



Peg L. Blake

Dear Colleagues:

**H**ow quickly our days turn into weeks, then months, and years. Another semester comes to a close—another term spent thinking, planning, and writing about ongoing issues in student affairs.

Our profession continues to struggle with the challenges of achieving ethnic and racial diversity among our ranks. In this issue of *Leadership Exchange*, we have an opportunity to learn what it is like to be a person of color and/or of different ethnic origin in the student affairs profession. Six student affairs professionals offer their perspectives on this topic, allowing us to share their first-hand, and often difficult, experiences.

Shifts in organizational structures within higher education have left many SSAOs wondering about the latest trends. Is reporting to the provost the ultimate example of student affairs/academic affairs collaboration? Does this reporting structure limit some of our institutional visibility and power? SSAOs who report to provosts and a former SSAO turned provost explore this reporting structure and offer their perceptions of the related benefits and drawbacks of reporting to the provost.

A number of institutions in the southeast United States began their fall terms in major upheaval, due to the tropical storms and hurricanes that hit that area with a vengeance. Those campuses damaged in the storms are still in recovery mode, and it may be months and years before they can put the damage behind them. Weather is just one of the myriad crises that faces SSAOs on an almost daily basis. On the pages that follow, three SSAOs respond to a case study to demonstrate the steps and plans their campuses have in place to deal with the unexpected and unanticipated. No matter what our level of preparedness, each crisis includes unique variables that give us pause and become opportunities to improve our policies and practices.

I hope that the articles in this issue will teach you, encourage you, and support your work on behalf of our students and our institutions. My best wishes for a happy and healthy 2005.

Sincerely,

Peg L. Blake, President

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### Balance is Bunk

Trying to balance work and life is a losing proposition. Sigmund Freud suggested it first: imbalance is part of the human condition. By embracing imbalance and acknowledging that anything done well demands our full investment, over time we can begin balancing a portfolio of diverse priorities and experiences. Here are several ways to think about sanity and imbalance for the long term.

**Rethink the mission.** Seeking balance is futile because it is intangible and impossible to measure. Set concrete objectives in important areas and plan concrete paths to each goal.

**Design a life of chapters.** Take your life for what it is—a rich and varied story defined by ever-changing circumstances and priorities. The object is to achieve balance over the long haul. Doing so means deciding what is important, then ordering your work and life accordingly.

**Within each chapter, do what you are good at.** A small portion of what you can do at work accounts for most of your value. Focus on that and cut out the rest. Find capable colleagues who can pick up where you leave off.

**Redesign continuously.** Work and life are like a kaleidoscope, with many pieces shifting all the time—and the chapters are not always so distinct. We must constantly reassess our goals and adjust our priorities as our life situations change.

—Fast Company, October 2004

### Leadership as a Contact Sport

Marshall Goldsmith and Howard Morgan, writing for *strategy+business*, reviewed leadership development programs in eight major corporations. Although all eight companies had the same overarching goals—to determine the desired behaviors for leaders in their organizations and to help leaders increase their effectiveness by better aligning actual practices with these desired behaviors—

they used different leadership development methodologies: offsite training versus onsite coaching, internal coaches versus external coaches, and traditional classroom-based training versus on-the-job interaction.

Rather than just evaluating “participant happiness” at the end of a program, each of the eight companies measured the participants’ perceived increase in leadership effectiveness over time. “Increased effectiveness” was not determined by the participants in the development effort; it was assessed by preselected co-workers and stakeholders.

Time and again, one variable emerged as central to the achievement of positive long-term change: the

participants’ ongoing interaction and follow-up with colleagues. Leaders who discussed their own improvement priorities with their co-workers, and then regularly followed up with these co-workers, showed striking improvement. Leaders who did not have ongoing dialogue with colleagues showed improvement that barely exceeded random chance. This was true whether the leader had an external coach, an internal coach, or no coach. It was also true whether the participants went to a training program for five days, went for one day, or did not attend a training program at all.

—www.strategy-business.com,  
Fall 2004

## Readers Respond

The dramatic increase in mental health problems and in the need for services among college students is a growing concern frequently discussed nationally and locally. It is clear that campuses must respond to this need. Hara Estroff Marano’s article on this crisis discussed the influence of the culture and the campus environment on students’ mental health. I was glad to see that her suggested response to the crisis emphasized systemic approaches, acknowledging that a campus-wide response is needed in addition to counseling services. I commend NASPA for providing leadership in this discussion.

Karen S. Moses  
Assistant Director, Student Health and Wellness, Arizona State University

As I listened to Gwen Dungy at the June Assessment and Retention Conference, I had the same indignant response as Gwen to the board chair who believed that all student issues should be addressed by faculty and faculty alone. However, I further reflected that the fault is largely with us. Student affairs officers do not “tell our story” well. A recent study conducted at the University of Utah indicated our entering transfer students believe their three greatest challenges to graduation will be finances, time constraints, and parking—all non-academic issues. Yet, are student affairs officers able to state how we will affect those issues and work to retain students—how we help students generate possibilities, consider options, and make informed choices about these and many other related issues? The answer is not very well. It is essential, as Gwen states, to “connect assessment and retention,” but it is also critical to make sure the results are shared widely both on campus and with the public so that our value as partners is recognized.

Kari Ellingson  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Utah



### The Newest Eating Disorder

The list of eating disorders continues to grow. The term orthorexic is now used by some eating disorder specialists to describe an unhealthy fixation with healthy foods. While not an officially recognized disorder, it is similar to several more serious diagnoses. Like anorexia, it often involves severe weight loss, but so-called orthorexics are obsessed with food quality rather than food quantity and strive for personal purity in their eating habits rather than a thin physique.

Implicit in the description of orthorexia are traits that resemble obsessive-compulsive disorder, since sufferers devote excessive attention to their own strict rules and often spend hours each day worrying about tomorrow's meals. Such a person may find himself or herself socially isolated because he or she does not indulge in everyday dishes. If your focus on healthy eating is interfering with your happiness and social life, you might have a problem.

Douglas Bunnell, president of the National Eating Disorders Association, says that while orthorexia may be important as a lay concept, in terms of treatment it differs from anorexia only in the finer points. Bunnell sees a hidden danger in the recent public focus on obesity: Whether or not you label them as orthorexic, certain people are psychologically vulnerable to becoming too rigid in their eating, he says.

—*Psychology Today*,  
September/October 2004

### Gender Gap in Higher Ed

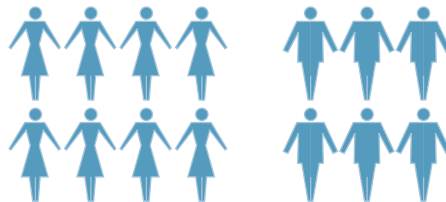
In 2003, about 42 percent of women ages 25 to 34 had a college degree compared with less than 36 percent of men, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. As the gender gap for college degrees continues to widen, the long-term economic consequences of this trend are profound.

First, there is the issue of getting a job and keeping it. Nearly half a

million men ages 25 to 34 might have avoided unemployment last year had they stayed in school. Unless they are extraordinarily bright and resourceful, individuals without some demonstrable skills beyond high school degrees can look forward to lifetimes of periodic employment and annual earnings that may or may not keep up with inflation.

The second long-term consequence for these two million or more men who fail to advance beyond high school is that they will be shut out of many high-growth and high-paying jobs that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects will be created over the next decade. During the next 10 years, the higher rate of job growth will occur among professional and related occupations, according to BLS statistics. More than 600,000 new jobs will open up each year in that category between now and 2012, almost all of them available only to those with college degrees.

—*American Demographics*,  
September 2004



### Networking as a Way of Life

Cheryl Dahle writes in her "Career Couch" column that the best connectors don't confine their networking behavior to a specific event or career turn such as during a job search. They network as a way of life. She offers the following advice.

- ◆ To get started, pick a few networking groups related to your profession or your hobbies and start attending events.
- ◆ When you attend events, ask to be introduced to a few people. To start your conversations, pick something you can compliment or ask a question. A self-described "networking maniac," Benjamin Ola Akande, dean of Webster University's School

of Business and Technology in St. Louis, says, "People love to share about themselves and their achievements. I try to create a stage. You know you're doing it right if they are doing most of the talking and you're doing most of the listening." Akande says networking isn't about promoting yourself; it is more about laying the groundwork for a friendship.

- ◆ Watch out for certain networking no-nos. If you are in conversation, don't scan the room for the next person to approach. Do not offer more than you can deliver or feel comfortable delivering. And do not make requests before you begin to understand a person and forge a connection.
- ◆ Maintaining a network requires some care and feeding. Do not let relationships languish until you need something. Akande writes personal letters to his contacts several times a year, trying to pick holidays like Thanksgiving, when his notes will not be lost in a pile of mail. "You have to avoid being a pest," Akande offers. "You should communicate when you have something of value to offer, or when you have something genuine to share. Don't just spam out, 'hello, how are you' notes." Akande recently persuaded the chief executive of Wal-Mart to speak at his school by tapping a Wal-Mart connection he made years ago.
- ◆ You do not have to be an extrovert to be a natural networker. Even shy people can learn, says Rick Frishman, co-author with Jill Lublin of *Networking Magic* (Adams Media, 2004). "You might be standing in line next to your future husband or the person who will give you your next job," he says. "Call it luck, call it fate, but you can't call it anything if you don't open your mouth and say hello. I met my wife through networking and I have hired more than 300 people, most of them through networking."

—*The New York Times*,  
October 3, 2004



# Ensuring a Place at the Table

*Student Affairs Professionals  
of Color Share Their Perspectives*

**I**n the last two decades, ethnic and racial minority professionals have made great strides in attaining key positions on college campuses around the country. Despite the progress, the student affairs profession, like so many other fields in higher education, still grapples with how to attract outstanding minority candidates and create comfortable environments in which they can truly achieve their career goals. In fact, of NASPA's approximately 8,500 members, less than one-fourth indicate they are a member of a racial or ethnic minority group. This fall, *Leadership Exchange* posed a series of questions to six student affairs professionals of color at different points in their careers to assess their perceptions of barriers to entry to the field, mentorship, career advancement, and NASPA's role in increasing opportunities.

