the various stages of the student affairs career.

### **Conclusion**

The preceding pages have made the case for research on student affairs graduate students. In chapter one, I provided an overview of existing gaps in the literature and the practical and research implications of my proposed project, which seeks to explain how students learn, internalize and demonstrate the espoused values of the profession. Chapter two examined graduate education as a socialization period, during which students come to learn, internalize and demonstrate a profession's values. Student affairs graduate education helps students learn and internalize the profession's espoused values base through exploring the profession's history and

priorities. Eventually, students demonstrate their understanding of student affairs values through enacting competencies, which expand and improve through ongoing professional development.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This study is an exploration of professional values development of student affairs graduate students. Exploratory studies examine what occurs in situations or phenomena not widely understood (Robson, 2002). As explained in chapter one, how student affairs graduate students learn, internalize, and demonstrate the profession's values has not been examined empirically. Using a qualitative design, this research addressed four research questions:

1. What do second-year students in a student affairs graduate program perceive to be the professional values of student affairs?
2. How do perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?
3. What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?
4. How do students learn, internalize, and demonstrate values of the student affairs profession? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?

This chapter explains the research paradigm, methodological approach, and procedures for data collection and analysis that was used to answer these questions.

#### **Researcher's Paradigm**

This section explains my paradigm and its influence on my role as researcher. A paradigm is a collection of basic beliefs that “represent a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the ‘world,’ and the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships

to that world and its parts.” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 107). The paradigm through which I examined values development in student affairs can be explained ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically.

How I view the creation of reality represents my ontological beliefs (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). I believe how individuals interact in a given context influences interpretations of a phenomenon (Mertens, 2005; Van Manen, 1990); therefore reality is co-constructed and explained in concert with others. While people are engaged in a shared experience, individual interpretations may vary (Robson, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). I believe there can be multiple socially constructed realities of individual and group experiences; however there is likely some common conception of the experience among participants. This belief undergirds my view on perceptions of how professional values development occurs in student affairs graduate education and influenced my approach to interpreting shared impressions of values development from the collection of participants’ individual views.

Epistemological beliefs emphasize knowledge construction in the research process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). In some phenomena, knowledge is subjectively created between researcher and participant as they make sense of experiences (Creswell, 2007b). Each participant’s story is equally valued and helps build knowledge about the phenomenon in question (Patton, 2002). The process of developing student affairs values was approached as such a phenomenon. I believed participants’ views had to be captured in a way that considered their individual voice as a part of a shared journey toward learning, internalizing, and demonstrating student affairs values.

Because I sought to explain how graduate students learned, internalized, and demonstrated student affairs values, I considered methodological approaches that permit deep exploration and respect the subjective nature of the topic. I chose qualitative inquiry to answer the aforementioned questions and increase the shared understanding of the phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). The foundational methodology was phenomenology, which focuses on how individuals make sense of and interpret experiences to create individual and shared meaning around some process (Patton, 2002). To best answer my questions, I applied tactics commonly used in narrative inquiry. Such techniques allowed deep explanations of individual participants' process of learning, internalizing, and demonstrating student affairs values (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Ultimately, separate narratives authored about each participant were examined collectively to help me create an interpretation of a shared experience.

### **Methodology**

This section explains my approach to conducting the proposed research. I provide an overview of qualitative inquiry and phenomenology as my primary methodological framework and explain procedures to be used for data collection, analysis, and overall goodness of the research. Because I collected data using a blurred genres approach (Chism, 2007; Patton, 2002), I describe selected techniques typically used in narrative inquiry methodology.

### **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative studies explain the meaning of participants' experience with some phenomenon in a given context (Creswell, 2007b; Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). Researchers are interested in "understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). Rather than test

a theory, qualitative researchers gather data to construct concepts, hypothesis or theories, or tell the stories of participants (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative inquiry and methodologies have become increasingly relevant in student affairs due to its practicality, usefulness in capturing the complexities of campus life, and support of widely held student affairs objectives including advocacy and social justice (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002; Broido & Manning, 2002; Jones, 2002; Manning, 1992; McKay & Schuh, 1991; Whitt, 1991). Recent qualitative studies on student affairs graduate education and the profession informed my study of values development (e.g. Flowers & Howard-Hamilton, 2002; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; St. Clair, 2007).

Social constructivism undergirds qualitative research (Creswell, 2007b, Patton, 2002). Researchers with a social constructivist approach emphasize interaction among individuals, assuming (1) individuals act toward things based on the meaning they assign to an object/person, (2) meaning is developed through previous interactions, and (3) meaning is modified through an interpretive process (Flick, 1998; Patton, 2002). I believe my ontological, epistemological, and methodological goals reflect a social constructivist approach.

Social constructivism is appropriate for inquiries into how participants make sense of the process of student affairs values development. While student affairs programs provide structure, many programs permit participants to tailor experiences to meet individual needs (Forney & Davis, 2002; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). Reality is constructed in concert with others and through observing current student affairs professionals. This research relied on the socially constructed stories of students as individuals and collectively to inform how they formed perceptions of and learned about student affairs values.

**Qualitative tactics.** Qualitative inquiry requires specific tactics that must be understood prior to beginning research. These include: using an appropriate research paradigm, determining a clear mode of inquiry and methods, integrating diverse research methodologies, creating clear and researchable research question(s), developing rigorous data collection processes, and attending to detail in data collection, analysis and interpretation (Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). It was important to develop and ask good interview questions, modify questions as needed, and listen well to comprehend participants' impressions. Each research stage was informed by those previous; therefore, I paid close attention to details throughout the process (Creswell, 2007b; Robson, 2002).

Another tactic is recognizing the role of researcher as instrument (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I was charged with conducting a study to understand life in relation to the phenomenon in question (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Patton, 2002). My role was to “understand the world as it unfolds, be true to complexities and multiple perspectives as they emerge, and be balanced in reporting both confirmatory and disconfirming evidence” (Patton, 2002, p. 51). Therefore, the research process was structured to go “in-depth” through methods that positioned me as deeply involved in the context (Broido & Manning, 2002; Creswell, 2007b; Patton, 2002). To do this, I interacted with participants in an interview process predicated on co-constructing knowledge (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002; Creswell, 2007b; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2005). I documented their individual impressions about developing professional values through two distinct interviews, from which I developed transcriptions. From transcriptions I developed narratives about these meetings. Each reviewed their narratives to ensure I accurately reflected their responses as individuals. Because they approved my



interpretation individually, I feel confident the final interpretation of shared impressions is accurate.

Researchers must also manage bias and subjectivity. Immersion required me to take responsibility for managing bias, subjectivity, and position in the research context (Gall et al., 1996; Mertens, 2005). I have experience in the context of student affairs graduate education having been a participant in a master's and doctoral program, worked as a professional for eight years at two different institutions, served as a teaching assistant in two courses for master's students while a doctoral student at Indiana University (IU), and interacted with master's students as a project advisor for an intensive research project during the first-semester of IU their second- year students' graduate education. I had ideas formed prior to this study about how one properly demonstrates the values of student affairs. I was and still am naturally biased toward this topic: therefore, my own personal student affairs values and beliefs about the development of professional values influenced how I conducted research and analyzed data (Creswell, 2007b; Flick, 1998; Mertens; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). A good qualitative researcher finds ways to acknowledge involvement rather than pretend it does not exist (Creswell, 2007a; Flick, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Robson, 2002). I explain later how I addressed personal biases throughout the research process.

A tactic to address bias that has particular importance is reflection on the research process (Flick, 1998; Robson, 2002). Frequent and meaningful reflection may mitigate my subjectivity. Flick (1998) explained, "The subjectivities of the researcher *and* of those being studied are part of the research process. Researchers' reflections on their actions and observations in the field, their impressions, irritations, feelings...become data in their own right, forming part of the interpretation, and are documented in research diaries or context protocols" (p. 6). I address

additional tactics for ensuring a sound research process in the data collection and analysis sections below; however, documenting my process and emphasizing reflection on my competence and experience as a researcher was a self-established expectation during the study.

It is also essential to respect context. Context must be considered in qualitative research and is critical to understanding the research questions (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). As context matters, I was intentional about the environment(s) selected (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). Whereas student affairs graduate education is enacted in diverse contexts (Hirt, 2006; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009), I paid close attention to institutional and program context to avoid providing an incomplete description of student perceptions of the values exploration process.

Entrance into a given context must be negotiated with gatekeepers (Creswell, 2007a; 2007b; Flick, 1998). For my research, gatekeepers were a student affairs graduate program faculty member at each of the three institutions at which research was conducted. I secured approval for each site based on a solicitation letter sent in August of 2009. The identification of these sites is not provided in this document; however, it is important to confirm that my degree granting institution, Indiana University, was not one of the three programs.

Qualitative research requires investigators to respect their participants in the given contexts. Basic ethical principles were applied when conducting research for this study (Creswell, 2007a; Magolda & Weems, 2002; Merriam, 2009; Mertens, 2005; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2002). This included respecting the rights of participants, honoring the sites in which research was conducted, and addressing both positive and negative aspects that emerge as a result of the study (Creswell, 2007a; Magolda & Weems, 2002). Human subjects' protocol at IU and that of the institutions at which I conducted the research was followed.

Entering the context, I needed to be cognizant of my role in the environment and the lives of participants (Flick, 1998; Mertens, 2005; Magolda & Weems, 2002; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2002). Flick (1998) wrote, "...The researcher faces the problem of negotiating proximity and distance in relation to the person(s) studied. The problems of disclosure, transparency and negotiation of mutual expectations, aims and interests are also relevant...the decision must be made between adopting the perspective of either an insider or an outsider with regard to the object of the research" (p. 60). Research projects are an intrusion into the institution studied and must be tempered with great respect for gatekeepers and study participants (Flick, 1998). As I conducted the study, I emphasized participant safety including efforts to maintain their anonymity, explained the importance of their contributions, and clarified my background and rationale for the study (Mertens, 2005; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2002). Throughout the study, I respected the objectives of qualitative research and made every effort to exercise respect and courtesy to context gatekeepers, institutions, and study participants.

### **Methodological Framework**

When embarking on a qualitative study, one must consider potential methodologies. Such a selection depends on how one may best answer their research questions (Creswell, 2007b; Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). Additionally, research genres may be blended, which allows researchers to abandon formal rules for conducting research and apply a more creative approach to address the questions at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 2002). Blurred genres are common in qualitative research (Chism, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Maggs-Rapport, 2000). Chism (2007) explained:

Researchers borrowed from other traditions, invented their own approaches, and mixed these all together. Formal rules for conducting research were abandoned in favor of the

creativity and personal responsibility of the researcher and the needs of the question at hand (p. 1).

The researcher may apply multiple methodologies to explain a phenomenon in question. I used phenomenology as a methodological framework. Phenomenology allowed me to explain the shared experience of developing professional values in student affairs (Van Manen, 1990). Because I sought to collect participants' individual stories as a means to interpret a shared experience, I used data collection methods commonly found in narrative inquiry (Creswell, 2007a). The following pages explain my adapted approach.

**Phenomenology.** Phenomenological studies focus on the exploration of how people make sense of an experience as individuals and as a group (Creswell, 2007b; Crowell, 2001; Gadamer, 1991; Habermas, 1968; Husserl, 1973; Kockelmans, 1994; Merriam, 2009; Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Such studies are grounded in the belief that “we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness” (Patton, 2002, p. 105-106). Phenomenology is both a philosophy of qualitative research and a methodological approach (Arminio & McEwen, 1996; Creswell; 2007b; Mertens, 2005; Merriam, 2009). It is the basis for any research, such as mine, that aim to explain and interpret experiences of individuals within a shared context (Gadamer, 1976; Husserl, 1973; Mertens, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008, Van Manen, 1990; Patton, 2002).

The nature of phenomenology is synergistic with social constructivism (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002) and draws from philosophy, psychology, and education (Creswell, 2007b). Participants make sense of subjective experiences in terms of what might be natural or

recommended in the given context (Husserl, 1973; Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). Reality is “interpreted social action” (Robson, 2002, p. 23) and the researcher gathers the rationale and meaning behind actions of participants (Habermas, 1968; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990).

During the phenomenological research process, researchers come to understand the experience of individuals and groups within a shared setting (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002; Husserl, 1973; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Describing the context and participants' ability to create and understand their shared experiences is the research focus (Kockelmans, 1994; Mertens, 2005; Van Manen, 1990). Interpretation is based on participants' impressions of the phenomenon in the moment and in reflection of past experiences (Crowell, 2001; Gadamer, 1976; Habermas, 1968, 1973; Husserl; Van Manen). Because I chose phenomenology as a methodological foundation, I focused on describing the experiences of participants rather than relying on my knowledge about student affairs or impressions of their experiences.

How participants make sense of a phenomenon and interpret its influence is gathered mostly through reflection on the experience (Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, 2009; Crowell, 2001; Gadamer, 1976; Habermas, 1968; Husserl, 1973; Kockelmans, 1994; Patton, 2002; Pietersma, 2000; Van Manen, 1990). Participants immersed in an environment in which the phenomenon occurs will likely examine and consider previous experiences in terms of current manifestations (Gadamer, 1976; Habermas, 1968; Husserl, 1973; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Additionally, the researcher comes to understand the intersubjectivity of the experience, which is the realization that across individual impressions there is a shared view of the phenomenon (Crowell, 2001; Kockelmans, 1994; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008).

In phenomenological studies, it is essential to emphasize collaboration with participants (Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). I was charged with helping the participant reflect on experiences to “determine the deeper meanings or themes” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 99). I sought to capture the experience as perceived by participants, which required me to lead them on an extensive exploration of the topic (Husserl, 1973; Patton, 2002). Multiple interviews are typically necessary to permit such reflection (Patton, 2002). To engage participants in a collaborative process, I had them review interview content. Content is often delivered to participants in the form of a transcript; however I chose to turn transcripts into narratives, which became interpretative texts (Van Manen, 1990) of the intersubjective experience of participant and researcher. I believed reflecting on my interpretation of their story allowed them to revisit previous thoughts and expand as needed. Reviewing texts is a form of member checking, which can help ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research (Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002).

While I was a collaborator in the process, I needed to separate from my previous relationship with the phenomenon in question. In phenomenology this is done through “bracketing” (Husserl, 1973; Merriam, 2009; Van Manen, 1990). Bracketing involves temporarily putting aside my prior beliefs to avoid seeing the elements and structure of the phenomenon as I currently do (Husserl, 1973; Merriam, 2009; Van Manen, 1990). When I bracketed my subjectivity, my consciousness of participant experiences became more true to their story. I was better able to capture the shared sense of the phenomenon as seen by them and not me (Van Manen, 1990).

Husserl (1973) demanded researchers bracket their beliefs and existing impressions completely from the research process. Many question to what extent this is possible (Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, 2009; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008; Van

Manen, 1990). Van Manen (1990) recommended past experiences of a researcher be first made explicit and then put aside temporarily to conduct the research. This is managed through the process of epoche, which describes researcher bias prior to the study (Gadamer, 1976; Husserl, 1973; Kockelmans, 1994; Van Manen, 1990). When the researcher practices epoche and continually assesses subjectivity, it is most possible to truly examine the experience of others (Van Manen, 1990). My epoche was authored prior to beginning the study and is found in its original form in Appendix C.

The contexts in which I conducted this study provided for a shared experience among students. This shared experience includes many attributes. My study emphasized one attribute: values development in student affairs graduate education. Therefore, as questions led students toward this particular focus and interpretations of developing student affairs values yielded several interesting findings, I chose to not identify the essence of their experience, which is historically emphasized as the primary goal of phenomenological analysis (Crowell, 2001; Husserl, 1973). Instead I examined themes that emerged across shared perspectives of values development. To some extent, this may violate a primary outcome of the phenomenological study; however, Patton explained that “One can employ a general phenomenological perspective to elucidate the importance of using methods that capture people’s experiences of the world without conducting a phenomenological study that focuses on the essence of shared experience” (p. 107). Therefore, I used the specific approach of using interpretive phenomenology (Crowell, 2001), which aims to offer an interpretive view of shared experience, based on deep understanding of the reflections of those immersed in the experience.

Phenomenological studies have been conducted using student affairs graduate students. Arminio and McEwen (1996) used interviews to examine how White students in a student affairs

graduate program conceptualized their race and relations with others. St. Clair (2007) examined how student affairs graduate students created multicultural competence. Neither study sought to explain the essence for students, preferring to interpret the shared experience through multiple approaches to address the phenomenon in question. My study used a similar approach.

**Narrative Inquiry.** I intentionally sought to first capture the individual perspectives of participants, which required me to isolate cases while attending to the ultimate goal of shared experiences. In order to accomplish the goal of knowing the individual first, I applied tactics commonly found in narrative inquiry. Often used to capture stories and make sense of how individuals come to understand some experience or aspect of self (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002), narrative inquiry is greatly influenced by phenomenology and shares the primary attribute of understanding experiences as internalized by participants (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). In its true enactment, narrative inquiry typically involves one to two participants and seeks to tell a very deep and rich story that emphasizes the past, present, and future of participants' holistic lives (Creswell, 2007a; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). An important aspect of narrative inquiry research is that it emphasizes the teller's interpretation of the lived experience of the participant. When interpreting narratives, the "researcher looks for and connects patterns of meaning and experiences in the respondent's narrative" (Reason, 2001, p. 95). Such perspectives can be examined in the aggregate to move toward a shared interpretation of a phenomenon (Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Reason, 2001). Reason (2001) explained narrative inquiry is particularly helpful in increasing the understanding of how student affairs professionals work with students, understand context, and reflect on their practice.

I did not choose narrative inquiry as my sole methodological approach because I hoped to capture a shared sense of values development across many participants in three distinct student



affairs graduate programs. Using elements of narrative inquiry allowed me to elicit insights into individuals' experiences and then examine each of those as part of an aggregate of participants. The next section explains how I conducted the study based on this methodological framework and emphasizing narrative techniques in the data collection process.

### **Research Process**

This section explains the logistics of the research process, including timing, duration, study sites, participants, data collection methods, and tactics to ensure sound data collection. The study occurred during the spring semester of the second-year in participants' student affairs graduate program. Interviews took place between the beginning of February and the middle of April 2010. Participants came from three graduate programs chosen from the *2006-2009 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in Student Affairs* (ACPA, 2009).

Programs were selected based on ease of access over the course of two months and represent different levels of professional prestige and emphases, as well as geographic location and participant characteristics. These programs are now explained through knowledge gained from the review of their websites, *The 2006-2009 Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in Student Affairs* (ACPA, 2009), and conversations with faculty contacts at the institution. The names of the institutions have been withheld in order to protect the anonymity of participants. It is important to note Indiana University was not selected as a research site because of my extensive experience with the institution, which could have resulted in a skewed perception.

### **Study Sites**

Institution A is a four-year public regional institution. Within the graduate program, students are required to participate in 39 hours of course work with an optional thesis and

required capstone course. There are three full-time faculty members. Students are required to have an assistantship and three additional practica or work full-time in student affairs. The program uses a cohort model. Students participate in mostly common educational experiences each semester while able to take some electives. My contact for the program explained the program as “evolving” and “improving” after some period of stagnancy. Evidence of increased prominence in student affairs graduate education is the movement from attracting primarily students from the surrounding Midwest to a broader recruitment of students from across the United States and internationally.

Institution B is a four-year Research One institution located in a metropolitan area. Within the graduate program, students are required to participate in 45 hours of course work with an optional thesis and required capstone course. There are two full-time faculty members. Students are required to have an assistantship and two additional practica or work full-time in student affairs. The program uses a cohort model, though students can begin courses in the spring semester. Students participate in some common educational experiences each semester while able to take electives. My contact explained the program as meeting the needs of the metropolitan area and recruiting a diverse pool of candidates primarily from the Midwest.

Institution C is a four-year public comprehensive university and is nationally known for its student affairs program. Within the graduate program, students are required to participate in 45 hours of course work with an optional thesis and required capstone course. There are seven full-time faculty. Students are required to have an assistantship on-campus or at a neighboring college or university. Full-time employees are eligible for the program. Practica are recommended but not required. Students have the opportunity to select some electives while taking several required courses as a cohort. My contact explained the program’s emphasis on

student development theory and research attracts students from across the country and internationally.

**Participants**

The sample consisted of 17 students in their second year of participation in the graduate program. Involvement was voluntary and interested participants were informed by the faculty contact. Interested students contacted me directly. As any student in their second-year of the program was eligible, all students who responded to my participant solicitation could have been accepted. Nineteen students replied with an interest. Because of scheduling conflicts I could not meet with two students. Seven participants each came from Institutions A and C and three from Institution B. The lower number of participants from Institution B can be explained by not being able to meet with one interested student and insufficient interest by other program participants. Appendix D includes email templates for faculty contacts and student participants.

Because I perceived demographics would influence the individual and shared impressions of participants, I sought a diverse sample. Table 1 lists participants’ demographics, assistantship and undergraduate involvement. As evident from the table, demographic, assistantship and undergraduate involvement diversity existed across participants.

Table 1 Research Participant Demographics					
Pseudonym <sup>1</sup>	Institution	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Assistantship	Undergraduate Involvement <sup>2</sup>
Ali	A	Female	Caucasian	Student Activities	Residence Life; Student Activities
Alisha	A	Female	African	Residence	Educational Opportunity

<sup>1</sup> Participants were asked to provide three options for selection as a pseudonym.

<sup>2</sup> Involvement was categorized after participants provided specific names.

			American	Life	Program; Work-study
Ashley	A	Female	Caucasian	Student Activities; Residence Life	Activities Board; First-Year Programs; Residence Life
Jami	A	Female	Caucasian	Residence Life	First-Year Programs; Residence Hall Honorary; Relay for Life; Residence Life; Student Orientation; Student Government
Landon	A	Male	Caucasian	Residence Life	First-Year Programs; GLBTA Support; Relay for Life; Residence Life; Student Government; Up 'Til Dawn
Sarah	A	Female	Caucasian	Residence Life	Academic Clubs; Residence Life; Sexual Assault Awareness/ Prevention
Tammy	A	Female;	Black/ African American	Volunteer Programs	Fraternity/Sorority Life; Residence Life, Student Activities; Student Government
Claire	B	Female	Caucasian	Student Services	Community Service; Fraternity and Sorority Life; Music Organizations; Orientation; Residence Life; Student Activities
Hallie	B	Female	Caucasian	Residence Life	Fraternity/Sorority Life
Sophie	B	Female	Caucasian	Fraternity and Sorority Life	Fraternity/Sorority Life; Community Service; Religious Organization
Allison	C	Female	Caucasian	Fraternity and Sorority Life	Fraternity/Sorority Life; Honor Societies; Music Organizations; Orientation; Student Government
Caitlin	C	Female	Caucasian	Residence Life	Academic Major Student Council; Community Service; National Residence Hall Honorary; Residence Life;
Cody	C	Male	Caucasian	Student Activities	Academic Major Organizations; Homecoming Committee; Peer Mentor; Programming Board; Residence Life; Student Orientation
David	C	Male	African	Residence	Leadership Programs;

			American	Life	Multicultural Programs; Residence Life;
Maggie	C	Female	Caucasian	Academic Program	Academic Major Organizations; Admissions; Residence Life; Service Organizations; Student Activities
Ryan	C	Male	Caucasian	Student Conduct	Rugby; Student Activities; Student Government
Shauna	C	Female	Hispanic	Residence Life	Admissions; Fraternity/Sorority Life; Residence Life; Student Government

The identification of student affairs graduate students is an example of purposeful sampling, which is often applied in qualitative research and allows a researcher to select individuals and contexts that permit for insight into the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2007b; Patton, 2002). People must have access to the experience in question to capture the essence of what it means to them as a participant (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002); therefore, purposeful sampling is widely used in studies that use phenomenology and narrative inquiry (Mertens, 2005; Van Manen, 1990). The recommended sample size for phenomenological studies is six participants (Mertens, 2005). Narrative inquiry typically explores the experiences of one or two individual's holistic stories (Patton, 2002.). My goal for this study was 12 to 18 students in order to secure a representation from various areas of student affairs (e.g. academic advising, fraternity/sorority advising, residence life) and who reflect the demographic diversity of the profession. It was my hope that capturing individual narratives across three different programs with a relatively large sample size would permit me to make conclusions about values development beyond one context with just a few participants.

Because the literature brings forth questions about how functional areas and demographics influence professional socialization and perceptions of values (Dungy, 2009; Gayles & Kelly, 2007; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Upcraft, 1998), it is important to consider such characteristics when determining the shared experiences of student affairs graduate students. I was fortunate that students who expressed interest based on faculty member announcements reflected demographic and functional area diversity; therefore, I did not need to employ tactics such as snowball sampling, which would have required me to ask volunteering participants to solicit involvement from peers (Creswell, 2007b).

### **Data Collection**

**Interviews.** Interviews were my data collection method. Through interviews, researchers can increase understanding of participants' experiences and impressions (Creswell, 2007a; Patton, 2002). While interviews take a lot of time, provide thick data to analyze, and are costly, the relationship built with participants can result in rich and relevant data (Merriam, 2009). Interviews are also the foundation for most phenomenological studies (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990) and are often used in narrative inquiry (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Reason, 2001).

I adapted my interview approach to respect phenomenological traditions while using narrative inquiry techniques. To blend these complementary but different approaches, I considered how the phenomenological and narrative interview tactics overlapped and what tactics were necessary to be true to both in the data collection process. In phenomenology, the interview has specific purposes and processes: explore and gather data that can be used to better understand the phenomenon, create a relationship with the participant, and establish trust to open

lines of communication for future interviews (Merriam, 2009). Accomplishing these purposes is why I conducted two interviews with each participant.

Narrative inquiry emphasizes the creation of a perspective (Creswell, 2007a; Merriam, 2009). Narrative inquiry asks what participants' stories reveal about the person from which it came and how it can be interpreted so that it provides insight about some experience of the person or people (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). To be true to both narrative inquiry and phenomenology, interviews emphasized the perspective of individual students developing the profession's shared values. The individual story of participants, summarized by their own words about the "journey" of developing professional values, is captured in chapter four. My interpretation of the shared impressions of the phenomenon of values development are explained in chapter five.

**Interview process.** I conducted two face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews include open-ended questions that serve as a launch point to hear participants' thoughts on the topic (Creswell, 2007a) and tend to be flexible and exploratory (Merriam, 2009). Such structured interviews helped me capture shared impressions, because I asked common questions; however, this approach allowed me to engage in a discussion based on responses, permitting each person to share their own values development process. Because both interviews were semi-structured, non-scripted follow-up questions were asked. Therefore, in both meetings, some participants answered additional questions for me to clarify their perceptions of the profession's values. Follow-up over email allowed for additional clarification after I received participants' review of the second narrative. The protocol developed for the interview process has been included as Appendix E.

Interviews lasted from 40-80 minutes and were captured with a digital recorder, which helped me to listen and not focus on taking notes (Merriam, 2009). I then transcribed interviews through the use of HyperTranscribe© transcription software. Transcriptions were used to create narratives of the interview and participants reviewed the narrative for interview one prior to interview two. Narratives from the first interviews were used to determine appropriate additional questions for each participant's second interview. This helped capture specific experiences distinct to the student. In the second interview, I revisited our last meeting, asked questions specific to the participant, and then posed questions asked of all participants.

## **Analysis**

Analysis tactics should coincide with specific qualitative methods. Jones (2002) emphasized that good qualitative research analysis from interviews does more than identify a few themes and "...requires the researcher to engage in an inductive analytic process while staying close enough to the data to create an in-depth understanding of the exact words and behaviors or the participants in a study" (p. 468). Creswell (2007b; 2009) explained analysis in qualitative research as an iterative process that consists of seven steps: collect data in a systematic process, prepare data for analysis through transcription of field notes and interviews, read through the data, code the data, use the codes to generate descriptions and themes, determine how the description and themes will be represented in the report, and interpret the meaning of the themes within the study's context.

Through data analysis, phenomenologists "arrive at structural descriptions of an experience...the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced" (Merriam, 2009, p. 199). The process of phenomenological reduction is used to discover themes that emphasize the phenomenon's meaning(s) for participants. A theme is an aspect of the



structure of the lived experience (Van Manen, 1990). Narrative analysis requires deep review of a transcript or text (Creswell, 2007a; Merriam, 2009). Creswell's (2007a) narrative analysis process is to create narratives from the interviews, code the narratives, analyze for themes and explain individual stories (Creswell). From this process, emerges a narrative discussion, which is a written passage in which the author summarizes findings from data analysis (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

I conducted and transcribed interviews and then turned transcriptions into narratives. I included quotes from interview data that supported themes, considered the participant's multiple perspectives, and wrote as clearly as possible (Creswell, 2007a). A primary goal was to develop a narrative that addressed pivotal research questions and write in such a way that the flow of all narratives would be similar. I aimed to write narratives to facilitate the eventual coding process. While it would be acceptable to infuse my own perspectives (Creswell, 2007a), I specifically wrote narratives to interpret a perspective based on each participant's individual story.

Within naturalistic inquiry, analysis is often infused throughout the data collection process (Patton, 2002). In this study, analysis began immediately following the completion of the first interview as a result of examining transcriptions for relevant ideas and excerpts to include in narratives. Also, individual questions were created for interview two; therefore, I analyzed narratives for areas requiring clarity or compelling points for which I wanted more information. The same process was used for developing the narrative from interview two; however, as there was no third interview, my analysis of the narrative was strictly to contact participants through phone or email to gain clarity on specific points. To be clear, I did not analyze data during collection to determine individual or aggregate themes: during the collection

process, analysis was focused on interpreting their individual views in order to create protocol for subsequent interviews and/or follow-up for clarity.

Analysis during data collection was improved through the process of member checking. Member checking places the research participant in the role of affirming the researcher's interpretation of the interview (Patton, 2002; Robson, 2002). Participants often review transcriptions as a form of member checking (Patton, 2002); however, those in this study reviewed narratives. After narratives were written, I sent them to the participant for review, requesting a two-week turnaround. The process of narrative review was similar for both interviews: participants received the narrative through an email, reviewed and provided feedback in the form they saw appropriate (e.g. through response in an email or through use of track changes/comments in the word document), and I reviewed feedback and made edits as needed. In some cases, I addressed particular feedback through an email dialogue versus waiting for the second interview. This was used when I felt an immediate response was necessary such as an error in my interpretation or a question from the participant that could be easily answered (e.g. if certain parts of the narrative might reveal identity). After the second interview, such follow-up may have also been required. All participants offered brief comments and/or affirmations of narrative content for both interviews. Emails documenting participant review were maintained through secure electronic files.

After data collection was complete, I turned my attention to analyzing data to write two results chapters: one to explain participants' processes individually and one to answer the research questions and explain themes. I reviewed narratives individually and collectively for participant and group analysis (Creswell, 2007b; Patton, 2002). Because I examined individual impressions through narrative analysis, I brought forth shared impressions through the selective

reading approach, as explained by Van Manen (1990). This approach required me to review narratives repeatedly and extrapolate the statements that seem particularly essential or revealing about the experience described (Van Manen, 1990).

My primary approach to analysis was coding. To facilitate this process, I used HyperResearch© for coding software. Coding focuses on categorizing data into descriptive labels to briefly explain clusters of responses (Patton, 2002). Using the software I coded over 1000 excerpts from the 34 distinct interviews. Some excerpts received multiple codes. Over 200 codes emerged. Codes were focused on interpreting results and answering research questions. For example, each value identified by participants became a code of “Professional Value – FILL IN THE BLANK.” From this process alone I developed 65 different “Professional Value – FILL IN THE BLANK” codes. It was necessary to combine codes.

I then examined coded content collectively versus as individual participants. I was able to minimize the number of codes based on emerging themes across multiple narratives. This is axial coding (Patton, 2002). Carrying forth the example of “Professional Value – FILL IN THE BLANK,” 65 different codes became 13 based on the number of times identified, my subjective interpretation of participants’ responses to questions, and terminology used in the literature if necessary. How analysis occurred for each question is addressed further in chapter five.

I then compared the data to existing literature summarized in chapter two. Throughout the process, literature was used to form interview questions, conduct analysis, and synthesize results. The use of literature in qualitative studies varies across methodological approaches (Creswell, 2007a; Mertens, 2005). For research possessing a constructivist orientation, literature should be reviewed and used to understand the phenomena in question (Merriam, 2009).

However, the literature must be bracketed to not impose my opinions during data collection. The objective nature of the existing literature base should be viewed as tentative and I must be “open to a change of focus if that is dictated by the data emerging from the field experience” (Mertens, p. 248). The literature on student affairs espoused values (Young, 2003) was particularly important to addressing the research question of, “How do students’ perceptions align with espoused student affairs values?”

### **“Goodness” and “Trustworthiness”**

I was constantly concerned with the quality of the research and its presentation. I sought to increase the “goodness” of the process (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). Arminio and Hultgren (2002) explain goodness in phenomenological research “...is shown in the lived quality of the language and the deeper meaning brought forward by the researcher in conversation with the text” (p. 453). Ensuring goodness was emphasized from study conceptualization, through data collection and analysis, and in the interpretation of results. This required infusing sound tactics into the development, conduction, and interpretation of the research. I carefully examined each narrative to tell an accurate and a well-explained story about participant perceptions. I also addressed dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability.

While reliability addresses stability across experiments within quantitative research, in qualitative research there is a question of dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2005). However, since change across contexts is expected, it is unlikely that any qualitative process will be completely stable across research sites (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002; Flick, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). This is acceptable, as within qualitative research “the only generalization is that there are no generalizations” (Flick, 1998, p. 234). Qualitative research aims to describe one or multiple contexts or experiences in rich detail (Flick, 1998). There is no

attempt in qualitative research for the findings to be transferred to different contexts. Dependability is determined by readers' interpretation in relation to their individual context (Arminio & Hultgren; Merriam, 2009). My research addressed a shared experience of values development among student affairs graduate students at three sites. Readers can determine the applicability of the findings to other contexts with which they are more familiar.

