Student Affairs on Campus

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An Introductory Note from the Editor

Rishi Sriram, Ph.D.
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TACUSPA's journal, Student Affairs on Campus, is now launching its second issue! The online journal before your eyes is here because of the incredible leadership of the TACUSPA board and the visionary, sacrificial work of the Student Affairs on Campus editorial board. If you run into any of these folks, please thank them.

A TACUSPA journal can tie members and colleagues together. Members who read the same publication can discuss articles with one another, exploring what they are learning and thinking about. It also creates a needed outlet for these talented professionals, faculty members, and graduate students to share the good work they are doing. Too much of our work is left unshared with the greater community of scholar-practitioners.

The reaction to the first issue of Student Affairs on Campus has been quite positive, and I can feel the momentum building. As with all new endeavors, we want to hear what you like about this journal and your ideas to make it better.

Happy reading, thinking, feeling, and doing,

Our Stories – with Dr. Don Albrecht

Teresa Simpson, Ed.D.
Lamar University

Dr. Don Albrecht is the Vice President for Student Engagement and Success at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. He became a member of TACUSPA in 1978 and served as President in 1989-90 and TACUSPA foundation chair in 2011-12.

How did you begin your Career in Student Affairs/Higher Education?

My undergrad experience at Texas A&M University provided me the opportunity to get to know many campus administrators, especially those in Student Affairs. I was the student director of the Fish Camp orientation program, and through that role and others, met John Koldus, Carolyn Adair, and many others. I asked "how can I work in a job like yours?" of Carolyn Adair and others, and things started falling into place. I was accepted into the higher ed program at A&M, became a graduate assistant for Carolyn Adair in Student Activities, and eventually became the associate director.

What is the one thing you would want to tell an aspiring Student Affairs/Higher Education Practitioner?

I received some very good advice when I was an aspiring practitioner. Going into this field should be done with a dedication that is more than simply love of alma mater. Obviously, I was able to get my start in the profession where I received my undergraduate degree, but I recalled that advice when opportunities for growth and advancement were presented at other campuses. I encourage all those considering this field to enter it if they can see themselves serving students at any college or university. If allowed a second piece of advice, I would tell aspiring practitioners to hone their listening skills. That may be the most important skill required for our work for and with students.

What do you feel you have contributed the most to in the field of Student Affairs/Higher Education?

I have been very fortunate to have worked at four wonderful, but very different universities, and I have worked with outstanding colleagues and students. I learned a great deal from them, and I hope I was able to help them in some way. I was encouraged to be involved and accept leadership roles in our professional organizations and I have done that with my staff. I also hope I demonstrate a good balance between student advocacy and administrative priorities as well as a healthy work-life balance.

What do you feel is the biggest challenge for a Student Affairs/Higher Education Practitioner today?

I feel the expectations and requirements for practitioners have grown exponentially since the time I started in the field. While not arguing their merits, we spend exceptionally more time and resources on reporting, compliance, assessment, and many other relatively new initiatives. And then, as with all of higher education administration, requests for additional staff to accomplish these tasks are rarely granted. Too often, we just add this on to all the other things we need to do.

Please tell us of your journey in TACUSPA and the value it brings a practitioner in the field of Student Affairs/Higher Education.

Because my first supervisor, Carolyn Adair, was heavily involved in TACUSPA, I was introduced to TACUSPA as a first year professional. My first role was as a committee chair, and in true TACUSPA style, one role prepared me for another, and another, and eventually I became President. I recently completed six years on the TACUSPA Foundation Board. TACUSPA has been my professional home for over 35 years and has provided me with great friends and colleagues, and the best professional development opportunities any student affairs organization could offer. TACUSPA offers a national quality organization right here in the State and particularly serves generalists very well. It remains current and proactive; it offers networking and best practices; and it continues to grow and meet the needs of our profession.

New Scholarship - Raider Ready: An Integrated Model for Freshman Seminar at Texas Tech University

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This essay advances the argument that freshman seminars that effectively combine academic and student affairs have higher retention and persistence rates. To support this argument, a concise review of relevant literature concerning the theoretical framework, historical roots, and typical structure of freshman seminar programs is discussed. Additionally, this essay's rationale is proposed, bolstered by a discussion of the limitations of most current freshman seminar programs. Emphasis is placed on how the freshman seminar program at Texas Tech University (i.e., IS 1100, Raider Ready) addresses these limitations. Specifically, a review of empirical data that supports Raider Ready's effectiveness is discussed. Thereafter, the paper concludes with suggestions for other schools who wish to employ similar freshman programs.

Introduction

Student undergraduate enrollment in US colleges and universities has grown greatly over the last couple of decades. The U.S. Department of Education (*Digest of Education Statistics,* 2011; 2012; 2013, as cited by the Institute of Education Sciences, n.d.) reports that while postsecondary education enrollment has fluctuated slightly as a result of the overall economic climate, enrollment rates have increased solidly by more than 48 percent. This increase reflects a greater number of non-traditional students (typically defined as age 25 and older), women, and minorities seeking higher education.