# “We must do more in the area of career management to help ethnic and racial minorities demonstrate leadership abilities more broadly.”

Contributors include **Doris Ching**, vice president for student affairs at the University of Hawaii-Manoa; **Charlene Dukes**, vice president for student services at Prince George's Community College; **Gail Edmonds**, vice president and dean of students at Goucher College in Baltimore; **Hal Gin**, executive director for student development services and judicial affairs at California State University, Hayward; **Juan R. Guardia**, doctoral student and research assistant in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University; and **Larry Roper**, vice provost for student affairs at Oregon State University.

they cannot achieve a high enough score to be considered for admission to many graduate programs. The GRE adds a huge amount of stress and pressure for students who may be doubtful about their abilities to succeed in graduate-level education.

**Roper:** The greatest barrier is the degree to which we engage ethnic and racial minorities in college and university life during their undergraduate experiences. Student affairs is a profession that attracts many people who are interested in recreating the experience they had as students—those who understand the transforming capacity that a caring professional can have on the life of another. However, we do not nurture that level of understanding and affection among ethnic and racial minority students. Our greatest potential for expanding participation resides in expanding engagement of under-represented students at the undergraduate level.

## What do you feel is the single greatest barrier to increasing access to graduate-level higher education for students of color?

**Ching:** The lack of faculty mentors and role models in advanced degree programs is one barrier that creates a vicious cycle and self-fulfilling prophecy, resulting in low aspiration to graduate school by students of color. The presence of faculty mentors and role models reinforces the safe, nurturing, and welcoming environment necessary for success in higher degree programs; conversely, their absence produces the adverse effect for students of color.

**Guardia:** The greatest barrier to accessing graduate school is the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Many students feel

## Why do you feel there are low numbers of ethnic and racial minorities in the student affairs profession and in senior student affairs officer (SSAO) positions overall? What barriers must the profession address?

**Dukes:** Entry- to mid-level professionals of color are not viewed in similar ways as their white peers when it comes to leadership, mentoring, and professional development. It really takes a conscious effort to view all professionals equally and see what each can offer the institution or the profession as a whole. These professionals are also becoming discouraged with the amount of work and lack of recognition for that

work from senior management. In many cases, the workloads are so great that professionals no longer have access to students, which was unheard of 10, 15, and 20 years ago.

**Edmonds:** Student affairs as a profession, particularly at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), has been largely overlooked as a field that students were encouraged to ‘aspire to.’ Historically, African Americans were guided toward ‘helping’ professions such as teaching, social work, and nursing. We need to do a more effective job of marketing student affairs as a profession at HBCUs and at all institutions. The issue of the absence of minorities at the senior level reflects several concerns: one needs to be in the pipeline to move up the ranks and minorities are missing from the pipeline. Intentional and aggressive recruitment of students into student affairs positions is needed. Increasingly, the terminal degree is expected of SSAOs. Since minorities continue to lag behind in the number of earned doctoral degrees, they are not as marketable as candidates with doctorates.

**Gin:** Low numbers of ethnic and racial minorities have created a shortage of role models for young professionals in the field. The NASPA Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program (MUFP) offers excellent training and mentoring for those entering the field. Other professional associations and SSAOs need to take aggressive approaches to encourage students of color to consider careers in student affairs. We need to increase the availability of internship programs at our institutions, which allow students the opportunity to shadow SSAOs and other professionals.

### What factors encourage or discourage ethnic and racial minorities from assuming SSAO positions?

**Ching:** Higher education has perpetuated the vision of white male leadership. Moreover, persons of color are often from collectivist cultures, in which individual achievement defers to the advancement of the team. Until ethnic and racial minorities matriculate from their cultural, collectivist, team mindset to a hierarchical, individual, self-promoting orientation, they may underestimate their abilities to succeed in existing leadership environments of colleges and universities. Ethnic and racial minorities need to be encouraged, supported, and mentored by those of dominant gender and ethnicity who hold executive positions in colleges and universities.

**Edmonds:** NASPA’s Academy Programs are excellent strategies for encouraging minorities in mid-level positions to consider upward mobility. That training provides the opportunity to interface with those at the senior level. Also, the Alice Manicur Symposium for Women is another excellent opportunity for networking, general information, and a tremendous

wealth of resources. Additionally, the SSAO position still has not achieved parity with other senior level positions at many institutions—neither parity of salary or importance to student learning. The SSAO typically has one of the largest reporting lines with a great deal of responsibility, but it is not always seen as central to the mission of the institution.

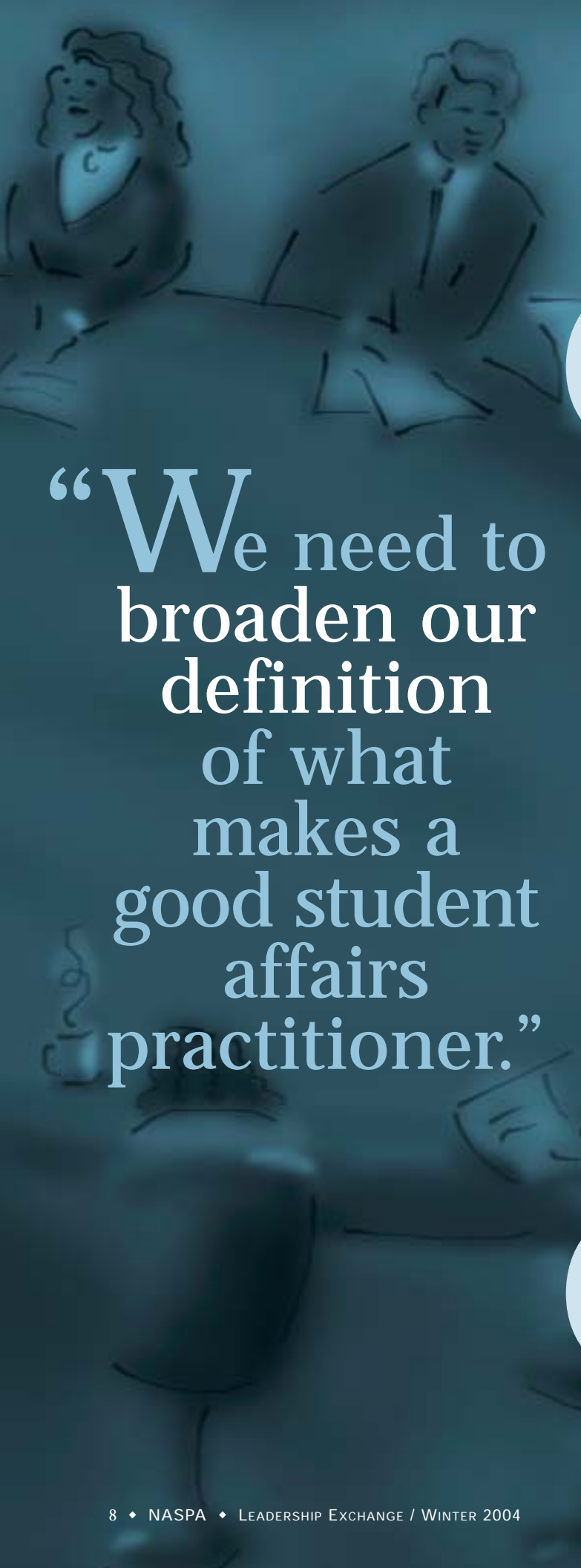
**Roper:** Being ‘pigeonholed’ into diversity positions creates the perception that the person does not know much beyond that realm. We must do more in the area of career management to help ethnic and racial minorities demonstrate leadership abilities more broadly. I also believe the style shown by many student affairs leaders, control-oriented leadership, discourages the development of those who need to be encouraged to take risks to expand and grow. The factors that most get in the way are those attitudes and ‘well-intentioned’ leadership practices that deprive ethnic and racial minorities of access to the knowledge of higher education culture and norms that can serve them well.

### In your opinion, is the student affairs profession accessible and welcoming to ethnic and racial minorities who enter the field?

**Ching:** The student affairs profession tends to be more welcoming of ethnic and racial minorities than other fields within higher education. Our profession believes in the development and growth of all human beings and is dedicated to development of all aspects of students. The profession values diversity and promotes its reality on college and university campuses. Those of minority ethnic and racial backgrounds—with an inclusive, non-hierarchical style of leadership—should be encouraged to continue to use that culture and style, particularly if they function effectively within it. It may be useful to develop a “bicultural” leadership style and be comfortable working in the dominant leadership culture while simultaneously influencing the culture to change and accommodate more collaborative and inclusive approaches.

**Edmonds:** Having been involved with student affairs since 1987, I can say that the profession is accessible but not always welcoming, especially as it relates to predominantly white institutions. A relegation of minorities to certain areas of student affairs still exists and the glass ceiling still remains. The extent to which national organizations like NASPA have created and sustained groups that allow minorities to network and support each other is a major factor in welcoming minorities to the profession. At the national and regional levels, the integration of diversity as a core value in all programming also reflects a welcoming posture.

**Gin:** Each institution has its traditions and cultures—urban and rural, public and private—that can limit access.



“We need to broaden our definition of what makes a good student affairs practitioner.”

Institutions with a large ethnic and racial minority student population are likely to have a higher representation of staff of color, although these numbers may not necessarily reflect a proportion that directly corresponds to the campus population.

**Have you made different career choices because of your ethnicity? For instance, have you chosen to work at a particular institution that has similar cultural values with which you were raised or to work in a particular region of the country?**

**Dukes:** I have moved up the ranks in student affairs, primarily from the enrollment management side of the house. I do not believe I made different career choices because of my ethnicity or race, but I think I have not been chosen to work in particular organizations because of it. I have worked at both two-year and four-year public institutions, majority and minority, and have made an impact in both. I came to higher education because I could not get a teaching job upon graduation from college in the early 1980s. Today, I am happy to be where I am.

**Guardia:** As a Hispanic, I purposefully chose my last position because it was in multicultural affairs and the institution was located near a large city. The position provided me with an opportunity to give back to my community and the city was large enough to allow me to participate in various ethnic activities and programs to which I am accustomed.