Credibility replaces the idea of internal validity (Mertens, 2005). Tactics such as prolonged and substantial engagement in a context, persistent observation, peer debriefing, member checks and triangulation can support credibility (Mertens, 2005). When using interviews as a method, it is important to consider the size of the sample as a way to influence credibility (Creswell, 2007a; Merriam, 2009; Mertens, 2005). Ultimately, "sample size is integrally related to length of time in the field" (Mertens, p. 328). Doing only two interviews, I increased credibility through using a large number of participants. Phenomenological studies should have around six participants (Mertens, 2005) and narrative inquiry typically has one or two participants. I had 17 participants. I strengthened the potential for transferability through having more participants, using multiple sites, and interviewing each participant twice. Such tactics helped me capture the shared experience of values development and helps me make the case for readers that experiences have been captured accurately and could in fact be found in other graduate programs. Through the narrative analysis process explained previously in this chapter, I deeply explored individual views before bringing forth shared ideas. Such a thorough examination of individual narratives permitted for increased credibility in data analysis.

Confirmability replaces the quantitative research concept of objectivity within the constructivist qualitative paradigm: "The assumption is made that data, interpretations, and outcomes, are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the researcher...Data can be tracked to

their sources, and the logic used to assemble interpretations can be made explicit in the narrative” (Mertens, 2005, p. 15). Evidence should indicate the research is authentic and accurately represents the data versus existing as something the researcher simply “made up” (Mertens, 2005). The subjective reality of student affairs program participants was shared through interviews, which were turned into transcripts and then used to create narratives of each participant’s story. Every participant reviewed the narrative from each of his or her interviews. Indeed, the data reflects the subjective impressions of participants and was confirmed through their review of each interview narrative, which was documented through emails. As a demonstration of thanks for participation, each participant received a \$25 gift card to Amazon.Com following their completion of narrative review. I do not perceive the gift card, intended to thank them for review, influenced member checking, though as the literature addresses, the provision may have influenced their decision to participate (Creswell, 2007b).

Finally, I must help the reader have faith in my process. Analysis in qualitative research likely brings challenges of trustworthiness (Creswell, 2007b; Mertens, 2005). Triangulation is an effective tactic in increasing trustworthiness (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Triangulation can result from my immersion in the context, use of different methods (e.g. adding interviews to observations), incorporation of multiple sources of data (e.g. increasing the number of interviews for a smaller sample) and use of different analytical tools (e.g. coding, member checks, comparison to the literature) (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). To ensure trustworthiness, I employed multiple interviews, used participant review of narratives to account for member checking, modified interview questions for round two based on round one, wrote memoranda of my experience, and reflected throughout the research process on all procedures through a well maintained audit trail (Flick, 1998; Jones, 2002; Magolda & Weems, 2003; Merriam, 2009).

## **Conclusion**

This section provided an overview of the research paradigm and methodology. Through blending phenomenological traditions with narrative techniques, I conducted a study to explore the perceptions of learning, internalizing, and demonstrating professional values by student affairs graduate program participants. Through studying their experiences, a shared idea of the event or process emerged. In the next chapter, the first of two results sections, I explain participants' individual impressions of the process of developing professional values.

## **Chapter 4: Research Participants**

This research examined how second-semester, second-year students in a student affairs graduate program developed professional values. Because I blended methodological approaches of narrative inquiry and phenomenology, I analyzed each participant's narratives individually and collectively. This chapter gives a glimpse into my interpretation of their individualized process of developing values. I briefly describe each participant's rationale for pursuing student affairs work. Then I explain a primary perception of student affairs work each participant derived from graduate education. I conclude my overview by explaining how she or he summarized their journey toward developing professional values.

### **Ali**

A first-generation college student, Ali pursued student affairs after advice from her undergraduate activities advisor. She chose Institution A based on requirements that students hold an assistantship and three distinct practica. Her assistantship was in student activities and practica included residence life at a different campus. Learning student development theory was a course work highlight. She was involved in the National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) as an undergraduate. When interviewed, she was a member of NACA and NASPA.

Ali perceived that student affairs is responsive to student needs, which are influenced greatly by society: "I think it has always been - diversity, service - we in student affairs saw a need...it has evolved even more and we're continuing to strengthen it as part of our philosophy today." During both interviews it was evident Ali sees student affairs as filling the emerging needs of students that she views faculty choose to not address.



The program and her experiences in a rural community prior to coming to Institution A influenced Ali's journey of developing professional values. She explained an ongoing process of integrating her personal values with those of student affairs:

For me to accept values as my own it has to be something that I work and deal with pretty consistently...Some student affairs' values are very much internalized and very much about who I am as a person. But there are a couple still out there and once I experience them and work through them...I think very much that student affairs values can and will be very much a part of who I am as I go throughout my career.

### **Alisha**

A first-generation student, Alisha had difficulty paying for college. She explained that advice from a supportive financial aid professional helped her persist to graduation and influenced her pursuit of student affairs as a career. She chose Institution A due to the faculty, expectations of assistantship and multiple practica and relationships she hoped to build with her cohort. Her second-year assistantship was in residence life. Using CAS Standards to examine aspects of each practicum was a course-related highlight for Alisha. She explained involvement in ACPA and NASPA as evolving and planned to volunteer when a professional.

Alisha had a terrific understanding of student affairs literature, which she felt allowed her to be intentional at work. She explained guiding documents such as the *1937 Student Personnel Point of View* influenced her views of professional values:

I think that having that foundation...can help to see some of the changes that have happened and why they've happened and what that has done for higher education...So, I

think recognizing what those documents are saying helps me to kind of reinforce my personal values about education and student development and student affairs.

Recalling her developmental journey, Alisha learned about student affairs values early in her graduate work, but it took time for them to become internalized: “I was probably ready to internalize things through course work, but not necessarily draw the connection [to work]...that didn't come until later.” Alisha predicted her journey would be an ongoing evaluation of values: “five years from now if you ask me the exact same questions I'd have tons of different answers.”

### **Allison**

As an orientation leader and active in her sorority, Allison often interacted with administrators who helped her determine student affairs as a career. She chose Institution C after being selected for a fraternity/sorority life assistantship, which included a residential component. She expanded her skill set through a practicum with the student union board and serving as an advisor for her sorority at another campus. Allison was passionate about learning and engrossed herself deeply in structured reflection required in the program's course work. She was active in AFA and attended the 2010 NASPA Convention in Chicago.

Allison perceived the “forced reflection” emphasized by Institution C's Program helped her be intentional in her work. She did not mind the expectation of reflection because it allowed her to take increased ownership over learning about the profession. This theme of accepting responsibility for learning how to be a professional was woven throughout Allison's narrative:

You have to reflect all the time about what is going on in your life and your assistantship and all of that. So there is definitely an element of forced reflection, but I think taking that reflection seriously is different from just reflecting. There is a big

difference in being intentional and actually thinking about what you're writing in a reflection than just kind of writing down everything you have done in the last month on a page of paper...I think the intentionality I incorporated into the reflection has made me a little bit more in tune with my values.

Integrating professional and personal values was a core part of her graduate experience. Allison believed she had internalized the profession's values and demonstrates them because they are her own. She credited her sorority, which openly espouses values, as contributing to the student affairs values development. Allison explained her journey of developing student affairs values:

When I came to the program...I didn't understand what it meant to work within the field of student affairs. I didn't really understand what the field of student affairs meant as a career. I certainly didn't understand what the values of the profession were, but I did understand what my own values were and I had those pretty well established. I think through the courses I have taken and the conversations that I have been able to have with the other members of the program, the faculty and also within my own assistantship site with my supervisors, I really have come to understand how the values of student affairs intersect with my own values. They have become much more clearly defined and articulated for me and I understand how the work that I do fits into those values.

### **Ashley**

Cocurricular activities "saved" Ashley's college career. A high-performing student in high school, she was not academically successful during the first two years of college. Involvement in the student activities board during the end of her sophomore year contributed to Ashley's increased confidence and positively influenced her academics. Because of her experiences, Ashley sought to help other students find meaningful cocurricular involvement.

She worked for two years at a regional college before deciding to pursue a degree in student affairs and chose Institution A because of the emphasis on practical experiences. Course work helped her formulate approaches to working with diverse student populations; something she applied in the context of two assistantships at a private college neighboring Institution A. She created a professional development plan that emphasized the frequent review of resources from ACPA, NASPA, and the National Orientation Directors Association (NODA).

Graduate work provided an opportunity for ongoing personal reflection. Ashley comes from a conservative family with a strong sense of spirituality grounded in organized religion. Her emerging beliefs about inclusion, particularly for LGBT students, forced Ashley to do “some soul searching” on how spirituality and openness for diversity intersect. Her family thinks she is more “liberal,” but she perceived her values to have not changed:

I'm still the same person I was; I've just been able to gain a better understanding of others and where they fit and where my role is in the process of that whole thing. I think some times it's about judging others and what they are and it's not about who they are as a person and how that person and I can get along and we can connect on many levels whether I'm extremely spiritual and they're atheist or they're agnostic.

The graduate program helped Ashley “find my place in the profession.” Professional and personal values were becoming intertwined as Ashley focused on holistic student development, a value she believed would guide her throughout her career:

We not only want to educate their hearts and minds but we ideally want to provide an opportunity for them to discover who they are and by creating a holistic environment that allows for education, learning...[and] then they're able to go into society with a better idea of who they are and a better understanding of others.

## **Caitlin**

A self-described “res-lifer for life,” Caitlin abandoned aspirations in law to work in student affairs after consulting with a mentor and career counselor. Caitlin chose Institution C after interviewing with 12 institutions at Oshkosh Placement. She wanted the more “regional and rural” experience, which contrasted her urban undergraduate institution. She believed her assistantship as an assistant residence hall director provided a forum in which to serve as an educator. Caitlin described herself as academically driven, which resulted in an eagerness to learn from course work. She was active in the Greater Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (GLACUHO) and attended the 2009 NASPA IV-E Regional and 2010 National Convention.

Caitlin perceived “bureaucracy” or a perceived emphasis on policy drives many processes at Institution C and in student affairs. Her experience at a small private undergraduate institution was less bureaucratic. Caitlin believed entrenched policies likely impede serving students and prevent professionals from demonstrating student-centeredness; however, she understood that documenting policy enactment and conducting assessment will continue to be priorities. She explained such expectations influence interactions with students and colleagues:

There are just more people to be accountable to in a way. [So you change] how you interact with students [by] keeping other people in the loop about what's happening...I had this conversation with a student who's going through this; I'm going to let my supervisor know this is happening...then going through the proper chains of authority...I think it tailored more my relationships with the professional staff, than the student.

Caitlin was focused on institutional mission, which influenced the development of her professional values. Caitlin believed she could integrate personal and professional roles:

I can really be myself in my office as well as at home. So, I think that is part of why I find this job so fulfilling. I feel like I can contribute to other people things that I can offer, but I can also take from them to challenge myself to learn different things. Overall it's very rewarding at work and outside of work because it comes together so easily.

### **Claire**

The path to student affairs graduate education included two undergraduate institutions at which Claire had very different experiences: the first very negative and the second very positive. Claire entered student affairs to help students avoid the pitfalls had at the first institution and have the successes had at the second. She only applied to Institution B; opting to stay close to her sister who was still at her undergraduate institution. The practical aspects of graduate work, including an assistantship in financial aid, were pivotal to Claire's understanding of student development theory. She is interested in many aspects of student affairs because she believes "everything is vital." Claire focused association involvement on reading journals.

A theme in both interviews was perceptions of how to demonstrate care for students. Because of her undergraduate experience, Claire felt a heightened sense of responsibility to help students succeed. She explained professionals demonstrate care by being accessible and working beyond the "normal" hours of 9-5. Serving on a campus committee that worked on projects targeted toward at-risk students, Claire saw how diverse functional areas demonstrate care for students. Conducting a limited job search, she examined institutional missions to ensure high

levels of commitment to advancing student learning, development, and success was articulated. Claire believed public statements reflect how institutions demonstrate care.

Claire explained her journey of developing student affairs values as a process of reflection and integration that strengthened her belief in the profession:

I know every experience I have had, I have kind of taken to heart what I have done, but also I try to keep those experiences close to myself so I can often reflect on them and what I am learning or doing. I can share these stories in conversations with others: in interviews, some of the mock interviews I have done. I use those experiences to further explain what I believe in and why I believe in those things.

### **Cody**

As an undergraduate human resources major, Cody enjoyed training and development and used these skills as Residence Hall Association President. After advice from a mentor he chose to pursue a degree in student affairs. Institution C provided him with an opportunity to be relatively close to home and attend a program that was well reputed in the profession. While his undergraduate involvement was primarily in residence life, Cody had an assistantship in student activities. Practically oriented, Cody learned from faculty and classmates how theory is helpful when working with students. He was actively engaged in NASPA IV-E serving in leadership roles in a knowledge community.

Accountability is important to Cody. He has a “business mindset” for student affairs work. Because many student affairs professionals do not enact their work with a business mindset, I thought it was important to learn how this approach may influence the enactment of professional values. He explained student affairs professionals must document how they attend

to espoused values. One way to do this is through assessment. Cody believed he stood out from other professionals because he likes assessment and emphasized this during the job search.

Cody was confident he had not only internalized the profession's values but also "intertwined" them. Because student affairs "takes up a lot of your life" Cody believed he needed to adjust his life to meet the needs of students and making student affairs values his own was part of that process. Listening to Cody, it was evident his journey followed a path of: others *doing for him* to him *doing with others* to now filling skill set gaps and being intentional about how he *does things for others* (students and professionals). Cody believed his work will be guided by the profession's values, which he will "put somewhere; I will look at [them] and refer back to and know what my purpose is in this field and why I chose this field as a profession"

## **David**

Summer internships through the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) helped David decide to enter student affairs. He chose Institution C based on an assistantship he procured in which he would help manage a program for underrepresented students. David accepted an assistantship as an assistant hall director during his second year. His practical experiences are incredibly diverse including work as a sorority house director during his first year. David is academically oriented and uses the label of "scholar-practitioner" to describe his evolving professional philosophy. Course work helped him make sense of his assistantship and examine how he might contribute to the scholarship of the profession. David's involvement in the NUFP program reflects a high degree of association participation. He also attends and presents at NASPA Conferences.



A primary theme for David was change: “The assistantship move helped me see that although you may or may not see change coming, it's coming... Whether or not you want it or not, you have to be prepared for it at any given moment.” David perceived institutional context influences change and student affairs priorities and values. He discovered the power of context through internships and the job search. While change is constant, David believed since student affairs’ inception, being “student-centered” has been the primary focus of the profession.

The journey to developing professional values was greatly influenced by his time in the program: “They go from introducing what the values are to helping you determine what are yours and how yours align with those of the profession. Then they show you how to reconcile those together to become an effective practitioner.” David moved from enacting the values of others to internalizing and demonstrating values he shares with student affairs.

### **Hallie**

Hallie taught middle and high school students and held other jobs for five years after her undergraduate experience. Interacting with a student affairs faculty member made her consider the profession, though she was not involved in many undergraduate activities other than her sorority. She only applied to Institution B, as her family lived close by. Her assistantship in residence life was one she very much enjoyed though she had no prior experience in the functional area. Hallie had very favorable impressions of course work because faculty are “sensitive to unique experiences” and demonstrate an appreciation for all aspects of student affairs. Volunteer roles for ACPA were pivotal to her growing professional competence.

Being authentic was a foremost concern of Hallie. She viewed faculty members as exceptional because they demonstrate openness and honesty. She wanted genuine relationships

with colleagues and classmates, which she acknowledged was not always easy to accomplish. Maintaining “true relationships” with family and friends was a foremost priority for Hallie. She felt she demonstrates authenticity through candid conversations with students, including those on difficult topics her other colleagues may choose not to have.

Hallie felt she internalized values important to student affairs work because she reflected greatly on the career choice. She felt the journey to professional requires ongoing examination of personal and professional values alignment. Hallie perceived that integrating the values of the profession was not hard because most of her peers, even outside of student affairs, infuse personal and work roles: “There is no separation...I think people just find a profession they really feel comfortable in and that makes them just as happy of a person and as a professional.”

### **Jami**

Extensively involved in residence life as an undergraduate, Jami’s pursuit of a degree in student affairs was highly influenced by her undergraduate residence director who had attended the graduate program at Institution A. While she examined multiple programs, this mentor’s advice and the close proximity to Jami’s family prompted her to attend Institution A. Jami learned a lot about student development theory in course work, which she believed helped her be intentional as an assistant hall director. She was involved in ACPA, NASPA, and GLACUHO Association and campus committee involvement highly influenced her professional preparation.

A theme in both interviews was Jami’s perception that residence life consumes professionals. As a result, professional conflicts occurred when interacting with students and colleagues. These conflicts influenced her ideas of professional and personal boundaries:

We work where we live, so the boundary between where are we supervisors or advisors or disciplinarians to where are we friends and support systems and things like that is a

very blurry line and the, everyone sort of has a different values system or ethical standpoint as to where that boundary lies.

Jami described her journey to developing professional values as observing others and reflecting on how colleagues at Institution A and throughout the profession conduct themselves. Such observations helped her infuse professional and personal values and realize a goal of accomplishing her personal best:

Whether it's reading ACPA's guide to ethics or just facing a situation where I have to make a personal decision, I've been able to process that and internalize what is important to me and then demonstrate that by picking the action that most fits with my values or molding my values to fit this new-found learning and then putting that into practice so that again I can be the best person that I can be.

### **Landon**

Landon chose to pursue student affairs earlier than others in the study – during his first-year as an undergraduate. He had numerous conversations with advisors and student affairs professionals while an undergraduate. Landon decided to attend Institution A after meeting the program chair at Oshkosh Placement. His assistantship in residence life helped him learn diverse approaches in one functional area to serving students. Because Landon considered student affairs longer than most of his classmates, he perceived that he entered the program with a deeper understanding of the profession's priorities and needed competencies. Course work strengthened his belief that assessment legitimizes student affairs. He was actively involved in ACPA, NODA, and the GLBT Knowledge Community in NASPA.

Landon strongly believed student affairs must enact practices espoused by professional associations. He was concerned many entering professionals are unprepared or not committed to widely touted goals - most notably appreciating diversity and creating inclusive environments:

Student affairs values diversity...I don't think we're really doing anything sometimes and I don't think we really value things sometimes as much as we say we do... We're very righteous in that we have these values, we have these mission statements... but I don't think so. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

For Landon, developing professional values began as soon as he became involved in undergraduate residence life. He believed all must examine how espoused student affairs values fits into professional and personal roles. Unquestionably adopting the profession's values concerned him, because blind adherence meant people did not examine personal relevance. He felt people might recite but likely fail to internalize them. Landon felt demonstrating student affairs values "always needs to be maintained" and people must "work toward perfecting them."

### **Maggie**

As a forensics psychology major, Maggie had plans to work for a Crime Scene Investigation unit. She determined such a career might not allow her the time to focus on a family. Actively involved in residence life, student activities, and admissions, she consulted with mentors about alternative career plans and, based on recommendations from these same mentors, she chose to pursue her degree at Institution C. While her background was primarily in residence life, Maggie found an assistantship working with an academic program. Her course work was pivotal in helping her learn from classmates about other functional areas. She served on her program's student advisory committee and was examining ways to become involved in associations. Between study interviews, she joined an ACPA Commission.

Evolving impressions of student affairs was a primary theme from Maggie. She entered the program focused on residence life and discovered much more. Maggie believed most people enter student affairs graduate education based on impressions built as an undergraduate student. These beliefs influence their entering perception of the profession's values. She explained people examine how the profession aligns with personal values and priorities:

I think a lot of people, we're all just like 'we love icebreakers - let's do student affairs' and then we get in here and we're like 'oh this really does line up with what I believe about life and how I look at the world' and then maybe there's some of those who say 'oh, never mind, it doesn't; I am going to look for a different career when I graduate.'

Maggie believed her personal and professional values have become increasingly aligned. She explained her journey of values development as one of reflection:

I made many mistakes and learned from them. I grew much more comfortable working with students and asserting my own ideas. Sometimes I learned from doing, and sometimes I learned from just listening and reflecting on what those around me said and did. All I learned will be strongly influential on what I do in my new job that starts in a couple months. Any time that I have a decision to make or a challenge to deal with, I will think about what I've learned and how each possible solution or decision will be a reflection of my personal and professional values.

## **Ryan**

Ryan worked for two years after completing his college degree in the United Kingdom. He came to Institution C after interacting with representatives of the Student Affairs Program while they were studying abroad. His assistantship was in student conduct, which forced him to reflect often on individual and community values. Course work helped Ryan examine diverse

approaches to work; he now uses student development theory to ground his practice. Ryan's involvement in ACPA or NASPA depended on which conference was held closer to Institution C. He found getting involved in associations was "more difficult than it needs to be."

Upholding professional standards is core to Ryan's story. He explained how two years off between undergraduate and graduate school provided him a period of maturation, which is something Ryan believed more graduate students would benefit from:

Some of them have come from roles where they were very influential student leaders...and they love their undergraduate life. I don't think two months over the summer gives them enough time to really let go of that...I needed two years really; two years between when I finished my undergraduate and enrolled here.

He was particularly attentive to his professional behavior because of his role as a conduct officer. Because he recognized how graduate students' actions influence the undergraduates with whom they work, Ryan chose to have conversations with classmates not making good decisions about behavior. Ryan felt he and his classmates grew from these dialogues.

Ryan believed the program helped him strengthen an existing values set aligned with student affairs priorities. For Ryan, the student affairs journey changed him: "Things look different now: I know that." He embraced challenge and support as a professional philosophy. Ryan felt he had integrated student affairs values "as they relate to my current experience." He posited that he might have to shift values somewhat if he goes into another functional area outside of conduct: "I might have to value certain tenets more than others." Essentially, as long as the profession's his personal values overlap, Ryan will be happy working in student affairs.

## **Sarah**

A residence life advisor encouraged Sarah to attend the Oshkosh Placement Exchange to consider graduate school in student affairs. After 19 interviews with prospective programs, Sarah chose Institution A. She was drawn to the opportunity for diverse practical experiences including an assistantship and three practica. Dealing with the death of a resident during her first year caused her to question whether the profession was an appropriate career path. After much reflection, Sarah chose to complete the degree and pursue student affairs work. Course work helped strengthen an existing set of helping skills she had prior to the program. She increased her understanding of student development theory and its utility in work with students. Sarah has been actively involved in GLACUHO and ACPA and is unsure of her future involvement in NASPA, though she attended the annual conference in 2010 for job placement.

Sarah appreciated the diverse professional approaches she saw from mentors and classmates. She felt diverse perspectives helped strengthen her own professional competence, particularly since her perspective is so strongly shaped by residence life. Because she placed a high personal and professional value on change, she felt it appropriate to continually examine how to conduct student affairs work in different ways.

Sarah believed her allegiance to the profession's values would grow as she interacts with students. She admitted she had not previously been tasked with examining her values, at least explicitly, though she came to recognize that her course work included aspects of values examination. Sarah is now able to explain how she has come to learn, internalize, and demonstrate the profession's values:

I've been able to cement them...and kind of say it is ok for me to value those things while working in this field. And now that I'm looking to make that first step out, I'm

comfortable with my values. Starting grad school, I knew what I valued but I wasn't comfortable enough to talk about it...I think I am more comfortable with what I value and that I can continue to examine them and make sure that this, throughout my time in this field, this field still values similar things to me.

## **Shauna**

After membership in a sorority, serving as a resident advisor, working in the university admissions office, and participating in other student organizations, Shauna chose to enter student affairs. The decision to attend Institution C was based on the program's strong emphasis on international study. She had an assistantship in residence life for both years and augmented student affairs skills through advising a chapter of her sorority at a neighboring institution and working at a Hispanic Serving Institution during the summer. Course work was very influential, particularly student development theory, which helped "justify" her approach to work with students. She attended ACPA and NASPA conventions but was not actively involved in either.

The process of using theory in practice and reflecting on her efficacy of such application strongly influenced Shauna's ideas of student affairs work. Course assignments were pivotal in making sense of her experiences and being intentional in her assistantship and practica:

I have to do the papers and I apply what I've learned: It creates a picture for me of what I've learned, like in this paper I can put an argument together and say 'oh, so this is how it works. This makes sense to me and this is going to be effective in one place or this is going to be a best practice for another campus.' I think as I gain a clearer understanding of how these feelings, concepts, ideas work for different programs, I am able to find the common theme.



Shauna explained there are personal and professional values and that a good amount of overlap is important; however, they do not have to be one and the same. Shauna explained distance between professional and personal values is acceptable as long as her personal values are not compromised. She provided thoughts on how work at a Jesuit institution, for instance, might present an opportunity to demonstrate a strong belief in helping students enact their values, even if they may not be completely in agreement with her own: “I can still incorporate them into my work with students and help them learn and demonstrate their own values...I think I can support them in that process even though I don't, myself, I don't practice that.”

Shauna had posted her values on a wall above her desk and examined how her work changed as a result of an increased connection between personal and professional values. She believed her journey of internalizing student affairs values is ongoing:

I feel like this has been a bus ride and I'm on the bus and I'm reading everything and there's another stop and I look around, take it all in, figure out where I am, try to like make a connection with where I am and what I've been doing and then I just keep on going and going and that will probably be the rest of my life.

## **Sophie**

Originally intending to enter rabbinical school, her relationships with the Dean of Students and professionals who worked in fraternity/sorority life at her undergraduate influenced Sophie's plan to work in student affairs. She chose Institution B to be close to family who lived in the area. Her assistantship in fraternity/sorority life gave Sophie the opportunity to reflect on meeting the distinct needs of identified student populations, particularly given the diverse institutional contexts in which they experience college. Sophie used interactions with cohort mates to make sense of her assistantship experiences and a practicum in residence life. Actively

engaged in AFA, Sophie believed professional associations are essential to preparing future student affairs practitioners.

Sophie perceived an emphasis on holistic student development directs student affairs priorities. Her belief that professionals must help students' cognitive and affective development is particularly strong when discussing how they serve students during transitional stages such as matriculation, joining organizations, and graduation. She believed student subpopulations require different strategies to address individual and group needs: "I think the individual is key... We kind of put students into different groups: Greek students, commuter students, residence hall students, LGBT students... but within those groups, the students themselves are very individualistic." Ultimately, Sophie saw the values of holistic student development and diversity and inclusion as "the fundamental goals of what we do [in student affairs]."

Sophie explained working in fraternity/sorority life helped her understand the need to align espoused and enacted values; therefore, she worked hard to internalize those of student affairs and demonstrate them through her actions. Sophie explained she always sought work that allowed her to emphasize personal values:

I knew that I wanted to help people; the whole reason I loved the idea of going to rabbinical school was the values that underlie the program. I mean, the helping values, the religious values... so learning student affairs is completely based in values, especially fraternity and sorority life, I was like 'I am sold. Keep me on.'

## **Tammy**

After completing her undergraduate degree in legal studies and accounting, Tammy chose to stay at Institution A to pursue her master's in student affairs. Highly influenced by her union

board advisor, it made sense to stay at the same institution since it hosted a reputable program and her partner was employed full time in a neighboring town. Her assistantship changed from her first to second year but both positions dealt with managing community service programs. Her most influential lessons from course work occurred through conversations with classmates on the topic of diversity and inclusion. She was not actively involved in professional associations but maintained connections to other student affairs functions through service on committees and participation in her sorority's graduate chapter.

Tammy had a sense of an "integrated self." She incorporated her personal life into work as much as possible. Colleagues often perceived she lacked "balance" because she responded to email at all hours of the day. However, Tammy believed persons in student affairs must love their work and place students first: "There isn't really a balance of professional and personal with student affairs because that's what you like and that's what you want to do then you're going to enjoy it. Your life is more integrated than it is balanced."

Developing professional values was easy for Tammy because "a lot of the values student affairs has everyone else has." She explained student affairs professionals are in tune with values because they are reminded of them through interaction with students on personal and professional levels: "we kind of get it out there and give them the opportunity to discuss those values and experiment with those values outside of the classroom." Conceptualizing professional life, Tammy reflected on values as context dependent. She explained she has "a public institution student affairs values" but hopes they are "just regular old student affairs values and that they'll transfer at a community or private college."

## **Conclusion**

Participants' individual impressions about values development were explained in this chapter. To introduce readers to these participants, I provided insight into their background, the rationale for attending their respective program, a primary lesson they learned during graduate work, and a summary of their individual journey to developing professional values. In the next chapter, I answer my four research questions and examine common themes across all 17 participants.

## **Chapter 5: Results**

In this study, I examined how student affairs master's students learned, internalized, and demonstrated professional values they perceived as essential to student affairs work. In this chapter, I answer the four research questions posed in chapter one:

1. What do second-year students in a student affairs graduate program perceive to be the professional values of student affairs?
2. How do perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?
3. What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?
4. How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate the values of the student affairs profession? Specifically, how do program and professional structures as well as determined agents of socialization (faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues) influence the process of values development?

### **Perceptions of Professional Values of Student Affairs**

To answer the first question is to understand participants' shared perceptions of student affairs values. I specifically asked two questions during the first interview: "What do you believe to be the professional values of student affairs?" and "Why do you believe these to be the values of the field?" At the beginning of the second interview I confirmed previously referenced values, asked for additions, and sought needed explanation. The second interview also addressed personal values. Exploring connections between personal and professional values often resulted in participants identifying other student affairs values. While specific questions were asked in both interviews (Appendix E), analysis for all questions was focused on interpreting participant

values. During review of each narrative, participants confirmed or made edits to clarify my interpretation of their student affairs values.

Analysis for question one focused on compiling all participant identified student affairs values, quantifying the number of times a value was mentioned by all participants, coding identified values to determine a set of shared values, and reviewing participant narratives to interpret a common understanding. Participants identified 65 different values. Table 2 lists all values by number of times identified. Following Table 2, I explain 13 values I interpreted as those of student affairs based on responses of study participants.

Table 2	
Listing of participant identified values	
Identified Values (in alphabetical order)	Times Referenced
Diversity	8
Collaboration	7
Learning, Student-Centeredness	6
Change, Ethics	5
Holistic Student Development, Intentionality	4
Advocacy, Caring, Community, Education, Inclusion, Relationships, Service, Support	3
Attending to Students' Needs, Beneficence: "do no harm," Challenge and Support, Empathy, Networking, Professional Development, Respect, Responsibility, Responsiveness to Society, Social Justice	2
Access, Activism, Advancing Knowledge, Adaptability, Appreciate Differences, Balance, Commitment, Communication, Compassion, Diversity and Inclusion, Educating the Whole Student, Equality, Equity, Fairness, Growth and Development, Guidance, Helping Students, Honesty, Innovation, Integrity, Interacting Across Differences, Justice, Learning and Development, Loyalty, Loyalty to the Institution, Mentoring, Open-mindedness, Openness to Diversity, Personal Development, Professionalism, Safety, Self-Direction, Student as a "Whole," Student Development, Students-First, Student Involvement, Student Learning, Student Success, Truth, Understanding	1

## Shared Values

While language and descriptions of values differed some, participants had relatively common ideas of student affairs values. From this research, I interpret the following to be participants' shared perceptions of student affairs' values: diversity and inclusion, collaboration, learning, student centeredness, change and responsiveness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, community, service, professional development, caring, and responsibility. This section explains my interpretation of commonly identified values.

**Diversity and inclusion.** Diversity was the value most often explained or conceptualized by participants (Ali, Ashley, Cody, Hallie, Landon, Maggie, Shauna, and Tammy). Diversity was often coupled with the idea that based on appreciating differences there is a need to make people feel included (Ashley, Sarah, and Sophie). Sophie believed diversity and inclusion go hand-in-hand because appreciating diversity is passive; practitioners must also seek to foster inclusive environments. Ashley explained student affairs professionals prioritize diversity and inclusion to ensure students can learn from one another:

I feel like it's a disservice to students when you don't have the opportunity to learn from someone really diverse...so I think as student affairs professionals, we create that diverse environment through student activities, we do things open to all groups of people and help students understand others and that they need to be open to other groups of people.

The idea of appreciating diverse student populations was also explained through like-terms such as advocacy (Claire, Hallie, and Tammy), equality and equity (Alisha), social justice (Alisha and Maggie) and understanding (Sophie). While terms may not have the exact same meaning, participants sensed student affairs attends to diverse student backgrounds and aims to make each

student feel included. Therefore, I interpret participants collectively viewed diversity and inclusion as both distinct and connected values of the profession.

**Collaboration.** Collaboration was the second most mentioned value. Caitlin, David, Hallie, and Landon each talked about working with student affairs colleagues, academic affairs professionals and faculty, parents, and other higher education stakeholders to help students succeed. Alisha valued collaboration with faculty because it advanced another value of holistic student development (a value explained later):

[Academic affairs is] thinking about intellectual development. But for student affairs, I think that developing the student as a whole, you have to have both sides of that. So, I think collaboration is part of the values, because you can't have the whole student development if you don't have academic affairs as well, so just recognizing that we're in it together, I think definitely reflects the values of the student affairs profession...

For those who did not explicitly mention collaboration there was still a sense of a shared responsibility to work together as student affairs professionals. Cody believed strong professional relationships are a prerequisite to student success. Jami explained how her contributions complemented those of others in efforts to help students learn and develop. Jami and Cody pronounced the idea that “we’re all working toward the same goal” and relationships with other professionals positively influence the extent to which the goal is accomplished.

**Learning.** Six participants specifically referenced the value of “learning;” however, others indicated “education” (Alisha, Allison, and Shauna) while David referenced “growth and development” and “advancing knowledge.” Sarah felt that to foster “student success” professionals should support learning in and out of the classroom. Shauna connected learning to



“student development.” Alisha explained how *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004) and other guiding documents emphasize the value of learning to student affairs. According to David, the value of learning reflects student affairs’ role in supporting the academic mission:

No matter what you do in student affairs, everything you do should enhance the academic mission of the university. No matter what that mission is, depending on that university, so whether it be the types of programs you do, how you supervise your students, how you advise your student groups, no matter what you do: first and foremost, we must push students toward academic success and student success as a whole.