The increase in enrollment has proven both an advantage and disadvantage for schools accepting more students. First, enrollment increases typically result in more revenue for growing institutions. Second, growing enrollments may lead to national and even international attention for growing institutions. Third, larger student bodies indicate the conveyance of the importance and availability of higher education for those interested. And so on. However, regardless of how much larger enrollment contributes to the growth of

American higher education, disadvantages also exist. Higher enrollment requires additional teaching and research staff, which might be difficult to acquire due to limited immediate funding. In short, plans to grow enrollments must be accompanied by plans to see these students persist and graduate. This may be best exemplified by the imbalance between enrollments and graduate rates reported by universities and colleges with open enrollment admissions policies. Additionally, enrollment growth introduces faculty and staffing needs especially when high faculty to student and staff to student ratios increase as a result of enrollment growth can limit the number of courses available to students on a timely basis. Furthermore, enrollment growth—especially at the freshman level—can create infrastructure demands on housing, student services, and other auxiliaries which affects student engagement outside of the classroom including the changing expectations and needs of students in the way they are acclimated to college life. This mismanagement of student expectations and needs ultimately can result in higher dropout rates, thus negating the work that higher education institutions are doing to get students into their classrooms in the first place. Therefore, if student recruitment is not coupled with active student retention, enrollment rates will begin to reverse, or—worse yet—the quality of education that students receive will could lack quality. Student retention and persistence are primary concerns among leaders of American colleges and universities, primarily because institutions of all types and especially State institutions are under greater pressure to graduate more students while generating more and more of their own revenue to cover operating costs. However, these issues can be the most challenging to address, but many colleges and universities are confronting the challenge early head-on by implementing programs known do directly impact student retention, persistence and graduation.

For example, many colleges and universities have made available to students their courses online so that students may implementing first-year college programs or freshman seminars to aid in student retention (which eventually leads to better student persistence). In fact, "more than 70% of colleges and universities now offer some type of first-year program" (Cox, Schmitt, & Graham, 2005, p. 40); at least 95% of four-year schools offer these programs as well (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006). Of course, student retention is important at any learning stage, but as Cox, Schmitt, and Graham (2005) conclude, "the first year is the most crucial period in student retention with more than half the students who drop out doing so in their first year" (p.40). Some of the reasons Cox, Schmitt, and Graham attribute to low retention rates include low admission standards, low grades, and unmet financial concerns. Oftentimes, these initial concerns or low performance derive from a lack of attention to the needs of new or young students.

However, research has revealed several factors that lead to higher retention rates among students. Students who attain higher grades and a higher GPA (Cox, Schmitt, & Graham, 2005; Braunstein, Lesser, & Pescatrice, 2006), have a greater interest in learning, integrate socially (Cox, Schmitt, & Graham, 2005; Erickson & Stone, 2012), maintain some sort of goal commitment, have regular interactions with faculty and staff, possess clear academic expectations and requirements, and overall enjoy learning with their peer (Cox, Schmitt, & Graham, 2005) tend to stay enrolled longer than other students and complete their degrees or certificates. Overall, Cox, Schmitt, and Graham (2005) concur that "academic,

social, and personal support" are the leading contributors for academic retention and measureable achievement (p. 42), especially when students are learning skills for success (Erickson & Stone, 2012).

Since the prevalent factors that support student retention and persistence can and should be achieved at the freshman level, the first-year programs and freshman seminars established by colleges and universities across the nation share common components and goals. Rhodes and Carifio (1999) suggest that freshman seminars first of all must be appropriate for students who attend schools of differing selectivity levels, meaning that schools that have relatively low or high admittance standards should offer freshman seminars that reflect such standards and prepare students accordingly instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. Additionally, Jewler (1989) and Rhodes and Carifio (1999) maintain that effective freshman seminars help students learn about three specific things: themselves, their campuses, and the value and importance of higher education. Most importantly, though, Hunter and Linder (2005) specifically define the idea of the freshman seminar as "a course designed to assist students in their academic and social development and in their transition to college.... In most cases, there is a strong emphasis on creating community in the classroom" (2005, pp. 275–276).

This essay advances the argument that freshman seminars that effectively combine academic and student affairs have higher retention and persistence rates. To support this argument, a concise review of relevant literature concerning the theoretical framework, historical roots, and typical structure of freshman seminar programs is discussed. Additionally, this essay's rationale is proposed, bolstered by a discussion of the limitations of most current freshman seminar programs. Emphasis is placed on how the freshman seminar program at Texas Tech University (i.e., IS 1100, Raider Ready) addresses these limitations. Specifically, a review of empirical data that supports Raider Ready's effectiveness is discussed. Thereafter, the paper will conclude with suggestions for other schools who wish to employ similar freshman programs.

Literature Review

Programs to assist students with their transitions into college academics and affairs have existed in the United States for more than 150 years. Vassar College was the first to establish any kind of preparatory program for academically underprepared students in the mid-nineteenth century (Stahl & King, 2000; Ryan & Glenn, 2004); by 1928, over 100 other schools offered transition courses for first-year college students (Fitts & Swift, 1928; Schnell & Doetkott, 2003; Ryan & Glenn, 2004). Many of these courses focused on specific learning outcomes, such as remedial skills. Over time, an increase in the number of non-traditional students enrolling in college urged a change in the direction for transition courses to focus on basic learning strategies (Ryan & Glenn, 2004). Today, almost 75% of US colleges and universities offer some type of first-year seminar (Ryan & Glenn, 2004; Skipper, 2002), which may be subject- or skill-specific.