**Roper:** I have factored my ethnicity into decisions more in later years than earlier in my career, being more sensitive to the motivations of the hiring institution and administrators than I was earlier. Throughout my career, I have been sensitive to the region, being especially careful to not live in regions that I do not believe would have a welcoming culture. Of course, this classification of regions was not necessarily based in fact. I have found it much easier to work at institutions with diverse values, believing that I can translate those institutions' values into meaningful educational activity. My greatest concerns have been campus climate and attitudes of those who were hiring me.

**Do you have a mentor and how important is it for ethnic and racial minorities to have mentors? Did ethnic background play a role in your choice of a mentor?**

**Dukes:** I have several mentors, both male and female, African American and white. I have needed people who could help me understand, negotiate, and maneuver systems and sidestep the land mines. As a person of color, scrutiny becomes part of

what you expect, both by colleagues to whom you report and by those who report to you. Having someone to talk to, ask advice of, and to be frank with about everything is necessary. As we all know, there are days and then there are days. I have had colleagues say things to me that I am convinced they would never have said had I been an administrator of another race. I have found that those things need to be, are required to be, confronted head on.

**Guardia:** I have several mentors, not all of whom are people of color. It is very important for ethnic and racial minorities to have mentors, but I would add that the mentors do not have to be people of color. In order to have a holistic approach to life and in the field of student affairs, one should have a variety of role models and mentors with different experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds. Personally, race and ethnicity did not play an important part in my choice of mentors. I wanted role models and mentors to provide me with knowledge and advice from various viewpoints. In addition, I chose individuals who would 'look after me' and have me in their best interest.

### How has your ethnic and racial background helped advance your career and do you perceive it has limited your career options in student affairs?

**Ching:** My Asian heritage was an asset to this institution, where more than 50 percent of the student population is of Asian and Pacific Island descent. While my ethnic and racial background enhanced my educational, leadership, and other qualities for the SSAO position, there is less receptivity in other geographical parts of the country. In this sense, my career options in student affairs are limited.

**Dukes:** I believe early in the 1980s I was hired because of my race. The institution specifically advertised for a minority college recruiter who had good speaking and organizational skills. I had just graduated with a degree in English and had worked full time through undergraduate school, so I applied. The rest is history. That is the only job where I felt color truly played a role.

**Edmonds:** I believe that I am eminently qualified to serve in my role as an SSAO, but I also believe that my career path has been affected by the fact that I am a minority. I achieved the position as a director of minority affairs and affirmative action because my qualifications were in order, but also because it was felt that a person of color would bring a greater level of understanding to that position and serve as a role model for African-American students who were in very small numbers at the institution. Similarly, I was one of the 'best qualified' candidates for my role as associate dean of students

at my current institution because I brought a sizeable portfolio of work with minority populations and the ability to forge relationships with students of color. As an SSAO in a predominantly white institution, I know I bring a much-needed perspective to the table—of a person who has been located for most of her professional career in marginalized positions.

### How can professional organizations like NASPA increase opportunities for ethnic and racial minorities in the profession?

**Dukes:** NASPA can be very up front and vocal about the need for SSAOs to look at the talent pool coming into the profession. We need to broaden our definition of what makes a good student affairs practitioner. If an individual does not come with the requisite student personnel/counseling skills, we must look beyond that and assist him/her with those skills once the job offer is accepted. None of my degrees are in the profession, but my heart and my head are. NASPA should not lose sight of the fact that racial and ethnic minorities deal with issues that go far beyond those of the majority population—a constant questioning of ability, commitment, and skill. Life has not changed that much for our younger professionals and we are here to lead the way.

**Gin:** MUFPP is successfully providing support to prepare and engage ethnic and racial minorities in the field. NASPA should take an active role in encouraging its members to be change agents by identifying and inspiring students and young professionals to consider the student affairs profession. SSAOs must continue to commit campus resources, especially at a time of limited resources, to provide ethnic and racial minority staff the opportunity to attend professional development activities and professional association conferences. NASPA might collaborate with student affairs or higher education preparation programs to develop attractive promotional materials to encourage racial and ethnic minorities to consider the student affairs profession. Student affairs needs to partner with enrollment management staff to ensure targeted populations are not forgotten.

**Guardia:** I would like to see NASPA provide ethnic and racial minorities with drive-in institutes across the country by people of color who have advanced degrees in the field. In addition, pre-convention programs at the national conference, such as African-American male and female summits, should be available at no cost. In light of increasing campus budget cuts, NASPA must be creative in meeting members' needs, given that many employees are funding their own professional development opportunities. Maximizing resources is key. [LE](#)



Pat Whitely, center, vice president of student affairs at the University of Miami, has been reporting to the provost for more than 15 years.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

# Partnering with Academic Affairs

*Reporting to Your Provost*

*Can Increase Opportunities*

BY NANCY GRUND

**W**ith pressures mounting on college and university presidents to spend more time away from campuses as fundraisers and constituent builders, provosts have taken on significant responsibilities that once belonged exclusively to their presidents. As campuses streamline the number of direct reports to presidents, provosts are now supervising more nonacademic divisions, including divisions of student affairs.

Provosts are assuming greater roles in the day-to-day management of campuses nationwide and senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) are finding themselves in new reporting structures that remove them from direct lines to their presidents. How will SSAOs bring major issues to the attention of their presidents? Will this shift in structure create new opportunities with faculty and staff? For SSAOs and provosts, these changes are contributing to partnerships and alliances that could benefit staff and students alike.

### From Faculty to Student Affairs

The success of these new reporting relationships and partnerships often depends on the personalities and backgrounds of those involved and the size and type of the institutions served. Kathleen Braden, former associate vice president of academic affairs and dean of students at Seattle Pacific University, who returned to the faculty this fall, reported to the chief academic officer for five years during her foray into student affairs. Now a Fulbright scholar studying eco-tourism in Russia, Braden has seen the situation from both sides. “No structure can compensate for a chief academic officer who does not understand student life,” she shares. “The bottom line is that the success of a reporting structure depends on the person who is holding the leadership position.”

When Braden was chair of the faculty at Seattle Pacific, she was intrigued by other facets of the university and worked on committees to understand the role of student life. “I felt it was the best way for me to learn more about how we educate our students,” she says. In her student affairs position, her hope was to build bridges with faculty, but much of her time was spent defending student affairs. “The challenge is keeping the student life voice at the highest levels of decisionmaking,” she adds.

Part of the problem in entering the academic/student affairs partnership is that faculty members hold all the cards, according to Braden. “The courtship may end up going one way with SSAOs making proposals and hoping for success and cooperation from the faculty,” she admits.

At many institutions, there are no incentives for faculty to cooperate or collaborate with student affairs. “To be taken seriously, collaboration with student affairs must be a high priority and that may require leadership to revisit criteria for faculty tenure,” she says. “Working with student affairs committees and student groups are lower priorities for faculty.”

“Colleagues in student affairs share a love of students and faculty members share a love of their disciplines. The common bond is they both interact with students all the time,” she relates. Now that she has

returned to the faculty, Braden will be “figuring out what I can do from the inside to push the student life perspective.”

### The Value of a Doctoral Degree

Tammy M. Gocial, assistant vice president and dean of student life at the College of Santa Fe, reports to the vice president for academic and student affairs, who was recently named provost. “His position gives my position good credibility in the academic community,” she maintains.

“Few provosts understand the philosophy and the theoretical underpinnings of our profession,” says Gocial. “An entire body of research informs what we do and how we do it, yet sometimes there is the sense that ‘anybody can do it.’ My provost knows I am more of the expert in this area and he gives me a great deal of leeway.”

Gocial believes that having a doctoral degree can make a difference for SSAOs when cultivating relationships with faculty. “Faculty members see you differently and listen to you differently,” she explains. “Faculty members often think differently about people who have doctorates from a variety of disciplines. You can build relationships, interact, and gain credibility before you open your mouth.”

She notes, “We are all constantly managing political agendas and we must find ways to get student life issues on

*“Colleagues in student affairs share a love of students and faculty members share a love of their disciplines. The common bond is they both interact with students all the time.”*



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

Kathleen Braden, former associate vice president of academic affairs and dean of students at Seattle Pacific University, is now a Fulbright Scholar.



PHOTO COURTESY OF USC

**Michael Jackson, vice president for student affairs at the University of Southern California, center front, manages a \$40 million budget providing services for 27 different programs.**

the main agenda. The more people who present those issues to the provost, the better. This is yet another reason for working more closely with the deans and faculty.”

A small campus with only 725 traditional age students, Gocial says the college is set up for student affairs and academic affairs to work together. “Some things are more easily facilitated because of our small size,” she notes. Gocial cites several examples of partnerships already in place.

Academic affairs and student affairs collaborate on an Early Alert program—when students are struggling with a course, faculty take attendance and pay particular attention when those students are not in class. “Whether a person has personal or academic struggles, together we can direct students toward the right resources,” she says. She is also a member of the retention committee, chaired by the dean of student services and retention, who reports to the provost.

“We are always looking for opportunities for student activities to collaborate with faculty,” Gocial adds. She also relies on five of her 23 staff members, who are graduates of the college, to strengthen relationships with the academic areas.

### **With the Mission in Mind**

In 1988, when Larry Roper, vice provost for student affairs at Oregon State University, accepted the position of acting dean of students at Beaver College in Pennsylvania (now Arcadia University), there was a question of whether he would report to the president of the institution or the vice president of academic affairs. “Based on the size of the institution, at the time I thought it best to report to the vice president,” says Roper. “I knew that connecting with faculty would be an important part of my role and that reporting structure would put me in a better position to get involved in conversations with them.”

In his next position as vice president of student affairs at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York, he reported to the president. When he arrived at Oregon State in 1995 as vice provost for student affairs, he reported directly to the

provost. “This role, as a member of the provost’s staff, embeds me in the central mission of the university with a stronger relationship to the academic program,” says Roper. “In meetings with the academic deans, we sit around the table and problem solve student affairs issues at the same time we are discussing academic programs.”