Participants saw the need to be aligned with an institution’s academic goals (David, Landon, and Sophie) and collaborate with faculty to help students learn (David, Hallie, and Sarah); therefore, my perception that learning is a professional value was strengthened through stories shared by participants about how they conduct work in student affairs.

**Student-Centeredness.** Being student-centered was also emphasized as a primary value of the profession. Cody interpreted this as a responsibility to make sure resources, particularly financial, are properly used to benefit as many students as possible. Throughout his career, Cody hopes to “keep [students] at the forefront of the decisions that I or other colleagues make.”

Some participants conceptualized student-centeredness as “helping students” (Jami), “students-first” (David) or “attending to students’ needs” (Sophie). Sarah explained professionals must have “commitment” to students. She believed when professionals are student-centered they support the goal of “student success.” While language varied, participants sensed they primarily served the needs of students. Additionally, those needs are influenced by trends external to higher education. Therefore, participants who identified “responsiveness to

society” (Ali and Ashley), “change” (David and Tammy) and “innovation” (Shauna) often spoke about meeting students’ evolving needs. Finally, because participants believed diversity is a student affairs value, they often spoke of the intersection between being student-centered and attending to the varying needs of student populations. Sophie explained: “I think the individual is key... We kind of put students into different groups: Greek students, commuter students, residence hall students, LGBT students... but within those groups, the students themselves are very individualistic.” Interpretations of student-centeredness as described here led me to believe participants share student-centeredness as a value of student affairs.

**Change and responsiveness.** Participants sensed student affairs’ priorities are often driven by change (Alisha, David, Jami, Landon, and Tammy). David was the most passionate about student affairs professionals embracing change, as they must “anticipate something will happen and being ready for it at the same time. Knowing what you anticipated may not happen; instead this may happen. So, being ready for almost anything.” David’s description implied that being ready for and responding to change is essential. Others explained “change” as “responsiveness”: Ali explained being responsive to society and addressing societal changes has been a value throughout the evolution of the profession. She talked about responsiveness in terms of the increasingly diverse society in which we live:

We’ve always been that profession that when it saw a problem we decided to take it on because we could and because the academics are teaching their books, the important theories and mathematical equations, but I think it has always been - diversity, service – we in student affairs saw a need or the importance for it so we took it on ourselves and that has gone on for generation to generation and it has evolved even more and we’re continuing to strengthen it as part of our philosophy today.

Based on participant descriptions, including terms such as “adaptability” (Tammy) and “innovation” (Shauna), I interpreted participants have a shared perception of “change and responsiveness” as connected professional values: Student affairs understands its role in addressing “change” and professionals become responsive to the evolving needs of students.

**Ethics.** The concept of having a professional set of ethics was often referenced. Ryan believed professionals should “at a minimum standard, [act] in the way we ask our students to behave;” his explanation was reinforced by Alisha’s emphasis on professionals having “integrity” to do the right thing. Jami explained the value of ethics requires one to examine their professional relationships with students and fellow staff. Claire believed that justice should guide the work of professionals. Alisha spoke of beneficence, or “do no harm,” which has been identified as an ethical principle (Janosik, 2004). She believed that valuing ethics means making sure decisions are based on institution and students’ well being versus her priorities:

Recognizing the actions I am taking isn’t...just to benefit myself. They’re to benefit the institution as a whole and in the end to benefit the student and they can take advantage of whatever services are provided by the institution. I think that’s another important value as well...You know, doing the right things at all times: Your due diligence.

**Holistic student development.** The idea that student affairs professionals attend to student learning and development in and out of the classroom was frequently articulated as “holistic student development.” It was conceptually also explained as “growth and development” (David), “learning and development” (Shauna) or “student development” (Jami). Sarah explained the concept as fostering “student success”. Additionally, “student involvement”

(Jami) was cited as a means to holistic student development. Ashley explained holistic student development is a priority because it is necessary for success after college:

We not only want to educate their hearts and minds but we ideally want to provide an opportunity for them to discover who they are and create a holistic environment that allows for that education and learning allows for that open community to do that; we allow them to do that, so then they're able to go into society with a better idea of who they are and a better understanding of others.

Ali explained holistic student development as complementing faculty's role of teaching; student affairs professionals serve all aspects of the student whereas she felt faculty are concerned only with the academic pursuits. Sophie believed holistic student development to be the most important value of the profession: "I think the underlying value is to promote that holistic development, because if we're not meeting that, then we're not doing our job as student affairs. I really do think that students learn just as much in and out of the classroom."

**Intentionality.** While only four participants identified intentionality as a value, I interpreted other values to be influenced by the degree to which one is intentional in their work. Ashley believed that student affairs work could not be successfully conducted without being intentional. Jami asserted that she must be intentional to reflect on her contributions to the welfare of students. Maggie believed "people in this field really want to be doing things on purpose." Landon was committed to being intentional to support students as they explored their sexual orientation. Sarah felt student development theory helped her be more intentional in demonstrating care for students; she could use theory to strengthen her approach to help students have a positive college experience. Because participants either articulated intentionality as a

value or described intentionality as an approach to enacting student affairs work, it is my impression that intentionality is a shared professional value.

**Community.** The objective of realizing community was prevalent in many of the stories told by participants: Allison and Sophie aimed to build community with fraternity and sorority members and connect the organizations to the larger campus. Landon and Sarah believed community occurred as a result of students who live and learn together in residence halls. Sarah explained, “I actively work to build a community and help them feel a part of the (Institution A) community.” Maggie explained she and other classmates identified their values in the capstone class and community was often conceptualized. Others commented about attending to the common needs of diverse student populations to foster connections and community (David and Sophie) and supporting students in efforts to work together (Shauna). While only three participants used the term “community,” many explained the need to strengthen students’ feelings of connectedness to the campus. Such explanations led me to believe participants regard community as a professional value.

**Service.** Participants also perceived student affairs professionals must value “service” to campus communities. Ryan believed he was a “servant to this campus.” Service is so important to Hallie that she focused her professional philosophy, authored for the Capstone Class, on this value: “When I’m tired or today, when I am crazy chaotic, I still feel it’s my duty to uphold what I said I am going to do.” Landon prided himself on the delivery of services to students in residence halls and to parents attending student orientation. He connected service and change:

I can see service; we are most certainly responding to student requests about how they like to live and what they're looking for in their accommodations. So next door, they're

renovating a residence hall and [there are] plans for more, I just don't think that would even be on our radar if not for society and our students and responding to that.

While service was only identified three times specifically, ideas such as loyalty to the institution (Jami), the provision of services because they aimed to exhibit student-centeredness (Cody, David, Jami, and Sophie), and modifying services to be responsive (Ali and Landon) helped me conclude service is a value of these participants and the profession.

**Professional development.** Professional development can also be explained as a student affairs value. Allison and Cody were highly engaged in associations and believed professional development to be a student affairs value. While few identified professional development specifically, many participants addressed a need for continued professional learning. Hallie spoke of her continued learning through involvement with an association convention committee. Sophie was engaged in multiple volunteer roles for AFA. Jami talked about how personal development helps her to be “the best person and professional I can be” and she must exhibit “self-direction” to increase her professional competence. Ryan explained the need to exhibit professionalism, which he believed evolved with one’s education about and preparation to work in student affairs. Allison and Hallie explained networking as a professional priority often enacted through professional development opportunities.

Answers to questions about necessary student affairs competencies provided further evidence for my perception that professional development is an integral value of student affairs. Many felt professionals need to have a passion for “lifelong learning.” Hallie explained how she learned about being a professional through association involvement. Allison explained that as a result of graduate education and a commitment to professional development, she has “seen a

transformation in myself quite a bit since I've been here.” Participants’ search for competence in different aspects of student affairs work led me to perceive professional development as one of their common values.

**Caring.** There were many values that could be identified as conceptually common but explained differently. The first group includes advocacy (Claire, Hallie, and Tammy), caring (Ali, Jami, and Sarah), compassion (Ryan), empathy (Caitlin and Ryan), guidance (Shauna) and support (Claire, David, and Shauna), which collectively can be explained as caring given Young’s (2003) explanation. Participants aimed to make sure needs of students are met: being student-centered meant professionals should exhibit great care for students. Sarah articulated caring as a value and explained:

We can't simply do our job without having that bit of caring and the commitment; we want students to succeed and need to commit to helping them. Whether it's being an advisor, being an ear to listen and even sitting them down and setting them straight. It's our commitment to helping them to become positive citizens of the world.

**Responsibility.** The second category of terms include beneficence/“do no harm” (Alisha and Ryan), challenge and support (Maggie and Ryan), fairness and justice (Claire), responsibility (Jami), safety (Alisha), and truth (Sophie), which were described through participants’ thoughts on helping students form a sense of right and wrong and addressing congruence between community expectations and individual behaviors. Participants believed they help students develop a sense of how to coexist based on campus policies and practices. Students have a responsibility to exhibit beneficence and collectively maintain standards. To determine a name for this conceptualized value, I looked to Young (2003). He identified justice, but I did not sense

this is how participants would describe this value. I interpreted the shared value as responsibility after revisiting narratives such as that of Ryan who believed in “challenge and support” and Alisha who felt people should look out for each other and uphold campus community standards.

While I interpret responsibility as similar to ethics (another value), participants’ impressions led me to believe ethics are something they attend to as professionals; they value a shared ethical foundation for conducting student affairs work. When talking about their service to students, participants often spoke of helping them develop a sense of responsibility and looking out for others. Therefore, I concluded that participants have view the values as different.

## **Summary**

This section addressed my first research question: “What do second-year students in a student affairs graduate program perceive to be the professional values of student affairs?” I documented how often 65 different terms were used to explain student affairs values. I then identified 13 values conceptualized through these terms. Evidence from interviews was used to explain my interpretation of participants’ shared impressions of the profession’s values.

I determined diversity and inclusion as connected and as the most identified value across participants; however, they may also be two distinct values. Other values of the student affairs profession as explained by participants and interpreted through my analysis are collaboration, learning, student-centeredness, change and responsiveness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, community, service, professional development, caring and responsibility. Implications of these perceptions are explained in chapter six. In the next section, I consider impressions of the profession’s values in light espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003).



### **Participant Identified Values Compared to Espoused Student Affairs Values**

The second question focused on the extent to which students' perceptions aligned with espoused student affairs values. I used Young (2003), the most recent known explanation of the profession's values, to analyze participant and literature overlap. Young studied professional values for over a decade (Young, 1996; 2001; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; 1991b), which gave me confidence that his authoring of the profession's values in 2003 was the most empirically-based conceptualization of student affairs values to date. To best interpret how students' perceptions aligned with those of Young, I re-read his descriptions. It was important to re-read Young (2003) prior to data analysis because question two specifically required me to make decisions about how participants' identified values aligned specifically or conceptually with those identified in the literature. I re-read narratives (and transcriptions if necessary) to reaffirm how students explained identified values.

When answering question one, I assigned a term to 13 categories of like values that I determined as shared among participants. Therefore, to answer question two, I compared the 13 values interpreted from participants against the eight values identified by Young (2003). Table 3 reflects the degree of alignment between my interpretation of participant values and Young (2003).

I believe my interpretation of participants' shared student affairs values align directly or conceptually with most identified by Young (2003). I have interpreted caring, community, and service as values viewed by both participants and Young (2003). No other values interpreted as shared across participants were termed exactly the same as Young (2003).

Diversity and inclusion was/were the most identified value(s) across participants. Young (2003) described the role student affairs professionals play in caring for the diverse needs of a campus community and the goals of supporting equality for all students; however, he did not use the terms diversity or inclusion in his articulation of student affairs values. I interpreted participants' views on diversity reflected in Young's (2003) explanations of caring, community, equality, individuation, and justice.

Table 3	
Comparing Participants' Identified Values to Young (2003)	
Participant Identified Value	Connection to Identified Student Affairs Value(s) (Young, 2003)
Diversity and Inclusion	Caring, Community, Equality, Individuation, Justice
Collaboration	
Learning	
Student-Centeredness	Caring, Individuation, Service, Student Contribution
Change and/or Responsiveness	
Ethics	Caring-Based Ethics, Equality, Justice
Holistic Student Development	Community, Individuation, Service
Intentionality	Community, Individuation, Service
Community	Community, Equality
Service	Caring, Individuation, Service
Professional Development	
Caring	Caring, Caring-Based Ethics, Equality, Individuation, Service
Responsibility	Caring-Based Ethics, Equality, Justice,

Student-Centeredness, which participants described as being there for and meeting the distinct needs of students, can be connected to Young's identified values of caring, individuation, service, and student contribution. This was the only value I interpreted as one of participants' shared values that aligned with Young's description of student contribution: "students caring for society" (Young, 2003, p. 102). Relative to the lack of overlap with student contribution, while participants sensed the enactment of their values positively influences students, few identified

values connected directly to how the profession expects *college students* to act. Some, such as Shauna, believed they had a responsibility to help students learn how to contribute to society; however, most participants did not identify values expected of students. They primarily selected values *professionals* demonstrate in their day-to-day work.

Ethics, as described by participants, could be aligned with Young's (2003) values of caring-based ethics, equality, and justice. However, my interpretation of participants' and Young's (2003) explanations differ. Young (2003) explained caring-based ethics is based on more than logic: caring-based ethics is grounded in a shared idea of virtue and character. Participants claimed ethics as a value but explained the concept more so in terms of right and wrong and adherence to college community and professional standards (e.g. Ryan). The intuitive aspect of ethics was not as pronounced across participants. I believe participants could connect ethics to caring but in the course of this research they did not.

Participants explained holistic student development as helping students become well rounded and providing opportunities to complement in-class learning through out of classroom activities. Community, individuation, and service are values of Young (2003) that undergird participants' shared ideas of what it means to value holistic student development: student affairs professionals serve the needs of a diverse campus community to help students learn and develop in and out of the classroom. While I understand participants' perception of holistic student development as a value that emphasized learning in and out of the classroom, I do not conclude that Young (2003) shared participants' sense that "learning" is a distinct value of the profession.

Intentionality, shared across participants, is reflected in Young's (2003) explanations of individuation, community, and service. Young (2003) explained the distinctive needs of students

as individuation and professionals should serve these needs while attending to a sense of broad campus community. As Sophie explained, professionals label populations but each student has a distinctive story; therefore, I believe she and her colleagues in this study would hold up the value of intentionality as they aim to simultaneously meet the needs of the student, campus subpopulations, and the collective campus community.

Responsibility is articulated in the spirit of Young's (2003) values of caring-based ethics, equality, and justice. Participants believed caring about students meant challenging and supporting them to make the right decision. They perceived individual students have a responsibility to make decisions based on shared standards for all students, not just themselves or a specific student population: When everyone in a campus community accepts responsibility for maintaining order, there is justice. My interpretation of responsibility as a professional value stems from participants' collective sense that student affairs professionals must right the wrongs and make sure students across diverse subpopulations uphold an obligation to sustain standards.

Participants' shared perceptions did not align completely with those of Young (2003). There are four values I interpreted as shared by participants that are not explicitly referenced by or neatly fit into categorizations using Young's (2003) espoused values: change and responsiveness, collaboration, learning, and professional development. Also, examining terms used by participants to explain the professions values, neither individuation nor student contribution, both cited by Young (2003), were not explicitly mentioned by participants. The implications of graduate students' perceptions in the context of what is described in the literature are discussed in chapter six.

## **Summary**

Question two focused on the extent to which participant identified values aligned with those of Young (2003). I analyzed 13 values I had interpreted as shared across participants against values espoused by Young (2003). My interpretation is that the responses from these participants and Young's (2003) values are directly aligned for caring, community, and service. There is also conceptual congruence with Young (2003) for my interpretation of the values of diversity and inclusion, student-centeredness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, and responsibility. My interpretation of participants' values and Young (2003) differ in that I believe change and responsiveness, collaboration, learning, and professional development were perceived by participants as shared professional values. Thus far I have examined perceptions of student affairs values and the alignment between those perceptions and the literature. In the next section I explain how student affairs functional areas influence perceptions of participants.

### **Functional Area Influence**

This section answers the third research question: "What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?" This question was based on findings in the literature that functional area might influence perceptions of values (Hirt, 2006; Tull & Medrano, 2008). To answer research question three, I had to first determine what the values of each functional area were. As explained, participants used 65 different terms from which I interpreted 13 shared student affairs values. I took each participant's identified values and coded it as one of the 13 shared student affairs values. I then placed my interpretation of each participants' identified values within their respective functional area: Academic Programs; Financial Aid; Fraternity and Sorority Life; Residence Life; Student Activities; Student Conduct; and Volunteer Programs. Table 4 lists the values I interpret by functional area.

For functional areas with one person (academic programs, financial aid, student conduct, volunteer programs), my interpretations of participant values were assigned to that functional area. Fraternity and Sorority Life, which had two participants, presented a conundrum: Allison and Sophie had no values that overlapped; however nine of the 13 values I had interpreted as shared across participants were evident between the two participants. Therefore I assigned all nine values to the functional area.

Functional Area	Identified Values (times identified)
Academic Program (Maggie)	Collaboration, Diversity and Inclusion, Ethics, Intentionality, Responsibility, Learning, Student-Centeredness,
Financial Aid (Claire)	Caring, Collaboration, Ethics, Diversity and Inclusion, Learning, Student-Centeredness, Responsibility, Service
Fraternity and Sorority Life (Allison, Sophie)	Caring, Collaboration, Community, Diversity and Inclusion, Ethics, Holistic Student Development, Learning, Professional Development, Student-Centeredness
Residence Life (Alisha, Ashley <sup>3</sup> Caitlin, David, Hallie, Jami, Landon, Sarah, Shauna)	Caring, Change and/or Responsiveness, Collaboration, Community, Diversity and Inclusion, Ethics, Holistic Student Development, Intentionality, Learning, Professional Development, Responsibility, Service, Student-Centeredness,
Student Activities (Ali, Ashley, Cody)	Caring, Change and/or Responsiveness, Diversity and Inclusion, Ethics, Intentionality, Holistic Student Development, Professional Development, Student-Centeredness
Student Conduct (Ryan)	Caring, Community, Ethics, Learning, Responsibility, Student-Centeredness
Volunteer Programs (Tammy)	Change and/or Responsiveness, Diversity and Inclusion, Learning, Responsibility, Student-Centeredness

Student activities was a functional area in which I had three participants. I could match eight of the interpreted 13 values to values explained by those in student activities. I identified seven of the eight as shared based on matching to the majority of participants. Professional

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<sup>3</sup> Ashley has two assistantships and is counted in both: residence life and student activities.

development was the only interpreted value I determined as not shared by at least two participants after matching. To examine if professional development could be a shared value I revisited the participants' narratives. Cody was highly engaged in professional associations and cited professional development as a value. Ali and Ashley did not identify professional development as a value; however, Ali's impressions of the importance of NASPA and Ashley's reading of association journals and desire to continue her professional education with a terminal degree helped me justify the selection of professional development as a student activities value.

For residence life, which had nine participants, I made the decision to call it a functional area value if identified by at least six participants, constituting two-thirds of participants in this area. Because of the larger number of participants, I did not think simple majority of five would suffice. Given my explanation of how I had interpreted the 13 shared values, a review of the stated values of all nine residence life graduate students, and a final review of their narratives, I found that each of the 13 interpreted values could be shared across participants in residence life.

Overall, Table 4 indicates values appear somewhat consistent across functional areas, but, as explained, I noticed differences. Therefore, I wanted to explain why differences exist. First, it is likely the overrepresentation of participants in residence life influenced my interpretation of overall student affairs values. As residence life is the largest provider of student affairs positions (Richmond & Benton, 1988; Hamrick & Hemphill, 2009), it makes sense that the values of residence life would greatly influence those of the overall profession. Additionally, research on the student affairs profession that describes graduate students and professionals make generalizations also having an overrepresentation of residence life personnel (Boehman, 2007; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). However, I thought it important to examine commonalities across all functional areas excluding residence life to examine how my interpretation of the profession's

values is sustained outside of this one functional area. Looking at the six other functional areas only, I found caring, collaboration, community, diversity and inclusion, ethics, holistic student development, learning, and student-centeredness to be a shared value across at least half of those functional areas. Therefore, when examined with residence life, acknowledging each as a value of the profession across participants and functional areas was appropriate.

Change and/or responsiveness, intentionality, professional development, responsibility, and service were not interpreted as a functional area value for at least half of the other areas. The lack of consensus across the functional areas made me question if these were indeed professional values, even though I felt confident to have identified them as shared values given the impressions of the 17 participants. Therefore, I went back to the narratives to (1) reaffirm my interpretation that the values are those of student affairs and (2) explain why there may be differences across functional areas. I reviewed content from five interview questions:

1. What has influenced your perceptions of the student affairs profession's values?
2. How has the assistantship helped you learn student affairs values?
3. You're conducting a job search for a professional position. How do you think the profession's values influence life as a professional? How do you think they will influence your work as a professional?
4. What kinds of positions are you looking for? What values do you think are most important for each position?
5. How do the values of (FILL IN THE FUNCTIONAL AREA) compare to values in other aspects of student affairs?



As applicable, content was coded for analysis with a “Perceptions of Values – Functional Area” label. I then examined all content coded as such to understand potential differences across functional areas. To confirm my interpretation of the rationale for differences across functional areas, I reviewed previous analyses for research questions one, two, and four. From analysis, I affirmed the 17 participants’ narratives reinforce my interpretation of shared student affairs values. Additionally, participants’ narratives provided evidence that all 13 values have a role in broad student affairs; however, data indicated participants could perceive functional areas influence the prioritization and enactment of shared values.

Maggie explained that prioritization and enactment was influenced by the individuals who conduct student affairs work: “Different individuals recognize or embody various different values, so certain values may be more important to one person over another. That is, in part, why people are drawn to certain functional areas.” Tammy had limited experience outside of Institution A, but had been actively involved in diverse aspects of student affairs. From those experiences, she came to believe that shared student affairs values exist across student affairs functions: “I’ve learned as far as values and what I believe, I think it will be the same no matter where I go.” She believed student-centeredness is particularly important in any context. David explained the values of student affairs are relatively “constant” across functional areas but differences in the prioritization and demonstration depend on how deeply professionals have come to make broad student affairs values their own. Ryan believed he might have to prioritize new values in a professional position outside of Student Conduct. The job search taught Shauna “there are so many different kinds of values” and reinforced many participants’ beliefs that priorities differ by functional areas and also institutional context. A predisposition to functional

areas based on one's personal values is addressed when I answer question four. Implications are provided in chapter six.

## **Summary**

Across 17 participants, I interpreted 13 common values. These participants came from a range of functional areas with nine of them working in residence life. While these 13 values are common across participants, an overrepresentation of residence life participants resulted in five values I interpreted as shared being less prevalent across other functional areas: change and responsiveness, intentionality, professional development, responsibility, and service. Therefore, I interpret that functional area likely has an influence on the perception of values. To determine the rationale for such differences, I reviewed narratives and found the values are likely shared across the broad student affairs profession, but their prioritization and enactment in specific functional areas differed. The implications of prioritization are addressed in chapter six.

To this point I have answered three research questions focused on perceptions of values, alignment of such perceptions with the literature, and the influence of functional areas on perceptions. In the final section of this chapter, I answer research question number four, which addresses how participants became socialized to values they perceive as those of student affairs.

### **Agents in Socialization to the Profession's Values**

This section addresses research question four: "How do students learn, internalize, and demonstrate the values of the student affairs profession? Specifically, how do program and professional structures as well as determined agents of socialization (faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues) influence the process of values development?" Several questions (Appendix E) were asked to assess how specific agents identified in the literature on

professional socialization (Weidman et al., 2001) and student affairs graduate education and socialization (Carpenter, 2003; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009) influenced views on student affairs' values and their subsequent adoption and demonstration.

Analysis was conducted using constant comparative coding. I developed a "Learning Values – (how)" overall code. I reviewed narrative content for each participant and assigned secondary codes as to how they learned values. Multiple codes could be applied to the same narrative content. After completing a coding process for each participant, I counted the number of times each code was used across participants. I determined if at least 12 participants (over two-thirds) were assigned a code at least once, then it was considered shared across participants. If the code was not shared it was eliminated or collapsed into other codes. I was left with 23 different "Learning Values – (how)" codes. Due to the large number, I aimed to combine codes. I ended with 11 codes identifying factors that influence how participants came to learn, internalize, and demonstrate the values of student affairs. This section explains those factors, which I have grouped into program-structured and graduate student-directed.

### **Program Structured Tactics**

The program-structured category consists of methods directly connected to and administered by graduate program agents and includes assistantships and practica, supervisors, course work, faculty, guiding documents and professional standards, lessons on the historical role of student affairs, and cohort members.

**Values development through supervised practice.** Practical experiences presented participants with a chance to learn about and demonstrate student affairs values. Cody believed graduate students are often thrust into assistantships that require them to demonstrate

responsibility for students. Sarah learned to demonstrate caring when dealing with residents: “I’m there to help them succeed and for me to work with them and apply everything that I am learning.” In the same functional area, Landon identified how he fostered the value of community as a result of his work with students. Because Ryan served as a graduate assistant in student conduct, he recognized his responsibility to attend to values each and every day: “I try to demonstrate those values; if it’s something that means a lot to you, I think it’s going to affect the area of the profession you go into. You get to talk about them every day.” Allison and Sophie explained how work with fraternities and sororities, organizations that espouse values, forced them to strengthen their professional values.

Ryan explained the assistantship helps graduate students reconsider previous understandings of student affairs. He felt the transition from undergraduate leader to graduate student forced people to examine previous ideas about student affairs and its values:

Some [graduate students] have come from roles where they were very influential student leaders...and they love their undergraduate life. I don't think two months over the summer gives them enough time to really let go of that...I needed two years really; two years between when I finished my undergraduate and enrolled here...I can't imagine going, in some cases not all, from partying undergrad who's very popular on a very vibrant college campus and then coming here and just automatically a professional and now my relationship with these students, some of which are the same age as me...you have to set completely different boundaries.

Many participants had previously participated or currently served in residence life. Landon felt residence life helps you learn professional values because so much is entrusted to personnel. The

generalist nature of residence life also appealed to Hallie, Jami, and Shauna because it allowed them to learn various ways to enact the profession's values. Alisha believed the relational aspects of residence life influenced how she learned and practiced values:

I live here and I can develop relationships with students in a specific way if I live with them... I'm not picturing some amazing world-shattering experience that I did. I think it's just the little things I do that are really understated and I think that's just the power of the profession: it's because it's that small little thing that can make someone stand back and say 'Oh gosh, I didn't expect that from you.'

Practica also provided a forum for participants to examine and refine a professional values base. Sophie's experience in her residence life practica helped her see common values existed for professionals in residence life and fraternity and sorority life. Cody was able to emphasize professional development through leading a student affairs division staff enrichment plan. Ali's experience in residence life at a private catholic university was influential as she considered the value of holistic student development. Having only learned about student affairs values in public institutions, Ali had not considered how holistic student development was augmented through explorations of faith:

[We say] we educate the whole student. Yes, we provide them the opportunity with campus ministries that are off campus, but we don't have this integrated into our daily activity like it is at [name of religiously affiliated institution]...If you're concerned about the entire student and that includes spiritual life, I found [name of religiously affiliated institution] was like this whole new world: It's so central to what they're doing there.

Ali had an assistantship in student activities and a practicum in residence life, which exposed how participants used assistantships and practica to learn diverse approaches to enacting the profession's values. Her practical experiences were hosted at distinct institutional sites. As explained when I provided results for research question three, Ali and other participants viewed common values as prioritized and enacted differently across functional areas and different institutional contexts. The influence of function and context merits further explanation.

*Supervised practice in diverse functional areas.* Ashley, who had assistantships in residence life and student activities, explained her demonstration of holistic student development differed between the two roles because she had different conversations advising students in each context. Sophie felt attention to values was heightened when working with fraternities and sororities, so there may be a greater inclination to develop professional values in such positions. Ali felt positions such as leadership education and student activities enable professionals to have a “more personal” approach to enacting values than a service function such as the registrar's office. Claire believed professionals who work outside of the “normal” hours of 9-5 more often represented student-centeredness. Claire also believed functional areas that allow professionals to integrate their personal lives, such as student activities professionals who involve their families in campus events, likely prioritize and enact values differently.

Hallie felt that common values guide all; however, “the daily implementation of values might be different” across functional areas and professionals within the same functional area on the same or a different campus. At Institution C, David worked with a residential program for at-risk students. Shifting to a role as Assistant Residence Hall Director provided him with a different perspective on how two roles in the same department can be enacted differently. His assistantships allowed him to reflect on diverse approaches to student affairs work:

My first year, I worked with a lot of students very similar to me, but not very similar to what higher education saw as a whole, so I had a chance to help advocate for them but almost at the same time, fall into a sort of 'this is what I know. I know I can do this' and I think that really helped me kind of see that what student affairs does, even in the same division, even in the same department, being residence life, what one practitioner does over here is not necessarily what one would do over here on this side.

Allison, Caitlin, Jami, and Sarah explained that functional areas offering differing approaches to learning about and demonstrating student affairs values is not problematic: Diverse tactics helped participants refine an individualized application of shared values. David explained that enacting values differently across areas “is really what makes student affairs unique.” Participants felt some values are expected regardless of functional area. Claire explained student affairs professionals “need to be aware that you're going to run into all different types of students and people who have different values other than your own.” Therefore, valuing diversity and inclusion is not optional across functional areas.

*Values enactment in diverse institutional contexts.* Assistantships and practica were hosted at diverse institutional contexts, which also influenced how participants came to learn about and demonstrate values. Through working in student affairs at four institutions, David saw student-centeredness as a common value; however there were variations on how each school enacted the concept. Caitlin attended a private Jesuit institution as an undergraduate and conducted graduate work at a public regional university. She perceived collaboration was easier at smaller institutions than at schools such as Institution C. She explained the difference as “bureaucracy,” which can interfere with demonstrating student development:

I will personally fight to keep student development as the primary issue in my work, but realistically understanding that sometimes things just need to be done so that we can have the information gathered and then we can move forward from there... Sometimes it's more got to be 'ok, let's get these done and then we can go back and really talk to students and make sure they're doing ok.'

Landon intentionally sought practica at faith-based institutions at which he had no experience. Involved in orientation at a public regional institution as an undergraduate, he came to understand how context influences function in a practicum at a school where orientation involves “just a few students.” Landon felt there is a need to adapt to the culture but also to see if the culture can adapt at all to you. He felt if both do not occur, even the most adaptable and flexible individuals will fail and personal and professional values would be misaligned.

**Supervisors modeling the way.** As a part of and separate from practical experiences, supervisors were influential in reinforcing or challenging participants' emerging perceptions of values. Cody felt supervisors provided hands-on support for practicing professional values. Sophie and Tammy believed that having supervisors who were well-established professionals in their field and in the institution were important in learning about the profession's values. Ryan explained that his supervisors, who were evolving into mentoring relationships as he completed the program, helped him understand challenge and support:

Accountability through education: it's what we believe in student discipline. We're very focused on the development of the student and having that student learn from the experience and make sure that they come out of the discipline process better than they were when they came in.



Sometimes supervisors provided very different approaches to enacting values than the participants had come to develop. Sophie appreciated her supervisor's approach but felt she would enact the profession's values in different ways. Ali found she could enact common professional values in one way while her supervisor did so in another: "[I] learned how to work with somebody that is different...[which is] important for someone in student affairs work, because we're all very different but we have the same passion." Hallie and Shauna lamented how experiences with a supervisor without a student affairs degree during their first-year resulted in gaps in understanding the profession's values.

**Values education in the classroom.** The classroom experience greatly influenced participants' conceptualization of professional values. Classes, assignments, capstone courses, structured reflection, and connections between course lessons and practical experiences were essential to expanding participants' sense of the profession's values. Classes helped David make sense of student affairs values he saw demonstrated by others. As he examined the literature, he discovered ways to influence the profession and promote student affairs values:

Course work helped me find my place and not specifically in regards to a position and a functional area, but what can I do to enhance the work of student affairs or to push it forward to advocate for it...They [the faculty] kind of helped me find what my place is, while, of course at the same time, giving me some sort of theoretical background to help influence the way I see my contributions. This is not something I knew about before I got here.

Hallie explained the formal curriculum developed by faculty coupled with the opportunity to interact at least weekly with classmates helped form her ideas of shared professional values:

A lot of it is talked about in our classes...where those conversations organically take place. We spend a lot of time talking about 'OK what's the big picture? How does this fit into the field?' We bring in our different experiences in our functional areas and to me...it's about what's the theme between all of our experiences?

Allison attributes courses to helping her clarify and articulate her personal values, which she believes are aligned with student affairs' values:

I don't think I would have had them as clearly connected for me if it hadn't been for some of the classes...I understand what my values are and I am able to articulate those, but it's through the thinking and the talking in my classes that I have been able to better understand how they connect to my work.

Many participants talked about how a "natural progression of courses" helped them gradually come to understand student affairs values. For Ali and Alisha, course work began with basic skills and history of the profession. In the second semester, students' evolving knowledge of student affairs is tested as application ensues through adding practica. When Alisha took the multicultural campus class during the first semester of the second year, she "felt confident enough to be open with people. I've been with my cohort for a year, so I was willing to share some things with them and with my professor." Alisha felt her perspective on the value of diversity and inclusion was more relevant after she had built relationships with her cohort through shared experiences in course work.