Freshman seminar courses are implemented at colleges and universities for various reasons but tend to serve the purpose of bolstering retention and persistence. The next section covers the most common theoretical frameworks upon which these courses are designed: psychological preparedness, increased support, and improved integration and transition.

Theoretical Frameworks for The Freshman Seminar Course

One of the primary reasons freshman seminars exist is to provide students with psychological preparedness for the longevity of their college careers. Hotchkiss, Moore, and Pitts (2006) agree that placing students into smaller learning communities and gradually exposing students to academic and social opportunities increases their confidence and willingness to persist. Students who do not participate in freshman seminar courses must navigate their first year seemingly alone and lose out on the chance to communicate directly with faculty members who have direct access to resources for success.

Psychological preparedness derives directly from support. Students enrolled in freshman seminars receive support from instructors and also from their peers, which oftentimes is more important and valuable. Research reveals that lack of "value congruence or social support" contributes to higher dropout rates among college freshmen and sophomores (Bean & Eaton, 2001–2002, p. 74; Spady, 1970). When students receive a combination of instruction and social support regarding their academic endeavors, they tend to seek guidance within the university setting, utilize available resources, and follow through with their education

Successful integration and transition to college life is vital for some students. Making the transition from small or private high schools or home school environments to large public universities can be a shock for many students, especially when little effort was required to succeed and values remained relatively stable in previous academic settings. Oftentimes, students have a difficult time coping with the separation from family and friends or the newfound independence that college life can provide. In fact, "students leave college because they fail to separate from a previous socializing agent, fail to negotiate a transitional period, and fail to incorporate new values into their lives at a school" (Bean & Eaton, 2001–2002, p. 74). Simply, students cannot or fail to acknowledge the interpersonal growth required to succeed and persist in college.

Aside from their theory-driven frameworks, freshman seminar courses also consist of particular structures depending on the goal of the course. The following section discusses the typical structure of freshman seminars—credit hours, student enrollment, learning objectives, and models—and the value that the structure adds to student retention and persistence.

Typical Structural Framework for Freshman Seminar Course

The structure of freshman seminar courses varies among colleges and universities, but many characteristics are common. For instance, most freshman seminars last only one semester or quarter term (Hotchkiss, Moore, & Pitts, 2006), allow no more than 25 students

per class (Cox, Schmitt, & Graham, 2005), and award one-to-three semester credit hours that count toward students' grade point averages or degree hours (Hotchkiss, Moore, & Pitts, 2006). However, "[t]he element that is most common to first-year seminars is a regularly scheduled meeting time with a specific instructor for new students" (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006, p. 26), which provides a sense of stability for students during a time of transition. On the other hand, variations among freshman seminars include "the frequency and duration of class meeting times; content, pedagogy, and structure; credit hours and grading; and whether the course is required or an elective" (p. 26). Moreover, courses can be structured within the university or within an academic or athletic department (Hotchkiss, Moore, & Pitts, 2006). From an instructor's perspective, however, variation comes from the number of courses taught and compensation (Hotchkiss, Moore, & Pitts, 2006).

The most prevalent differences among these courses is the pedagogical model upon which they are based. Three models make up the majority of freshman seminar structures: learning strategies, academic socialization, and discipline-based models (Ryan & Glenn, 2004; Braunstein, Lesser, & Pescatrice, 2006). The learning strategies and academic socialization models typically are administered at the college- or university-level, whereas the discipline- based model is administered at the department or degree level and are less common for freshmen. Therefore, details about the learning strategies and academic socialization models only are discussed in the following sections.

Learning Strategies Model

The learning strategies model for the freshman seminar is based on academic learning approaches to success and consists of practice in active learning, note taking, time management, and the like. Since many freshman or transition seminars were established in direct response to helping underprepared students perform better in college, teaching strategies for test taking and reading were considered fundamental and transferable skills. As time passed, a select few social issues became part of the strategy curriculum and included topics such as financial responsibility, drug and alcohol safety, and interpersonal relationships (Ryan & Glenn, 2004). However, the focus remains on active and engaged learning within the academic setting with the end goal of personal success and achievement.

Proponents of the learning strategies model argue that students should learn as early as possible "to become active agents in their academic integration and persistence" (Ryan & Glenn, 2004, p. 7). In other words, students must acknowledge their own learning styles and what strategies work best for them. In order to do so, students must be presented with options. Many students who sailed through high school may find that their previous approach to studying and test-taking is insufficient in college, or students who are returning to college after many years may have no strategy at all. Freshman seminars based on the learning strategies model introduce students to different but appropriate skills, but more importantly, they teach students that success may rely on the adaptability of strategies in different classes or subjects.