Roper does not put much stock in the power dynamic at play on many campuses. “Too often, SSAOs believe that if we don’t report directly to the president then we don’t come to the table in positions of equality,” he says. “This is not about whose work is more important, it is about how we align our work to elevate the missions of our universities and colleges. We cannot make the student affairs agenda separate from the agenda of the institution.”

Roper cites two examples of the trust and confidence his office has earned. “The last time there was a vacancy for the provost position, I chaired the search,” he says. “One of my important roles was bringing the community together to discuss what type of leadership we were seeking.” In addition, the director of the student union was asked to facilitate the mergers of several academic departments. “Our kind of leadership is about helping the university get to a better place and to wrestle with the most challenging issues,” shares Roper.

To promote the institutional agenda, Roper advocates more seamless relationships and more shared values. “People want to cling to distinct identities, but there are no lines where the learning environment begins and ends,” he notes.

### **Supporting the Academic Enterprise**

Michael Jackson, vice president for student affairs at the University of Southern California (USC), reports to the provost just as he did in his previous position as dean of students at Stanford University.

“People get too hung up on reporting relationships,” Jackson notes. “If they don’t report to the president, then their jobs are not as prestigious—even though presidents have very little time for them.” SSAOs reporting to busy presidents may have greater independence, but as Jackson points out, “When you need a new building or \$100,000 for equipment, where do you go?”

“If you think of student affairs as a direct supporter of the academic enterprise, then it is appropriate to be at the table with others making decisions that affect academic life,” says Jackson, who manages 300 people and a \$40 million budget, providing services for 27 different programs.

“You want to be positioned where the action is, where key decisions are made about how the institution is managed,” says Jackson. “In the budgeting process, you need to be around the table to advocate for the needs of students.”

A weekly executive group meeting at USC includes the vice president for student affairs, vice president for faculty affairs, dean of the graduate school, vice provost for enrollment for the medical school, and the university’s chief information officer. “It’s really the people running the place. If I wasn’t there, it would not be a good thing,” says Jackson. “All of us are helping to develop policies and implement programs.”

Jackson has created a student affairs council that includes representatives from all 13 professional schools and colleges on campus. "It is a voluntary council, but it helps to strengthen our relationships with the respective deans," he describes. "We look at institution-wide concerns that affect the lives of students, such as safety, security, emergency response, information technology, and orientation. It helps our deans understand the contributions that student affairs makes to the education of our students."

### Challenging the Misperception

A reporting link from student affairs to the provost was implemented some 15 years ago at the University of Miami and Pat Whitely, the institution's vice president for student affairs, now views herself as a vital part of the provost's team. "My participation in the dean's staff meetings ensures that the collaborative voice of student affairs is strongly heard," says Whitely.

"Part of the problem is the perception, or rather misperception, that if you do not report to the president, you are not seen as essential," explains Whitely. "The way Miami is set up, in terms of size, this is a great positive structure, given that our president has such high visibility and is constantly traveling."

When it comes to the budget, reporting to the provost can definitely be an advantage, according to Whitely. "The provost is the chief budget officer. Even in the current climate in which any great enhancement of resources is just not available, our office has been fairly successful in the budgeting process."

Examples of partnerships between the academic and student life areas abound at Miami. Whitely notes that through the university's residential college system, 10 to 15 faculty members live in residence halls. Academic advisors and career planning and placement representatives, part of student affairs, assist faculty members in their work with students.

Through the counseling center, a social worker housed in the dean of students' office serves as a resource for academic affairs to handle the complex mental health challenges facing students, including assisting faculty with problem or disruptive students.

Whitely has learned through experience that to gain credibility with faculty you need to be completely available. "I suggest trying to attend faculty meetings once a semester and finding opportunities to speak about the challenges of student affairs so faculty know what you are facing," says Whitely, who sends a letter each fall to remind faculty of the resources in student affairs. By successfully handling a number of international student issues that were largely the result of fallout from September 11, 2001, Whitely has gained even more credibility with faculty.

Part of her success can be attributed to her tenure at Miami. "I have been here for 23 years," she says. "I have a presence in the community and my years of experience bring certain benefits." Her responsibilities have broadened over the years to include handling commencement, the honors convocation, and a lecture series in the College of Arts and Sciences. "We are taking on more and more tasks because our office gets things done. When the provost or president needs someone to turn to, they know they can turn to us," relates Whitely. LE

### A Provost's Point of View

Thomas Morales, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, agrees that the provost's relationship with the senior student affairs officer is critical.

"In the past, I felt strongly that vice presidents should report to the president—that structure was stature-easy," says Morales. "There is a feeling, 'If I don't have the president's ear, somehow I am not at the table.'" Now, he believes this reporting relationship is not as significant as shared values and a commitment to forging partnerships. "The provost must have a strong interest in making relationships work and leadership must share and communicate those values," he says.

"If, in fact, the vice president of student affairs reports to the provost like any other vice president, there are not stature issues," says Morales. "If student affairs is the only division with a vice president reporting to the provost, that could be problematic." Morales adds that if a provost does not appreciate the contributions of or is not knowledgeable about student affairs, problems are likely to arise.

He advises that if the reporting structure for an SSAO is going to change, that change should occur when "a new hire is coming in the door. Restructuring midstream causes its own set of problems," he warns.

Morales foresees a trend in which student affairs professionals will work more closely with individual schools and colleges. Specifically, SSAOs may find themselves looking at how college enrollment management plans tie into the university's plan or how college-specific, student life initiatives can be implemented. He shares how at Cal Poly Pomona, "Each college has an academic council of student clubs and a student affairs practitioner works with the council, dean, and faculty advisors to develop activities. We also offer college-specific student services."

"In the past, the chief academic officer developed the relationships with the academic deans," says Morales. "Now, if student affairs does not forge those partnerships, the division will become less connected and more marginalized."

Morales says the responsibility falls on the SSAO to educate academics that "we are partners in this enterprise." In the end, he says, deans must be held accountable by the leadership. "They must report on activities that contribute to student learning outside the classroom and work with student affairs in their colleges. They should be accountable for reporting progress in those areas with incentives in place to reward faculty who serve as advisors to student clubs and organizations."

# Managing a Crisis: How Would Your Campus Respond?

**I**t can happen at any time at any college or university. The car accident, the fire, the crime on campus that harms students, faculty, or staff members and affects hundreds of their peers and colleagues. Is your campus prepared? How will your campus respond? *Leadership Exchange* posed the following scenario to three senior student affairs officers (SSAOs), who share how their respective campuses would handle the crisis.

## THE SCENARIO

At four this morning, you received word that two of your students were killed when their car struck a light post at the front entrance to campus. The students were riding in the same car and both died immediately. It is not clear who was driving, but it appears the car was traveling at a high rate of speed. Three other students following in another car witnessed the accident.

Emergency medical personnel were called by a neighbor who heard the crash. You understand that the main entrance to campus could be cordoned off for as long as three hours while the police conduct their investigation. In the meantime, a local stringer for a national newspaper affiliate has been trying to contact students for their opinions.

The deceased students are Nikunj “Nik” Gurung and Emily Schimnoski. Nik was a junior from Bombay, India and Emily was a first-year student from a neighboring state. Nik and Emily, along with the three students in the car following them, were driving home from an off-campus fraternity event. All five students had consumed alcohol at the party before driving back to campus. Emily’s older brother Kip, a junior, left the party before Nik and Emily.

Nik was vice president of the student body and active in the International Student Association and the Rugby Club. Emily served on the Judicial Council and was a student worker for the Career Development Center. Both students lived on campus—Nik in a suite with three other men and Emily in a double room.

The three students who witnessed the incident, Angela Stonecipher, Jason Lienhoop, and Beth Pokora, all live in the same residence hall. Angela and Beth are roommates. You learn that the local police have taken statements from Angela, Jason, and Beth, but will need to speak with them later today. Two of the three students were so intoxicated during the interviews that their statements are unreliable.

Since the fall semester, a convocation had been planned and advertised for this evening, featuring a nationally recognized speaker.

## Winthrop University

BY FRANK P. ARDAIOLO

Our campus is an index to society and, unfortunately, society’s ills and tragedies have occasionally visited us. In response, our university has developed several protocols for dealing with crisis situations.

Immediately, I would call the dean of students, who would begin to assemble a crisis response team from the division of student life, selecting those team members most appropriate to this situation. Team members, including the directors of counseling, residence life, Greek affairs, the international student center, and the university chaplain’s office, would be asked to report to campus as soon as possible. Their roles are to advise and help me in our immediate response to the student community. I would next call the president of the university to inform him of the situation. Together, we would decide who else to summon to begin our response to broader university issues. This second team would include the president’s executive assistant, the assistant for public policy, the assistant for campus events, and the director of university relations. We would also dispatch the director of university relations to work with the newspaper stringer to assure professional behavior and student privacy.

Upon arriving on campus, all next-of-kin contact information should be readily available on our student information system, assuming the student provided it to us when registering. Notifying family can be problematic, especially when dealing with a notification to a foreign country, where phone systems and hours of day vary. I learned this firsthand 10 years ago when I had to make nine death and critical injury notifications at 2 a.m. to parents in Brazil, Peru, Hungary, Germany, and New Zealand, whose children were traveling with our tennis team and were involved in a van accident in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, 600 miles from campus.

The fog of tragedy can completely cloud one’s memory. I recommend recording everything you do so you can jog your memory later regarding who you talked with and what decisions you reached.

After the notifications are complete, my next task would be coordinating the additional actions of the student life and president’s office teams in responding to the tragedy. In the case at hand, I would dispatch a professional counselor and a chaplain to every residential student group in which the deceased students were involved, including residence halls and fraternities. Of course, a professional staff member would remain with Emily’s older brother, Kip, throughout the crisis and with Emily’s and Nik’s roommates. We would consider sending staff to be with the three witnesses of the incident. We would also arrange to later brief staff advisors of the relevant clubs—Judicial Council, International Student Association, Student Government, and Rugby Club—to provide accurate information and assist with the grieving process. We would also use an established protocol for rumor control by regularly providing accurate information to resident assistants for distribution.