Specific courses were highlighted as essential to developing a fundamental understanding of student affairs and its values. Her multicultural campus class helped Alisha have the "most hands on way to teach me that concept of diversity." As a required project, Alisha immersed

herself in a culture different from her own. Choosing the East Indian culture, she learned how “my beliefs and my stereotypes affect how I interact with other people. So, recognizing that about myself and how that influences my ability to be inclusive on campuses.” Sophie found classes emphasizing theory and assessment provided a foundation on which to base her enactment of the profession’s values. She could advance the value of holistic student development through understanding theories behind such growth. Such courses also send messages that student affairs must use assessment to demonstrate how it enacts values. A monthly course on advising allowed Maggie to hear what fellow students experienced in assistantships and practica. Discussions helped students consider different advising scenarios one might encounter. Maggie believed “this process helped each of us identify and learn to articulate our values as we talked through possible solutions to our challenges and incorporated advice from our cohort members.”

Assignments from course work were influential in developing professional values. Participants at all three institutions reviewed CAS Standards for course assignments, which allowed them to connect their practical experiences to what they were learning in the classroom. Shauna explained she learned many lessons she could apply in various course assignments:

I have to do the papers and I apply what I've learned: It creates a picture for me of what I've learned, like in this paper I can put an argument together and say 'oh, so this is how it works. This makes sense to me and this is going to be effective in one place or this is going to be a best practice for another campus.' I think as I gain a clearer understanding of how these feelings, concepts, ideas work for different programs, and I am able to, find the common theme between these, and that becomes my value.

All participants examined professional values in the context of a capstone course. While the content differed across institutions, course requirements helped students develop a professional philosophy (Hallie), examine growth as a professional (Caitlin and Ryan) and consider how individual perceptions of values may differ from peers (Landon and Maggie). Sophie perceived the Capstone Course was essential to the transition from graduate student to new professional.

Maggie wrote a “Personal Statement of Mission” for the Capstone Course that described her rationale for a career in student affairs and explained her professional values. Job searching while completing the Capstone Course helped her examine emerging professional values in diverse work environments. The Capstone Course was an opportunity for Maggie to deeply explore professional values: “It is very difficult to remember how I understood values prior to Capstone. I honestly don’t think I can say. Now that my thinking has changed, it is difficult to remember whether and how I thought differently three months ago.”

Structured reflections allowed for participants to take time in and out of class to examine their emerging perceptions of the profession’s values and consider personal and professional values alignment. Allison perceived the effort exerted in such reflection allowed for increased understanding of the values and how she was coming to make student affairs’ values her own:

You have to reflect all the time about what is going on in your life and your assistantship and all of that. So there is definitely an element of forced reflection, but I think taking that reflection seriously is different from just reflecting. There is a big difference in being intentional and actually thinking about what you're writing in a reflection than just kind of writing down everything you have done in the last month on a

page of paper...I think that the intentionality that I incorporated into the reflection has made me a little bit more in tune with my values.

The course expectation of reflection was pivotal to understanding and internalizing values participants perceived as essential to student affairs. Reflection as part of student-directed socialization to student affairs values is discussed later in this chapter.

There is adequate literature that documents how graduate students emphasize practical aspects of the program over the classroom (Komives, 1998; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009). However, most found course work and practical experiences equally important. Ashley explained:

I think the reading side of things just kind of reinforces what I've already been discussing with professionals or with others. I don't think one is more important than the other...It's like the ying and the yang kind of thing: they just coexist. To help you fully develop I think you just can't have the books. It's more than just the books and having the information in front of you, but it's about being able to have the questions and think critically about the issues and then being able to talk to others about that and form your own thoughts and opinions on the ideas.

Ryan believed it was difficult to understand student affairs work and its values without having both experiences: "You know in the practical experience you do learn a lot in terms of values, but through the course work you are reminded on a day-to-day basis of why you're doing what you're doing, which is easy to forget if you're working every day." Claire also felt learning about student affairs' values in the class setting helped her be more effective in her work:

Through a lot of the readings I have become a lot more aware of the values of student affairs and being able to reflect on my course work in areas such as my assistantship and

my internships. For the internship I had this semester that was probably the greatest reflection I had was sitting down with my supervisor and being like 'ok, this is what we did in class and this is how I can connect it to what we're doing right now.'

Cody was the sole participant to strongly prefer practical experiences; however, he felt course work helped him “have an understanding of and have a common language for the values.” The combination of theory and practice emerged as a preferred approach to conducting work for most participants. This connection is addressed later in this chapter as part of the section on self-directed learning of the profession’s values.

**Faculty members modeling the way.** Observations of faculty members in and out of the classroom helped participants conceptualize student affairs values and how they are demonstrated. Because faculty produce research and have had experience as practitioners, Sophie perceived them to be good role models of the profession’s values. David explained, “My interactions with [faculty]...has kind of helped me see where the profession has come from and where it is going.” Caitlin explained how a professor told her that “I am not going to teach you anything new: I am going to teach you how to look at things you already see in a different way;” as a result, Caitlin examined her values and those of the profession to ensure they became aligned. Watching faculty interact with colleagues and graduate students at professional conferences, Hallie observed they were committed to demonstrating the profession’s values. She explained professors provide advice on (more so than dictate) values students might adopt, which taught her how to work with undergraduate students:

[Faculty members are] sensitive to unique experiences...They're all very careful to not over generalize...So, I think that's a good model of how you treat students, especially as

the age gap and experience widens and you want the student to feel what you are presuming is authentic to them.

Ryan described that professors explain espoused student affairs values, ask students to reflect on alignment between their values and those of the profession, explain the extent to which such (mis)alignment might have implications for them working in student affairs, and provide a forum through course work to discuss personal and professional values. Cody believed faculty members want graduate students to be someone who “can really speak the terminology but not just sound like the terminology and knowledge is the trend. It's more than words. They know the meaning and the history behind the values.”

**Using documents and standards.** Participants emphasized the use of student affairs guiding documents and the CAS Standards as influential in their interpretation of the profession’s values. Documents such as ACPA’s *Statement of Ethical Principles* (American College Personnel Association Standing Committee on Ethics (ACPA), 2003) greatly influenced Jami, Cody, and Ryan. Alisha recited a list of documents that have guided the work of student affairs including the 1937 and 1949 versions of the *Student Personnel Point of View* (ACE, 1994a; 1994b) and the more recent *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004). Alisha reflected on how the documents define the work of student affairs:

Each one of those says the same things to me: here’s why we're here and here's what we stand for; we're not here for...the student as a whole, we need to bridge the gap between academic affairs, because in the end, you know, we have to work together because we're all here to help students. I think that has a lot to do with it: seeing those documents and knowing that's the foundation for the profession.

Alisha went on to emphasize her current use of documents to understand learning as a student affairs value. Such documents helped her connect personal and professional values:

In my class we're reading *Learning Reconsidered*...the whole document is saying the same thing: here's the integrated learning. Basically, it's saying we're going to take this from academics and take this from student affairs and here is where they need to meld together. Administratively, the presidents and vice-presidents all need to be in line for this to work. The policies of the university need to be behind everything for the student to develop intellectually, socially, and emotionally. I think recognizing what those documents are saying helps me to kind of reinforce my personal values about education and student development and student affairs in general.

While the age of guiding documents varies, Maggie believed the content of the documents remain applicable, in spite of the changing student population and shifting priorities in higher education. She spoke about holistic student development's relevance as a value today:

Early documents such as *The Student Personnel Point of View* talk about the holistic development of students and connecting learning experiences and things like that, and I think that definitely still plays a huge role in what we do in student affairs. I think that's really what we're trying to do. We're trying to develop people holistically, outside of the classroom, and then I think as we have evolved there have been...the new documents that have been generated. Some of the more recent ones that talk more about 'well, we're educators now and let's reframe the way we look at things'...while some of the language is outdated, the underlying message of them still holds true.



Alisha used CAS Standards as a framework for analyzing three practicum locations. She believed CAS Standards helped her enact the value of intentionality in student affairs work. A course on administration and policy in which Claire was charged with conducting a CAS Standards Review helped her examine how policies and procedures enacted in a functional area reflect what is valued in student affairs; therefore, meeting the CAS Standards was interpreted by Claire as meeting the profession's values.

**Student Affairs' past and present function.** Participants learned about the historical and current role of student affairs through many program provided experiences. Perceptions about what have historically driven student affairs and today's expectations of the profession greatly informed perceptions of values and ideas of how they should be demonstrated. Ali explained student affairs emerged as filling the gaps left by faculty and responding to students' needs, which influenced the formation of values such as service, holistic student development, diversity, and responsiveness. Alisha explained how student affairs began to help students with out of classroom needs. Over time, professionals have conceptualized student affairs as primarily supporting the academic experience, promoting the value of collaboration. Ashley talked about the responsibility of student affairs to bring students together, demonstrating values of community and appreciating diversity. Ashley believed student affairs has always existed to make each person feel connected and important focusing on collaboration to accomplish inclusion.

Perceptions of subordination to academic affairs influenced ideas of the profession's values. Landon described student affairs as "the underdog" that must "par up with" academic affairs: "As far as the values of student affairs, I guess that we're always reminded of our place..."

[and] how to act.” Expectations to be congruent with academic affairs priorities influenced Landon’s perceptions of values and created confusion about the role of student affairs.

I think we're often reminded of the academic mission and that is our purpose and we need to support that purpose...I have no beef with that. I think that's our purpose and we do need to be in line with the academic mission, but we're not academic affairs, we're student affairs. That's where the disconnect is and then values just get so murky and what is our purpose?

**Relationships with cohort members.** Relationships with cohort mates helped participants conceptualize common and diverse perspectives on enacting professional values. Sophie described conversations with fellow cohort members in classes and in less formal settings. While conversations may not be primarily about student affairs values, Sophie explained, “They’re the underlying theme.” Shauna observed cohort mates demonstrating the profession’s values with undergraduates. She examined how she might apply the same value in her role in residence life. David placed a high value on his relationships with cohort members. He greatly appreciated learning about the profession and its values from peers:

I think working with my cohort and my colleagues helped me see how people who are at the same point or at similar points in their careers see what student affairs is and how does that all change from when we got into the program to us preparing to leave the program and what we value in a position and in an institution? What do we value about higher education? How did we see it in the past and how do we see it now? How have things that we've all been through separately and collectively shape us? I think having someone to go through that with kind of helps you validate what you're thinking, because

sometimes you may go 'oh, maybe it's just me but I think...' and then someone will go 'oh, I thought that too' so having that almost instant validation that you're not the only one going through what you're going through really helped out.

Relationships with cohort members are not optional: participants had to interact with each other whether they liked to or not when they were in class. However, sometimes relationships evolved based on out of class interactions. Ryan established very purposeful relationships with his cohort mates. He surrounded himself with “people who are very values based” and developed a shared responsibility to “support each other living a professional lifestyle while we’re here.” Ryan shared how another graduate student was socializing too often with alcohol. He accepted the responsibility to talk with this cohort member about aligning professional values and their actions. While the discussion was difficult for both, they strengthened their relationship as colleagues and the cohort mate modified his behavior. A first-year cohort member who was having a tough time with the transition from student to professional also changed his behavior as a result of Ryan’s intervention.

Participants learned how cohort mates express and prioritize values differently. Shauna learned about diverse approaches to enacting values from cohort mates who had assistantships outside Institution C. Sarah also learned how cohort mates demonstrate common values differently within and across functional areas. A cohort mate of Ali’s who advocates for LGBT rights exemplified student affairs values through “educating a campus, educating faculty, educating other student affairs staff, and students about this community.” Ali explained individual cohort members likely care deeply about specific values: “They really care so much about one or two particular values. Those are the values they hold very close to themselves and they just exude it. They don't have to tell you. It just sort of oozes out of them.”

Ashley found cohort members to be “very student-centered” while differing in their enactment of values. She believed that being “such a diverse group” helped them:

Learn a lot from each other and the fact that our values might not entirely entwine with each other or maybe what we value personally in the field or why we got into the field was different... We gain a lot of knowledge from each other from discussing issues, common concerns; we're all in the same place - about to be new professionals.

Some participants identified how cohort members may be unprepared to conduct student affairs work, which also provided lessons about what are and how to enact student affairs’ values. Jami learned student affairs’ values through watching cohort members who exhibit behavior that may counter espoused professional values:

Leading by watching what other people do and not wanting to do that; I see some peers doing X, Y, and Z... Some of those actions don't fit into my values or doesn't fit my ethical standards. I make sure that I don't do that. I won't have that same quandary with myself.

Alisha and Landon expressed concern about cohort mates who had not thoroughly examined student affairs as a career, which they perceived impacts how well those people may exhibit the profession’s values; however, Alisha acknowledged the graduate program introduced the values and it is each student’s responsibility to learn, adopt, and demonstrate them now and as professionals. Because Landon entered student affairs education after extensive exploration on the profession with mentors, he found it frustrating that some fellow cohort members are less committed to the same ideals as he: “[I am here] not just because that one event was fun. Not because first-year programs was a good time. I mean, I really thought about this...this is a huge

move because I could spend my time doing something else.” Landon perceived these differences could negatively influence the collective student affairs profession.

Hallie believed as cohort mates enter the profession, they would eventually conceptualize common student affairs values and improve on their demonstration. Each person must work to internalize values they believe to be those of student affairs. Hallie explained, “Maybe the values are ingrained deeper in some than others but that doesn't mean they won't get deeper for those people who aren't quite getting it quite yet.” Ryan explained cohort members have a common struggle of truly internalizing student affairs’ values:

You can reaffirm them, you can change your behavior to align with the values of the institution...in terms of internalizing values to your own and really believing them and really living them in the position, I don't think it happens here. I think a lot of people are here because they were involved in a functional area in college; they really love Greek life or they really love student activities; to actually have a philosophy of this is what I want to do and why I want to do it - enriching the lives of students, for example – is something that took me a while to really solidify and this is why I am going to do it.

## **Summary**

This section provided an overview of program-structured influences on participants’ professional values. In the next section, I explain factors directed by the student that influenced perceptions of and approaches to demonstrating the profession’s values. Students used several experiences connected to but external from the graduate program to learn how to enact professional values.

## **Student-Directed Tactics**

Student-directed influences on learning, internalizing, and demonstrating student affairs values are not organized by the graduate program and require student initiative. These factors are heavily influenced by graduate student background and initiative. They include participants' previous experiences, emerging approaches to enacting student affairs work, involvement in the broad student affairs profession, and the job search.

**Preconceptions of professional values.** All participants had experiences and relationships that influenced their perceptions of student affairs values prior to graduate school. Such experiences and relationships influenced their enactment of values while in the program. Experiences included undergraduate involvement, relationships with family and friends, participants' sense of identity, and work experience after college and prior to graduate work.

***Involvement in undergraduate life.*** In chapter four, I provided Table 1, which listed types of involvement of each participant. While varying in types and levels of involvement, participants' responses led me to interpret involvement during undergraduate work as highly influential in developing professional values. Participants explained they were strengthening values in their graduate work that they had developed while in college: Allison and Sophie both pursued student affairs careers because sororities they joined as undergraduates had values that could be translated in the professional context. Jami entered student affairs because values she developed through residence hall activities could be applied as a professional:

You attend everything that is going on around campus and so, during my undergraduate time, my friends and I were all so involved, so you would see the same people are at the

same campus events. If the library were having a program, we'd all be there. You know if the union was having a program, we'd all be there and that was just the culture.

Landon chose student affairs to advocate for students. After coming out during college, he is most committed to diversity, specifically supporting students as they examine sexual orientation: “I really got into the field, maybe because of my experiences coming out as a gay male in my undergrad. You know, I kind of wanted to help another gay male [through the coming out process].” Landon hoped to strengthen his commitment to diversity once a professional.

Undergraduate pitfalls and successes framed perceptions of the profession’s values. Claire’s emphasis on attending to students’ needs stems from examples of those who failed to demonstrate care for her at her first undergraduate institution. To some extent, student activities “saved” Ashley. Her transition from high school to college was marked with great difficulty. A position on the Student Activities Board helped academically and emotionally. Shauna was extensively involved as an undergraduate student. Such involvement helped her develop values she determined to be consistent with student affairs. A conflict between emerging social priorities and cocurricular responsibilities forced her to examine her values:

When I turned 21, I started going out and drinking and neglecting my work and just not being involved. My mentor told me '(Shauna) you still have responsibilities. You still have these positions. You need to be able to do these jobs. Go out and have fun: you're 21. But at the same time, don't forget about this'...I realized this is my responsibility. I feel I have a personal responsibility to do what people have chosen me to do.

***Values as a part of relationships with family and friends.*** Existing relationships with family members and non-student affairs friends helped participants interpret values of student affairs;

professional values were sometimes complementary and sometimes different. Through her family, Hallie came to personally value education, honesty, and relationships; tenets she could apply in student affairs. Tammy explained she developed values such as honesty, adaptability, and understanding – values she thought vital to student affairs - as the oldest child in her family.

Experiences growing up heavily influenced how participants came to identify and demonstrate diversity and inclusion as a value. Tammy described her family as largely “mixed” race, which helped her form ideas of diversity; however perceptions changed as she interacted with persons who held different ideas of the value. Ali’s student affairs values development was influenced by her rural upbringing. She had learned to not “judge people by the way that they look or the clothes that they wear or the job that they do, because most of the people where I am from, they're farmers or they're doing blue-collar work.” Sophie attended a “hippie school” as a child. She estimated more than 60 percent of classmates were bused in from low socioeconomic places. She explained English was a second language and she “heard 12 different languages in the hallway.” Non-heterosexual orientation was “no big deal to the students and administrators.”

From family, Ashley developed a sense of spirituality. She reflected on how her spiritual beliefs prior to college and subsequent reflection on such beliefs while in school influenced her enactment of the student affairs value of holistic student development:

If a student wants to have a conversation about religion and they want to have a conversation because they're questioning their spirituality then I'm definitely open to that conversation, because I questioned my spirituality during that time that I was in college...But I just think it's definitely something that is important for the student to discover where they fit.



Student affairs values could be a source of conflict when interacting with family and friends. Ashley grew up in a “conservative family” who indentified her emerging alignment to student affairs values as “more liberal.” Landon explained his how his 84 year-old grandmother exhibited racist behaviors, which countered his commitment to diversity. Conflict between student affairs values and those of peers was easier to handle. Landon chose to end relationships with friends that discriminate: “I'm sorry, I'm not trying to be the third grade school teacher, but if you choose to say that then we cannot be friends...That is where I stand. I really mean that.”

However, for most participants, relationships with peers helped them to reinforce student affairs values. Caitlin believed empathy is a personal value shared with friends outside student affairs. She felt able to integrate her personal and professional values easily in student affairs; therefore, she created a more authentic sense of professional self:

I can really be myself in my office as well as at home. So, I think that is part of why I find this job so fulfilling. I feel like I can actually contribute things that I can offer, but I can also take from others to challenge myself to learn different things. I think it's just very rewarding both at work and outside of work because it all comes together so easily.

Hallie explained her non-student affairs peers also seek to find work in which they can integrate personal and professional values. She attributed this to a generational trait:

I think for most people, especially my generation and these younger generations, there is no separation...I think people just find a profession that they can really feel comfortable in and really like and that makes them just as happy of a person and as a professional.

***Explorations of personal identity.*** Participants’ background and sense of identity helped them form and determine ways to enact professional values. Coming out during undergraduate helped

Landon prioritize diversity as a value. He felt he could demonstrate commitment to diversity by helping other gay males consolidate their identity. David talked about attending to the “multiple identities of students.” He believed his own multiple identities, including as an African American Male, fostered a perspective different from some other cohort mates and influenced his views on and enactment of the values:

I think the largest part of it is the background that I have come from: primarily lower class, urban area student going to a very different place than what I had been used to growing up in high school...From what I see, there are certain needs students have that are not in the books. And based on my personal experience and what I have kind of used or gained to kind of figure out what those needs are, and just based on my needs, there are certain things that I don't think student affairs approaches in a similar way I would.

Ali identified as a first-generation college student as did Alisha, Ashley, and Claire. Alisha believed for first-generation undergraduate students to succeed, student affairs professionals must demonstrate values of holistic student development and caring in a different way: “if [first-generation students are] going to succeed, [they’re} already starting behind, so you need that focus to be driven and self-motivated.” She understood first-generation students likely come from conditions in which family members provide limited, if any, support. Her experience with a student affairs professional who sought to help her understand the financial responsibilities of college serve as a model for her when working with first-generation undergraduate students:

He wanted to find out about me. He wanted to know how was school, home...He cared that I was having this situation, but first I was a person. I was a student. This was affecting my ability to go to school and things like that.

Alisha discovered that creating inclusive environments for persons based on sexual orientation and gender identity is a powerful demonstration of student affairs values. Because she values equity and equality, concepts I interpreted as shared with others as the values of diversity and inclusion, Alisha examined how to be more supportive of marginalized populations. For Alisha, who has come to understand the “spectrum” of diversity much more through her time at Institution A, inclusion had become a foremost priority in her work.

*Professional experiences after college.* Few participants had experience working after college. However, for those who did, time off after undergraduate education helped them to approach student affairs work and its values differently. Ryan shared how some cohort mates taught him lessons about the profession’s values by making mistakes he feels he avoided by taking time after college to examine professional goals. The time helped him to enter the program more mature and professionally prepared and better demonstrate the value of responsibility:

The typical master's student is going to be 21 or 22 years old when they enter the program. [Undergraduate] students will connect with those people a lot more than they will with senior administrators... A lot of graduate students will argue that they should be allowed to go out and let their hair down and drink excessively on the weekend despite it being a very small college town and being surrounded by undergrads, because they're still at that age and they're still allowed to go out and have fun when they're 22 years old. For that exact same reason is why you shouldn't be; it's because you are 22 years old and students are looking up to you. They have direct interaction with you. They're trying to make that connection to you. In doing that, you're losing that professional boundary and any professional impact you may think you have.

Hallie also felt time working as a teacher after college strongly influenced her approach to graduate work. Her perspectives have presented challenges in relationships with peers:

It has been an interesting experience. I've struggled but in interesting ways. I have struggled more with peers because I did take the time to explore options. I had been teaching for a few years. I'd been in that professional realm...there are a lot of students that went in straight after undergrad, so I know there was definitely a disconnect.

**Developing ways to “do” student affairs work.** Over the course of time in the program, participants became increasingly confident in their competence as future professionals. This permitted them to make decisions about how they might tailor broad expectations to a more individualized approach to work. Such approaches reflected how they were coming to understand and feel confident in demonstrating professional values. Descriptions of ways that participants found to develop their own individual approach included how they might maintain relationships with students, handling ethical conflicts, incorporating change into their work, developing tactics to apply theory to practice, responding to crises, and strengthening alignment between professional and personal roles.

***Maintaining relationships with students.*** Participants sought meaningful relationships with undergraduates. Such relationships helped participants learn about and develop tactics for enacting student affairs values. Cody wanted students to see him at events, even if just for a little while, because being visible demonstrates a message of being student-centered. Tammy prioritized emails at any time of day because responsiveness demonstrated that she cared.

Hallie felt “authentic conversations” with students are essential because undergraduates need role models for honesty. A student who served as a first-year guide had made inappropriate

comments. Other professionals did not address the student, which Hallie attributed to views that he is just sarcastic and did not mean harm by comments; however, she addressed the comments and he took the feedback well. Her relationship with him actually improved thereafter.

Allison also believed having simple conversations helped demonstrate student affairs values and supports fraternity and sorority members in efforts to demonstrate their organization's espoused values. Allison talked about how sorority members with whom she worked became more competent in talking about organizational values. She is also a member of the sorority from a different campus, which helped her have conversations based on shared values. Allison is proud the women have been "more intentional in conversations they have with each other about the values they have in their organization." From this experience, Allison came to understand how demonstrating student-centeredness could be fostered through open dialogue: "It really boils down to knowing how to have a conversation with a student. This experience showed me I can individually connect with somebody, meet them where they're at, and push them to a new level."

Ali demonstrated the value of caring through a relationship with a student leader. When he developed a health issue, she became "very much drawn to that student because of his personal issues." She provided rides to medical treatments and supported him through difficult procedures. While she viewed these actions as meeting her responsibility to demonstrate caring, she wondered if the relationship compromised her advising of the student:

Once I made that cross to allow him to come to me if he ever had any problems with his treatment or wasn't feeling well or whatever it might be, on a personal level, I think that somewhat hindered my ability to advise him in the proper way...At the end of last

semester I really thought 'wow, did I do that student a disservice in their leadership development because of the friendship that we developed?'

***Addressing conflicts of ethics.*** All participants could identify some ethical conflict experienced during graduate preparation that helped them learn about and refine approaches to the profession's values. Subsequent reflection on these conflicts presented a chance to revisit how values might be enacted when next confronted with an ethical dilemma. Jami and Landon talked about social situations in which undergraduates were present. Jami removed herself from the social setting. Experiences running into residence hall paraprofessionals at a bar helped Landon examine interactions in social settings influenced his relationships with staff.

Tammy experienced a personal and professional conflict in her judicial office practicum that helped her exemplify student affairs values. In this role, she handled discipline cases, one of which involved a student who was a participant in her service-learning program. After the student was dismissed for the remainder of the academic year, he informed her of plans to return to the school and to the program she oversees in fall 2010. The incident reinforced Tammy's belief that caring and responsibility are student affairs' values that can appear contrary but are often enacted simultaneously.

***Enacting change in response to societal trends.*** Participants sensed society influenced the enactment and prioritization of values. They were charged with infusing change into their roles. While they had learned about change through courses, their willingness to embrace change and respond appropriately informed how they viewed values to be enacted. Ali and Shauna identified student affairs professionals as responsive to society, which meant that change should be embraced and incorporated into how they conducted student affairs work. Tammy felt

strongly that using technology was important in demonstrating student affairs' values. Using her mobile device and Facebook™ to communicate with students helped her to enact the value of student-centeredness. Governmental expectations for higher education to be increasingly accountable influenced Cody, Alisha, and Sophie's perceptions of how student affairs values are prioritized. Alisha also expressed concerns about how increasing costs would likely counter broader goals of creating more diverse and inclusive campuses.

For those who identified change or responsiveness as values, they often addressed how the metaphorical walls around institutions are not immune to societal trends. Because David identified change as influencing the interpretation of all student affairs' values, he explained:

Part of it is just how student affairs has responded in the past to different types of situations; whether it be crisis situations or a sudden budget shortage...I think a part of it is, from what I've seen, that's how we've been trained: to respond to what happens in the moment but at the same time plan for what could happen at any given moment.

There was an ongoing sense that student affairs should reflect on their efficacy in enacting timeless and emerging values to be seen as responsive to such tasks as: the charge for assessment (Alisha, Cody, and Sophie), meeting needs of diverse student populations (Ali, Ashley, Landon, Shauna), a perceived movement to prioritize services over student development (Caitlin and Ryan), and preparing undergraduates for entrance into the changing global work force (Tammy).

***Connecting theory and practice.*** Intentionality emerged as an interpreted value. While it was not optional for many participants to discuss practice and theory in the context of course work, many talked about how when they intentionally applied lessons about theory while in supervised practice. Such application helped them become more competent in enacting the

profession's values. Claire explained how particular theories from Gilligan, Kohlberg, Perry, and Chickering helped her understand student growth. Because she knew these theories, she could better enact student affairs' value of holistic student development. Ryan believed his commitment to student development theory helped him support the needs of students. Alisha came into the program "not even recognizing the concept of the profession having values." She began to recognize the values and priorities of the profession, but it was a while before she could internalize the profession's values. Applying theories helped her be intentional in making the connection between course work and practical applications: "I was probably ready to internalize things through course work, but not necessarily draw the connection between what we're doing in class [and that] we're doing things intentionally...that didn't come until later."

***Student crises as a conveyer of values.*** I asked participants about a time during which they exemplified student affairs' values: crisis situations were often referenced as a means to exemplify lessons learned about and the demonstrations of the profession's values. Claire demonstrated care to a student leader who lost a family member. Sarah was tasked to be "the strong one for the building" after a student death, which forced her to demonstrate the care and commitment she viewed as essential student affairs values. An attempted suicide gave Cody an opportunity to reach out to a troubled female student. He believed he exhibited great care and was student-centered, which Cody viewed as vital for [especially] male advisors to demonstrate.

Dealing with a sexual assault helped David examine personal conflict with student affairs values: expected to attend to policy, he sought to prioritize values of caring and student-centeredness: "We should respond to the needs [of students]...My values, what I would have preferred to have done, personally didn't align with what the manual or the protocol said I was supposed to do." As David was thrown into this situation, he came to understand how policy and



values might intersect. David found he could also convey support during, “moments where policy says just sit there...if the policy says call the police they might not come for 10 minutes, so those 10 minutes is where my personal values fill in the time.”

Caitlin felt she best demonstrated student affairs values when handling crises. In alcohol-poisoning situations, she often went to the hospital or visited students in recovery; time with students while in the hospital has implications for handling the crisis later. Caitlin believed crises are core to why she loved student affairs. Because this is “when you see a student at their worst,” crises allow professionals to demonstrate caring: “It just really keeps that personal, holistic focus in view and you realize they have a lot of different things going on...sometimes different areas need more attention...recognizing that and adapting to their needs is important.”

***The integration of personal and professional roles.*** Participants felt graduate school was a period during which they learned to integrate their personal and professional selves. Entering with different perspectives about the profession resulted in some period of dissonance as they reconciled previous and emerging perceptions of work in student affairs. I interpreted that this search for integrating personal and professional selves influenced how they came to learn and demonstrate student affairs values. This integration can be categorized into finding “balance” and examining the connection between and efforts to align values identified as personal and those identified as professional.

Many participants perceived creating a sense of balance between work and life as a rite of passage. This rite helped them learn, internalize, and practice demonstrating student affairs values. Hallie reflected on her personal value of hard work, which makes her “feel like I am being useful; I am contributing in some way.” Such personal values resulted in often working

seven days a week; as a result she believed she had yet to find “balance.” She viewed graduate school as a time during which to consider how work and life intersect so that she can live her personal and professional values while not letting work dictate her life.

Jami recognized that continuing the “attend everything” approach she had as an undergraduate would result in a lack of “balance” even though participation in events drove her to pursue student affairs and is something she enjoyed: “We want to help and we just want to be there...[however] if you did attend every major event on campus than you might not be able to keep yourself maintained well enough to benefit the students.” Jami’s view of promoting the value of student-centeredness shifted in efforts for a more balanced approach to life and work. While still important, she was discovering new ways to convey the value.

Balance meant separating time as a graduate student/emerging professional and that of a person who lived in a college environment. It was important for Landon that he not adopts students’ experiences as his own. He thought student affairs professionals with the values of service and diversity might be inclined to do so. Such an inclination may result in diminished life/work balance. Landon believed he cannot “take that on myself” and leaving work meant leaving work behind: “I feel for them, but I've learned that I can't do that...leaving my office and leaving totally confused, you know, an emotional wreck, because I don't know how to work with them? That will never happen.”

Some found that life and work could intersect successfully, but each person had a different idea of their capacity to do so. Tammy introduced the idea of an integrated self. For Tammy, personal and professional lives and values overlap, a fact she was comfortable with even as potential employers conveyed messages about striking balance:

A lot of the interviewers asked me about balance and how do you pretty much balance your life and how will you act living in a residence hall and you're surrounded by work all the time. But, it is trying to get at that integrated, this is what I like doing and this is what I do. Like today, I had to change my schedule a lot because of students...So, I think with student affairs you have to change your life around because you never know what's going to happen and ultimately we are here to better serve the students.

Participants offered that demonstrating student affairs values gradually became easier as they integrated their personal and professional selves and aligned personal and professional values. The degree to which this had occurred differed across participants, which influenced how they had come to adopt and demonstrate student affairs values.

For some, personal and professional selves and subsequently personal and professional values were integrated prior to entrance. Hallie thought student affairs graduate work would not appeal to people if their personal values were incongruent with those of the profession. Student affairs graduate education reaffirmed Landon's values and their relevance to student affairs work. Maggie explained, "What I recognize as the profession's values, I recognize because they are my values." Maggie believed she is more intentional in work with undergraduates because the values were second nature.

Some participants learned to enact personal values differently within student affairs. Sarah explained values she had entering the program became stronger and she became more willing to stand up for them. Working in fraternity and sorority advising, Sophie understood the need to align espoused and enacted values; therefore, she worked hard to internalize student

affairs values and demonstrate them in all she does. She felt she already demonstrated values consistent with student affairs prior to the program but learned to enact them differently:

I wanted to help people; the whole reason I loved the idea of going to rabbinical school was the values that underlie the program. I mean, the helping values, the religious values, which I have learned a lot about myself in the last three years regarding that...learning student affairs is completely based in values, especially fraternity and sorority life, I was like 'I am sold. Keep me on.'

For most, the program helped integrate participants' sense of personal and professional self and in turn their personal and professional values. According to Sophie, graduate programs serve a primary function of helping students align personal and professional values. Shauna believed graduate students examine their own long-standing beliefs and values in light of lessons on the profession's values: Student affairs values become second nature as graduate students fit them into their existing values structure. Cody explained that he "intertwined" life and work. When Ryan began the program, his supervisor placed parameters on where Ryan could socialize. He was complicit abstaining from establishments deemed inappropriate by his supervisor; however, over time Ryan moved from doing things based on the direction of others to "telling people why they shouldn't be going into these places and I truly believe it." For Ryan, integration occurred and the external direction of values became internally grounded. Tammy routinely integrated her personal and professional responsibilities to demonstrate student-centeredness:

There isn't really a balance of professional and personal with student affairs because that's what you like and that's what you want to do then you're going to enjoy it. Your life is more integrated than it is balanced.

For many, knowing the profession's values and properly demonstrating them required extra effort to reflect on and incorporate lessons as they developed approaches to student affairs work. Through self-directed reflection, Jami examined her own values in light of the profession and found new ways for their demonstration. Gradually, she adopted one common set of personal and professional values. Allison believed professionals must be intentional to demonstrate values. They must examine what student affairs values mean to them and develop an individually tailored approach to work:

For professionals to better connect their values to their work, they're going to have to clearly identify what those values are for themselves: I am not sure some people take the time to do that, so they could be going through their work day not really understanding their values and how they align with their work. For values to be more included within the work of student affairs practitioners then clearly outlining them and then reaffirming those values through conversations and professional development...I think would help.