Academic Socialization Model

As an alternative model to learning strategies, the academic socialization model of the freshman seminar also incorporates learning strategies into its paradigm but emphasizes social integration. In some cases, this model is seen as "the extended orientation model" (Ryan & Glenn, 2004, p. 7) in that students are "integrated into the culture of the university" (p. 7). The academic transition into a college or university setting can be difficult for some students, and it can be made even more difficult by the inability to integrate socially. Hesitation to talk to instructors, utilize available resources, or participate in campus activities contributes to higher dropout rates among college freshman. Therefore, schools that utilize the academic socialization model acknowledge students' needs for support inside and outside the classroom.

While many believe that learning should trump socialization—especially when the cost of higher education is skyrocketing, schools that acknowledge the importance of integrating these two aspects of college life beginning at the freshman level tend to retain and graduate more students. As a result, many of the most successful freshman seminar courses offer a combination of insights to college success, meshing academic and student affairs. Students may excel in academic endeavors, so courses that stress classroom or study skills may accomplish little for these students. On the other hand, socially active students may have no trouble fitting into university life but may struggle to adapt to new academic expectations; however, courses that emphasize social engagement may do little to retain these students. Seminars that highlight equally academic affairs and student affairs have a better chance of increasing student retention and persistence because they promote work and life balance.

Case Study: IS 1100—Raider Ready

Texas Tech University, a large four-year university in West Texas, offers a one-semester credit hour interdisciplinary freshman seminar course during the fall and spring semesters. IS 1100, Raider Ready, is structured for new students of the university to acclimate them to college life and academics. Unlike many impersonal freshman courses that are large-lecture format and can seat as many as 400 students, Raider Ready is available in several small-capacity sections. This design allows students to have direct access to university faculty and staff and provides an environment where students in the same stage of learning can share academic and social experiences with one another. Instructors include faculty and staff from various academic backgrounds, from campus administrators to adjunct instructors.

At the beginning of each semester, students enrolled in Raider Ready are required to attend New Student Convocation, a social gathering for new students and faculty. Convocation is an opportunity to meet other new students, faculty and staff, and administrators from across campus. During the event, students are exposed to music, activities, and traditions of the university, which enables students to grow comfortable with the social aspect of their new learning environment. Students especially receive a glimpse into

what types of activities in which they can participate and discover the social opportunities in store for them throughout the academic year.

Raider Ready's typical format consists of a combination of online and classroom learning that encompasses writing, reading, critical thinking, and communication skills. Students meet in assigned classrooms during the first week of classes where they are introduced to the course, to their instructors, and to their classmates. Students also are advised of the mixed format where classroom meetings occur every other week. During class meetings, students discuss assigned readings or campus activities they attended. Specifically, topics such as academic integrity, professionalism, time management and study skills, academic advising, critical thinking, and cultural literacy are explored since these will prove fundamental for students as they persist through college.

During the weeks that classes do not meet, students must stay engaged via online discussions through Blackboard, the course's content management system. Instructors post questions about assigned readings to which students respond with original ideas and takeaways. Students also must respond thoughtfully to at least two of their classmates' postings, thereby dialoguing about relevant course topics and questions. Additionally, students are required to attend at least one campus engagement event during the weeks that classes do not meet in person. These events include a variety of activities: social gatherings, sporting events, academic fairs, local art exhibits, lecture series, and more. The purpose of having students attend these social events is to encourage them to engage with the campus community and their classmates outside of the classroom setting. Social engagement is important for all first-year students, especially for those who live on campus, because it provides an opportunity for students to develop social skills and create lasting relationships with others.

One of the more important assignments students complete early in the semester is a MAP-Works assessment. MAP-Works is an online student retention platform that queries students about their activities, motivations, impressions, and plans and produces a report of factors that might impact student attrition. Results of the MAP-Works questionnaires are available immediately to students and instructors so that specific risk factors can be addressed, thereby aiding each student to be more successful in college. Ultimately, students use their MAP- Works reports to write a two- to three-page final paper titled "Make the First Year Count." The essay requires students to reflect upon their academic preferences and interpersonal college experiences. Specifically, students respond to three overarching questions: 1) *How will you meet your own expectations as a student?* 2) *How can you be more successful in college?* and 3) *What campus resources might you use to improve your likelihood of success?* More importantly, however, students' MAP-Works results provide instructors with an early alert about whether or not specific intervention is required. For instance, if students indicate that their study habits might not produce the academic goals they have set for themselves, instructors can use that information to teach students about different yet beneficial study habits that more accurately match their desired outcomes. Further, instructors might also be able to assist students who normally are hesitant to engage in social activities or even to speak to instructors about important course issues. Overall, MAP-Works is a constructive tool for students in that it provides them an opportunity to see

firsthand how their goals compare to their strategies, but it provides much more constructive insight for instructors who can intervene to help students revise their strategies to reach academic and social success.

Through Raider Ready, students also are introduced to group work, as a group project and end-of-semester presentation is assigned. Projects are intended to spark creative engagement about a relevant topic, and students are expected to produce a final product that represents particular concepts associated with the course. Students are not assigned to groups; rather, they are responsible for choosing their own groups, which provides an opportunity to discover how group communication and dynamics evolve over a semester. Students work on these projects outside of class, thus requiring them to organize the project and manage their time accordingly.