The basic brief for staff would come from the university's official statement on the events. This initial statement would contain the facts of the accident that could be made public, seeking to deflect any queries of alcohol abuse or blame until the police investigation is completed. A general statement on grieving would be included along with an announcement that the university convocation would proceed as planned with a brief memorial to open the ceremony. We would make this statement available to the media at a news conference later in the day as an all-campus email was distributed. This information would also be posted on the university's main Web page.

Recognizing that this event would be ongoing for those involved, we would ensure appropriate and caring follow up for all of the involved students and our response group would meet daily until the crisis had passed and our team efforts were no longer necessary.

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*Frank P. Ardaiole is vice president for student life at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.*

## The University of Wyoming

BY S. LEELEN BRIGMAN

**L**ike most senior student affairs officers (SSAOs), I have responded to major crises that involve auto accidents, alcohol, and student deaths. The weekend after September 11, 2001, colleges and universities across the nation cancelled intercollegiate competitions. Saturday morning, our cross-country athletes trained as usual and then traveled as friends to Cheyenne and Ft. Collins, Colorado. Sunday morning at 5:30, I received a call that another student who was driving drunk had killed eight of our athletes.

The first and foremost actions in these situations are to deal effectively with the immediate needs of the individuals who are most personally touched by the tragedy—the brother enrolled at the same school (we had that, too); the families of the victims; the roommates and residents on the residence hall floors of the victims; the student government peers; and the fraternity members. All are in shock and grieving.

The residence life staff and the university police at the University of Wyoming are well trained to immediately respond to a crisis and coordinate the necessary resources, and the counseling center staff is available 24 hours a day. In the wee hours of the night, our professionals would be attending to the people related to the crisis, notifying the families of the victims, and bringing in counseling support for those who were present.

As an SSAO and chair of the Crisis Response Team, I would be called. I would establish a meeting time and place and trigger the phone tree to alert team members and other professionals who need to be added to the team. Based on the given scenario, the student government and international student services advisors would be notified. The agenda of the

first meeting would be to share information and develop a formal action plan, including how to handle the convocation.

One unique aspect of this scenario is the involvement of an international student. Over Memorial Day weekend 2002, two Chinese researchers and their families were on a trip when they lost control and rolled a sport utility vehicle. Three individuals were killed and two were seriously injured and hospitalized. The university had to notify and work with the families in China and the Chinese community at the university. An excellent translator sensitive to the cultural nuances was engaged in the process and we remained focused and responsive to the families in China who relied on us to provide accurate information and support.

Certainly an important aspect in this scenario is the impact on public perception with regard to alcohol and fraternity parties, which is nothing new for student affairs professionals. A central university spokesperson must be identified. This individual must not comment on the situation until families are notified and accurate information about the accident is available. In addition, that person should be knowledgeable about routine education programs and procedures to ensure "safe, legal, and responsible" use of alcohol by all members of the university community who choose to drink. The reality is that a very high percentage of college students drink alcohol and too many drive impaired. Inevitably, we must deal with the grief and the loss of these wonderful students and their incredible talents.

Finally, the University of Wyoming is located in a college town with no mass transit or cab system. In 2001, our student government established "Safe Ride," a free bus service for students and any individuals in Laramie on Thursday through Saturday evenings from 7 p.m. until 2:30 a.m. The bus follows an assigned route or can be accessed via telephone for a pick up or drop off. Student government representatives volunteer to ride with the driver to ensure appropriate behavior on the bus and maintain rider counts. Last academic year, Safe Ride provided more than 20,000 free rides to or from major businesses, local bars, and nearby residences. Bar staff provide the phone number to their patrons and many students have it programmed into their cell phones. People will drink and some will drink too much, but Safe Ride provides a good alternative to the scenario described here.

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*S. Leellen Brigman is vice president for student affairs at the University of Wyoming.*



# Symbolic messages during difficult times are especially important on small campuses. We would try to “read” the community and make the appropriate decision about the evening’s convocation.

## Denison University

BY SARAH WESTFALL

At Denison University, our first action in this crisis would be to convene the university’s response team. Our Catastrophe Response Plan identifies each team member by name and by position as well as a campus meeting place. Once convened, the team develops a plan of action that focuses on a number of areas: immediate concerns, communication, local/civil authorities, business as usual (ensuring normal campus operations), family(ies), campus impact, details, ceremonies/memorials, and long-term issues. The plan itself is a comprehensive “checklist of potential tasks” designed to ensure that nothing important is overlooked in the heat of the moment.

Many of our responses, while presented here separately, would occur simultaneously. Our initial concern would be to confirm the identities of the involved students and to determine their locations (residence hall, police department, or morgue). We would also notify the university president and campus physician and establish a reliable communication link with local authorities to obtain the best possible information. We would work with local authorities to determine who would deliver the news to the families of the deceased students and would begin preparing a public, campus statement about the situation, including where, how, and by whom the information would be communicated. We would also develop a protocol for working with local media (identifying the campus spokesperson and the location and timing of the briefings) and for managing incoming calls from concerned parents. We would inform any reporters of our media protocol and would vigorously enforce it.

Designated team members would have face-to-face contact as quickly as possible with the roommates of the deceased students and any siblings on campus. Our staff would do everything to ensure that students closest to the deceased

receive information before the public statement is made and receive as much support as we can provide. We would likely assign one of our residential life professionals to maintain ongoing contact with these students for the weeks following the incident. Similarly, our vice president and dean of students would likely serve as the contact persons for the families of the deceased students. As soon as practical, faculty advisors for the deceased students would be notified of the incident.

Our counseling staff would be called to campus and initially deployed to different locations for immediate service, then meet back in their offices or in a central campus location for drop-in services. Visits by counselors to residence hall floors and student organizations would be arranged as necessary.

We would be particularly careful regarding counseling services. First, we would try not to exhaust our resources all at one time. Second, we would get help from other staff with counseling backgrounds and avail ourselves of community resources (local mental health providers, clergy, and counselors from sister institutions).

We would arrange at least one opportunity for the community to gather together to process the loss and to share their feelings.

A final issue relates to the cancellation of public events. The response team would consider, along with the provost and the president, whether to hold the scheduled convocation. Symbolic messages during difficult times are especially important on small campuses. We would try to “read” the community and make the appropriate decision about the evening’s convocation. In past crises, we did not cancel classes as an institutional decision, but left it to the discretion of individual instructors and asked for their understanding as they worked with affected students. [LE](#)

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*Sarah Westfall is dean of students at Denison University in Granville, Ohio.*



# Five Strategies to Improve Student Retention

BY JOHN M. BRAXTON

**C**ollege student departure poses a significant problem to members of the student affairs profession. Colleges and universities that are experiencing troubling rates of departure frequently charge student affairs divisions with the responsibility of reducing these rates. Student affairs professionals who shoulder such a responsibility frequently seek strategies that hold promise for diminishing student departure rates at their institutions.

In *Understanding and Reducing College Student Departure* (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, 2004), Amy S. Hirschy, Shederick A. McClendon, and I advance a serious revision of Vincent Tinto's well-known interactionist theory of student departure in "Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research" (*Review of Educational Research*, American Educational Research Association, 1975) to account for departure from residential colleges and universities. We also propose a new theory to account for departure from two-year and four-year commuter colleges and universities. In both of these theoretical formulations, we identify *commitment of the institution to student welfare* as an important source of influence on the departure decisions of students. We postulate that *commitment of the institution to student welfare* positively influences student social integration in residential colleges and universities. Tinto defines social integration as the degree of congruency between the individual student and the social systems of a college or university. Social integration, in turn, positively affects students' commitment to their institution, a commitment formed after entrance to and experience with the institution. The greater the level of subsequent commitment to the institution, the greater the likelihood of student persistence.

*Commitment of the institution to student welfare* consists of three components. First, an institution committed to the welfare of its students embraces an abiding concern for the growth and development of its students. Second, a college or university that places a high value on students in groups and as individuals also embodies this commitment. Moreover, a high value placed on students signifies that they have a stake in the institution as do faculty members, administrators, and staff. Third, a college or university committed to the welfare of its students treats students equally and with respect as individuals.

## Strategies to Improve Student Retention

**I** offer a set of five strategies for the student affairs divisions of colleges and universities to follow that will help address current retention problems. For the purposes of this article, student affairs divisions include those units typically associated with the roles and functions of student affairs, encompassing all levels of student affairs professionals, staff members, and administrative employees. Staff members, including administrative staff, play anonymous but important roles in the retention of students and frequently interact more on a day-to-day basis with students than do senior student affairs officers (SSAOs).

### Shaping a Culture of Commitment to Student Welfare

The defining culture of the student affairs division of a college or university should stress a deep and abiding commitment to



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

student welfare as one of its key attributes. The development and maintenance of such a culture begins with the inclusion of such a commitment as a key facet of the division's organizational mission.

The development and reinforcement of such a culture of commitment should drive the selection of members of the student affairs division. Interviews with prospective employees should probe for the extent to which each individual espouses the core values associated with a commitment to student welfare. It is reasonable to expect that student affairs professionals will clearly espouse these core values. It is of critical importance that prospective staff members not trained as student affairs professionals also hold such values.

The orientation and training of new employees provides another mechanism to shape this culture of commitment to student welfare. In particular, all staff members should receive training in ways to deal with students equally and with respect for them as individuals.

The reward structure for administrators and other staff members of the division of student affairs should recognize those individuals who highly value students, treat them equally, and demonstrate respect for them as individuals. These behaviors should receive appropriate weight in the allocation of such institutional rewards as annual reappointments, promotions, and salary increases. Individuals who do not

demonstrate a commitment to student welfare or treat students disrespectfully and unequally should either be terminated or counseled on ways to improve their performance in these areas.

### Imperatives for Role Performance

The day-to-day role performances of members of the student affairs division of a college or university also help shape and sustain a culture of commitment to student welfare.