Not all participants had come to fully adopt or know how to demonstrate student affairs values, which caused them to examine their emerging approach to work in the profession. Shauna explained how she might enact values she does not understand or prioritize:

I think there are two different values: I have my values mostly because of my spirit and what I believe student affairs to be, but they may not be the values to the university or the job. I am job searching. If I am looking for a job at a Jesuit institution and they're talking about 'can you promote Jesuit practices in this field,' I don't even know what those practices are. But I can support the student to talk to the Chaplain to do service-

learning to go back to the community and pursue the truth. I can keep those professional values to meet the university's mission, but I don't myself value that.

Ali felt she had personal values that align with those of the profession but that she had not yet internalized all the needed values to do student affairs work. She viewed values development as ongoing throughout the career span:

For me to accept values as my own it has to be something that I work with and I deal with pretty consistently until I have that critical moment where I'm like 'ok this is how I really feel' or is it just something that I do because I think it's the right thing kind of thing.... so yes, I think there are some of the student affairs' values that are very much internalized and are very much about who I am as a person. But there are a couple still out there, probably ones I don't even know about, that I haven't come in contact with or I haven't learned about yet, so I can't internalize that. I think once I encounter them and kind of work through them; yes, I think very much that student affairs values can and will be very much a part of who I am as I go throughout my career.

Ryan believed people might enact but not truly internalize student affairs values. He believed people enter and leave programs with varying degrees of alignment with the profession's values, though some growth likely occurs over time in the program. Ryan explained, "I think unless you can really believe in what you're doing and internalize those values, I think you are really going to have a struggle to have a deep rooted commitment to the profession."

**Conveying values through professional involvement.** Participants were beginning to understand the need for involvement in student affairs outside the graduate program, primarily demonstrated through professional association participation and volunteerism. They perceived

student affairs associations had an influential role in learning, internalizing, and demonstrating values. Maggie examined messages from associations in light of her own perceptions of emerging professional values: As professionals develop and prioritize specific student affairs values, they will likely seek involvement opportunities based on those values: “he or she will be drawn to committees, commissions, and other groups that espouse those values.” Others said observing members at conferences and through roles in committees influenced ideas of the profession’s values. Allison explained AFA and NASPA helped her see professional development through networking as highly valued. Tammy observed some attendees making bad decisions at NASPA. She found it was “surprising to see how many students...don't have that level of professionalism” particularly involving alcohol use at the conference.

Perceptions were influenced by the extent of involvement in the association and attendance at conferences. Alisha, Ashley, Claire, and Ryan had not been actively involved, but they drew ideas from association guiding documents, books, journals, and magazines. Others were engaged in associations through volunteer roles. Hallie held a role in ACPA, which helped her see how the value of service is enacted. Cody grew to understand professional development as a value because of his involvement in a NASPA Knowledge Community. Allison saw the profession’s values through committee work in AFA: Involvement helped her demonstrate the value of community with colleagues.

Allison explained how the size of AFA allowed her to get involved early in her professional career, which she countered to NASPA, an organization in which she has yet to determine her niche. Caitlin was becoming engaged in GLACUHO. Attending GLACUHO and the NASPA National Convention during her second year as a student, Caitlin explained how professional values are demonstrated differently in each context and described the difference as a

matter of “energy”: As a smaller organization, GLACUHO members tend to know each other better. It is also more practical oriented than NASPA, which has a “push toward scholarly work and seeing what is being published.” Caitlin used NASPA to develop more generalist skills and learn about topics outside of residence life such as crisis management and legal issues. She asserted values do not differ across associations, but their enactment does.

As referenced earlier, students viewed guiding documents as influential. Association messages about such documents reinforced lessons about the profession’s values. Ryan and Jami fell back on *ACPA’s Statement of Ethical Principles* (ACPA, 2003) to make sure the profession’s values are in the forefront when they made decisions. Hallie believed those actively engaged in associations likely use guiding documents to shape their enactment of professional values. Sophie, who used AFA’s *Core Competencies for Excellence in the Profession* as a framework to enact personal and professional values, provided additional evidence for Hallie’s claim.

All participants attended association conferences in the last year. They explained how educational sessions taught them about student affairs values. Workshops on social justice, LGBT issues, and veteran’s issues at NASPA taught Alisha and Ashley about demonstrating diversity and inclusion as professional values. Because student affairs values inclusion, associations offer workshops to teach necessary skills to create such environments. Maggie attended the ACPA conference, which increased her awareness of diversity as a professional value:

ACPA seems to be very social-justice oriented... after I left the recent convention, I felt a renewed dedication to issues of social justice, and particularly issues related to race and



LGBT issues. I decided to get involved with the Standing Committee for Women and the Commission for Wellness, which helped me reflect on certain values.

Associations helped participants create relationships with colleagues, role models, and mentors to inform perceptions of the profession's values. Cody identified how involvement in a NASPA Knowledge Community helped him forge relationships with colleagues from across the country. He now looks to support fellow colleagues in enacting the value of professional development:

I want to help them; that's one way I look to really give back. And so, if that's helping some of my friends who are coming into this field or people that I meet through interview days for our program or people in professional associations...I think why I look to give back so early on in my experience in professional associations is because they've given me so much and just those people I've connected with; so I feel that relationship building is something I hold as a high value within this field.

Colleagues with whom Allison and Sophie built relationships created an idea of what values are prioritized in fraternity and sorority advising. Alisha felt discussions with colleagues from different institutions helped her to examine how values might be enacted differently in the same functional area in a different context.

Not all colleagues were good role models for demonstrating professional values. Jami explained residence life professionals she had interacted with through GLACUHO were hard working, take initiative and go "above and beyond" but some make bad decisions:

I've also had the rare instances that I see someone not meeting what I feel are student affairs values and that reinforces my own values.... I see something that I don't feel is right then I know then that's something that's important to me as a value.

Landon reinforced Jami's thoughts that sometimes colleagues helped participants learn values through conducting the wrong approach to student affairs work. He believed professionals should "say what you mean and mean what you say."

Relationships with role models and mentors were often renewed during or began through association participation. Such relationships had sent messages about the profession's values and their demonstration during participants' undergraduate experiences and over the course of their experience within the student affairs profession thus far. Shauna had a conversation with a mentor that helped redirect her priorities as an undergraduate leader. Tammy used her undergraduate activities board advisor as a model for student advocacy. Ali came to understand how one demonstrates commitment and support to students while watching her Director of Student Activities. Jami used undergraduate mentors as a sounding board to tailor her emerging approach to student affairs work:

I do get off track, if I do something that should not have been done or in which I could have done a better job and things like that, then they've been able to say 'well, have you ever thought about doing it this way' or 'you know, here's what you can learn from this experience' so that I can better myself through those situations.

**Enacting values during the job search.** Participants used the profession's values as a framework to examine the job search process. Searching for professional positions, participants considered previous lessons and heard numerous messages about the prioritization and demonstration of student affairs values. Ashley felt many of the questions she was asked focused on how she demonstrated the value of student-centeredness. She was also asked questions about emerging priorities of student affairs such as assessing student outcomes, which

inferred beliefs about the value of student learning. Cody heard clear messages about how campuses value diversity and inclusion and expect him to have a “comfort level” with handling different cultures and an approach to social justice.

During the job search, Ali reflected on personal values and those of the profession. She was often asked about enacting environments and creating programs and services to meet needs of diverse populations. To answer the questions of employers, she needed to be sure she was clear on and had actually internalized diversity as a value. Through reflection on if the values of the profession were hers as well, Ali realized diversity is a personal and professional value:

I don't know necessarily if that is whom I was coming into it or if being in student affairs work and getting an education behind it has helped transition me into [this value]. That's something I think about regularly, because I am very different from when I went to college back in the day. Have I changed because of my own personal development or because of my involvement in student affairs and my education? I don't know: I'd like to think that part of it is due to my education and work in student affairs and I'd like to think that part of it is because of who I am.

Participating in a job search at both NASPA and ACPA, Landon explained how interactions with potential employers provided lessons about enacting student affairs values in diverse contexts. He believed shared values exist, but “things look different across the country.” Having experienced student affairs at one public institution, Tammy wondered how the mission of a private institution might influence her enactment of professional values. Ryan felt he had integrated student affairs values “as they relate to my current experience” but congruence was dependent on institutional mission:

I need to be working at an institution that is very mission-focused and very values based and those values have to align with my own. That is something very important to me. I don't deal well with cognitive dissonance in the environment I work in. I need to know what I am going to be working toward and need to believe in what I am working toward.

Claire reviewed mission statements during the job search to ensure her professional values were aligned with institutional priorities. Maggie pursued institutions at which she may demonstrate professional values she perceived as important:

As I visited several schools for on campus interviews, I did try consciously to interpret the institutional and departmental values based what people said to me, how they acted, the questions they asked, what they stressed as important to them...It reinforced what I already knew about how important it is to look for a school and a department that has values similar to my own.

For some, the job search conveyed confusing messages about the profession's values. Ryan was advised to be ready to explain thoughts on theories to potential employers. Because he believed theories send messages about values such as responsibility, he was excited to have such conversations. However, during interviews, he was rarely asked to explain thoughts on theories or their application in the professional realm:

Many questions focused on customer service: how do you provide customer service?

You know, how do you time manage? What's your experience with managing a budget?

And all of these are important things but to me the most important thing is that you can connect with students and you can challenge them and you're aware of how they are developing as people and no one asked that. No one asked about my knowledge of

student development theory and it just took me aback and surprised me. Then you begin to doubt; why have I learned what I have learned.

Caitlin also expressed how job search expectations were not met. She began the process believing lessons from the program would prepare her for an entry-level position in student affairs. However, she was surprised by how some almost dismissed lessons from graduate work:

Some were very open about, you know, what you learned in the master's program is great, but we're more worried about what you can do...I think there were a couple of schools that were more business oriented and more efficiency driven. I think that was something I had been concerned about with my search: finding those schools and then worrying about if I'd be forced to compromise any of my personal outlooks on student affairs or is that something that I could work within but still bring my values with me.

Through the job search, participants received messages about the profession's values that were both reaffirming and somewhat jolting. The implications of mixed messages about the profession's values and the impact on graduate students as they prepare to enter the profession are discussed in chapter six.

## **Summary**

This section explained program-structured and student-directed methods participants used to learn about student affairs values and their demonstration. I provided thoughts from participants about the individuals and experiences that informed perceptions of student affairs values and appropriate ways to demonstrate such values. Participants used relations with others and experiences to guide their interpretation and enactment of student affairs values.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I answered four research questions about professional values development as part of the socialization process for second-semester, second-year participants in student affairs graduate education. I interpreted 13 values as shared across participants: diversity and inclusion, collaboration, learning, student centeredness, change and responsiveness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, community, service, professional development, caring, and responsibility. My interpretation of these 13 values reflects that participants' perceptions of the profession's values are mainly aligned with the literature (Young, 2003); however, differences emerged. Additionally, while the interpreted values are shared across participants, I perceive that functional areas do not demonstrate all 13 values in the same way nor do they prioritize each to the same degree.

I identified 11 socialization agents, categorized as program-structured or student-directed, which influence how students learn and demonstrate the profession's values. Program-structured agents are practical experiences, supervisors, course work, faculty, guiding documents and standards, messages about the past and present role of student affairs, and cohort members. Student-directed factors identified are experiences prior to graduate school such as undergraduate involvement, relationships with friends and family, developing a personal identity, and professional experiences after college. Another student-directed factor was creating personal approaches to work, which included developing relationships with students, handling ethical conflicts, enacting change initiatives in response to societal trends, using theory in practice, responding to crises, and integrating personal and professional roles. Finally, involvement in associations and enacting the job search also influenced perceptions of the values and their enactment. These agents are very influential to the way participants learned,

internalized, and tried to demonstrate the profession's values. In the next chapter, I discuss results in connection to the existing literature and explain the practical and research implications for the student affairs profession and graduate education, as well as overall socialization of graduate students.

## **Chapter 6: Summary, Discussion, and Implications**

This chapter provides a summary of findings and examination of results in light of the literature on the student affairs profession, student affairs graduate programs, and overall graduate student socialization. I explain how results support or counter existing literature and fill research gaps identified in chapter one. I also consider the research and practical implications of findings. Study limitations are addressed. I conclude with a series of recommendation for student affairs preparation, practice and policy, and research.

### **Summary and Discussion**

This study focused on how 17 graduate students across three distinct student affairs programs became socialized to the values of the student affairs profession. I conducted two interviews with each participant to examine perceptions of the profession's values and how they developed and demonstrated perceived values. I analyzed the individual narratives of each participant to determine answers to four research questions. This section summarizes study findings and addresses interpreted results in light of the existing literature or gaps in the research.

### **Perceived Values and Alignment with Student Affairs Literature**

Question One was "What do second-year students in a student affairs graduate program perceive to be the professional values of student affairs?" I determined 13 shared values among participants that they perceive to be those of student affairs: diversity and inclusion, collaboration, learning, student-centeredness, change and responsiveness, ethics, holistic student development, intentionality, community, service, professional development, caring, and responsibility. For Question Two, I compared interpreted values against those espoused in the literature (Young, 2003). The values I interpreted from participants were relatively aligned with Young (2003) but there were differences. Because Question Two - "How do perceptions align



with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?” - was related to interpreting findings about participants’ perceptions against current ideas about student affairs values, I addressed results from questions one and two together.

While the specific values and terms for their description have varied somewhat, there has long been understanding that student affairs work is guided by values (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Dalton, 1993; Evans & Reason, 2001; Love et al., 1993; Reason & Broido, 2010; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 1993; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a). The findings from this study and current ideas of student affairs values found in the literature overlap to a substantial extent. A review of existing descriptions of student affairs values (Young, 2003), studies about the shared values of professionals (Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young & Elfrink, 1991a), literature on the professional evolution of student affairs (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Nuss, 2003; Reason & Broido, 2010) and guiding documents (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Evans & Reason, 2001; Keeling, 2004; ACE, 1994a; 1994b), led me to conclude my interpretation of shared values among participants reflect those of today’s profession. Further evidence can be found in that each of Young’s (2003) eight values could be explicitly or implicitly matched to at least one of the 13 values I interpreted as those of student affairs. Also, the principles of student affairs offered by Reason and Broido (2010), which include attending to the whole student, promoting student learning, promoting responsible citizenship, and advocating for social justice, are aligned with participants’ values of holistic student development, learning, responsibility, and diversity and inclusion respectively. My interpretation of participants’ perceptions of values are for the most part either specifically or conceptually aligned with the literature.

However, results bring forth some questions as to whether student affairs' values have changed or expanded and whether or not historical approaches to explaining the values are still relevant. While I connected each of Young's (2003) values to at least one of my 13 interpreted values, I could not connect each of the 13 interpreted values to one of Young's. Young (2003) did not explicitly or implicitly identify change and responsiveness, collaboration, learning, and professional development as primary values of the profession. Based on existing student affairs literature published since Young (2003), I conclude my interpretation may more accurately reflect today's values: change and responsiveness (Burkard et al., 2005; Cuyjet et al., 2009; Hephner LaBanc, 2009; Love & Estanek, 2004; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Sandeen & Barr, 2006); collaboration (ACPA, 2007; Arcelus, 2008; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Burkhard et al., 2005; Keeling, 2004; Whitt, 2010); learning (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; CAS, 2009c; Consolvo & Dannells, 2009; Dungy, 2009; Keeling, 2004; Magolda & Quayle, 2010; Reason & Broido, 2010) and professional development (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Janosik et al., 2007; Reesor et al., 2009; Roberts, 2007) have each been increasingly documented as priorities in the student affairs literature. Study findings identified values that drive the work of student affairs professionals. Some of those values have been long-standing while others are new. It is evident that some degree of change about perceptions of student affairs values has occurred since Young authored his interpretation (2003).

It was not the intent of the research to determine whether Young (2003) is still relevant but rather what graduate students perceived as values and to compare against those in the literature to see if there was alignment of perception. However, based on the aforementioned literature about the shared values I interpreted as those of participants but not Young (2003), it appears messages about evolving priorities from those in student affairs, including graduate

students, strongly influence views on the profession's values. It is also evident from the literature that as a group comes to share a priority, it may manifest itself as a value (Kuh & Whitt, 1988); therefore, it is acceptable to conclude professional priorities drive student affairs values and vice versa. As new priorities emerge, perceptions of values may shift or be revised.

Additionally, I believe the nomenclature used by Young (2003) needs modification for today's profession. Participants are not using some terms Young has held up for over two decades (Young, 1993; 2003; Young & Elfrink, 1991a; 1991b). Instead they used different terms to explain similar concepts. For example, Young's (2003) value of equality reflects a sense of prioritizing diversity and inclusion. However, only one participant explained equality as a value but most used the terms "diversity" and "inclusion" as shared values of the profession. Because language matters when discussing the role of student affairs (Carpenter, 2003; Dungy, 2009 Manning et al., 2006), those who conduct student affairs work need to articulate widely held values with language that is meaningful and relevant to the collective profession.

There have been contributions made to the literature as a result of this study. This research provides some empirical evidence to recent works about the philosophy of student affairs work. Reason and Broido (2010) build on Young (2003) focusing on the role of values in developing a professional philosophy. Reason and Broido (2010) acknowledge learning, social justice, holistic student development, and responsibility as principles that undergird a collective student affairs professional philosophy. As student affairs values connect to one's professional philosophy and Reason and Broido (2010) consider these terms as core principles to the foundation of student affairs, the authors reaffirm my interpretation that learning, diversity and inclusion, holistic student development, and responsibility are modern day values of the

profession, even if not identified by Young (2003). Study findings offer evidence to back Reason and Broido's (2010) claim about the importance of these concepts.

Answering questions one and two fills gaps in the research: no prior studies have solicited the perceptions of the profession's values by graduate students. Wiese and Cawthon (2009) used a values inventory to "provide an initial insight into the spirituality of graduate students in preparation programs and the uniformity of spiritual culture across institutions and programs of study" (p. 3). Therefore, Wiese and Cawthorn's study differed because it emphasized how specific values were prioritized based on programmatic culture versus values of the overall profession. Other studies, each quantitative, which sought to explain student affairs' values either did not include graduate students (Young & Elfrink, 1991a) or students were included as part of a larger sample (Tull & Medrano, 2008). I discovered graduate students were not analyzed distinctly in the Tull and Medrano (2008) study, because a small percentage (8.7) of participants (n=952) had not yet completed a master's degree (C. Medrano, personal communication, December 10, 2010). There are no qualitative studies examining any aspect of graduate students and perceptions of professional values.

### **Perceptions of Values and Functional Areas**

Examining my interpretation of values and their relevance in seven distinct functional areas, I found values were common across the 17 participants, but were not necessarily common across functional areas. Participant responses led me to conclude values are shared across the student affairs profession, but prioritized and enacted differently depending on the functional area in which one works. Findings about the role of functional area on values development provide new insight and reinforce some existing research on how the diversity of function and context influences student affairs work (Hirt, 2006).

Enacting the values of the profession is a way to demonstrate professional competence (Dalton, 1993; Young, 2003). Finding that some difference exists across functional area is not completely surprising given the literature on how different functional areas influence the development of student affairs competence (Amey et al., 2009; Carpenter, 1996; Herdlein, 2004; Hephner LaBanc, 2009; Hirt, 2006; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Tull & Medrano, 2008; Young, 1993). Additionally, people enter the profession based on predispositions and experiences within specific functional areas (Hirt, 2006; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Results from this study indicate experiences prior to graduate work influenced perceptions of the profession's values. As Maggie explained: "Different individuals recognize or embody various different values, so certain values may be more important to one person over another. That is, in part, why people are drawn to certain functional areas."

As explained in chapter five, I found graduate students who worked in residence life influenced my interpretation of shared values across the 17 participants. Examining my interpretations of values removing those who work in residence life resulted in a different set of interpreted values during analysis. The high number of study participants working in residence life reflects the literature on the demographics of the student affairs profession (Hamrick & Hemphill, 2009; Richmond & Benton, 1988). It is not surprising that the largest functional area within most student affairs divisions influenced the findings in my research or any other.

Previously published literature emphasizes institutional culture as influencing values (Kuh & Whitt, 1988), how values drive diverse approaches to the provision of services (Kuh et al., 2001; Kuh & Whitt, 1991; Manning et al., 2006) and how conceptualizing student affairs work depends on the type of institution at which one participates in graduate education (Hirt, 2006; Love et al., 1993; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008). Study results provided evidence that

graduate students' views on enacting and prioritizing the profession's values were also influenced by institutional culture and context. Such findings are not prevalent in other aspects of the student affairs literature; therefore, this research provides a distinct contribution in that the intersection of functional area and institutional context was concluded to be influential when graduate students developed ideas about and ways to enact the profession's values.

Additionally, this research provides additional empirical evidence to support other studies. Results reinforce Tull and Medrano (2008) who found respondents reported diverse approaches to values enactment and prioritization across functional areas. Findings provide narrative to consider in light of Tull and Medrano's (2008) quantitative findings. Also, findings support previous notions that students are drawn to specific aspects of student affairs because they perceived shared values with the functional area (Taub & McEwen, 2006).

### **Influential Factors in Values Development**

Question four dealt primarily with how one becomes socialized to student affairs values through graduate education, specifically student affairs preparation programs. The specific aspect of how student affairs graduate program participants become socialized to a set of professional values was absent from the existing student affairs literature. Within the literature on socialization, there is an emphasis on the process of values development as one outcome of professional preparation and socialization (Bragg, 1976; Weidman et al., 2001). The literature on values development in other professions had implications for student affairs because of the emphasis on applied sciences (Erlanger & Kelgon, 1978; Martin, et al., 2007; McGuire & Phye, 2006); however fields even with a common practical foundation are bound by different principles. Therefore, determining how graduate students develop student affairs values became a research priority.

From this study, I identified 11 socializing factors explained by participants as influential in how they learned to demonstrate student affairs values. These factors can be categorized into program-structured and student-directed. Program-structured include assistantships and practical experiences, supervisors, course work, faculty, guiding documents and professional standards, the historical role of student affairs, and the cohort. Student-directed included participants' previous experiences, emerging approaches to enacting student affairs work, involvement in the broad student affairs profession and the job search. Many of these socialization factors have been addressed in other aspects of the socialization literature in and outside of student affairs; however this work contributes new evidence as to how these aspects influence socialization to professional values, specifically in student affairs. I now consider how findings reinforce or counter existing literature and fill research gaps on student affairs preparation.

**Values development through supervised practice.** Study findings prove that assistantships, practica, and internships in student affairs functional areas are instrumental in helping participants to identify, clarify, and adopt values of the student affairs profession. These findings reinforce some of the general literature on student affairs supervised experience and provide new insight into how values guided work in practical settings.

The literature is rich with examples of how practical experiences influence an increased sense of competence and provides master's students with an idea of work in student affairs (Collins, 2009; Cooper & Saunders, 2003; Grube et al., 2005; Hephner LaBanc, 2009; Hirt & Strayhorn, 2010; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Tull, 2007). Having a grasp on the philosophical traditions and values of student affairs is connected to professional competence (ACPA, 2007; ACPA & NASPA, 1998; Reason & Broido, 2010). Results provide

evidence that supervised practice helped participants learn philosophies and values of student affairs, resulting in perceptions of increased professional competence.

Practical experiences become particularly important in socialization efforts because many student affairs program participants have little to no professional experience (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 2006; Young, 1985). Limited professional experience may impact the extent to which one can be successful in student affairs graduate education (Amey et al., 2009; Forney, 1994; Keim, 1991b; Young, 1985). Therefore, most students take part in supervised practice to hone professional skills (Cooper & Saunders, 2003; Janosik & Hirt, 2002; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Moore & Hamilton, 1993; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). One particular skill identified as a result of this research was using values to guide professional work. For research participants who had worked between college and graduate school, there was a sense that adopting the profession's values was easy, particularly if work was similar to that of student affairs (e.g. Ashley who worked in student life at a small regional campus or Hallie who was a teacher). For those who had not worked, study findings reinforce that as a result of practical experiences in the graduate program, they immediately begin to learn and apply professional values and develop increased competence as they practice demonstrating the values. For example, Cody believed the assistantship experience placed him in a situation where he was thrown into his first role as a "pseudo-professional" and tasked with representing the profession's values.

The literature documents the important role of theory and research in the practical setting (Evans et al., 1998; 2010; Hyman, 1988; Komives, 1998; Reason & Broido, 2010; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). Participants applied theories in assistantship and practica, allowing them to see that through intentionally applying theory they became more aligned with student affairs



priorities, including its values. Participants such as Shauna viewed applying theory as a way to demonstrate student affairs values because it allowed her to be her most intentional. Reflection on results after applying theories allowed participants, such as Claire, to reaffirm or reshape perceptions of student affairs values and practice them in the assistantship setting. My interpretation of intentionality as a value was strengthened by participants' views of how they demonstrated intentionality by applying theory and research in supervised practice.

**Supervisors modeling the way.** Study results provided evidence that assistantship and practicum supervisors served as role models for how to conduct student affairs work. These individuals provided insight to and lessons about how to (or not to) demonstrate professional values. Responses also reflected a sense that graduate students reflect on supervisors' approaches to enacting professional values and determine if a similar or different approach would work for them. Findings reinforced literature on perceptions of student supervisors and offer new insight to how participants learned values from those by whom they were managed.

Much of the empirical literature on supervision in student affairs draws on new professionals' reflections on graduate experiences and current work with a supervisor (Barham & Winston, 2006; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Tull, 2006) or the perspectives of supervisors themselves as they manage new professionals (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Waple, 2006). The literature on student affairs graduate student and supervisor relationships is less prevalent. What exists focuses on advice for sound supervision of students (Creamer & Winston, 2002; Cooper & Saunders, 2003; Saunders & Cooper, 2002) or the influence of the supervisor in terms of developing a sense of professional competence (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Goodman, 1984; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009; Grube et al., 2005), including role-modeling professional ethics and values (Carpenter, 2003; Dalton et al., 2009; Hirt & Strayhorn, 2010).

Study results reinforced that supervisors have influence over graduate students' emerging perceptions of student affairs work. The finding that supervisors provide lessons about the profession's values and their enactment emerged as a distinct finding that may be assumed from, but not documented empirically in, previous student affairs literature.

The literature on broad socialization also reinforces the role of supervisors in supporting graduate students, particularly in applied fields (Bragg, 1976; Conrad et al., 1998; Eraut, 1994). However, because of the emphasis on research in many graduate programs, program faculty likely serve supervisory roles (Weidman et al., 2001). Considering professional values, research on the relationships of supervisors and students in nursing programs and social work indicated values inculcation occurs as a result of an ongoing relationship between supervisor and student in a nursing program (Reamer, 1998; Schank & Weiss, 2001). The relationship between nursing student and supervisor was particularly important in moving from perceptions of novice to expert (Schank & Weiss, 2001). Similar findings emerged in this study, in which I found supervisors helped student affairs master's students become more competent in the enactment of values. This study adds to an existing body of research on how supervisors influence graduate student emerging perceptions and subsequent demonstration of a profession's values.

**Values education in the classroom.** In this study, participants explained they learned about values within a range of courses in the formalized graduate curriculum. Learning about the values occurred as students took classes on topics such as advising, assessment, and student development theory. Structured discussions and reflections in courses forced students to examine their individual values and consider evolving professional values. Assignments helped participants consider broad student affairs issues in light of professional values. Each graduate program expected students to use practical experiences to make sense of their course work.

Young and Elfrink (1991b) found course work to be a conveyer of student affairs values. Therefore, this study reaffirmed course work as a venue in which student affairs values were learned and options for demonstration considered. As the general socialization literature addresses course work as the primary socialization agent for most fields, results from this study add evidence that quality of course work is pivotal when considering good preparation and education for any profession (Conrad et al., 1993; Weidman et al., 2001).

An unexpected finding was the influence of capstone courses on perceptions of professional values and learning about how values could be demonstrated. It is likely that student affairs preparation programs have embraced the capstone course model because of evidence from other fields and undergraduate education that such a culminating activity has positive educational gains (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2007). In my review of the literature, I did not find evidence of the influence of the capstone course on student affairs graduate education let alone their use as a forum in which professional values were fostered. All three programs had a capstone course, two of which had been intentionally structured by graduate program faculty to address values. I had not known this entering the research. However intentional or not, participants across all three programs explained capstone courses provided forums for students to synthesize and analyze what they know about and discuss ways they had come to demonstrate the profession's values.

Previous findings about the importance of course work in helping students make sense of student affairs (CAS, 2009b; Evans & Williams, 1998; Hunter & Comey, 1991; Manning, 1993; Meaborn & Owens, 1984; McEwen & Talbot, 1998) were reaffirmed through this study. I also conclude that study findings indicated participants perceived course work to be as important to learning professional values as supervised practice. Some student affairs literature explains that

once a professional, lessons learned in the classroom may be subordinated by experiences in assistantships and practica (Amey et al., 2009; Cutler, 2003; Komives, 1998). My research reflected a more balanced approach of theory and practice, similar to findings of Forney (1994). Students in this study believed course work and supervised practice were the “ying and the yang” (Ashley) and each supported the other.

**Faculty members modeling the way.** I interpret that much of the respect for the academic setting came from very favorable impressions of graduate program faculty. Through positive relationships formed with faculty, students learned about student affairs values and were able to discuss diverse approaches to their enactment. Participants felt faculty members’ teaching and research conveyed messages about using values to demonstrate commitment to student affairs and their students who will one day be professionals. Additionally, students perceived faculty provided insight to the profession’s values while not mandating tactics for enactment; for most, this approach to educating on the profession’s values was what participants’ most respected.

The literature on student affairs faculty is largely focused on preparation for the professoriate (Evans & Williams, 1998; Keim, 1991a), specific approaches to helping students develop skills such as multicultural competence (McEwen & Roper, 1994a; Talbot & Kocarek, 1997), and comparisons to practitioner-counterparts who supervise graduate students in assistantships and practica (Love et al., 1993; Upcraft, 1998). The student affairs literature reaffirms lessons found in the general graduate student socialization research about the essential role of faculty in helping graduate students become socialized to professional contexts (Conrad et al., 1993; 1998; Schank & Weiss, 2001; Tillman, 2001; Weidman et al., 2001) and the values of that profession (Erlanger & Klegon, 1978; Reamer, 1998; Schank & Weiss, 2001). I believe

this study complemented the body of literature on student affairs faculty and general graduate student socialization.

Most relative to the study at hand, Young and Elfrink (1991b) explained faculty members send messages about student affairs values and their demonstration. Faculty explained there are formal (e.g. readings) and informal (e.g. role-modeling) approaches they use to educate students on student affairs values (Young & Elfrink, 1991b). This research provided the graduate student perspective about the role faculty has in values development, which was missing from Young and Elfrink (1991b). Results from this study make the case for a shared experience between faculty and students in promulgating student affairs values. From these results, I can conclude relationships with faculty were pivotal to conceptualizing and learning to demonstrate values.

**Using documents and standards to make sense of values.** Graduate students in this study felt strongly that professional values were directed by historical documents such as the *Student Personnel Point of View* (ACE, 1994a; 1994b) and more recent documents such as *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004). For participants, such as Alisha, values espoused in these documents, regardless of when authored, reflected enduring principles for student affairs work. Reading and applying the documents helped participants learn the historical role of values that are specific to student affairs practice. The CAS Standards (CAS, 2009c) also gave insight into prioritized student affairs values and how they should be enacted across functional areas. The influence of the CAS Standards in developing professional values was reinforced by the responses of Alisha and Claire, who both relied on these documents to determine and prioritize professional values in diverse practical settings.

The existing literature references guiding documents as reflecting the values of the

profession (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Evans & Reason, 2001; Nuss, 2003; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 1993; 2003). The extent to which students used documents to interpret values needed empirical studies in the student affairs literature. Evans and Reason (2001) wrote:

Although each of these statements did restate and reinforce core values presented in earlier position papers, the process of revisiting and confirming these values is healthy, particularly given the unfortunate lack of attention paid to the history of student affairs in most preparation programs. Serious study of the impact of these reports on the practice of student affairs is needed (p. 375).

In this study, Alisha relied on documents to explain professional values. Maggie looked to these documents when making decisions about how to work with students. My research provided evidence that graduate students do in fact perceive guiding documents influenced their learning about and demonstration of values, as well as the extent to which values were relevant across the history of student affairs.

The body of literature affirming CAS Standards (CAS, 2009c) as an important part of graduate education continues to grow (Arminio, 2009; Young, 2005; Young & Janosik, 2007). Young (2005) examined the realization of desired learning outcomes of student affairs graduate programs identified as CAS-compliant versus those who were not. One outcome was developing professional values. Young (2005) found no significant difference between CAS-compliant programs accomplishing specific outcomes more often than those in non-compliant programs. To some extent, Young's (2005) research implied CAS Standards (CAS, 2009c) might not have a high degree of influence on graduates' perceptions of how they learned student affairs skills in their program. However, students in my study referenced the CAS Standards as documents that contained statements of professional values and these statements informed their perceptions and

enactment of student affairs values. As values development is one desired outcome of graduate education (CAS, 2009a; McEwen & Talbot, 1998) and students in this study had experiences using CAS, specifically in interpreting values, I conclude the use of CAS Standards were influential in supporting this outcome. This finding strengthens the articulated need to introduce CAS Standards to students during the graduate school experience (Arminio, 2009; Miller, 1991; Young & Janosik, 2007). It also addresses Miller (1991) who called for increased study as to how programs use professional standards to socialize graduate students to student affairs.

**Student Affairs' past and present function.** Through structured experiences in graduate programs, participants came to learn about the historical role of student affairs. Most participants shared the perception of a subordinated profession: student affairs filled gaps that faculty did not want to do as the university emerged in the late 1800s. These are roles participants continue to perceive as secondary to that of faculty. Study participants identified that the purpose of student affairs evolved to fill students out of classroom needs and manage the cocurricular experiences such as involvement in student life programs.