Ultimately, Raider Ready's goal is to expose students to fundamental skills for college success, including social and academic engagement. However, Raider Ready is part of a larger push for student retention and persistence across the university, and its aim thus far has been successful due entirely to its adoption of and alignment with current research on the collaboration between academic and student affairs. The exposure students receive to basic academic skills—such as study habits, college and personal finances, and culture and diversity- bolster an ideology that they can succeed in an atmosphere that often is daunting and intimidating; but the exposure they receive to social skills—becoming part of a community and tradition of something larger than they have ever been a part of—compliments the academic side of higher education, hence creating a desire to continue their education beyond their freshman year.

The freshman seminar course at Texas Tech University constantly is striving to incorporate strategies for student success, and the next phase of this endeavor is peer mentoring. Peer mentoring has the potential to facilitate more active engagement in the classroom and in social events, simply because new freshmen are paired with other students who may share similar goals, experiences, and expectations. In the meantime, however, overlapping academic and social affairs for new students is proving effective for the university and ultimately for the students who attend and graduate. Other colleges and universities that currently offer a freshman seminar course or first-year program might consider revising their approach to encompass a blend of academic and social affairs that students deem important and necessary for survival in higher education, but as stated previously, the approach must be appropriate for the institution. Schools that implement the wrong type of freshman seminar or program for their students will fail to accomplish the goal of higher retention and persistence and, instead, will promote higher dropout rates among individuals who simply set out to receive higher education.

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Research in Brief - Addressing the Identity Development Experiences of Hispanic Women

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When many White Americans talk about the borderlands, they think geographically, but the borderlands for many Hispanic* college students are the place they live every day no matter what their geography. The borderlands are where two cultures mix, and for young Hispanic women, that is their daily lives. However, they would not want it any other way.

Based on interviews with over 30 Hispanic female college students across three research projects, we saw patterns that have implications for student affairs practice. The studies included a cross section of nationalities including Central American, Cuban, Mexican, and South American women living in a large city in the south and attending a Hispanic serving institution. One addressed identity development (Owles, 2009), one specifically leadership identity development (Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Onorato, 2010), and one first-year experience (Musoba, Collazo, & Placide, 2013). While these patterns may be true of other ethnic groups, (for example, White women raised in traditional families or recent immigrants may report some similar experiences) we address Hispanic women from these studies. We also caution against assuming this is the experience of every Hispanic woman. However, with the demographic shifts in the United States and Texas in particular, understanding the experiences of Hispanic students is critical for student affairs professionals. We offer some suggestions for practice that come from our interviews.

Leadership or general identity development programming must address gender and ethnicity simultaneously.

Virtually every Hispanic woman we interviewed had a merged ethnic and gender identity. While researchers usually study ethnic identity or gender identity independently,

these are not experienced separately by Hispanic women. They could not talk about being Hispanic without talking about gender expectations, and they could not talk about being a woman without talking about being a "good Hispanic woman." Therefore programming for leadership or identity development will not reach these women without considering these identities simultaneously.

Programming about gender should provide opportunities to process the contradictory messages about gender roles in family and society.

Many of our participants spoke of a public message and a subversive message they received about gender roles. "Be a good Hispanic woman, but don't be dependent on a man." Publicly they were expected to adhere to prescribed gender roles, usually dictated by the family and supported by social and cultural norms of the extended families and local community.

Interestingly, there is also a counter-narrative against traditional gender roles. Behind the scenes, the mothers and aunts encouraged them to be strong and independent and avoid being vulnerably dependent on their spouses. They were encouraging their daughters to adopt new ways of thinking about success and family, but not to the point where they sacrificed all cultural values. These young women viewed their mothers, grandmothers, as well as other female family members as the cornerstone of strength in the family; therefore, they did not reject notions to value family first. There is a strong narrative of feminine strength. This generation of women want it all: family, career, leadership roles, etc.

Program with Hispanic families in mind.

Traditional developmental theories based in White cultural norms of developing autonomy may frame these Hispanic women as immature, but they see their connectedness with family as a strength and are less interested in independence. One student said, "Family, gotta love 'em, can't leave 'em."

Further, administrators must confront negative stereotyping about Hispanic families that come out of a deficit narrative. The vast majority of the young women felt supported by their family in pursuing a college education, and spoke of family members who told them they could accomplish anything. Yet, they found it stressful to be a full-time college student and meet family gender role expectations. When they experienced conflicts between family life and education, it was usually family members' lack of knowledge of the value of study groups, internships, co-curricular involvement, and other reasons to be on campus outside of class. Programs for families to understand the full undergraduate experience and university expectations are desperately needed. Once these young women's parents understood, they supported their daughters' involvement.

Identity development must consider lenses from sociology and anthropology as well as psychology.

Until recently researchers only considered one developmental lens. These women's cultural heritage, experience of otherness in relation to the dominant culture, and family dynamics are a part of their identity, and these aspects are not accounted for in staged psychological models. Further, in interviewing young women in a Hispanic dominant community and university, the experience of otherness was much less a part of their development. Some Hispanic identity development models (Torres, 2006) put a strong emphasis on negotiating their relationship to White dominant culture, but that was much less of a relevant experience for students where White culture was less dominant.
Embrace their value of paying it forward.