Accordingly, SSAOs and their staffs should adhere to the following imperatives:

- ◆ In the day-to-day administration of institutional policies and procedures, members of the student affairs division should treat students equally and fairly. Favoritism toward some students should not occur.
- ◆ A respect for each student as an individual should manifest itself in all interactions between student affairs professionals and students. All staff members in the various units of the student affairs division—student activities, career development and counseling, residential life, etc.—should display such respect.
- ◆ Public speeches made by the SSAO and other key administrators should convey the high value the college or university places on students as members of the academic community.

### Enforced Success

In his book *College Attrition at American Research Universities: Comparative Case Studies* (Agathon Press, 2003), Joseph C. Hermanowicz compares four research universities with similar levels of admissions selectivity but differing rates of student departure. At the university with the lowest rate of departure, he observes a “culture of enforced success.” He notes the key characteristic of this culture includes a religious-like belief in the promise of all students. Such a culture treats all students as “at-risk” for departure.

The characteristics of a culture of enforced success resonates with the components and underlying values of an *institutional commitment to student welfare*. Hirschy, McClendon, and I describe exemplary programs designed to reduce student departure in *Understanding and Reducing College Student Departure*. Of these exemplary programs, the Strategic Retention Initiative stands out as particularly indicative of both a culture of enforced success and of an institution’s commitment to student welfare. The treatment of all students as “at-risk” for departure characterize this initiative. Student affairs divisions of colleges and universities serious about reducing their rates of student departure should consider the



implementation of a program similar to the Strategic Retention Initiative. At the core of this program developed by Ellen M. Brier, assistant dean of undergraduate student affairs at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College, are telephone calls to all first-year students during the early part of the fall semester. The topics of the conversations center on the students’ academic and social experiences. Phone calls of a similar nature are also made during the spring semester. Follow-up calls are made to see if a problem persists. Face-to-face appointments and referrals to appropriate campus resources such as health services, counseling services, and student organizations may result.

Student affairs professionals should make the needed phone calls. However, student residence hall advisors could augment this initiative by visiting each student in his or her residence hall room. The adjustment of the student to residential life, the social life at the college or university, and the academic demands of the institution should be addressed during each visit. Student residential advisors could refer students experiencing difficulties in any of these areas to a student affairs professional or to an appropriate campus resource. More details of the program are available in *Understanding and Reducing College Student Departure*.

### Organizational Arrangements

Joseph B. Berger offers recommendations for colleges and universities as organizations in his article “Understanding the Organizational Nature of Student Persistence: Empirically-Based Recommendations for Practice” (*Journal of College Student Retention*, Bayworth Publishing, 2001-2002). Although his recommendations apply to colleges and universities as organizations, some recommendations fit with the

components of an *institutional commitment to student welfare* and are appropriate for implementation by student affairs divisions.

- ◆ Students should receive timely information about policies and procedures administered by the division of student affairs and other important information about student life. The various offices of the division of student affairs should establish clear lines of communication with students. This particular recommendation facilitates the equal treatment of all students and communicates the high value the institution places on students.
- ◆ Students should be given the opportunity to participate in the decisionmaking process for issues relevant to student life. The SSAO should strive for student representation on pertinent college or university committees. Decision opportunities within the division of student affairs should also include students when appropriate. This recommendation communicates to students that they, like other stakeholders, play an important role in the campus community.
- ◆ The student affairs division of a college or university should also serve as an advocate for the welfare of students. Berger suggests the creation of an ombudsman office, which could be established within a division of student affairs. The staff of such an office could listen to student problems, issues, and complaints. In some cases, the staff of this office would refer the student to other services or offices on campuses. In other cases, the staff of this office would communicate student complaints, issues, and problems to the SSAO. The SSAO, if he or she deems appropriate, would bring the matter to the attention of the institution's president and other central administrators. The establishment of a student ombudsman office clearly communicates the importance of students to the campus community and respect for students as individuals.

### Yearly Assessment of Student Perceptions

Many student affairs divisions conduct yearly surveys of enrolled students. Such surveys should include items that assess student perceptions of the extent to which their college or university demonstrates a commitment to their welfare and a concern for their growth and development. Items would also measure the extent to which students feel that they are greatly valued as members of the campus community and treated equally and with respect as individuals.

Survey results could identify both successes and problems to institutional policymakers. The findings may lead to the development of new policies, programs, and procedures or changes to existing ones. Moreover, the act of including such survey items demonstrates the commitment of the institution to the welfare of its students.

## Factors to Consider

SSAOs should give serious attention to the following factors as they implement strategies to reduce student departure.

- ◆ Students of color experience higher rates of departure than white students (Braxton, Hirschy, and McClendon, 2004). Colleges and universities should develop approaches tailored specifically to reduce the rate of departure for students of color. However, a college or university that demonstrates a strong and abiding commitment to the welfare of its students creates a campus environment that improves the collegiate experience and serves the needs of all of its enrolled students.
- ◆ Student affairs divisions serious about reducing student departure at their college or university should implement a wide array of strategies. In their book *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights From Twenty Years of Research* (Jossey-Bass, 1991) Pascarella and Terenzini contend that institutional goals are more likely to be achieved through the use of many small policy levers rather than a single large-scale lever.
- ◆ The implementation of these strategies involves little or no direct financial costs, but requires a considerable expenditure of effort on a daily basis by members of the student affairs division. For this reason, the reward structure of student affairs should recognize through annual salary increases and promotions those individuals who personally embody a commitment to the welfare of students.
- ◆ Although some common sources of influence are offered here, factors that play a significant role in departure differ between commuter and residential colleges and universities. *Understanding and Reducing College Student Departure* presents theories to account for departure factors in different types of institutions. A *commitment of the institution to student welfare* plays a role in the departure process at virtually every type of higher education institution. Ongoing, serious attention must be given to all factors that influence student departure decisions. This continued focus, combined with the implementation of strategies to address student needs and concerns, should help individual colleges and universities significantly reduce their rates of unnecessary student departure over time. ■■

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## Fire Safety on Campus

BY PETER LAKE

Recent events in Oxford, Mississippi have drawn attention to the risk of college fire and its impact on the safety of college students and property. By far, the greatest concern arises in residential living units such as Greek houses and residence halls. At least one college insurer places fire safety as a top priority, with losses due to fire considered a major cost.

Many factors contribute to fire safety issues on college campuses. Too many students live in housing that was not built to modern safety standards. Those who live in modern housing or retrofitted housing are often challenged by the use and conditions of those facilities. For example, it was common in one era to build basement party rooms—think of the Delta house in the movie “Animal House”—with one up-the-stairs exit. At certain capacities, these spaces are too crowded to be safe. Yet, such construction is a lure for spontaneous and hard-to-prevent gatherings.

Sadly, what makes many colleges so unique is often what makes them dangerous. Beautiful old buildings make for great catalog photos, but are very difficult and expensive to maintain and retrofit. Frequently, students and graduates demonstrate significant emotional attachment to certain buildings. In some cases, a president could easily raise money to update an old building, but not to build a newer and safer facility. College customs by their very nature are not safety customs. Texas A&M University dealt with this painful lesson in the wake of fire and other injuries suffered in its now banned bonfire celebration. Fire safety may only trump tradition after a tragedy occurs.

Alcohol use contributes to fire safety problems. Many buildings have so many points of entry that it is impossible to prevent surges in capacity during parties or gatherings. Alcohol use impairs judgment and facilitates poor or inadvertent choices such as tampering with smoke detectors or neglecting to alert school authorities about fire hazards in a timely fashion. Alcohol culture also spawns trash and trashing; crowded stairwells become impassible. Smoking tobacco and marijuana is also part of the college alcohol culture. The dangers of fire associated with smoking are hard to snuff out completely.

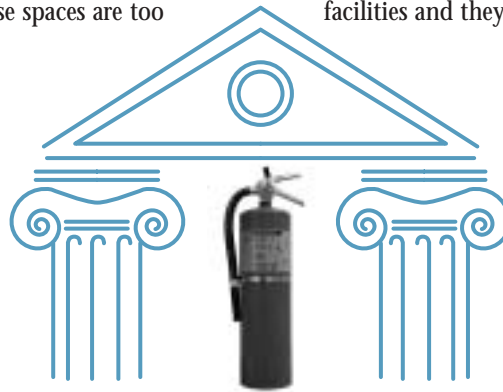
It is important to realize that as landlords, universities and their Greek living units have a legal duty to make their premises reasonably safe. In particular, when a landlord has agreed to remedy a condition, it may find itself in a precarious position in a lawsuit arising out of the failure to address that

condition. As a matter of developed university practice, Greek units bear primary responsibility for their own safety. However, the entire campus should share concern for safety in all the environments in which students live, learn, and play. It is uncommon these days, for example, for large, sanctioned events to be held in women’s fraternities. Yet, the members of the women’s fraternities often party with men in their living facilities and they might just as easily be injured as the men who live in them.

Few quick-fix solutions are available to significantly reduce fire risk in colleges. Increased education about fire danger and stepped up enforcement of fire code and campus regulations—with regular inspections—is a first step. Greater emphasis on maintenance and renovation also will help reduce risk. Some colleges would be wise to engage long-term capital campaigns to either create new and safer residential

living facilities or to substantially renovate existing ones. The existing capital climate makes these goals difficult in comparison to competing fundraising objectives. Presidents and members of boards of trustees must be willing to redirect tradition and loyalty in some instances.

Most promising of all may be the increased risk-management culture on college campuses and the rise of environmental strategies to reduce overall risk to students. The same efforts to reduce alcohol and drug use may be paying off with the collateral benefit of reducing fire risks. Clearly, reductions in such usage will have long-term benefits in decreasing the numbers of serious fires on university and college campuses.

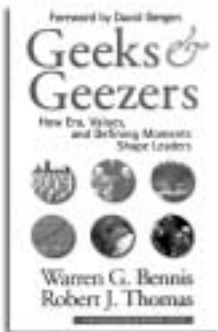


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*Peter Lake, professor of law at Stetson University College of Law, is co-author of The Rights and Responsibilities of the Modern University (Carolina Academic Press, 1999). An expert in higher education law and policy, Lake sits on several boards, including The Center for Academic Integrity and the review group of The Higher Education Center.*



# Who's Reading What?



**Geeks and Geezers** by Warren G. Bennis and Robert J. Thomas (Harvard Business School Press, 2002) encourages us to reflect on the transformational experiences in our lives, the eras in which those experiences occurred, and how our interactions with students are influenced by them. The book describes the magical quality called neoteny, which occurs when geezers (us)

continue to find possibility, excitement, and wonder as we engage with geeks (students). This is a wonderful book about building and respecting intergenerational relationships.