Participants also believed there is now a strong sense that student affairs aspires to be seen as educators, which would strengthen the perception, primarily by academics, that student affairs contributes to student learning. All participants struggled with the perception of student affairs as subordinate to academic affairs, but explained how such status helped the profession to focus on holistic student development – focusing on the student in and out of the classroom. Based on a desire to work with academic affairs, they explained that collaboration was an essential value of student affairs. There was a particularly strong sense that student affairs professionals seek to build community and make students feel included. Because of this

historical and current role, participants conceptualized professional values such as community and caring.

The historical role of student affairs has been well documented (Dungy & Gordon, 2010; Nuss, 2003), but not relative to how the profession's history and current status supports the development of professional values. The extent to which history guides current practice has always been questioned (Evans & Reason, 2001). Results from this study imply that students understand the history of student affairs and conceptualize values based on this history.

Participants used lessons about the perception of student affairs' role to inform how they make sense of professional priorities, including values. Additionally, lessons about student affairs history, current state, and desired future – particularly about collaboration with academic affairs and increasing the role of student affairs in student learning (ACPA, 2007; Arcelus, 2008; Consolvo & Dannells, 2009; Schroeder, 2003) - informed participants' perceptions so much that I interpreted collaboration and learning, not identified by Young (2003), as professional values.

**Relationships with cohort members.** Each participant identified how cohort members informed an emerging sense of student affairs values and their demonstration. As referenced in chapter five, relationships with cohort members were not optional: to some extent participants had to interact with all cohort members through class activities. Cohort relationships were often positive and helped participants learn appropriate ways to convey professional values; however, most could identify some way in which cohort members acted in ways to counter (and possibly undermine) professional values. Peers in the cohort demonstrated how common values could be articulated and demonstrated differently, which was appreciated by participants. Conversations in and out of class and observations of cohort members' demonstrations of values were tactics used to help conceptualize ideas about and ways to enact student affairs values.



The literature on student affairs graduate education and the use of cohorts is minimal. Forney and Davis (2002) explained how a common learning experience helped cohort members identify ways to support each other in transition to graduate work. Lessons about multiculturalism were learned as a result of heterogeneous cohorts (Castellanos et al., 2007). Goodman (1984) found that at one student personnel program, the cohort was an important factor in socializing students to what it means to work in student affairs. Others found graduate cohorts were a source of support new professionals used when beginning their careers (Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008). My research supported the current literature on the influence of cohorts and adds to this research by addressing values development as a result of interactions with diverse student affairs graduate program cohort members.

The literature on socialization within broader graduate education presents a more informed picture of the important role of a cohort (Bragg, 1976; Maher, 2005; Weidman et al., 2001). Maher (2005) found socialization as a cohort allowed students to feel supported and created a learning environment that emphasized self-exploration, shared meaning making, and an appreciation for diverse learning styles. The results in my research reinforce findings by others outside of student affairs that cohorts provide direction and support for graduate students.

Findings that a graduate program cohort informs perceptions and demonstrations of values in student affairs is new terrain for the profession; however, the broad socialization literature explains how cohorts and other student peer groups heavily influence socialization activities and how students learn, internalize, and demonstrate the profession's values (Bragg, 1976; Martin et al., 2003 Weidman et al., 2001). Conrad et al. (1993) found the cohort experience helped shape personal and professional values and provided opportunities for students to nurture values through individual and cohort-oriented projects.

Research indicates cohorts with demographic diversity provide opportunities to explore shared values while respecting diverse approaches to their enactment (Antony, 2002; Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Costello, 2005; Eraut, 1994; Patton & Harper, 2003). From my research, I believe this to be true in the student affairs profession given the broad appreciation for diversity and inclusion as a value and the extent to which some used their identification as gay, first-generation, or a person of color to explain professional values. Kuk and Cuyjet (2009) explained diversity as a factor in how graduate students were socialized to aspects of student affairs, one of them the profession's values. Participants such as Ali referenced how her interaction with a gay cohort member helped her increase her appreciation for diversity. Stories such as Ali's provide additional empirical evidence to Kuk & Cuyjet's (2009) assertions.

**Preconceptions of professional values.** Findings show participants entered student affairs graduate education with perceptions about professional values. Experiences as undergraduates, relationships with family and friends, participant concepts of their personal identity, and working full-time between college and graduate school influenced perceptions about and the subsequent enactment of student affairs values. Perceptions about student affairs work and its values when entering the graduate program were often considered against new information about priorities of the profession. Participants explained how they reaffirmed existing values or reshaped them to fit into the profession of student affairs. Many believed personal values upon entering student affairs were aligned with those of the profession; previous experiences served a role in preparing them to fully adopt and demonstrate the values.

Existing literature indicates entering perceptions about graduate work in student affairs have been informed from undergraduate experiences (DeSawal, 2006; Ellingson & Snyder, 2009; Forney, 1994; Hunter, 1992; Phelps Tobin, 1998), personal and professional relationships

(Collins, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Taub & McEwen, 2006), individual sense of personal identity (Castellanos et al., 2007; Flowers & Howard-Hamilton, 2002) and previous work experience (Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008). Studying values development of student affairs program participants resulted in strengthening these considerations as influential in emerging perceptions of student affairs work.

The findings from this study are generally consistent with the literature that explains socialization is informed through perceptions of what it means to be a professional that were developed as undergraduates (Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001), personal and professional relationships (Conrad et al., 1992, 1998; Konstam, 2007), personal identity (Antony, 2002; Costello, 2005; Patton & Harper, 2003) and previous work experience (Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). Overall, results confirmed literature on graduate student socialization and strengthened the student affairs socialization literature (Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009).

**Developing ways to “do” student affairs work.** Participants were trying to make sense of how they will be full-time student affairs professionals. Considering how they would likely enact student affairs work, participants reflected on how various approaches to handling situations influenced the enactment of the profession’s values now and possibly into the future. Six aspects of developing a professional approach to work emerged as themes: maintaining relationships with students, ethical conflicts, changing approaches to be responsive to new societal trends, incorporating theory into practice, responding to campus crisis situations, and integrating personal and professional and personal lives. The existing literature on student affairs is reinforced by many findings. Additionally, some findings reflect new insight into how to conduct student affairs work.

***Relations with undergraduates and ethical conflicts.*** Perceptions of how to interact with undergraduates vary across student affairs (Ortiz & Martinez, 2009; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008). Additionally, relationships with undergraduates can throw graduate students and professionals into ethical conflicts (Dalton et al., 2009; Fried, 2003; Janosik, 2007). My study reaffirmed the aforementioned literature about the challenges with managing professional and personal relationships with undergraduates and how participants' demonstration of values was influenced by the nature of these relationships. Because relationships with students forced participants into some ethically questionable situations, findings support the research of Humphrey et al. (2004) and Janosik (2007) who provided insight into handling such dilemmas. Study results provided evidence that participants used values to guide decision-making in ethical situations. Therefore, I conclude that students use their values to make decisions when immersed in situations that caused ethical conflicts. Empirical studies on the use of values to resolve ethical situations during graduate school are not currently found in the literature, though the impressions of professionals have been captured (Humphrey et al., 2004; Janosik, 2007). Therefore, this study contributes to the literature and can be used as a launch point for future research on how graduate students make (ethical) decisions.

***Enacting change in response to societal trends.*** The literature reflects varying perceptions as to the ability for the student affairs profession to change (Bloland et al., 1994; 1996; Kuh et al., 1987; Love & Estanek, 2004; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Young, 2003). Many participants felt student affairs was responsive to societal trends, which influenced perceptions of the profession's values. Such responsiveness meant even long-standing values were enacted with approaches that spoke to "today's student." Additionally, the ability to enact change has emerged as an expected competency of student affairs practitioners (Burkard et al., 2005;

Herdlein, 2004; Kretovics, 2002). Findings provide evidence that graduate students perceive student affairs is responsive to internal and external factors and is a nimble profession. At least in the graduate context, study participants were exposed to changes and explained they were responsive because the profession expects them to do so. For those who assert student affairs must be responsive to change, this study provided evidence that graduate students welcome change and use values to make decisions about new approaches to student affairs work.

***Connecting theory and practice.*** The student affairs literature brings forth questions as to the level to which graduate students and professionals apply theory in their work (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Hephner LaBanc, 2010; Komives, 1998; Love & Yousney, 2001; Saunders & Cooper, 2002). The extent to which students in other types of graduate programs make an intentional connection between theories learned in class and their application in the practical setting has also been questioned (Eraut, 1994; Poock, 2001). Whether or not student affairs graduate students and professionals often apply theory, there is an expectation they will have some understanding of theory and recognize its utility (Burkard et al., 2005; Hephner LaBanc, 2010). Results from this study provide interesting insight as to how students are applying theory in practice: it is my conclusion that graduate students often used theory to inform their work. Participants felt using theories demonstrated commitment to the values of student affairs. Subsequently, they perceived the application of theories allowed them to demonstrate values. For example, participants explained how social identity theories provide a context for valuing diversity and inclusion. Claire felt she was able to best demonstrate the value of service and caring to female students because she understood Gilligan's theory on women's development (Gilligan, 1982).

***Student crises as a conveyer of values.*** One of the most memorable conversations was discussing Caitlin's belief that responding to campus crisis allowed her to best demonstrate

student affairs values. My conversation with Caitlin and other participants led me to believe that crisis situations were experiences to learn student affairs values and practice their demonstration. Much has been written about crisis management as a core student affairs skill (Burkard et al., 2005; Herdlein, 2004; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Miser & Cherrey, 2009). Based on the importance placed on responsiveness to crises, it was not surprising to hear participants' views of learning competencies in such situations. However, using crises to perfect the application of values they perceived as core to student affairs was a finding I was not expecting. It led me to believe participants were very intentional in reflection on the profession's values and their ability to convey those values in the most important times such as helping students in crisis.

Crisis brought about reflection, which most participants used as a tool to internalize student affairs values. Reflection also was a way to examine how well they were enacting student affairs values. The literature recommends reflection on responsiveness to crises (Miser & Cherrey, 2009). Because participants used reflection to consider their approach to enacting professional values in the context of a crisis or in every day student affairs work, my research reinforces reflection as an essential tactic to make sense of student affairs work.

***The integration of personal and professional roles.*** Participants also used reflection to examine how well they were balancing life and work and integrating the profession's values into a personal set of principles and beliefs. Furthermore, they explained the search for balance as an opportunity to reflect on how they were enacting student affairs values. Participants such as Landon believed he demonstrated the value of caring for students but sought to separate life and work in order to not make the problems of his students his own. He felt student affairs professionals often become committed to demonstrating values such as caring and forget to care for themselves.

The need to enact personal and professional lives in ways that feel balanced to student affairs graduate students and professionals is documented in the literature (Cutler, 2003; Ellingson & Snyder, 2005; Grube et al., 2005; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008). The connection between seeking balance and understanding and demonstrating the profession's values had not been previously captured in the literature. Study findings provided insight to participants' struggles with balancing their needs with those of students they served, specifically relative to their desire to demonstrate professional values such as service.

Conversations with participants revealed an ongoing need for integrating personal and professional selves. As participants entered preparation programs, they examined existing personal values in terms of lessons learned about the profession's values. Gradually they came to determine the extent to which their personal and professional values were synonymous. As divergence occurred there was effort to reconcile different values sets. For most, alignment between personal and professional values had occurred by the end of their graduate program. For some, issues of misalignment were matters they would take care of as a new professional or were simply to be accepted because they had integrated most other values. The student affairs literature has examined emerging professional philosophies and their connection to graduate student and professionals' personal lives (Amey et al., 2009; Carpenter, 2003; Cutler, 2003; Reason & Broido, 2010; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Young, 1985). Professional philosophies are often grounded in a sense of values core to one's work (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003); however, graduate students often struggle with reconciling previously held perceptions of student affairs work with new ideas learned through graduate school (Phelps Tobin, 1998). Study results reinforced the existing literature that professional philosophies are evolving as

persons enter student affairs work. The conclusion that graduate students used emerging perceptions of values to create a professional philosophy is a distinctive finding from this study.

There is also evidence that graduate students do not perceive the need to have professional and personal selves, including a set of values, completely integrated. I believe participants were seeking to adopt these values in such a way that personal and professional lives were aligned; however, if values perceived as those of student affairs were not one's own, she/he felt they could still be true to the value because it was relevant to student affairs. While Dalton (1993) and Young (1993; 2003) expressed the need to have standard values across the profession and each professional should adopt those values, Whitt et al. (1994) explained there are multiple ways to enact student affairs work; therefore it is acceptable to not have uniform values across each student affairs professional. From results, I have determined students depart from graduate preparation with varying levels of personal and professional values integration. Participants understood the profession's values, had adopted them in some way, and considered how they might continue to evolve in their connection to and demonstration.

Findings indicate that while participants have similar ideas, they also believe diversity of opinion about how to do student affairs work, including the extent to which they infuse professional and personal lives, is acceptable. Dalton (1993) explained that one can know and adopt or they can know and choose to not adopt the profession's values. My interpretation of participants' approaches reveal a less dichotomous approach is often taken: students came to know student affairs values, adopted these values as they found them relevant to their work, continued to try to demonstrate perceived student affairs values, and often evaluated how to better integrate values into an emerging approach to student affairs work.



**Conveying values through professional involvement.** Through professional associations, participants conceptualized professional values and observed diverse approaches to their enactment. Participants had varying levels of engagement, which influenced perceptions about how associations influenced their perceptions of student affairs values. The size of the association had an influence as well; many were active in a regional or functional area association and ACPA or NASPA. Codes and statements about professional standards and association journals, magazines, and conference workshops were also used to interpret values and develop approaches to their enactment. Finally, relationships participants built with colleagues through association involvement, which included mentoring relationships with well-established professionals, were vital to understanding diverse approaches to enacting professional values and discussing values conflicts participants had during graduate school.

Research findings affirm the role of associations in developing professional competence (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Roberts, 2007; Evans & Ranero, 2009; Janosik, 2009; Komives & Carpenter, 2009; Moore & Neuberger, 1998; Reesor et al., 2009). The development of professional networks and mentoring relationships has been explained as a specific outcome of graduate student and new professional involvement in associations (Janosik, 2009; Reesor et al., 2009). However, the existing literature, specifically empirically grounded research on student affairs associations, is limited. As a result of this study, there is more research on the role of student affairs professional associations.

The literature on professional associations addresses graduate students and professionals as approaching association membership differently (Carpenter, 2003; Chernow et al., 2003; Janosik, 2009; Roberts, 2007); however, the narratives of graduate students in professional associations have not been captured in the empirical research. Study findings about perceptions

of conference atmosphere and educational offerings and views on the quality of engagement in association activities supplement the existing research on student affairs associations. They also bring forth new considerations specific to how students use associations to develop professional competence and internalize student affairs values.

**Enacting professional values during the job search.** Because this research was conducted during the second-semester of the second-year, all but one student was approaching graduation and actively involved in the job search (Claire had two classes left to complete but was job searching). Exploring potential institutions at which to work, particularly considering participants' views on institutional "fit," provided an opportunity to reflect on their perceptions and development of student affairs values. Participants also used this period to examine their sense of integrating professional values with those they identified as personal values. Through reviewing institutional materials and websites and participating in job fairs hosted by ACPA and NASPA, students developed ideas about applying professional values within different contexts. Interactions with potential employers allowed participants to see values prioritized and enacted differently. Study participants reflected on how values they had adopted as their own may stay with them during the transition from graduate student to new professional.

The job search has been documented as a difficult time for student affairs graduate students (Collins, 2009; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup Anger, 2008; Richmond & Benton, 1988). Results from this study confirmed the literature on the job search as a time of stress and reflection. Study findings describe aspects of the job search process, specifically how professional values were examined as participants sought first jobs after graduate school. Research on the job search is limited in the student affairs literature (Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004). Evidence from this study fills a gap in the literature about how

students' sense of the profession's values influenced an approach to the job search. Furthermore, participants' responses offered new data about how the search influenced perceptions that values are enacted differently across institutions. Participants such as Ryan and Caitlin indicated the job search sent confusing messages as to how values are prioritized across the profession.

## **Summary**

This section connected study results to the existing literature. This study addressed how values development occurred for graduate students in student affairs. Findings reaffirmed existing literature on aspects of socialization into graduate education broadly and in student affairs and filled a research gap in that I learned what master's students perceived as the profession's values, how those values aligned with the literature, the influence of functional areas on values development, and factors in student affairs values development. In the next section I address study implications of findings from this study.

## **Implications**

This research answered four questions about how student affairs master's students conceptualized and demonstrated professional values. It is my hope this study is a catalyst to strengthen the intentionality behind helping graduate students and professionals become aware of and learn to demonstrate professional values and increase research on student affairs values; therefore, this section explains how findings might influence practice in and future research on student affairs graduate programs, the student affairs profession, and broad graduate education. Limitations are also addressed in the hopes future studies might provide a more comprehensive look at graduate student values development.

## **Master's Education in Student Affairs**

**Practice.** As graduate preparation has a primary responsibility to educate on values (Amey et al., 2009; Carpenter, 2003; Dalton, 1993; Kuk & Donovan, 2002; Moore & Hamilton, 1993), the study has relevance foremost for the administration of student affairs graduate education. Of course, this is predicated on the responsibility of the graduate student to aspire to develop student affairs values. Dalton (1993) explained the decision to adopt and demonstrate student affairs values is up to the individual:

Whether or not student affairs leaders demonstrate a personal commitment to values is perhaps the single most important factor in encouraging others to take values seriously.

It is possible to *talk* about values, to *reason* about them, and to *clarify* them, and yet never to *own* them as one's own. (p. 94, emphasis from the author).

**Individual students.** I explained in chapter one that interviewing participants during their final semester would best permit me to interpret values they identified as those of student affairs. However, my previous perception that the solidification of values would require the entire two years of graduate preparation was not accurate for most. I learned students' previous experiences, social identity, and personal relationships were reasons they chose to enter the field, which provided most with a set of personal values consistent with student affairs. They easily connected the process of developing values during graduate work to predispositions established prior to entering the program. They used reflection on existing values to incorporate lessons on new values. It is not surprising that participants entered the profession because they could see themselves doing the work – this has been documented in the literature (Ellingson & Snyder 2009; Hunter, 1992; Phelps Tobin, 1998) - but the connection made between values students had prior to entering the program and those identified as current student affairs values is not

documented in the literature to date. This may imply that responsibility to develop values lies as much (if not more) with the student as the program.

***Program administrators and faculty.*** While students are responsible, graduate preparation programs can create conditions that foster a sense of professional values and training to ensure they are properly demonstrated. Because students will use lessons learned in the graduate school context to inform their work as professionals (Carpenter, 2003; Kuk & Cuyjet, 2009), departing preparation with an idea of shared values is vital. Administrators and faculty would benefit student affairs values development by knowing the gap between students' personal values and those of the profession upon entrance to the program. As a result of study findings, I believe that developing tactics to narrow that gap should be a priority for program administrators and faculty.

Providing supportive environments in which to reflect on what are the profession's values and to examine possible approaches for their enactment was evident when analyzing the narratives of study participants. Each of the three programs structured at least some educational experiences with attention to adopting a set of professional values: Allison explained the structured reflections she had for classes; Sophie believed that she was able to reflect through discussions with fellow cohort members in her capstone; and Alisha explained that because she had to conduct a CAS review of different practica, she was able to consider values development through course assignments. I believe that because programs were intentional about values promulgation (not necessarily indoctrination) these participants more consciously applied values in their work. A similar outcome could occur if all student affairs graduate programs made values development core to course work and supervised practice.

***Association and program partnerships.*** This study brought forth evidence that professional associations influenced the development of values during graduate work. Associations provide an environment that reinforces the messages of graduate work (Janosik, 2009). Because these organizations are first introduced to students during graduate education, I perceive program administration and association leadership could view these results as delivering a shared charge: supplementing the education from the student affairs program with exceptional learning experiences at annual conferences and throughout the rest of the year would help graduate students better understand and learn to demonstrate student affairs values.

**Research.** An important contribution of this study is that the process through which these students came to learn and demonstrate student affairs values is now understood. As a result of interactions and experiences with socialization factors, graduate students developed ideas of the profession's values and about how diverse functional areas influence values enactment and prioritization. Researchers may use findings as a rationale for future studies about socialization and professional values development starting in graduate education and throughout one's student affairs career. Such research would build on prior studies about professional generativity (Carpenter, 2003; Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Chernow et al., 2003).

***Students' identity.*** Because graduate students' perceptions of values had not been previously studied, this research fills a specific gap about how prior educational and professional experiences, personal relationships, and personal identity influence the specific aspect of values development as part of the socialization process. One notable contribution is the identification of first-generation status as a factor in views on student affairs values; while not shared across most participants, first-generation status emerged as a consideration when participants' who identified as such (Ali, Alisha, Ashley, Claire) explained values. Struggling through their college

experience helped each create a sense of professional values prior to graduate education. An important implication of this research is that preparation activities must speak to a range of backgrounds and experiences. Graduate programs need to attend to the diverse perspectives of the students whom they serve.

There is also evidence that exploration of personal identity and purpose becomes salient in graduate preparation. Chickering and Reisser (1993) identify the discovery of professional purpose as a primary outcome of college student development. Because student affairs is a “hidden profession” (Richmond & Sherman, 1991) and undergraduates often examine such careers later in their college experience, there may not be time for them to internalize a sense of identity and purpose around this work. Examining the narratives of students in this study brings forth considerations on the continued human development that occurs in the graduate school context. Future studies may apply theories about identity development and creation of purpose of student affairs master’s students.

***Variations in methodology.*** This study was an exploration into individual and shared experiences of graduate students. Therefore, I used tactics from narrative inquiry and interpretive phenomenology. There are additional opportunities for research based on application of different methodologies. For example, some participants articulated their experiences as stages. I interpreted that Cody went through a process of others *doing for him* to him to *doing with others* to now filling skill set gaps and being intentional about how he *does things for others* (students and professionals). Tammy spoke of a process of integrating personal and professional values. Articulating values development in such ways begs the question if creating theory might be appropriate. Therefore, one might apply grounded theory methods to a study on student affairs values development. Further evidence that this might be an interesting

methodological approach stems from students' explanation of values development as externally to internally driven. Theories such as Self-Authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001) have been widely integrated into student affairs preparation programs (Rogers, Magolda, Baxter Magolda & Abowitz, 2004). Participants' stories about student affairs values development echo sentiments of self-authorship theory and could be examined in light of Baxter Magolda's (2001) longitudinal study.

***Exploring limitations.*** Study limitations present other opportunities for future research about master's students' experiences developing professional values. This study considered three sites at which students participated in graduate education. Exploring student affairs programs with different foci (McEwen & Talbot, 1998) and those hosted at diverse institutions (Hirt, 2006) could provide evidence to support or counter findings in this study. Additionally, as this research focused on understanding how a group of only 17 different students created a shared perception of student affairs values development, research efforts to capture a more comprehensive picture of ideas of the profession's values and their enactment could be conducted with surveys or focus groups.

### **Professional Work in Student Affairs**

**Practice.** I chose this topic because of my hope that each graduate student will become properly prepared to conduct work in student affairs. I believe professionals should guide their work on a set of shared values that undergird the contributions of student affairs to those we serve. Based on my beliefs, study findings present considerations for professionals who work in student affairs.



*Determining professional values.* Overall, findings from this study build on prior examination of student affairs values and may be used as an impetus to revisit and potentially revise espoused professional values. Such review is necessary in order to ensure student affairs values are understood, developed, and implemented within student affairs practice. Young (1993) explained that student affairs values should be examined periodically:

Our values seem somewhat different today. Factors such as cultural diversity have affected them. This evolution is only natural because internal and external factors always change values priorities...Such changes mandate further review of the essential values of student affairs. Which are eternal and which are ephemeral? (p. 12).

Given that I interpreted different values than those espoused in the literature, there are implications for the profession. It is important to examine if it is problematic that those who have written about professional values in student affairs (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003) and graduate students engrossed in learning about those values do not have a completely shared idea about the profession's values. This study exposed that language matters when discussing student affairs values. Terms such as learning, holistic student development, responsibility, and social justice are explained as approaches to enacting student affairs work rather than values of the profession. These are terms students in this study held up as values. I believe it is important student affairs holds up values that are relevant and meaningful to today's professionals. Those values may be explained differently but be similar to Young's (2003).

I should not overstate the implications of my subjectively determined differences between participants' shared perceptions and the literature. There are different understandings of the concept of "values" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Young's terms appear more esoteric than those of

participants. As mentioned, each of Young's (2003) values can be assigned to at least one of the 13 I interpreted. It is wonderful participants at least *conceptualized* values held up in the literature. Also, seven years has lapsed between when Young (2003) authored his perception of the profession's values and when I collected impressions of student affairs values. The world changes and students may be responding to these changes. Recent work on professional philosophy and values (Reason & Broido, 2010) provide a more modern explanation of frameworks for student affairs practice. However, I interpret Reason & Broido (2010) to reinforce values identified by Young (1993; 2003) rather than bring forth new values of student affairs. Finally, Young committed a good portion of his professional career to documenting and disseminating the values of student affairs. I do not believe the opinions of 17 master's students with very little professional experience should make us dismiss Young (2003). Ultimately, findings lead me to believe that more research about professional values must be conducted to build on generations of literature about the values of student affairs. Relevant to professional practice, a primary implication for student affairs is that the study brought forth evidence about ideas of the profession's values, how possible values have emerged since Young (2003), and that values are demonstrated with differing levels of prioritization in diverse functional areas.

*Administering divisions of student affairs.* There are implications for those who administer divisions of student affairs at colleges and universities around the country and possibly the world. Student affairs professionals influence a student affairs division's environment and priorities (Hirt, 2006). Participants in this study indicated they would use values developed in the graduate context to make decisions about enacting student affairs work when a professional. If graduate students enter their first positions with a solid foundation about the profession's values, then they may use such values to guide their work. Student affairs

division leadership could examine values identified in this study and consider to what extent they are demonstrated at their institution.

Additionally, values are subjective and may be culturally bound (Kuh & Whitt, 1988); therefore, there are implications for broad application of study results in diverse institutional contexts. Professionals might consider how their institution conveys the values interpreted in this study and help graduate and professional staff enact those values with respect to distinct aspects of institutional culture. While divisions of student affairs may hold up common values, functional areas should be permitted to claim others that exemplify their purpose. Chief student affairs officers, deans, and department heads could steward values development by connecting the demonstration of shared values to annual performance reviews. Divisional professional development opportunities could have internalizing values as a primary outcome of participation.

Third, supervisors can use results from this study to strengthen mentoring and guidance provided to new professionals. Study findings allow me to conclude that supervisors play a very important role in helping (especially new) professionals to learn, internalize, and demonstrate perceived professional values. This is evident in the existing literature as new professionals take lessons learned from managers and consider them when making future decisions (Tull, 2006). Modeling how values are demonstrated should be a priority for supervisors. Supervisors also provide insight into how values might be used to demonstrate ethical decision-making in student affairs (Janosik, 2007). If supervisors understand the values on which people ground their work and the factors that have influenced their enactment, they may be able to use this research to support new professionals through difficult decisions and situations.

For all practitioners, results from this study can be used to consider their own values development. Appendix E lists the questions asked of participants: the same questions might be used for practitioners to reflect on perceptions and demonstration of values. Once they have answers, I hope they display their professional values publicly (such as the case with Shauna) and commit to recurring reflection on their enactment. Encouraging student affairs professionals to perform this ongoing ritual might be a focus of associations to which they belong.

***Individual responsibility.*** There are implications for the collective profession. There was a clear message that participants participated in opportunities to learn about, reflect on, and adopt values of student affairs; however, some took this responsibility more seriously. Allison reflected often on her values; however, Sarah offered that she had not been tasked with values exploration prior to these interviews. There is clearly a need to send messages that student affairs has a set of common standards to which it aspires (CAS, 2009c) and values are one part of having professional standards (Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003). Rallying around common values may be an appropriate way to create connections among professionals who perform diverse functions under the guide of student affairs work. Aspirations towards adopting student affairs values should be encouraged.

Conversely, while I believe all who work within the profession should learn student affairs' common values, there is always a danger that the individuality of each person is dismissed when a profession seeks to indoctrinate people to a set of values. This is evident in the case made by Antony (2002) about how professionals should not be expected to endorse values to which they do not prescribe. Additionally, evidence from study participants indicates that people take varying lengths of time to understand and come to demonstrate values, some to which they may never feel completely connected (e.g. Shauna). I feel strongly that values of the

profession identified from this study are sufficiently broad in order for each person to apply them to the extent they feel comfortable; however, it is important to remember that participants believed the values of diversity and inclusion drive the work of student affairs. Therefore, it is vital to respect the diverse approaches that each professional will take to values adoption. Student affairs should hold up shared values, but the diversity of the profession's members means the enactment, prioritization, and adoption of said values will differ.

*Associations.* An additional implication of study findings for the profession offers considerations about how student affairs associations should emphasize student affairs values. Opportunities to examine values and practice their enactment can occur within trainings such as annual conference educational workshops, especially those geared toward graduate students and new professionals. Through educational workshops, study participants were reminded of student affairs priorities; for example, Alisha learned about veterans' services and social justice at 2010 NASPA, which helped her identify those as current priorities. There is a need to remind professionals that they conduct work grounded in common values and philosophies (Dalton, 1993; Reason & Broido, 2010). Professional development opportunities can serve as reminders as to what are and how we demonstrate student affairs values.

Finally, results reveal that learning about and demonstrating student affairs values occurs through a convergence of factors. Therefore, who is responsible for periodic review of the relevance of commonly held values? It is likely the responsibility of associations to determine and promote a set of shared professional values, because they play a primary role in socialization (Janosik, 2009) and provide shared experiences for those conducting student affairs work (Chernow et al., 2003; Evans & Ranero, 2009). Therefore, professional associations, particularly ACPA and NASPA, should declare bottom-line, not-optional values for its members. For

example, a student affairs professional should be committed to meeting the distinct needs of students and diverse populations. There is certainly a case made by Dalton (1993) and Young (2003) to identify common and “essential” values and revisit and revise those values (as needed, Young, 1993).

**Research.** This study was on graduate students – a population that appears to be relatively understudied in the overall student affairs literature. As a result of this study, there is increased knowledge about how graduate students are socialized to student affairs values and the factors that have had significant influence on such development.

*Values across the student affairs career.* This research can also be used as a framework to study student affairs values development of professionals. Over the course of the career-span, student affairs professionals differ in their approaches to work (Boehmer, 2007; Carpenter, 2003; Chernow et al., 2003). Increased attention to values development over the career span can continue to build on his model of long-term professional development in student affairs. Studying approaches to labeling and enacting student affairs values during different stages in one’s career could answer Young (1993), who asked if currently prioritized values are eternal or ephemeral. Such studies could also build on my finding that functional area and context influences the demonstration of values and the extent to which shared values are prioritized; do professionals who have worked in diverse contexts perceive differences of values? Another question might be, “does moving from a functional area to a more generalist role, as many mid-managers do (Boehman, 2007), influence perceptions of values?”

Researchers in the field of student affairs must be committed to future studies regarding values development across the collective profession. While professional competencies are often

the focus on student affairs research, values - principles that guide the work of the profession - have been minimally examined. It may be that values are often more abstract, but persons who work in student affairs have some idea about their professional philosophies and could probably explain their demonstration if asked. Asking such questions would be good for the profession.

***Revisiting previous research and addressing limitations.*** Results from this study may be also used to revisit surveys about professional values that have been used by Young and Elfrink (1993) and Tull and Medrano (2008). From this qualitative study, a broader quantitative effort, parallel to the work on new professionals done by Cilente et al. (2007), could emerge. As an undertaking, this effort would allow the profession to examine student affairs values development across different functional areas, institution types, and stages in one's career. The limitations found within all qualitative studies, such as a lack of generalizability, might be addressed by using study results to inform a more widely applied research initiative on professional values and their development for all of the profession.

### **Graduate Student Socialization**

**Practice.** This research may also provide value in the practical settings of graduate student education. As Weidman et al. (2001) emphasize, graduate programs are influenced by the culture of their profession and host institution; therefore, there are many diverse approaches to socialization in the graduate context. However, my findings provide a rationale for specific interventions such as increased reflection on professional values and the use of capstone courses.

***Application of a socialization model.*** Appendixes A and B provide a visualization of Weidman et al.'s (2001) process of socialization, highlighting influential factors and experiences across distinct stages as one completes education for a career. For those who attend to this

model as a means to structure intentional environments and support student socialization, my findings might provide insight into how to insert values education across the entire duration of graduate education. My study can provide ideas as to the salience of different factors in supporting values development. For instance, cohort-based programs may promote values differently than those without cohorts.

***Supporting the job search.*** Career services are pivotal to graduate students (Lehker & Furlong, 2006). My findings reinforce that the job search is a confusing time for graduate students. One part of the confusion was mixed messages about professional values. The job search was also an opportunity to reflect on and reaffirm professional values. An implication for graduate programs, particularly at the master's level, is that support and counseling is a basic need for students. Conversations about the job search in light of emerging beliefs about a profession, including fundamental values, are needed for graduate students to enter the professional realm with the necessary confidence.

***Support distinct needs of students; appreciate the common ground.*** There were findings that I believe provide a mixed message about the existing general graduate student socialization literature. First, assertions that socialization is not necessarily a shared process for all students, particularly different for students of color and other historically marginalized populations (Antony, 2002; Patton & Harper, 2003) is both reaffirmed and called to question by my research. While participants spoke of how their identity as a person of color (David), a gay person (Landon), or a first-generation student (Ali, Alisha, Ashley and Claire) informed their values, their perceptions of values did not differ from others. I interpreted identified values and modes of enactment are primarily shared despite demographics.