Many Hispanic women come from the immigrant experience where they have a deep appreciation for their family members' sacrifice for a better life for them. They feel a deep obligation and desire to be successful to honor that sacrifice even among those who were generations removed from actual immigration. This was usually a stronger motivation for academic achievement than competition for grades. Further, they often embraced advocacy and social justice for newer immigrants which tied to these deep beliefs. Institutions can provide service learning or volunteer opportunities that align with these values and develop volunteerism habits.

Provide role models of peers who were successful.

Student guest speakers in first-year experience classes provide the "show me the way" that Torres (2006) talks about in her research. The women spoke of these senior students as an important part of the orientation and first-year experience course. Similarly, when talking about their leadership identity development, many of the women spoke of older role models and mentors whom they identified as similar to them. The individual encouragement of these mentors was important to their owning a leader's identity and taking on leadership roles.
They may need help understanding the realities of gendered opportunities in our society.

Many of the women believed that barriers for women were a thing of the past and would not affect their opportunities for advancement in their career. They believed their generation is different despite evidence to the contrary in their own lives in campus leadership positions. For example, they simultaneously spoke of equality with a future life partner, despite complaints that all of their brothers were raised traditionally.

Conclusion

Hispanic women come to campus rooted in their cultural heritage, as we all do. As higher education professionals, we need to embrace this heritage and see it for the strength that it provides. If we are going to live our diversity narrative, we will adapt our programming to build on their cultural strengths.

**We use the term Hispanic rather than Latina because the majority of women we interviewed self-identified as Hispanic.*

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Case in Point - A Review of Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin

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Since 1950 The University of Texas at Austin (UT) has been the focus of three landmark cases concerning race-based admissions; Sweatt v. Painter (1950), Hopwood v. Texas (1996), and most recently Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin (Fisher v. UT), where the Supreme Court voted 7-1 to vacate and remand the case to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ("Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin : SCOTUSblog," 2013). In July 2014, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the UT admissions policy with a 2-to-1 decision (Abigail Fisher v. State of Texas, 2014). This article will review the UT race-based admissions policy, demographics from the 2008 entering class (when Fisher applied), Supreme Court case, and admissions implications after the final verdict.

UT Admission Policy

After the Hopwood ruling, applications from ethnically diverse students declined sharply (Healy, 1997). In response, the Texas Legislature passed HB 588 in the 75th Legislative Session, establishing what is referred to as the top 10% law ("75(R) HB 588 Enrolled version," 1997). This law required Texas public colleges and universities to admit first-time freshmen if they graduated in the top 10% of their graduating class. In 2009, an amendment to this bill allowed UT to cap the automatically admitted students (those graduating in the top 10%) to 75% of the incoming class omitting some students in the top 10% ("81(R) SB 175 - Enrolled version - Bill Text," 2009). The amendment affected admissions in the 2011-2012 academic, after Fisher had applied for the class of 2008.

UT has a holistic admissions process for students who rank outside the 10% automatic admit, international students, and out-of-state students. There are three main areas of the holistic review: academic achievement, personal achievement, and special circumstances. Examples of special circumstances include consideration for at-risk variables such as socioeconomic, single parent family, primary language at home, and race and ethnicity ("Application review," 2013).

Abigail Fisher

Fisher was a 2008 graduate of Sugarland High School, where she finished in the top 12% of her class. Fisher "dreamed of going to UT ever since the second grade. My dad went

there, my sister went there…it was a tradition I wanted to continue" (Abigail Fisher vs. University of Texas at Austin, 2012). Additionally, Fisher claimed classmates that were not white gained admission into UT with lower class rank and test scores. Fisher and a co-plaintiff (who has dropped the case) where chosen by the Project for Fair Representation and anti-affirmative action activist Edward Blum, who is paying all legal fees (Smith, 2010).

Fall 2008 Class

In the year Fisher was applied to UT, 3590 students were non-automatic admits (outside the top 10%). As shown in Table 1, the largest demographic of that group were whites (60%), and they were the only demographic that raised percentage points compared to the top automatic admits (top 10% enrollment) which was 48%. Blacks were 6% of the automatic admits while Hispanic was 42%. In the more holistic view of admissions, they were 4% and 11% respectively.

Table 1.
Comparison of Race/Ethnicity of Automatic Admits and other Enrolled Freshmen Summer/Fall 2008

	HB588 Status					
Race	Automatic-Admits		Other Admits		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
AMERICAN INDIAN	30	0%	20	1%	50	0%
ASIAN AMERICAN	1744	19%	565	16%	2309	18%
BLACK	582	6%	146	4%	728	6%
FOREIGN	234	3%	302	8%	536	4%
HISPANIC	2218	24%	403	11%	2621	20%
WHITE	4440	48%	2142	60%	6582	51%
Not Reported	5	0%	12	0%	17	0%
Total	9253	100%	3590	100%	12843	100%

Note. Adapted from "Student Profile Admitted Freshman Class of 2008," 2008, by The University of Texas at Austin.

Supreme Court

Influential organizations such as the Ivy League, The College Board, and 57 fortune 100 businesses filed a total of 73 briefs in support of UT. One brief is from the family of Heman Sweatt, the Plaintiff of the 1950 Supreme Court case challenging UT's Law School admissions policy. Fisher had 17 briefs filed on her behalf, and there were two briefs filed in support of either party ("VPLA | Fisher vs. Texas," 2012).