*Ronni Sanlo, Director of the LGBT Resource Center, University of California at Los Angeles*



**The Impossible Will Take a Little While: A Citizen's Guide to Hope in a Time of Fear** by Paul Loeb (Basic Books, 2004) is a response to the political despair and fatalism encountered by the author in the process of speaking at campuses and conferences throughout the country—the sense students keep expressing that their voices and efforts do not count. *The Impossible* creates a conversation

among some of the most visionary and eloquent voices of our times: Nelson Mandela, Maya Angelou, Diane Ackerman, Jonathan Kozol, Seamus Heaney, Václav Havel, Alice Walker, Marian Wright Edelman, Tony Kushner, and Desmond Tutu to name just a few. These voices mix with Loeb's essays to explore what it is like to go up against Goliath, whether South African apartheid, the iron fist of Eastern European dictatorship, or Mississippi segregation. The book inspires hope by showing what keeps people keeping on—even when the odds seem overwhelming.

*NASPA Staff*

## Web Sites to Watch

**Knowledge@Wharton**  
(<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu>)

Wharton publishes a biweekly e-newsletter of faculty and business and management perspectives that is easy-to-read and jargon free. Knowledge@Wharton reports on 14 topics, providing commentary on issues at the forefront of today's business world. You can search the database spanning eight years of articles. The site also collaborates with other business schools.



**MentorNet**  
(<http://www.mentornet.net>)

MentorNet is the award-winning nonprofit e-mentoring network that addresses the retention and success of women in engineering, science, and mathematics. Its approach has been recognized nationally and it can provide good ideas for mentoring programs of your own. Founded in 1997, MentorNet provides highly motivated proteges from many of the world's top colleges and universities with positive, one-on-one, email-based mentoring relationships with professionals from industry and academia. In addition, the MentorNet Community provides opportunities to connect with others from around the world who are interested in women's issues in engineering and science.



## Quick and Handy References

**FedStats** (<http://www.fedstats.gov>)

When you are looking for numbers and data to support your work, use this site to access more than 100 federal agencies and reams of government information. Statistical data are available on the topic of your choice along with statistical profiles of states, counties, and cities. A statistical reference shelf is offered as well as selected online agency databases.

**The Internet Public Library** (<http://www.ipl.org>)

The first public library of and for the Internet community, the IPL offers subject collections, ready reference, a reading room, and special collections among other topic heads.

**Be More Creative** ([www.bemorecreative.com](http://www.bemorecreative.com))

This site is a quote collection "that got out of hand." Whether you are writing a speech or trying to motivate your staff, search these pages for more than 50,000 quotations. Indexes and special collections are available, including The Creative Process, Creative Proverbs, and Creative Wit. Get inspired as you search.

# Preparing Students for Their Voting Future

BY CARY ANDERSON

Regardless of our perspectives on the outcome of the recent presidential election, we should all take time to reflect on our roles as student affairs professionals with regard to elections. From Plato and Thomas Jefferson to John Dewey and *Points of View* (NASPA, 1989), preparing students to be productive citizens in a democratic society is an important goal of education. As student affairs professionals, we can create opportunities to involve students in more participatory forms of governance such as student government and residence hall councils, which provide opportunities to experience democracy firsthand. Furthermore, we can utilize technology to improve student participation.

Like almost every other facet of modern life, technology is playing a more ubiquitous role in the election process from candidate Web pages and blogs to actual electronic voting (e-voting). For example, Howard Dean's early primary success was fueled by Web campaigning embraced by 18 to 25 year olds. Given students' interest in technological issues and the use of the various media, technology can provide a nonpartisan mechanism for promoting a fuller realization of democracy.

## Promoting Student Involvement

Promoting political involvement is particularly important considering college students' past participation was notoriously low in national elections. The same is true for many campus elections. Few students run for elected offices and voter participation is often weak, leaving the student body to be governed by those who may or may not represent the interests of the majority. Like the disenfranchised national electorate, many of our students may not feel they benefit from the system and, therefore, do not actively participate. These same students need to learn that to change the system they must be educated participants.

To be sure, colleges can harness technology—such as informational Web sites and blogs—and utilize course management tools (see Technology Center, *Leadership Exchange*, Summer 2003) in a non-partisan manner to inform students of the issues and motivate students to act accordingly. Non-partisanship allows students from all political backgrounds to participate and provides them with a safe place to explore the issues. Non-partisanship is also necessary to stay in compliance with the Federal Election Campaign Act and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. (For a list of permitted and prohibited or questionable activities see the American Council on Education's [ACE] Web site at [www.acenet.edu/washington/legalupdate/2003/Campaign.pdf](http://www.acenet.edu/washington/legalupdate/2003/Campaign.pdf)).

Another area in which technology has come to the forefront in elections is in the very act of participatory democracy, namely e-voting, which is already a reality in national elec-

tions. Tens of thousands of e-voting machines were deployed across the United States in 2004 and it is estimated that they accounted for about 40 percent of the votes in the recent presidential election. E-voting provides an incredible teachable moment involving real world applications of technology. At a minimum, e-voting should be conducted on campuses as we prepare students for their voting future.

## E-voting on Campus

E-voting lends itself to referendum balloting, which is more participatory. Instead of only student government representatives casting their votes on a particular issue, the vote could be opened to the entire student body using homegrown or commercial (e.g. [www.campus-vote.com](http://www.campus-vote.com)) campus e-voting technology. Online voting is fast, asynchronous, and eliminates the need for students to physically go to a polling station. Online democracy could be a very efficient method to increase student participation in campus elections.

While implementing e-voting on campus is worthy of consideration, it requires advanced thought and planning. Currently e-voting is fraught with pitfalls such as verification, vulnerabilities to hacking, and the potential to crash at inopportune times. The potential of e-voting to increase participation is huge. The pluses and minuses of e-voting is fodder for debate in the larger society and on campuses as well. To learn more about the issues surrounding e-voting, see the dynamic bibliography on e-voting at <http://theory.lcs.mit.edu/~cis/voting/voting.html#bibliography> or search for other sites.

In student affairs, we have a unique opportunity to take the lead by educating students to become aware of and adept at an online participatory democracy. Further, by arranging for actual online debating, campaigning, and voting on important campus issues, students can develop and hone the skills they will need as ongoing participants in this country's democracy. Through these types of activities, we can truly live up to our goal of educating productive citizens for a democratic society.



*Cary Anderson is dean of students and adjunct professor in the College Student Personnel Master's Degree Program at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. As the student affairs representative to various institutional information technology committees, Anderson has taken a leadership role in establishing networked computer access, educational programs, and computer user policies for students. He wrote the monthly column, "Building Community in Cyberspace," for the NASPA Forum and has presented numerous conference programs on technology-related issues.*



# Perspectives on the Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program

## An Intern Evaluates His Experience

Last summer, I was one of 42 students who participated in the NASPA Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program (MUFP) Summer Internship Program. After an extensive application process, I was selected to intern at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. As I reflect on my experiences, MUFP echoes the monumental decision nearly 50 years ago in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which I now realize was a catalyst to open doors in higher education for minority professionals such as myself.



Andre Moore

Through a bit of luck and what I can only explain as divine intervention, the NASPA Small College and University Institute was hosted by Lewis & Clark College in June. I attended sessions and conversed with more than 50 senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) and heard their discussions of critical issues and effective program initiatives. My involvement as a MUFP Fellow sparked many discussions, which shed light on my Fellow experience while advancing a wider perspective of the profession and higher education. I have an enhanced understanding of how values, relevant knowledge, and mental toughness are vital for success in senior-level student affairs positions.

By working closely with the dean of students at Lewis & Clark, I was able to brainstorm with different departments on programming initiatives, attend strategic planning meetings with the president of the college, and take advantage of the countless professional growth opportunities that allowed me to see the “big picture” in higher education.

I am now completing my first semester as a resident director and am pursuing a master’s degree in English literature. My future aspirations include a Ph.D. in higher education and an SSAO position. Being a MUFP Fellow, including my summer internship, cemented my decision to pursue a career in student affairs and provided me with the tools needed to flourish in this profession. By building on my past experiences and constantly developing my own abilities, I will bring much to student affairs and higher education.

*Andre Moore is a resident director at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He was a NASPA MUFP Fellow at Seton Hall University and a MUFP summer intern at Lewis & Clark College during the summer of 2004.*

## A Small College Reaps the Benefits

Last summer, Lewis & Clark College had the pleasure of hosting the NASPA Small College and University Institute. The biggest highlight for me was working with Andre Moore on all of the behind-the-scenes tasks that led to a successful institute. Moore’s presence on campus was the college’s most recent involvement with MUFP and reaffirmed its importance for both Fellows and colleges around the country.

Lewis & Clark benefited immeasurably from Moore’s campus internship. The tangibles include his assistance with the institute, the collection of information and resources for our diversity-focused Web page, and great ideas for the resident assistant training program. The intangibles include the work Moore will continue to do as he talks with others about his experience at Lewis & Clark and encourages them to consider employment in student affairs at a small liberal arts college.

In attempts to diversify staff, a program such as MUFP can be incredibly valuable. It can be difficult to achieve a diverse candidate pool for many searches, particularly in some geographic areas. For a modest investment of time and money, the internship program assists with building networks, creating exposure for the institution, and fostering the professional development of future candidates.

I am confident that the value of Moore’s experience extends beyond his daily work on campus. Moore interacted with more than 50 SSAOs at the institute, attended meetings with me, and learned about the operations of a small college.

Lewis & Clark’s first MUFP Fellow, Myah Moore (no relation to Andre), completed a MUFP Summer Internship at SUNY Stony Brook and is now the assistant director of alumni relations at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is also working toward her master’s in higher education administration at Columbia. It is hard to believe that when Myah began at Lewis & Clark College in 1999 she had no intention of pursuing a career in higher education.