Second, my study brought forth a struggle between previously established values, particularly those of one's family, and those of the profession. While I cannot infer from participant responses that all felt tension between personal and professional values, responses from Ali, Ashley, Landon, and Maggie brought forth an important consideration: how do previous experiences, which inform individual values and ideologies, and new experiences in graduate education, which educate on professional values, intersect to socialize graduate students to prioritized and shared professional values when previous and emerging ideas about values are not complementary? This study provides evidence to assertions by Phelps Tobin (1998) and Young (1985) that graduate students in student affairs struggle with aligning personal and professional roles. Relative to research outside student affairs, the graduate student socialization literature explains values reconciliation as a pivotal process of degree pursuit (Weidman et al., 2001). Results from this study indicate the reconciliation of prior and emerging values is also a process of great reflection for graduate students in student affairs.

**Research.** Student affairs is one type of graduate education. While findings from this study cannot be widely applied across all professions, results support the literature on graduate student socialization and professional values development (Bragg, 1976; Conrad et al., 1998; Hirt & Muffo, 1998; Lehker & Furlong, 2006; Weidman et al., 2001). They also provide more evidence about some factors that influence perceptions of and demonstrations about a profession's values. For those who want to examine values development in other fields, particularly applied studies, they may use this research to see if specific factors identified in this study influenced values development in their context. For example, do guiding documents in the field of nursing, social work, or law influence the development of values in those areas?

Additionally, Weidman et al. (2001) explained graduate student socialization as having four stages (Appendix A) based on years of empirical research. They also conceptualize the process of socialization as a confluence of predispositions, experiences in the environment of the graduate education and overall profession, and the subsequent emergence as a professional (Appendix B). The authors emphasize values development as a part of the formal stage; however, participants in this study emphasized that conceptualizing professional values and learning how they are enacted occurs as early as entrance into the program. Future studies on broad graduate student socialization might be influenced by findings that values examination occurred prior to matriculation and throughout all aspects of the preparation experience.

## **Summary**

This section outlined implications for practice in and future research on student affairs graduate education, the student affairs profession, and general socialization through graduate work. Limitations were addressed. The research and practical implications of this study will likely be determined by readers as they consider results in light of their specific context and experiences; however, I believe this research has started the exploration of how graduate students come to learn, adopt, and demonstrate professional values. I hope study results can be useful for graduate program faculty and administrators, student affairs administrators and student affairs association leaders. As a result of applying the evidence from this study, I hope graduate students' beliefs about student affairs work become increasingly aligned with the profession's values prior to entrance into the field. In order to foster such attention to student affairs values, I have developed a collection of recommendations. Explaining these recommendations is the focus of the next part of this dissertation.

## **Recommendations for Student Affairs Preparation, Practice and Policy, and Research**

Ultimately, this research was conducted in order for student affairs professionals to be aware of graduate students' perceptions of the profession's values and how they enacted said values. Implications about the findings have been explained in the preceding pages.

Considering study findings and the potential influence these findings could have on the field of student affairs, it is necessary that those in the profession act on results; therefore, this section proposes recommendations in three areas: student affairs preparation programs, the practice and policies of the profession, and the study of student affairs.

### **Recommendations for Preparation Programs**

**1. Send clear messages about widely held student affairs values.** This study brought forth evidence that values held up in the literature (Young, 2003) and those perceived by graduate program participants were somewhat but not entirely aligned. Because it is important that student affairs values are known and enacted as a part of one's professional philosophy (Dalton, 1993; Reason & Broido, 2010; Young, 2003), graduate programs should provide messages about values that are unequivocal to student affairs work. Such messages should begin during the anticipatory process, even before students begin their pursuit of the degree, and should be revisited over the course of the students' participation in the preparation process.

**2. Recognize that the enactment of values, even those that are shared across the profession, will differ. Validate graduate participants' individual values and approaches to their enactment.** While this study brought forth interpreted values of the profession, participants had varying degrees of adoption of the values and different approaches to their enactment. Currently lacking accreditation or ongoing certification processes, student affairs is a profession that does not have a uniform way to enact its priorities. Programs should promote shared values while

respecting that all students will not consider values equally important. As found in the study, some students, such as Shauna, felt they could enact values of the profession because they generally believe in those values; however, they were at varying levels of appreciation and ownership. Providing the space to reflect on values does not mean programs should aim to indoctrinate.

**3. Provide early opportunities for students to examine alignment between personal and professional values.**

The literature indicates graduate program participants might not have personal values that are consistent with widely held values of the profession (Phelps Tobin, 1998). Findings in this study indicate most students have values consistent with the profession; however, participants faced some reconciliation of personal and professional values. Preparation programs can support values exploration, development, and demonstration by creating interventions early in the preparation experience that help students understand expected values and the means to which they might develop these values. For instance, as orientation is documented as an important part of socialization into graduate school (Poock, 2001; 2004) including an introductory session to professional values might be useful.

**4. Promote structured and self-directed values exploration throughout preparation.**

It is clear from findings that students used opportunities provided by the program as well as those they created in order to examine values. Program leadership can support student exploration and development of shared professional values through structured reflection, required practical experiences, purposeful engagement with faculty and supervisors, course experiences that examine both historical and emerging priorities, facilitating conversations with cohort members about values enactment in diverse functional areas and institutional contexts, and a culminating experience such as a capstone in which students synthesize lessons about the profession's values.

Because participants in this study explained the approach they were taking to integrate their personal and professional selves, program stakeholders can offer ideas as to how students can examine their demonstration of values outside of structured program experiences. As evident with the case of Allison, who prioritized her reflection in a different way than she believed her classmates to, and Ryan, who had conversations with peers he felt did not connect personal actions with student affairs values, reflection and conversation about values with colleagues outside of program activities should be promoted as a means to becoming a more aligned and integrated student affairs professional. Helping students develop strategies to engage friends and family who are not in the student affairs profession could also bring forth opportunities to better integrate students' sense of an integrated professional and personal self.

**5. Programs can partner with professional associations and the Council for the Advancement of Standards for clear messages about desired values and opportunities for ongoing education.**

Participants came from three distinct programs. What connects those in student affairs is some level of engagement in the associations of the profession. Therefore, associations emerge as a pivotal player in promulgating and educating on professional values. The diversity of associations in student affairs allows for professionals to connect based on generalist (ACPA, NASPA) and functional area (e.g. ACUI, AFA, NODA) interests.

Associations should have somewhat consistent values while respecting those that are particularly important to the functional area at hand. Because participants perceived that associations influence values development, creating specific conference tracks or trainings for graduate students might be an appropriate way for graduate program educators and administrators to partner within the broad profession to prepare students to adopt and enact a professional values base. Hosting webinars and developing resources might also be opportunities for associations to

work with student affairs program faculty and administrators on providing forums for learning professional values. Research on professional values is also an area in which preparation program faculty and association leaders might partner. Because CAS provides standards for a cross-section of functional areas that comprise student affairs and explains understanding the values of student affairs as part of enacting standards (CAS, 2009b; 2009c), the consortium can be seen as a partner in educating graduate students on professional values as well. Findings from this study certainly offer enough evidence to conclude that CAS was influential to graduate students as they developed ideas as to what are and how to enact the profession's values.

### **Recommendations for Professional Practice and Policy**

- 1. Convene an inter-association task force to determine approaches to the promulgation of values that are unequivocal to student affairs.** Associations tend to speak for the profession. Of course this voice is somewhat fragmented due to the current reality of having two primary professional associations and a collection of regional and functional area associations. In lieu of having only one professional association for all of student affairs (which I do not support other than consolidating ACPA and NASPA) it is important that associations come together to determine essential values and how these should be promoted across the diverse functions of the profession. While this charge would provide a distinct purpose, there may be opportunities to have representatives from CAS to serve on the task force.
- 2. Infuse values enactment into certification and accreditation processes.** While professionals must understand and apply laws and ethical principles, there are no policies that present specific approaches to enacting the student affairs profession. Student affairs as a collective profession has no certification or accreditation processes for its staff, which has

certainly been examined as a potential weakness for considering student affairs as a profession (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007). Such practices would likely create policies to guide the profession. Should the profession as a whole or specific functional areas explore certification processes, possessing and enacting a set of student affairs values could be an expectation.

- 3. Student affairs associations should ground actions, programs, resources, and services in professional values.** Should associations convey messages of unequivocal values through all programs, resources, and services, then members would be aware of these values and understand the individual and shared responsibility for their demonstration. Such messages should convey common values across all of student affairs and respect functional areas' inclination toward specific values.
- 4. Provide opportunities for values development, refinement, and strengthening across the career-span.** While pivotal to address values in graduate preparation, we know that professional development occurs over the span of one's student affairs career (Carpenter, 2003). As persons move from roles of mentee in the formative stage of student affairs work to mentor in the application and additive stages, student affairs professional development experiences can offer opportunities to move from student to perpetrator of the profession's values. Therefore, the profession should consider how to promote professional values exploration and recommitment/revision at distinct points in one's career. Conference sessions, professional institutes (e.g. the Donna Bourassa Mid-Level Management Institute of ACPA), publications, webinars, and other programs and resources can be grounded in core professional values.

**5. Divisions of student affairs should expect staff to know and demonstrate values and understand the contextualization of those values.** As Allison stated, persons are more likely to guide their work with professional values when there clear expectations to do so. This was also evident from the narratives of Cody and Ryan who moved from externally defined values to a more internally grounded set. There are high expectations for student affairs practice (ACPA & NASPA, 1997); there should also be an ethos throughout divisions of student affairs that professionals will guide their work with a set of professional values. This message should be stewarded by senior student affairs officers all the way down to colleague on the “front-lines” of student affairs work. Supervisors can ground conversations with staff on enacting values. Simple conversations between supervisors and staff might be grounded in questions similar to those that drove this study: What do you think are the values of student affairs? What drives those values? How have you learned to demonstrate those values? What are the ways you are demonstrating them in your work? What messages about student affairs values are conveyed by our distinctive institutional context? Annual goals submitted by staff could be structured with the division’s values in mind. Staff evaluations could have some aspect of performing values as a primary metric for good practice.

### **Recommendations for Research**

**1. Include research on student affairs values as a priority in an agenda for research on the profession.** If examining professional values, for graduate students and all others in the profession, were to be a priority, it would need to examine interpretations and demonstrations of the profession’s values broadly - at different points in the career-span and across functional areas and institutional contexts. A limitation of this study was small numbers of participants from specific functional areas: other than residence life, I had no more than three individuals from any



given functional area. Future research may dive deeper into how values of distinct student affairs functional areas are prioritized and demonstrated. Personally, I hope to pursue a longitudinal study with these participants as they progress in their careers. I am very curious about how their graduate education and participation in this study will affect their connection to professional values as professionals. Hopefully others who read this dissertation will discover their own curiosities about how student affairs promulgates its values and as a result readers will contribute to the body of research.

**2. Increase research on student affairs professional socialization broadly and within functional areas.** This research added to the body of literature on how a population of professionals experience socialization within student affairs. There is much more to learn about aspects of one's professional work, across the stages of student affairs work. Associations can be particularly helpful in providing forums for research on student affairs values. Focus groups at conferences are one convenient approach to collect perceptions of socialization across a cross-section of professionals.

### **Conclusion**

The preceding pages outlined the approach taken to study student affairs values development as a part of socialization to the profession. After a review of the literature, it was determined that the perspectives of graduate students about how they learned, internalized, and demonstrated professional values were missing. Using aspects of narrative inquiry and phenomenology to develop a research methodology, I collected perceptions of 17 students across three student affairs graduate programs. I analyzed their responses to determine shared perceptions of the profession's values and how they learned to enact these values. Additionally,

I inquired as to the influence of diverse functional areas on values development. Finally, the extent to which perceptions of values are aligned with existing literature was examined.

From the data, I interpreted 13 values shared among participants. Perceptions of values were somewhat congruent to those espoused in the literature but there were differences. The values are prioritized and enacted differently within diverse functional areas. Eleven different factors influenced how they came to demonstrate values perceived as important to student affairs. Connecting findings to the literature on student affairs graduate preparation, the student affairs profession and graduate student socialization, I determined study findings often supported existing literature, brought some beliefs about values to question, and filled research gaps about student affairs values development. The implications of this research were explained and recommendations, based on study findings and current literature, were provided.

For decades, scholars and professionals have examined student affairs values. Dalton (1993) wrote:

The central issue for student affairs leaders...is not *whether* they should advocate certain essential values but which values should be advocated and *how* these values can be advocated in a clear and intentional manner (p. 88, emphasis by author).

Dalton's words continue to ring true in modern-day student affairs. As Allison explained, identifying and enacting the profession's values is still a challenge for some:

For professionals to better connect their values to their work, they're going to have to clearly identify what those values are for themselves: I am not sure some people take the time to do that, so they could be going through their work day not really understanding their values and how they align with their work. For values to be more included within

the work of student affairs practitioners...clearly outlining them and then reaffirming those values through conversations and professional development...I think would help.

Results from this study offer student affairs scholars and practitioners with a new launch point for emphasizing professional values. I like to imagine Allison and others have infused reflection on values into their work. I hope they continue to consider how they demonstrate values as they interact with students. But for 17 participants to nurture, demonstrate, and promulgate student affairs values is only one objective of this research; I also hope these pages have provided inspiration for all professionals to use values as a guide for their work.

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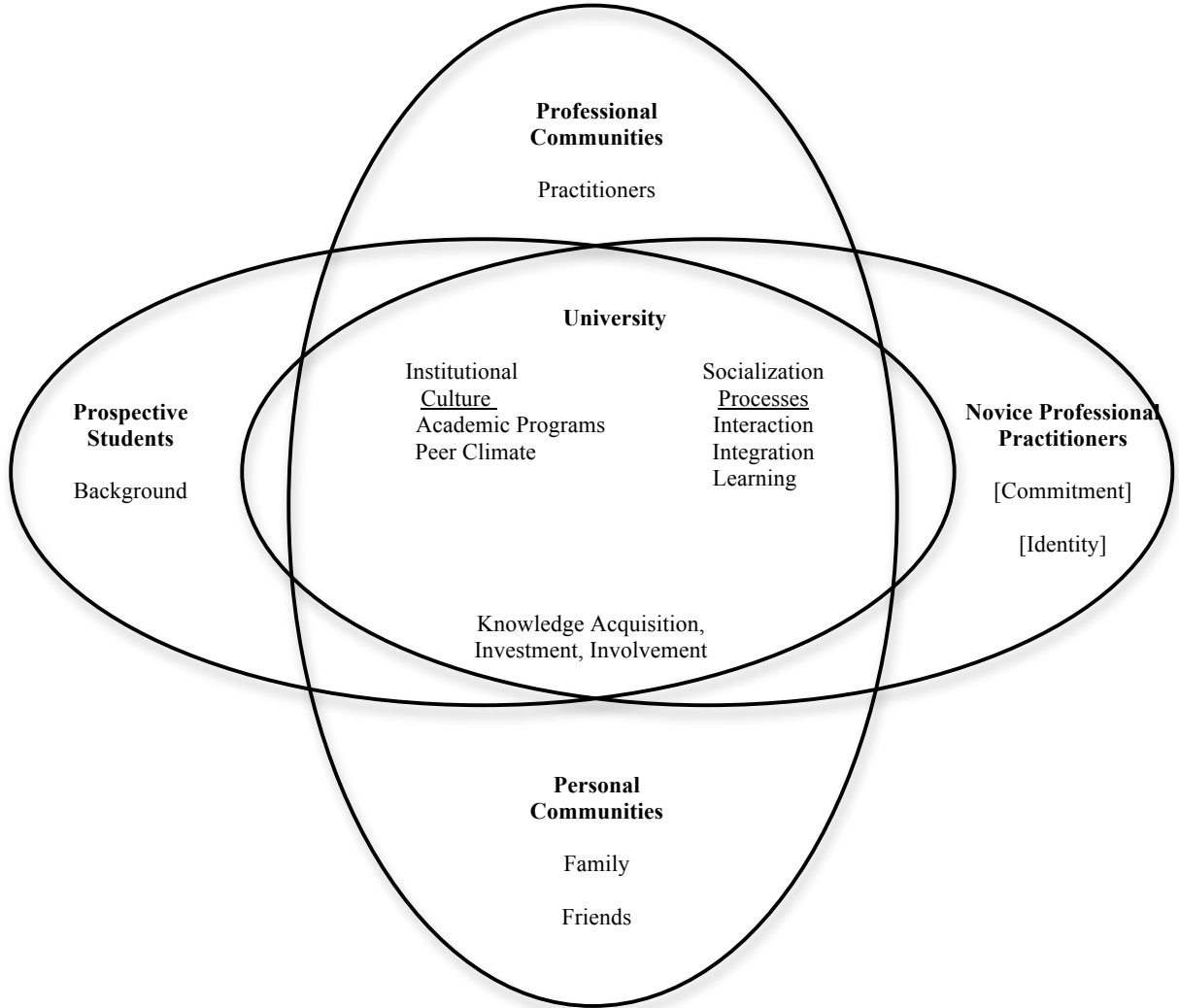
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## Appendix A: Weidman, Twale, and Stein's Socialization Process

<i>Stages</i>	<i>Core Objectives</i>			<i>Structural Engagement</i>
	Knowledge Acquisition	Investment	Involvement	Nature of Identity and Commitment
Anticipatory	Learns general role expectations through mass media and observations of role incumbents. Accuracy of knowledge a factor because of outsider status	States interest in role and its status by applying to/enrolling in school and rejecting career alternatives. Financial and temporal (full vs. part-time status) investment	Admission and matriculation create sense of involvement in role.	Identification is with stereotypical dimensions of role. Disengages from conflicting roles, other possible professional roles.
Formal	Didactic instruction primary source of knowledge of jargon, heritage, etiquette of role. Begins to achieve competence in required knowledge and skills. Expectations of dimensions clear. Understands why alternative roles/institutions were rejected.	Specialized knowledge, educational policies, social value of consistency, pride and self-esteem make change difficult. <b>Includes values attitudes, ethics and beliefs of the profession.</b>	Interactions provide chance to compare competence enacting roles and motives for entering profession. Reflects on performance. Demonstrates competence in some roles. Sometimes treated as role incumbent. Rites of passage include passing exams and internships.	Identifies with problems, ideology, motives, required normative dimensions of role. Seeks license or certification. Conducts research to advance a discipline, writes doctoral dissertation.
Informal	Learns informal (implicit) role expectations. Attains status within student, association or other informal group.	Tenure in role and sponsorship of incumbents and faculty make giving up role increasingly difficult. Claim of being in role forces novice to act as if it were true. Develop faculty-student bonds.	Increasing involvement with role incumbents helps learn implicit role dimensions. Participation in role activities increases sense of competence. Solidarity with other students	Increasing identification with personalized professional role. Interaction with professional practitioners.
Personal	Can perform cognitive dimensions of role with adequate skill and competence. Preparation for exams, oral defense of work, theses, dissertation.	Sponsorship based on professional competence as well as manner in which role tasks are performed. Heightens sense of obligation to meet expectations. One-on-one mentoring.	Increasing sense of solidarity with role incumbents. Clinical experience; joint presentations and publications with faculty.	Professional and personal role needs generally congruent. Claims "to be" a professional. Secure job in profession, ethical practice.

**Appendix B:**

**Weidman, Twale and Stein Model of Intersection of Stages and Socialization Factors**



**Stages of socialization:**  
Anticipatory, Formal, Informal, Personal

## **Appendix C:**

### **Epoche**

I believe my experience as a master's student at The University of Massachusetts from 1996-1998 influences my perceptions: Entering graduate work, I was immature, uninformed and did not understand my responsibility to help students learn versus being really good at planning events and programs. I entered the profession to continue having fun in the college context. I experienced great growth during my second year of master's work into my first year as a professional, but I still did not know how to balance life, work and responsibilities. My graduate program did not properly prepare me for life as a professional. I measured my value in terms of hours in the office. While I did good work, there were also periods of time during which I was likely ineffective and a poor role model for students.

While never perfect at their enactment, I developed a professional values base toward the end of my graduate work that helped me frame decisions as a professional. Because of this foundation, I tried to treat students with respect, monitored my professional behavior, and engaged students and others in collaborative processes. Early in my time as a professional, I became concerned with how my actions and those of peers were aligned with the values of the profession. While I could not have recited the specific values of the profession, I came to understand what I felt were expectations of student affairs work.

My work as a master's student supervisor, a teaching assistant in an introductory student affairs class, and an instructor to master's students in a practicum course that emphasized reflection on students' experiences influences my perception of how students come to make sense of the profession and become professional. I have interacted with master's students as a

professional and as a doctoral student. Throughout this time, I witnessed students struggle with the work of student affairs.

I believe my experience as the only doctoral student in a course with 30 other master's students during the first semester of their second year has influenced my thoughts about how these students make sense of student affairs work and its priorities. I left the course concerned about the quality of many of these students' work in student affairs.

I know it is hard for me to talk about student affairs graduate education without conviction for what I believe needs to be done to better prepare students to one-day work in the profession. I believe the profession needs to do more to help graduate students align professional expectations with reality, understand the responsibility to support student development and learning, and make their own personal and professional actions more congruent with widely held beliefs of appropriate professional practice.

Therefore, this epoche documents my beliefs about student affairs, graduate education for the profession, and the students in these programs.

### ***Beliefs about student affairs***

I believe the student affairs values base is not well articulated to professionals.

I would like to see professionals make a public commitment to demonstrating the profession's values, conducting themselves in an ethical way, and continued ongoing development to be effective in interactions with students.

I believe student affairs functional areas prioritize values differently and also demonstrate some distinctive to their work. I am not sure if this is something that is “good” or “bad,” but I believe it influences how people view the profession’s collective values.

If I were to quantify the quality of our profession, I would say 80% are quality individuals who are clear on the purpose of student affairs. The other 20% may actually hinder the learning and development of the students with whom they work. I believe anyone who understands and chooses to live by the profession’s espoused values likely will perform quality work and positively impact students. I believe understanding the values development process from the perspectives of master’s students is one way to create better socialization practices that will help them become better professionals.

I believe the literature on how students learn from and reflect on graduate experiences needs expansion. This is particularly so in the area of professional values development.

I believe learning how student affairs professionals understand the profession’s values should be a foremost priority in the profession’s research agenda. Therefore, I have come to very much value the work of Robert Young and am very influenced by his writings.

### ***Beliefs about graduate education in student affairs***

I believe graduate education in student affairs is, for the most part, essential to work in the profession.

I believe student affairs master’s education intends to prepare students for work as practitioners. Secondary to this function are developing the competencies of assessment, research and teaching in the student affairs context.



I believe, for the most part, persons with responsibility to educate master's students for entrance into student affairs do very good work and educate students, in and out of the classroom, as to what matters to student affairs work.

I believe graduate education in student affairs does not attend sufficiently to helping students learn, internalize and demonstrate professional values. Of particular importance is emphasizing values development as a core outcome of student affairs education.

I believe student supervisors in the professional setting could also be more intentional in helping students learn, internalize and demonstrate professional values. This could strengthen how students view the profession's values as a core part of their work in specific functional areas.

I believe student supervisors in the professional setting can do more to help students learn and reflect on the necessary competencies to enact work in student affairs.

I believe that student affairs program faculty and assistantship/internship/practicum supervisors often send different messages about what is important in student affairs, which confuses students about their purpose and role.

I believe student affairs preparation programs can be more intentional about aligning educational experiences with the needed competencies of the profession (e.g. ACPA Core Competencies).

***Beliefs about the students who enter graduate education in student affairs***

I believe students who aspire to work in student affairs may be some of the most passionate and committed people in the world. They intend to make a difference in the lives of college students.

I believe students aspiring to enter student affairs may enter because they want to continue their involvement in the college setting and bring with them ideas of what constitutes good out of

classroom experiences based on their own undergraduate experiences. I am not sure such expectations properly prepare them for the expectations of mid-managers and senior student affairs professionals.

I believe students entering graduate education are rarely mature enough for such academic pursuits and their ability to work with diverse others is even more significant of a problem.

I believe master's students lack professional experience entering the program and this impacts their work in assistantships and without good oversight they carry misinformed ideas of work into their first student affairs professional work.

I believe most students entering student affairs graduate work share the profession's values or have some idea that what the profession does is something they themselves can do.

I believe dissonance likely occurs if personal and professional values do not align. Students often work reconcile this lack of alignment as a part of student affairs education.

I believe most students experience great growth during master's education; however this growth varies to a great degree and influences professional philosophies and the ability to work in the profession. This results in a lack of shared understanding about the role of student affairs.

I believe master's students preparing to enter student affairs are too practitioner focused, disregarding research and scholarly work as part of day-to-day life in student affairs. While I do not see scholarly work as the primary part of student affairs work, the extent to which some downright disregard this work can negatively influence the profession.

I believe students often do not understand the value and role of professional colleagues outside of the immediate cohort, particularly in professional associations.

I believe graduate students make poor decisions during graduate work; if they are not addressed they will carry those decisions into their professional work.

I believe master's students can point to the literature to say what the profession's values are but have difficulty in describing them. It is likely they also have difficulty enacting them.

I believe master's students may not be aware of the literature on professional values. This may be dependent on program priorities, which differ across contexts.

I believe master's students are not intentional about deep exploration of how they learned, internalized and came to demonstrate professional values.

**Appendix D:**  
**Contact Points for Research Project**

*Initial Project Title:*

*Learning, Internalizing, and Demonstrating Professional Values*

*Within Student Affairs Graduate Education*

- C1. Email to Program Contact
- C2. Email to Potential Participants
- C3. Email to Program Contact to ask for continued promotion (sent if I have less than four participants from each program within 10 days of sending the first contact).
- C4. Email to Potential Participants if I have less than four per campus 10 days after first email
- C5. Email to participant once they contact me
- C6. Email to participant after first interview.
- C7. Email to participant to confirm second interview – sent within five days of appointment.
- C8. Email to participant after second interview.
- C9. Email to campus contact at conclusion of research
- C10. Email to participants once dissertation is complete

### **C1. Email to Program Contact**

Dear NAME OF PROGRAM CONTACT,

Thank you for agreeing to serve as my contact for NAME OF INSTITUTION. The email below can be passed on to students in your program for participation in my study. I am also happy to provide copies in paper format for dissemination at a class. Any support you can provide to encourage participation in this research is appreciated. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

## C2. Email to Potential Participants

Dear NAME OF PROGRAM Student at NAME OF INSTITUTION,

This email is sent to solicit your involvement in my dissertation research to complete requirements in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Doctoral Program at Indiana University. The Indiana University Human Subjects Committee (INSERT STUDY NUMBER) and the NAME OF INSTITUTION Human Subjects Committee (INSERT STUDY NUMBER) have approved this study. The working title is *Learning, Internalizing and Demonstrating Professional Values within Student Affairs Graduate Education*

My research is a qualitative study on the phenomenon of professional values development by second-year student affairs graduate education students. This research is being conducted at three distinct graduate programs and aims to capture the shared experience of learn internalizing and demonstrating student affairs values. I believe this work will inform the student affairs profession as to how values development can be strengthened during graduate education.

Four questions guide this research:

- What are the perceptions of student affairs values by second-year students in a student affairs graduate program during their final semester?
- How do students' perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?
- How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate student affairs values? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?
- What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?

The expectation of participants will be two interviews during February and March. The interviews will be 60-80 minutes long and can be conducted at a location and time convenient for you. Participants will review texts I create based on our two interviews. This will help ensure the accuracy of my work. I expect that interviews and texts review will take five hours combined.

As a thank you, each participant will receive a \$50 gift card for Amazon.Com. The gift card will be provided upon review of the second interview text.

Please indicate your interest to participate by contacting me at [dabureau@indiana.edu](mailto:dabureau@indiana.edu) by February 15th. The research is conducted under the guidance of a committee chaired by Dr. Vasti Torres. She can be contacted at [vatorres@indiana.edu](mailto:vatorres@indiana.edu) if you have questions or concerns.

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C3. Email to Program Contact to ask for continued promotion (sent if I have less than four participants from each program within 10 days of sending the first contact).**

Dear NAME OF PROGRAM CONTACT,

Thank you for agreeing to serve as my contact for NAME OF INSTITUTION. At this time, I have had NUMBER contacts from students in your program. My goal is four to six. I am hopeful you can forward the email below encouraging students to participate in this study. Any support you can provide to encourage participation in this research is appreciated. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

#### **C4. Email to Potential Participants if I have less than four 10 days after first email**

Dear NAME OF PROGRAM Student at NAME OF INSTITUTION,

On DATE OF FIRST EMAIL, I sent the email below soliciting participation in my dissertation research project, tentatively titled *Learning, Internalizing and Demonstrating Professional Values within Student Affairs Graduate Education*. Please consider participation in this important research project, which can help inform student affairs graduate programs about the experiences of their students and improve the socialization process into the profession. Participants will receive a \$50 gift card to Amazon.com.

While the original email indicated February 15<sup>th</sup> as a date by which participants should contact me, I have extended this deadline. I would like to have participants confirmed by February 20<sup>th</sup>. Please contact me with questions about participation. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

Dear NAME OF PROGRAM Student at NAME OF INSTITUTION,

This email is sent to solicit your involvement in my dissertation research to complete requirements in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Doctoral Program at Indiana University. The Indiana University Human Subjects Committee (INSERT STUDY NUMBER) and the NAME OF INSTITUTION Human Subjects Committee (INSERT STUDY NUMBER) have approved this study. The working title is *Learning, Internalizing and Demonstrating Professional Values within Student Affairs Graduate Education*

My research is a qualitative study on the phenomenon of professional values development by second-year student affairs graduate education students. This research is being conducted at three distinct graduate programs and aims to capture the shared experience of learn internalizing and demonstrating student affairs values. I believe this work will inform the student affairs profession as to how values development can be strengthened during graduate education.

Four questions guide this research:

- What are the perceptions of student affairs values by second-year students in a student affairs graduate program during their final semester?
- How do students' perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?
- How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate student affairs values? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents



of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?

- What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?

The expectation of participants will be two interviews during February and March. The interviews will be 60-80 minutes long and can be conducted at a location and time convenient for you. Participants will review texts I create based on our two interviews. This will help ensure the accuracy of my work. I expect that interviews and text reviews will take five hours combined.

As a thank you, each participant will receive a \$50 gift card for Amazon.Com. The gift card will be provided upon review of the second interview text.

Please indicate your interest to participate by contacting me at [dabureau@indiana.edu](mailto:dabureau@indiana.edu) by February 15th. The research is conducted under the guidance of a committee chaired by Dr. Vasti Torres. She can be contacted at [vatorres@indiana.edu](mailto:vatorres@indiana.edu) if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C5. Email to participant once they contact me**

Dear NAME OF STUDENT,

Thank you so much for your decision to participate in my study, *Learning, Internalizing and Demonstrating Professional Values within Student Affairs Graduate Education*.

I live in Indianapolis, so I am trying to coordinate interviews at NAME OF INSTITUTION during a time that I can drive and spend a couple of days on campus. Right now, I would like to coordinate a time to meet sometime during DAYS AND POTENTIAL TIMES. I can be flexible with this schedule if this will not work for you.

The first interview takes 60 minutes. The second interview will last about 75 minutes. Please let me know by February XX if there is a time that will work for you on DAYS AND POTENTIAL TIMES.

Also, please let me know of a location at which we can meet.

I am grateful for your time and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C6. Email to participant after first interview.**

Dear NAME OF STUDENT,

Thank you so much for taking time for an interview with me on DAY AND TIME WE MET. As you're aware, this research may be important to the future of student affairs graduate education and the socialization process of future professionals into student affairs. Your participation supports efforts to better understand the process through which graduate students come to learn, internalize and demonstrate the values of the student affairs profession.

I created the attached narrative based on our interview. True to my methodological approach, I took the transcription of our interview and turned it into a story of your perspectives on student affairs and its values. Please review within the next week to let me know if I have accurately captured our time together. I will assume the text accurately reflects our interview if you do not reply with changes.

At the end of our interview, we scheduled our second meeting for NAME AND DATE THAT IS AT LEAST TWO WEEKS FROM TIME THIS IS SENT. We will meet at NAME OF LOCATION.

The second interview takes 60 minutes. I am grateful for your time and look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C7. Email to participant to confirm second interview – sent within five days of appointment.**

Dear NAME OF STUDENT,

Thank you so much for taking time to be involved in my research on values development of student affairs graduate students. As you are aware, this research may be important to the future of student affairs graduate education and the socialization process of future professionals into student affairs. Your participation supports efforts to better understand the process through which graduate students learn, internalize and demonstrate professional values in student affairs.

IF APPLICABLE, THANK THEM FOR THEIR RESPONSE REGARDING THE TEXT. IF THEY DID NOT RESPOND, THEN INDICATE NOTHING.

At the end of our interview, we scheduled our second meeting for DATE AND TIME. We will meet at NAME OF LOCATION. The second interview takes 60 minutes. Please let me know as soon as possible if you cannot make this meeting. I am grateful for your time and look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C8. Email to participant after second interview.**

Dear NAME OF STUDENT,

Thank you so much for taking time for an interview with me on DAY AND TIME WE MET. As you're aware, this research may be important to the future of student affairs graduate education and the socialization process of future professionals into student affairs. Your participation supports efforts to better understand the process through which graduate students come to learn, internalize and demonstrate the values of the student affairs profession.

I created the attached narrative based on our interview. True to my methodological approach, I took the transcription of our interview and turned it into a story of your perspectives on student affairs and its values. Please review by the end of next week to let me know if I have accurately captured our time together. I will assume the text accurately reflects our interview if you do not reply with changes. Once I hear from you, I will order your \$50 gift card to Amazon.com.

Your involvement and contributions have been so important to this process. I cannot thank you enough.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

### **C9. Email to campus contact at conclusion of research**

Dear NAME OF CONTACT,

Nine months ago you committed to helping me conduct a research process to examine the socialization process for student affairs graduate students during their second-year. That broad focus became examining how students learn, internalize and demonstrate values development in student affairs graduate education. I am writing to thank you once again for your time and effort in helping me conduct this research.