In October 2012, the Supreme Court heard the case of Fisher v. UT concerning affirmative action and admissions to UT. June 24, 2013, by a 7-1 vote, the Supreme Court vacated and remanded the case to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The high court concluded the lower courts did not give the policy enough scrutiny and recommended the

case should be retried. ("Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin : SCOTUSblog," 2013). The transcript of the trial only mentioned Abigail Fisher's name 4 times. The only comment of substance about Fisher was from the UT attorney who said "Ms. Fisher would not have been admitted to the fall 2008 class at University of Texas no matter what her race" (Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin, 2012, p. 54). This trial was not about Fisher, but about the philosophical differences of using race as a factor in the admissions process.

Fifth Circuit

On July 15, 2014, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals filed their decision, voting 2-to-1 to uphold the UT admissions policy (Abigail Fisher v. State of Texas, 2014). Fisher and Blum, the director of Project on Fair Representation, have both said they plan to appeal the decision (Schmidt, 2014). Fisher has the option to appeal the Fifth Circuit again; however, they do not have to rehear the case. Her case could also be appealed to the Supreme Court where they could decide to rehear the case a second time ("Race in Admissions at the U. of Texas," 2014). There is currently no court date to rehear the case.

If Fisher Wins

A court finding in Fisher's favor will force UT to change the admissions policy, but the state law guaranteeing admissions for student graduating in the top 10% of their class would not be affected. The 2009 amendment to HB 588 that allows UT to cap automatic admits at 75% of the freshman class, also has a provisions to remove the waiver if a court or governing body does not allow race to be a factor in admissions ("75(R) HB 588 Enrolled version - Bill Text," n.d.). Based on current law, UT could be required to only admit only top 10% students. According to The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Institutional Resume for UT, white students made up 48.5% of the campus population in fall 2013 (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2013), which is consistent with the class of Fall 2013 at 46%. According to the enrollment data, white students represented 60% of all students admitted with the holistic review and only 39% of the automatic admits. If UT is required to admit only the top 10% of public high school graduates, it is possible fewer white students will be admitted.

UT has always claimed a one-dimensional view of diversity does not provide the diverse campus experience they are seeking. Their admissions policy incorporates several factors to cast a wider view of diversity. According to court briefs, race-neutral admissions relying on just the top 10%, would lead to a 3% decrease in the of the African American students in the freshman class (Abigail Fisher V. the University of Texas at Austin, 2013). Additionally, institutional research showed ethnic minorities felt isolated on campus and perceived 1000s of classes with no Hispanic or African-American students (Abigail Noel Fisher and Rachel Multer Michalewicz v. University of Texas at Austin, 2010).

If UT Wins

The impact of a UT victory is difficult to predict. Would other schools be more inclined to consider diversity as a factor in admissions, or would they be afraid to be the next school targeted for a lawsuit? November 17, 2014, two suites were filed against Harvard and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There are a few notable differences in these potential cases. Historically, private schools like Harvard have been absent from the landmark admissions cases. The Harvard case also claims Asian-Americans are discriminated against and more recent trials have been focused on the discrimination of white applicants. The plaintiff for both of the cases are not individual student, but the newly formed Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA). The SFFA encourages students to join by providing name, contact information, school that "rejected" the student, and some basic credentials of the student.

Unless courts stop hearing cases, this topic will continue to be debated in the halls of justice.

Conclusion

The University of Texas at Austin is once again in the middle of a civil rights and higher education debate in this third landmark case. When Abigail Fisher was denied admissions to UT she sued the university claiming her race was a factor. Appealing the case all the way to the Supreme Court, her lawyers largely focused on the concept of critical mass and not Fisher. The Supreme Court vacated the decision back to the Fifth Circuit Court of appeals to apply more scrutiny to the UT admissions policy. The original decision in favor of UT was upheld by a 2-to-1 vote, and now UT awaits the next steps while the newly formed Students for Fair Admissions is the plaintiff for two new cases against Harvard and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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Winners Circle - Building Community through Physical Space: A Visual Ethnography of College Union Utilization by Community College Transfer Students

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Winner of TACUSPA Research Grant

When discussing a successful student transition from a community college environment to a four-year institution, the campus environment can be addressed in three main settings: peer interaction, classroom environment, and the physical environment. In particular, the physical environment is an important factor because it is the first thing students are exposed to upon arrival to a college campus, whether it is part of a tour or orientation session (Strange & Banning, 2001). Students notice the beauty, cleanliness, and friendliness of the green spaces, buildings, and people that make of the campus community (Stewart, 2012; Strange & Banning, 2001). They are drawn to spaces that enable them to witness and participate in social interactions or involvement opportunities that will ultimately be an indication of whether or not they feel comfortable enough to join or commit to that particular community (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Griffith, 1994; and Strange & Banning, 2001). Boyer (1990) studied campus life and drew conclusions that the appearance of the campus was one of the biggest factors in a student's decision to enroll. If the physical environment is critical to a student's first impression of campus, college administrators need to understand the individual characteristics that encompass these various surroundings and how they can be created or transformed (Stewart, 2012).