Andre and Myah are excellent examples of the importance of the program. As an SSAO, I have an obligation to develop the future talent that our field needs. Through MUFP—sponsoring Fellows within your student body and creating summer internship opportunities for students from other colleges—you can support that development as well. By

*Tools of the Trade continued on page 27*



# Shaping Student Affairs Leadership Globally

BY THOMAS C. SHANDLEY

**E**arly in June 2005, NASPA's James E. Scott National Academy will launch its first-ever international institute held outside of the United States. The institute will be held at the University of Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain. Founded in 1218, the University of Salamanca is among the oldest universities in the world and offers an environment rich in history and tradition in which to pursue current issues in student affairs.

In the midst of this historic setting, senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) have a rare professional development opportunity to reflect and explore critical topics in student affairs with colleagues from around the world. Participants from the U.S. and a host of other countries will attend sessions in an environment conducive to deep thinking and comparisons of the past and the present.

## Why Spain?

In May 2003, several SSAOs visited Spanish institutions of higher education as a part of the NASPA International Exchange program. In Salamanca, after becoming increasingly impressed with the quality and range of student affairs programs in Spain, the idea of holding an SSAO Institute abroad was formed. The Spanish system of living/learning, called "colegio mayors," is a sophisticated, learning-centered experience widely respected by higher education institutions around the world. The colegio is a residence hall and student center wrapped into one. In this one facility, students live and dine with members of the faculty who reside there, enjoy much of their social life, utilize small libraries, and celebrate commencement. Drawing upon centuries of experience, it is clear much can be learned from our European colleagues.

The Bologna Declaration of 1999 was implemented to increase the competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The plan includes adopting a comparable degree; a common two-cycle program of undergraduate and graduate study; a common system of credits to ease transferability and mobility across European universities for students, faculty, and staff; European cooperation in quality assurance through comparable assessment; and integrated educational dimensions including curricular development, institutional cooperation for programs of study, training, and research. This monumental effort—its planning and the implementation of massive institutional and systems change—will be discussed at the institute.

## Of International Interest

While differences may exist across countries and continents, all institutions are seeking to broaden their outreach and enhance leadership and management practices. All of us recognize that our increasingly complex organizations require more insightful leadership, effective responses to calls for accountability in what we teach and in what students learn, and the ability to maximize diminishing resources.

Since fall 2003, a planning team has been hard at work establishing a vision and the program for this international experience. In shaping the program, planners are hoping to attract SSAOs from around the world in search of common goals, commitments, and values. The planning committee developed a program to draw a faculty with a wide breadth of international experience and understanding of international issues in higher education. The program addresses the most timely topics for professionals in the field, including:

- ◆ **Leadership in the midst of institutional and systemic change.** This issue is of utmost priority in Europe and its impact will be felt throughout the world. European institutions are actively trying to make it easier to share students and resources across boundaries and to be more competitive with other systems of higher education around the world, in particular the United States. To do so will require unprecedented cooperation between countries in the European higher education community.
- ◆ **Immersion into intentional learning communities characteristic of Spanish and European higher education.** The models for creating community in the midst of large institutions work well in the Spanish system of higher education. The system of colegio mayors in Spain will be a major topic and tours of several facilities in Salamanca will be offered.
- ◆ **Entrepreneurship in the management of student services.** As institutions compete for scarce resources, developing the required management skills is essential. Participants will learn creative and profitable ways to manage their own services rather than outsource to off-campus vendors.
- ◆ **Integration for a holistic campus experience.** Given the shared objectives, challenges, and constraining conditions on educators, collaborating and partnering within and beyond the academy is essential in realizing the potential of higher education. *Learning Reconsidered* (see NASPA's publication bookstore at <http://207.97.193.139/>) serves as a point of reference.

◆ **Effective practices to enhance and illuminate varying cultural and philosophical beliefs.** As our campuses become increasingly diverse, campus climates that embrace multiple cultures are essential. Strategies for fully engaging a campus community in the difficult matters of diversity and ethnicity are among the planned topics.

Institute participants will benefit from formal seminars and discussions with the faculty on these topics throughout the week. The week-long immersion will allow for a more sustained dialogue on topics of particular interest to each participant. Faculty members with direct experience in international issues and diversity have been chosen for the institute, including a representative from the Universidad de Granada.

### A Setting Steeped in Tradition

Institute participants will include NASPA membership throughout the world, International Symposium participants, and those who have participated in the International Education Knowledge Communities. The small size of the Institute (approximately 50 attendees) will allow for the development of collegial relationships in both formal and informal sessions. Participants will also be immersed in the “Spanish way of life.” They will work until 2 p.m., enjoy a two-hour

lunch, honor the tradition of the “siesta” when most businesses close from 4 to 6 p.m., and partake in activities centered in beautiful, historic plazas with late-night dinners featuring wonderful Spanish cuisine. Salamanca is approximately two hours north of Madrid and is close to Portugal, the historic walled city of A’vila, the El Escorial castle, and many wonderful vineyards.

At a time when NASPA is striving to heighten its international presence, when communication across boundaries is increasingly important, and when more and more students live outside their native countries, NASPA has taken the initiative to offer its members the opportunity to live and learn on an international campus.

*Thomas C. Shandley is vice president for student life/dean of students at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina. He is the director of the 2005 International Institute in Spain.*

For more information on the institute in Spain, visit the NASPA professional development Web site at <http://www.naspa.org/prodev>.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

*continued from page 25*

making the conscious choice to participate in MUFPP, SSAOs have an immediate impact on student learning and a long-lasting impact on the health of our profession. I look forward to identifying more students to mentor in the program and welcoming future interns to campus.

*Jonathan Eldridge is dean of students at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon.*

### A Fellow SSAO Expresses Gratitude

Last summer, I enjoyed attending the Small College and University Institute at Lewis & Clark College, which was hosting MUFPP summer intern Andre Moore. Moore not only gained day-to-day experience working in a student affairs division, but was involved in coordinating and running a conference for small college and university deans.

Not only did Moore do an outstanding job working with Lewis & Clark Dean of Students Jon Eldridge and his talented staff, but he had the opportunity to meet SSAOs and NASPA leadership from all over the country and to participate in conference events. It was an experience we all appreciated—working and discussing issues with a very talented Fellow.

This experience could not help but reopen all of our eyes to the tremendous value of MUFPP. Too often, we are bogged down in operational issues and forget the importance of our roles as mentors and teachers. Moore left Portland with many SSAOs both grateful for his hard work and ready to follow his progress through graduate school. It is safe to say that job offers will soon follow.

*Louis Stark is vice president of student affairs at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.*

Through the Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program (MUFPP), NASPA is working to increase the number of ethnic/minority and/or persons with disabilities who pursue careers in student affairs and higher education. The main components of MUFPP are a year-long, on-campus mentorship, the summer internship program, and leadership institutes. To learn more, please visit <http://www.naspa.org/resources/mufp> or contact Tess Shier at [tshier@naspa.org](mailto:tshier@naspa.org) or 202-265-7500, ext. 3003.



## Zero Tolerance for Cheating

BY GWENDOLYN JORDAN DUNGY  
Executive Director, NASPA

In speaking with current college students and administrators, it is clear that cheating has become symptomatic of the growing expectations and pressures on today's students. Under pressure to perform, many students see cheating as an adaptive tool and not necessarily a moral or an ethical lapse. It is a means to an end when grades rather than learning are rewarded.

Not only is this attitude becoming more widespread, the ways in which students cheat are growing. Smart phones have become a cheater's dream tool according to Cary Anderson, dean of students at Canisius University in Buffalo, New York, who shares the following: "Not only can someone send answers to a mobile phone via email or text messaging, answers can also be stored in the organizer. The camera allows for digital images of tests, the MP3 player can be used to tape or playback a voice recording of answers, and with optional software, mathematical and scientific formulas are easily accessed by pushing a few of the right buttons. As these devices get smaller and smaller, concealment will be increasingly difficult to detect." Contrary to what some might think, we do not need a forward leap to the next technological fix, but rather a step back to the roots of good teaching and good citizenship among the entire community, including students and families. For when advances in technology outpace ethical understanding among a critical mass of students, educators will have failed to accomplish the mission of higher education.

### Honesty as a Learning Outcome

As educators, we need to recognize that an important learning outcome of a college education is interpersonal and intrapersonal competence. We are not simply responsible for students' intellectual growth, but their ongoing emotional and moral development as well. We must avoid the possibility that cheating can easily become one leg of a three-legged stool with dishonesty in the classroom, in social interactions, and with one's self.

### Partnerships as a Strategy

Counteracting the pull of this slippery slope of dishonesty calls for partnerships among faculty, student affairs, and judicial affairs. According to Robert Kelly, associate dean of students at the University of Vermont, "among faculty on many campuses, there is some confusion regarding what typically happens when a referral is made and how issues are resolved." He adds that there are also "questions about what values we wish to hold regarding the issue of integrity on campus." These observations are good reasons why partnerships between all parts of the college, including students and their families, are necessary to create a culture of honesty and

integrity in the academic community. More and more parents or guardians are intervening on behalf of their students, and students are more willing than ever to discuss their experiences with their parents. Just as educators have a role in defining learning outcomes, parents have a responsibility to help their students make connections between coursework and personal and civic experiences.

Orientation of students and families, before classes begin and throughout the students' college experiences, should include conversations that reflect on the choices students make and the consequences of those selections. While teachers work with students through assignments and class discussions on ethical dilemmas in a variety of disciplines, Kelly suggests that faculty who get to know their students and connect with them as individuals experience less academic dishonesty in their classrooms. Student life administrators work with students on how to hold honest student government elections, how to be equitable in distributing funds for various student clubs and activities, and how to listen with less prejudice to the ideas others bring to the table. The work of integrating classroom learning with behavior is critical.

The roots of character are based on role models and experiences and are reinforced in the classroom through readings and discussions. The broader community needs to understand and constantly address the fact that students are under tremendous stress. It is our responsibility to give them ongoing assistance in identifying and adhering to strong values that include honesty and academic integrity. **LE**