During February and March, I interviewed NUMBER OF students across three programs on two occasions. I am now in the data compilation and analysis phase. I hope to be done by August, though plan to pursue full-time work immediately.

Please let me know if you would like to receive a copy of my dissertation. Also, as a thank you I am sending along a gift card for \$20 to Amazon.Com. I appreciate the time you have given me and look forward to interacting with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

**C10. Email to participants once dissertation is complete. Blind copied and campus contacts blind copied as well.**

Dear NAME OF PARTICIPANT,

Back in February 2010 we began a journey to examine the process through which student affairs graduate students learn, internalize and demonstrate values as a part of socialization into student affairs during graduate education. Your participation was integral to helping me conduct this research project.

I am pleased to inform you that I recently defended the dissertation and have graduated from the Indiana University Higher Education and Student Affairs Doctoral Program. It has been a long journey, but one that I have valued greatly. I am currently working at FILL IN WHAT I AM DOING.

Please let me know if you would like a copy of my dissertation.

I hope your job search has worked out well for you and that your hopes and dreams can be realized in the student affairs profession. Please let me know if you need any advice or support as your transition to life as a professional. I hope our paths cross in the future!

Sincerely,

Dan Bureau  
Doctoral Candidate  
Higher Education and Student Affairs  
Indiana University

## **Appendix E: Protocol and Questions for Interviews**

### **Interview One**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Collect demographic information.
2. Understand the student's rationale for pursuit of a student affairs graduate degree.
3. Collect the student's perception of student affairs broadly.
4. Collect the student's perception of graduate education experience broadly.
5. Collect student impressions of the profession's values.
6. Examine student perceptions of values versus those espoused (Young, 2003).
7. Begin to collect perceptions of how they have learned the profession's values.

#### **Process:**

The first interview will take 60 minutes. It will occur around middle of February.

The interview will occur in a location to be determined that is convenient for the participant.

#### **Overall research questions:**

**Questions asked should help answer these questions and should be based on the literature. Each interview question is connected to at least one of these questions and designated as such by the label of (Q1, Q2, Q3 and/or Q4).**

Q1: What are the perceptions of student affairs values by second-year students in a student affairs graduate program during their final semester?

Q2: How do students' perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?

Q3: How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate student affairs values? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?

Q4: What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?

Part of interview one is to ask questions broad in nature in order to better understand their rationale for the profession. These are asked to break the ice but also to collect information about values that may be less explicit but explain their individual stories in graduate education and entering the profession. I believe these questions may bring forth interesting information about how they learn, internalize and demonstrate values in a more implicit manner.

#### **Interview One Process (time taken/total time):**

Introductions and overview of the research questions and process (Appendix B in IRB) (5/5)

Review and sign informed consent form (Appendix C in IRB) (7/12)

Collect demographic information (below) (3/15)



Request to record the interview (1/16)

Ask interview questions (below) (40/56)

Wrap-up and schedule next interview (4/80)

### **Preparation for, Conducting of, and Interpretation of Interview**

Before interview one, I will write my epoché. This will be revisited during analysis. After interview one, I will transcribe content to develop a narrative discussion, which explains the student's perspective and my interpretation thereof. My own subjective interpretation of student affairs will be revisited and infused into the narrative as appropriate. I will send the narrative discussion to the participant for review prior to interview two. Students will have a week to review. Interview one concepts and subsequent feedback will be integrated into interview two.

## Demographic information Sheet

Name:

Assistantship:

Gender:

Ethnicity:

Undergraduate Institution:

Undergraduate involvement:

Interests in student affairs work:

Please select three potential pseudonyms for use in my dissertation:

## Questions – Interview One

*After all responses, probe and follow up as needed. Understand the spirit of human subjects research and respect participants as you ask follow-up questions.*

*Questions are listed by objective and may not be asked in this exact order; however, as an order is determined it will be used for all interviews.*

### **Focus of interview: Why student affairs?**

Why did you choose to pursue graduate study in student affairs?

### **Focus of interview: Perceptions of graduate education.**

What made you choose this program?

Think about your perceptions of student affairs when you entered the program compared to now. How have your thoughts about the profession changed or evolved since you started the program? (Q3, Q4).

What stands out as the most important lesson you've learned since you enrolled in this student affairs graduate program? (Q1, Q3)

### **Focus of interview: Perceptions of profession.**

In what areas do you have interest in working in student affairs? What experiences influence your desire to work in these areas? (Q4)

How have you been involved in the student affairs profession outside of your program? (Q3)

What are your biggest concerns about entrance into the profession?

What most excites you about entrance into the profession?

### **Focus of interview: Understanding student perceptions of student affairs values.**

What do you believe to be the professional values of student affairs? (Q1, Q2)

Why do you believe these to be the values of the field? (Q1, Q3, Q4)

What skills or competencies do you think are most necessary for work in student affairs? (Q3, Q4)

How do you see the profession's values reflected in these competencies? (Q3, Q4)

### **Focus of interview: Understanding how they have learned student affairs values.**

What have influenced your perceptions of the student affairs profession's values? (Q3, Q4)

How have the profession's values informed your approach to work in student affairs? (Q1, Q3, Q4)

## Interview Two

### Objectives:

This interview has a particular emphasis on how students internalize and demonstrate values.

1. Revisit interview one. Does she/he have questions about narrative description? I can ask any specific questions based on interview one content.
2. Further understand the student's process of learning student affairs values
3. Further understand how individuals and program structures influence professional values development
4. Understand how students came to internalize a set of student affairs values.
5. Understand examples of how the student demonstrates student affairs values.
6. Discuss understanding of espoused student affairs values per Young (2003).
7. Establish an open line of communication for the participant and the researcher post the research project completion. This is done in the case I pursue this as a line of continued research and may want to interview these participants as professionals.

### Process:

The second interview will take 75 minutes. It will occur around the first and second week of March. The interview will occur in a location to be determined that is convenient for the participant. Possibly at NASPA or ACPA.

### Overall research questions:

**Questions asked should help answer these questions and should be based on the literature. Each interview question is connected to at least one of these questions and designated as such by the label of (Q1, Q2, Q3 and/or Q4).**

Q1: What are the perceptions of student affairs values by second-year students in a student affairs graduate program during their final semester?

Q2: How do students' perceptions align with espoused student affairs values (Young, 2003)?

Q3: How do students learn, internalize and demonstrate student affairs values? Specifically, how do program and professional structures and determined agents of socialization including faculty, staff, cohort members and professional colleagues influence the process of values development?

Q4: What, if any, differences of perceptions of student affairs values exist based on functional area?

### Interview Two Process (time taken/total time):

Request to record the interview (1/1)

REVIEW: Revisit last interview (15/16)

Move to questions below, which emphasize internalizing and demonstrating values (30/55)

Wrap-up and discuss provision of Amazon.Com certificate (5/60)

### **Preparation for, Conducting of, and Interpretation of Interview**

Prior to interview two, I will review interview one narrative (including student feedback) to determine additional questions. After interview two, I will transcribe the content to develop a narrative discussion, which explains the individual student's perspective and my interpretation thereof. My own subjective interpretation of student affairs will be revisited and infused into the narrative as appropriate. I will send the narrative discussion to the participant for review, giving her/him one week for feedback. Clarification will be addressed over email or phone.

## Questions - Interview Two

*After all responses, probe and follow up as needed. Understand the spirit of human subjects research and respect participants as you ask follow-up questions.*

*Questions are listed by objective and may not be asked in this exact order; however, as an order is determined it will be used for all interviews.*

### **Focus of interview: Review**

Let's revisit our conversation from the last meeting. (I ask follow ups based on narrative discussion content). (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)

Anything else you'd like to talk about regarding our last meeting?

### **Focus of interview: Further understand process of learning values.**

Let's talk a little more in depth about how you have come to learn, internalize and demonstrate student affairs values. (Q2, Q3, Q4)

Probe: Let's talk a little more about how you perceive student affairs values to be demonstrated by others? Faculty, staff, students, colleagues.

How has course work helped you learn student affairs values? (Q3)

How has the assistantship helped you learn student affairs values? (Q3, Q4)

In what other practical experiences have you participated? What have you learned from these experiences about the values of the student affairs field? (Q3, Q4)

How do you think graduate programs convey messages about the profession's values? Explain any differences you might think exist between how your program educates you on professional values versus other programs. (Q1, Q3, Q4)

How have professional associations influenced how you learned student affairs values? (Q3, Q4)

Please explain how fellow professionals influence your learning of the profession's values (Q3, Q4)

### **Focus of interview: Internalizing and demonstrating values.**

Tell me about your personal values. (Q1, Q2, Q3)

Have these changed since you began this program? How? (Q3, Q4)

How do you think your personal values connect to student affairs values? (Q1, Q3, Q4)

Have you encountered an experience that brought you into conflict between personal and student affairs values? Explain. (Q3, Q4)

Tell me about a time in which you demonstrated student affairs values. (Q1, Q3, Q4)

Probing question: what have you taken from that experience that might inform how you will one-day work as a professional?

Can you summarize your own journey from the beginning of this program to today in terms of how you have learned, internalized and demonstrated student affairs' values?

**Focus of Interview: Understand influences of functional area.**

You're conducting a job search for a professional position. How do you think the profession's values influence life as a professional? How do you think they will influence your work as a professional? (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)

What kinds of positions are you looking for? What values do you think are most important for each position? (Q4)

How do the values of (FILL IN THE FUNCTIONAL AREA) compare to values in other aspects of student affairs? (Q4)

Any other thoughts on student affairs values and master's education?

**We will close with information about the receipt of their incentive upon review of the last narrative discussion.**

**Curriculum Vita**  
**DANIEL A. BUREAU**

**EDUCATION**

***Indiana University, Bloomington Indiana***                      September 2006-February, 2011

Doctor of Philosophy, Higher Education Student Affairs

Passed Qualifying Exams: May 2009

Dissertation Defense Date: January 31, 2011

Dissertation topic was socialization to professional values in a student affairs master's program.

Completed courses on areas such as assessment, qualitative research, educational research methods, student affairs administration, higher education policy, and environmental theory.

Minor in Public Administration through the School for Public and Environmental Affairs

***The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign***                      September 2002-May 2005

Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Organization and Leadership:

Higher Education Administration

Completed six courses on topics including student development, program evaluation, and organizational behavior

***The University of Massachusetts Amherst***    September 1996-May 1998

Master of Education, Higher Education Policy, Research & Administration

**University Of New Hampshire Durham**    September 1990-May 1995

Bachelor of Arts, Communications and English

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

***Doctoral Associate,***  
***Center for the Study of the College Fraternity, Indiana University*** August 2009-February 2011

Coordinate client participation in Fraternity and Sorority Experience Survey (FSES)

Manage relationship with Center for Survey Research and develop reports from survey data

Help clients develop survey protocol and promote survey participation

Aid in managing Center functions such as communication with board, budget process, and membership solicitation

(Continued)



***Educational consultant (individual proprietor)***

July 2006-present

Helped Indiana University Division of Student Affairs develop divisional assessment plan

Led assessment and strategic planning processes with the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Center for Service and Learning and Indiana Campus Compact, an organization focused on service-learning

Served as strategic planner for fraternity/sorority communities at five campuses and one professional fraternity

Conducted document analysis to inform policy review for student organizations at an institution in Texas

Facilitate leadership retreats/keynotes for students at diverse institutions; coached students in the development of individual and organizational leadership goals often emphasizing collaboration across student organizations

Coordinated and hosted webinars on innovation, collaboration, values, and anti-hazing

Developed curriculum and led facilitation for the Fraternal Relevance Institute, a three day institute for 50 participants focused on examining the role of fraternities and sororities in higher education (May 2008)

***Program Facilitator, CAMPUSPEAK***

May 2001 – June 2010

Facilitated programs on community building, collaboration, diversity, anti-hazing, and values

Developed anti-hazing resource for national dissemination; served as primary editor

***Client Services Assistant, Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) at Indiana University***

July 2008-July 2009

Managed consortium participation in National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Served as assistant manager of eight project associates; supported Center operations

Created curriculum for and organized educational webinars to help clients with NSSE administration

Participated as part of a team of staff members to support NSSE implementation at Minority Serving Institutions

Helped with day-long institute to support institutional use of NSSE; served as presenter and part of planning team

Worked on Center publications; responsible for developing and editing publications  
(Continued)

***Project Associate, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at Indiana University***

July 2006-July 2008

Worked as part of Client Services Team to support mission of national survey focused on student learning

Served over 250 clients in survey implementation and plans to use data

Managed registration and administration for 20 consortia and state or university systems

Coordinated efforts to create organizational policy and managed aspects of strategic plan

Authored articles on efficacy of administration modes, increasing response rates and working with student affairs divisions to promote participation

Developed webinars to support client administration and promotion of the NSSE survey

***Assistant Dean of Students, Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) The University of Illinois***

July 2001 – July 2006

Enhanced student learning and development through advising fraternity/sorority community leaders

Supported mission of ODOS through the advancement of fraternity/sorority life programs

Fostered collaboration with alumni and graduate members, international headquarters, and parents to assist in the forward progression of fraternities and sororities

Supervised two full-time and two graduate staff members; conducted annual staff evaluations

Advised four governing councils with particular attention to values-based programming, building community and campus policies and standards

Advised 100 organizations consisting of over 6,300 students; coached leaders on individual/organizational goals

Coordinated and facilitated retreats on issues such as community building, diversity, and values

Consulted with Associate Dean on budget matters; aided four governing councils with budget-related issues

Applied quantitative and qualitative assessment methods to investigate experiences of fraternity/sorority members; used Educational Benchmarking instrument and conducted hundreds of meetings to determine salient issues

Developed weekly educational newsletter distributed to chapters, alumni and national offices

Represented ODOS at summer orientation sessions; interacted with new students and parents  
(Continued)

Collaborated with neighborhood businesses and associations, New Student and Parent Programs/Orientation, Residence Life and Certified Housing, Volunteer Programs, McKinley Health Center, Career Center, Office for Conflict Resolution, Registered Student Organization Office, Public Safety, Illinois Leadership Center (ILC), and LGBTQA Support

Served on committees for safety, alcohol education, HIV/AIDS, leadership programs, new student convocation, eating disorders, LGBTQA issues, student conduct, and housing appeals

Served twice a semester as Emergency Dean; aided in walk-in “dean on duty” matters

Served on Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Strategic Planning Team; led ODOS strategic planning efforts

Volunteered for over 10 different student-focused educational experiences that addressed community standards and leadership such as “Ethics in Action” and ILC Programs; served as leadership coach to students

***Student Activities Advisor, Student Activities Center  
The University of New Mexico***

June 1998 – May 2001

Participated as member of dynamic Student Activities Center team to promote student learning through fraternity/sorority and leadership development programs

Worked with partners to increase students’ understanding of risk/crisis management

Coordinated Up ‘til Dawn, a philanthropic event for St. Jude’s Children’s hospital

Facilitated leadership programs for campus community on topics including team building, group dynamics, conflict management, ethical development, organizational culture, personal styles inventories, and diversity

Advised Golden Key National Honor Society; assisted in planning efforts to induct several hundred new members

Managed budgets for Fraternity/Sorority Life, Leadership, and Golden Key Honor Society

Supervised Coordinator for Greek Life, front-office manager, and student employees; conducted staff evaluations

Worked with new student orientation to host activities fair; conducted presentations for students and parents

***Interfraternity Council Advisor, Dean of Students Office  
The University of Massachusetts Amherst***

August 1996 – May 1998

Advised 12 men’s fraternities on chapter operations

Advised Interfraternity Council Executive Board  
(Continued)

***Student Services Graduate Assistant, Student Activities Office***      May – August 1997  
***New Hampshire College***

Organized activities and handled discipline cases for 200 international summer students

Assessed student experience; compiled reports to offices and discussed strategies for improving practice

***ADDITIONAL TEACHING AND TRAINING EXPERIENCE***

***Teaching Assistant***      August – December 2008

***U544 – Introduction to Student Affairs***

***Indiana University, Higher Education/Student Affairs Master's Program***

Aided in the development and management of course for 40 masters students

Reviewed and provided feedback on student journals, papers, and class presentations

Mentored students on student affairs issues across a wide range of functional areas

***Course Facilitator***      January – May, 2007

***U547 – Student Practicum***

***Indiana University, Higher Education/Student Affairs Master's Program***

Facilitated eight week course to discuss practicum experiences of seven students

Organized course session discussion, small group activities, and graded papers

Approached work as a mentor and career coach to aid students in processing graduate experience and job search

***Facilitator, Illinois Leadership Center Insight Program***      January 2004, 2005, 2006,  
***The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign***      2007, 2008

Served as lead facilitator for program on emotional intelligence and leadership (2006-2008)

Trained team of small group facilitators on curriculum including a focus on effective facilitation strategies (2006-2008)

Supported program success through facilitating learning for 9-12 participants (2004-2005)

***Course Facilitator, Program on Intergroup Relations***      September 2005-May 2006  
***The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign***

Developed curriculum to facilitate conversations and collaboration among diverse student populations

Focused on issues of diversity, change agency, and empowering students to actively create communication between different populations on a large dynamic campus

(Continued)

***Course Facilitator, First-Year Impact*** September 2005- May 2006  
***The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign***

Served as facilitator for first-year student transition program

Coordinated workshops on topics such as campus involvement, diversity, leadership, and time management

***Interfraternity Institute***  
***Fraternity Executives Association (FEA)***

Facilitator: led educational programs July 2003, 2006, 2007, 2010  
Fellow: mentored 15 young professionals for four days July 2005  
Institute Participant July 1999

***North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)***

IMPACT facilitator (DePauw University): led small group discussions on values based leadership March 2003

Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute facilitator: led small group discussions on values based leadership June 1999, 2002

***Facilitator, Exploring Leadership*** August - December 2000  
***The University of New Mexico, University Honors Program***

Facilitated discussions related to leadership development for 16 honors students

Developed syllabus/curriculum for course that included topics of diversity, values and community building

***Teaching Assistant, Leadership in Changing Times &*** August 1997 – May 1998  
***Leadership in Action***  
***The University of Massachusetts Amherst, Higher Education***

Assisted in the creation of and co-facilitation of two comprehensive leadership courses

Conducted research on student involvement and leadership development

**RELATED PROFESSIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT AFFAIRS EXPERIENCE (alphabetical order)**

***ACPA Mid-Management Institute*** January 2006  
***Program Participant***

Participated in institute to increase competence in areas such as financial management, strategic planning, professional/personal balance, assessment and research, enacting learning environments and diversity; developed strategic plan for my professional development as a student affairs practitioner

(Continued)

***Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA)***  
***Executive Board Member***

*Past President*

December 2004 –2005

Served on Personnel Committee

Managed nominations/elections process

Supervised Awards and Recognition Committee Chair

Led effort to develop national curriculum called “Inclusive Communities: Creating Strategies for Promoting Diversity in Fraternities and Sororities”

Initiated launch of Association’s research journal

Participated in year-long strategic planning process

Worked with Central Office to survey membership on experience in association which included

*President*

December 2003 – 2004

Led association of over 1300 members

Managed six Executive Board members

Supervised Executive Director

Assisted in development/management of association budget

Initiated projects on diversity, anti-hazing, strategic thinking, and research

Emphasized the experience of volunteers; created monthly newsletter focused on personal and professional development of volunteers.

*President-Elect*

December 2002 – 2003

Worked with stakeholders to address issues within fraternal movement

*Executive Vice-President*

December 2001 – 2002

Managed five member services committees

***Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA)***  
***Volunteer***

December 1996 - Present

Liaison, Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS)

October 2008 - Present

- Served on parent and family programs standards committee
- Serve on Fraternity/Sorority Advising Programs Standards Committee
- Chair, Transfer Student Program Standards

(Continued)

Workgroup member, Student Development Theory in Fraternity/Sorority Communities	December 2009 – December 2010
Workgroup member, Affinity Networks	December 2008 – December 2009
Editorial Board, <i>Oracle: Research Journal of the Association of the Fraternity Advisors</i>	December 2005 - Present
Editorial Board, <i>Perspectives</i>	December 2005 – December 2007
Liaison, National Hazing Prevention Week and National Hazing Symposium	December 2005 – December 2006
Chair, Assessment and Research Coalition	December 2006 – December 2007
Associate Editor, <i>Oracle: Research Journal of the Association of the Fraternity Advisors</i>	December 2005 – December 2007
Professional Development Committee Chair	December 2000-December 2001
Area Coordinator for Arizona and New Mexico	December 1998-December 2000
Fireside Chats Committee Member; Chair (1999)	December 1996-December 1999
<b><i>Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Foundation</i></b>	December 2008 - Present
Served as Succession Committee chair	
Supported Foundation objectives of fundraising to support AFA mission.	
<b><i>Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) Volunteer</i></b>	August 2007 - Present
Member, Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs; Worked with committee to create standards for Higher Education Programs	May 2008 – May 2009
(Continued)	

<b><i>College Student Educators International (ACPA) Volunteer</i></b>	July 2007 – Present
Editorial Board, Journal for College Student Development Research in Brief/Issues on Campus	July 2009 - Present
Member, Commission for Assessment	July 2009 – Present
Member, Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals	July 2007 - Present
Member, Commission for Leadership Education	July 2007 - Present
Member, Commission for Student Involvement	July 2007 - Present
Workshops Reviewer	Fall 2008, 2009
Workshop Presenter	March 2008, 2009, 2011
<b><i>Center for the Study of the College Fraternity (CSCF) Volunteer</i></b>	November 2004 - October 2007
Board Member	
<b><i>Gamma Sigma Alpha Volunteer</i></b>	August 2004 – November 2008
Board Member; led strategic planning initiatives	
<b><i>HazingPrevention.Org (HPO) Volunteer</i></b>	December 2007 – Present
Nominating and Governing Committee	December 2008 – Present
Volunteer Coordinator	June 2009 – October 2010
Board Member Aided in developing infrastructure for new non-profit	December 2007 – December 2009
<b><i>National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Volunteer</i></b>	December 2000 - Present
Region IV-E Board Fraternity and Sorority Network Liaison	February 2005 – March 2006
Workshops Reviewer for Annual Conference (Alcohol and Other Drug Knowledge Community, Fraternity and Sorority Knowledge Community, Leadership Knowledge Community)	2003, 2004, 2005
National Conference Workshops Committee Member	August 2004, 2005, 2006
Volunteer Advancement Committee Member	December 2000 – March 2003
Workshop Presenter (Continued)	2004, 2009, 2010



***Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity Volunteer***

Member, Board of Trustees	August 2007 - Present
Dean, 2002 Leadership College	January 2002 - August 2002
Member, Educational Programming Committee	August 2000 – August 2001
Dean, 2000 Leadership College	January 2000 - August 2000
Member, Expansion Committee	August 1999 – August 2000
Member, Substance Free Housing Task Force	October 1998 – August 2000

***Other Professional Volunteer Experiences***

Mock Interviewer, IU Higher Education/Student Affairs Mock Placement	February 2008, 2009, 2010
Judge, Order of Omega Case Study Competition, AFA Annual Meeting	December 2007, 2009, 2010
Advisor, Group Project; U549: Environmental Theory and Assessment	Fall 2007, 2008
Committee Member, Delta Zeta Commission on Membership and Values	Spring 2007
Advisory Board, Empirical Black Greek Letter Organization Project	August 2007 – August 2007

***Community Volunteer Work***

Humane Society of Indianapolis Mutt Strut	April 2009, 2010
Heartland Truly Moving Pictures	June 2008-December 2009

***Memberships***

Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors	December 1996 - Present
Association for the Study of Higher Education	May 2007 - Present
College Student Educators International (ACPA)	May 2007 - Present
Gamma Sigma Alpha Honor Society	December 2005 - Present
Golden Key National Honor Society	November 1998 - Present
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators	December 1996 - Present

(Continued)

Order of Omega Honor Society	November 1998 - Present
Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity	November 1991 - Present
Southern Association for College Student Affairs	October 2009 – October 2010

***SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (in chronological order from most recent to oldest)***

- Bureau, D. (2010). Fraternities and sororities support leadership development! How do we know? *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors*, 5, v-ix.
- Bureau, D. (2009, August) Making your mark on the fraternal relevancy movement. *Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Essentials*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2009, Winter). Using values to rationalize risk management. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2008, September). Using credibility as an approach to anti-hazing. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Essentials*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2008, March). Using NSSE data for good practice in fraternity and sorority communities. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Essentials*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Martin, G. & Bureau, D. (2008, Winter). Student development theory and implications for the values movement. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2007, Fall). Ready for research but don't know where to start? 10 fraternity/sorority related research topics. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2007, Summer). Beyond the Rhetoric and Into the Action of the Values Movement. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN. (won annual award from AFA).
- Marchell, T. & Bureau, D. (2007, Summer). A bystander framework for hazing prevention. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. & Barber, J. (2007, March 14). The role of alcohol in student community development: Challenges and recommendations for student affairs practitioners. *NASPA NetResults*. Washington, D.C.
- Bureau, D. (2007, Winter). Barriers to greatness: Using the concept of fraternal relevancy to create urgency for change. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Harms, P.D., Woods, D., Roberts, B., Bureau, D., Greene, A.M. (2006). Perceptions of leadership in undergraduate fraternal organizations. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors*, 2(2) 81-94.

(Continued)

- Wall, A., Reis, J. & Bureau, D. (2006). Fraternity and sorority new members' self-regulation of alcohol use. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors*, 2(2) 108-116.
- Bureau, D., Schendel, K., Veldkamp, S. (2006, Spring). Using qualitative research to assess values congruence. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2006, Winter). AFA: The first 30 years. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2005, Fall). Fraternity and sorority professionals as allies for GLBT fraternity and sorority members. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2005, Summer). Assessment/program review and strategic planning for fraternity/sorority life. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2004, Fall). Making the most of your annual meeting experience. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2004, August 3). The will to govern well: Part one. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Volunteer*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2004, June 28). The volunteer commitment. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Volunteer*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. & Fussell, S.K. (2004, Summer). From the top: Core Competencies. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2004, April 30). Thinking creatively in AFA. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Volunteer*. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. (March 12, 2002). Student affairs is a lot like a trip around the country with your parents. *NASPA NetResults*; Washington, DC.
- Bureau, D. & McRoberts, C. (Fall 2001). The millennials succeeding. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D. & McRoberts, C. (Winter 2001). A new generation of students. *Association of Fraternity Advisors Perspectives*; Indianapolis, IN.

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

I have conducted over 100 presentations. Topics I find most notable are documented below:

- Bureau, D., Bergman, A., Foster, A., & Trolan, T. (2010, December 4, 2010). *The amazing next top fraternity and sorority professional*. Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Annual Meeting. Phoenix, AZ.
- Bureau, D., Perlow, E., Ressler, S. & Whittier, C. (2010, December 3, 2010). *Lessons from the use of CAS Standards in fraternity and sorority advising programs*. Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Annual Meeting. Phoenix, AZ.

(Continued)

- Bureau, D. & McCall, F. (2010, December 2). *Stories from the Fraternity and Sorority Experience Survey: What we're learning about the experiences of members*. Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Annual Meeting. Phoenix, AZ.
- Bureau, D. & Shaw, M. (2010, June 29). *Using assessment in student affairs work*. Association of College Unions International New Professionals Institute: Bloomington, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2010, June 19). *Linking learning outcomes to inform our work*. Interfraternity Institute. Bloomington, IN.
- Bureau, D. (2010, March 9). *Advancing fraternity and sorority research: Improving the movement*. National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Annual Convention. Chicago, IL.
- Bureau, D. & Shinn, J. (2009, December 9). *The experiences of first-generation college students in fraternities and sororities*. Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Annual Meeting. Jacksonville, FL.
- Bureau, D. (2009, December 6). *Using the CAS Standards in Fraternity and Sorority Advising*. Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Annual Meeting. Jacksonville, FL.
- Bureau, D., Hower, A., Roberts, G., Zacker, J. (2009). *Communities of Practice*. CAS Symposium.
- Bureau, D. & Shaw, M. (2009, April 1). *Acting intentionally: Using NSSE Data to inform student affairs practice*. American College Personnel Association Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C.
- Bureau, D. (2009, March 31). *A Residential transition program: Opportunities for powerful partnerships*. American College Personnel Association Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C.
- Bureau, D. & Gerhardt, C. (2009, March 10). *Fraternity and sorority leadership research*. National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Annual Meeting. Seattle, WA.
- Bureau, D. (2008, December 2). *Using the CAS Standards in fraternity and sorority advising*. Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting. Denver, CO.
- Bureau, D. & Druetzler, R. (2008, December 3). *Using NSSE data to guide fraternity and sorority practice*. Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting. Denver, CO.
- Bureau, D. & Ribera, T. (2008, November). *Intentional pedagogical practice in student affairs*. National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Region IV-E Meeting. Indianapolis, IN.
- Bureau, D., Nelson-Laird, T., Niskode, A.S. (2008, March). *Student affairs assessment: Using intentional strategies to promote student success*. American College Personnel Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA.

(Continued)

- Bureau, D. (2008, February 21). *Using values to align community expectations: The judicial chairs pathway*. Mid-American Greek Council Association. Annual Conference. Chicago, IL.
- Bureau, D. & Ryan, H.G. (2007, December 1). *Prove It: Assessment and accountability in higher education and the impact on fraternity and sorority life programs*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; Cincinnati, OH.
- Bureau, D., Cutler, B. & Jones, S. (2007, November 30). *Strategic planning for your fraternity and sorority community*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; Cincinnati, OH.
- Bureau, D., Koepsell, M., Maxwell, T. & Sneath, K. (2007, November 29). *The fraternal relevance initiative*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; Cincinnati, OH.
- Bureau, D. & Niskode, A.S. (2007, November 7). *Doctoral education for a new century: Breadth, complexity and depth*. Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE); Louisville, KY.
- Bureau, D. (2006, December). *What to call your Rho Chis and Other Values-Based Conversations*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; New Orleans, LA.
- Bureau, D. & Isaacson, J. (2006, February). *Motivation: Inspiring and leading*. Mid-American Greek Council Association. Annual Conference. Chicago, IL.  
(Continued)
- Bureau, D., Eberly, C. & Molasso, W. (2005, November). *Research, assessment, and evaluation in fraternity and sorority advising*. National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Region IV-E Conference. Chicago, IL.
- Bureau, D. (2005, October). *Call for Values Congruence*. Indiana Student Affairs Administrators Annual Meeting. Franklin, IN.
- Bureau, D. & Hancock, C. (July 2003). *A practical guide for closing chapters: Employing a coalition model*. Interfraternity Institute; Bloomington, IN.
- Bureau, D., Kaler, K. & Rice, K. (March 2003). *Health advocates: A peer education model for Greeks and athletes*. Mid-American Community Health Association. Regional Meeting; Champaign, IL.
- Bureau, D. & Pendleton, K. (February 2003). *Emotional Intelligence as a competitive edge for leaders*. Mid-American Greek Council Association; Chicago, IL.
- Bureau, D., Lynch, A. & Manderino, M. (December 2002). *Building organizations that last: Involving the millennial generation*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; Columbus, OH.
- Bureau, D. (February 2002). *The millennial generation: Implications for fraternity and sorority professionals*. Big Ten Greek Leadership Conference; Indianapolis, IN.

(Continued)

Bureau, D. (September 2001). *Understanding our common mission of excellence*. Illinois Wesleyan University Fraternity and Sorority New Member Convocation; Bloomington, IL.

Bureau, D., Donlin, C., Karnes, K., Kirst, K. & Smart, H. (December 2000). *From the cause to the classroom: Creating a service-learning program for your campus*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting; Phoenix, AZ.

Adams-Riester, K., Bureau, D. & Najor, M. (April 2000). *What's on your mind? Using open space technology as a powerful educational tool*. Western Regional Greek Conference; Santa Clara, CA.

Bureau, D., DiCesar, D., Fedler, L., Longo, A. & Williams, M. (December 1999). *Reflections by the firesides: Creating partnerships to affect student success*. Association of Fraternity Advisors Meeting; Denver, CO.

Bureau, D. & Hernandez, J. (November 1999). *Leadership coalition models*. ACUOH-I Regional Conference; Albuquerque, NM.

Bureau, D. Carraro, K., Dillon, M., & Hill, M. (October 1999). *The focus program: Empowering women as change agents*. National Panhellenic Conference Executive Meeting; Saddlebrook, FL.

Bureau D. & Cody, P. (April 1999). *Experiential activities as a source of leadership development*. Western Regional Greek Conference; Santa Clara, CA.  
(Continued)

Bureau, D. (April 1999). *Effective leadership in student organizations*. Golden Key Regional Conference; Tempe, AZ.

Bureau, D. & Smiley, M. (February 1998). *Translating the Greek experience: Developing a four-phase Greek leadership model*. NEIFC/NEPC Meeting; Cherry Hill, NJ.

Bureau, D., Rogers, C., Sailer, M.E., & Stassen, M. (November 1997). *Student and academic affairs collaboration: An analysis of a first-year retention program*. NASPA Region I Conference; Newport, RI.

## **HONORS & AWARDS**

AFA Essentials Award for Outstanding Article, December 2010

AFA Sue Kraft Fussell Distinguished Service Award, September 2009 (presented at 2009 Conference in December)

Wade Fellowship, Indiana University, Higher Education and Student Affairs, Spring 2009

AFA Perspectives Award for outstanding article, 2007

(Continued)

CAMPUSPEAK Anti-Hazing Hero Award, 2007

AFA Volunteer of the Year Award, 2006, 2009

AFA Perspectives Award for outstanding article, 2002

Outstanding AFA Member Services Chair, 2001

Outstanding AFA New Professional, 2000

Outstanding AFA Area Coordinator for Region V, 1999

Order of Omega, initiated 1999

Golden Key International Honor Society, initiated 1998