The Association of College Unions International ([ACUI], 2009) attests that a college union can serve as a beacon for this community engagement; therefore, the college union may be a valuable tool in helping students feel a deeper connection to their transfer institution, especially those individuals transferring from a community college environment. If a sense of community can be created within or around specific facilities, like a college union, there is a possibility that it might have positive effects on the ability of this transfer population to interact with fellow students and engage in activities or programs (Strange & Banning, 2001). Since Cohen, Brawer, and Kisker (2014) indicate that large populations of community college students are seeking to transfer to four-year institutions, it is important that these students feel like they matter once they arrive at an institution, and

that they have adequate and appropriate space to interact with other students on campus (Schlossberg, 1989).

In the spring of 2013, a doctoral study was developed to gain an understanding of how and if college unions can create community for transfer students from a community college during their initial exposure and enrollment at a four-year institution. The research examined specific observations and reflections of recent transfer students in order to understand their experiences with community, especially since these students sought a connection or sense of belonging with their new institution. In addition, the study analyzed the physical layouts and aesthetics of the college union to see if there were common attributes that are similar for community building. The qualitative research study used semi-structured interviews and a visual ethnography technique from 11 different students to examine pictures and reflections on current physical space within the college union. More specifically, the study was a participatory action research (PAR) project or "self-reflective inquiry undertaken by these participants in social relationship with one another in or order to improve some condition or situation with which they are involved" (Berg, 2007, p. 223). In this instance, the action component was the discussion of a new facility and how changes could be made to reflect better or more ideal physical space for these social interactions and involvement opportunities. The interviews were coded to find common themes and the data was used to determine how the college union designed and arranged for physical space to create community. Additionally, the photographs provide a visual representation and catalyst for directed discussion and reflection on these distinct spaces.

The analysis of the pictures and interviews were presented in two distinct parts: 1) the photographs, and subsequent comments on those pictures, from the student perspective of community within the college union, and 2) relevant reflection and discussion about concepts related to the physical environment and human interaction within those spaces. Each section utilized visual ethnography, data interpretation, and dialogue from individual participants to present the findings of the study (Berg, 2007). The 11 participants discussed several factors that were ideal in the development of physical space to make it ideal for community building. The factors mentioned included characteristics of home and work; the physical layout of the space related to architecture and aesthetics; the activities and events taking place within those areas; the ability to observe those activities, without actual participation; the convenience or access of resources and support functions; the overall campus climate, dictated by years of cultural formation; and the significance of history and representation of that history throughout the facility. All 11 participants confirmed that physical spaces, especially within the college union, were instrumental in the formation of community on a college or university campus. Additionally, all students indicated that while conditions were not ideal for community within the current facility, they were able to transform these areas to make them useful for social interaction and other shared experiences. The manipulation or alteration of space became a key component for these transfer students when ideal conditions related to aesthetics and architecture were not ideal or missing completely.

Strange and Banning (2001) posited that a sense of comfort and belonging comes from the statement made by surroundings and visual representations of the constructed

climate within institutional facilities. In other words, the values of the campus community can be seen in the placement of particular services, departments, and programs. It can be seen in advertisements, dining options, and the placement of student gathering areas. The programs and resources within a college union have the ability to not only educate students, but make them feel like they are part of a larger community, thus giving students a sense of worth and empowering them to become even more connected or take ownership of their collegiate experience and surroundings (ACUI, 2009).

Images are powerful. The visual nature of the study was important because without pictures of spaces, descriptions and data of the physical environment is hard to distinguish or vocalize. Students were asked to identify community through imagery because it connected them to the study and provided genuine responses about the college union. They did not have to concentrate on where community was taking place because they were able to focus on why and how community was prevalent within these spaces. The study of community and the physical environment are much easier when the spaces are real. While the imagery from the spaces were special, students indicated that the people in the photographs were just as important because community cannot happen without a group of people coming together to share an experience. While students indicated that people choose to engage in community in a variety of ways, the college union was a unique space that allowed them to experience that social interaction in a number of different ways: retail components, student affairs offices, events and programs, and lounge spaces. This study not only showed that the college union does have a profound impact at an institution of higher education, it can be even more powerful as a beacon for community when it is thoughtfully designed and effectively managed to change with the campus culture.

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In Review - Being – With, or Without, Thinking: The Case of Online Behavior in Higher Education

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Wankel, Laura A. & Wankel, Charles. (Eds.) (2012) *Misbehavior online in higher education: Cutting-edge technologies in higher education, volume 5.* Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

The higher education topography has changed significantly over the centuries. In recent times, hallowed halls have given way to digital corridors. Grandiose brick and mortar libraries filled with the sweet smell of books, generations of anxiety, and decades of coffee have been replaced with the hum of MacBooks and the illuminated faces of seemingly technology native Millennials engrossed in online learning as well as online social networking. Although the scenery may be changing, one aspect that has not changed is the fact that institutions of higher education are still the pivotal precipice for growth and identity development among young adults.

That identity development now includes a constantly changing world of online identity integration that must be addressed and reflected upon to address student's behaviors, including misbehaviors, in higher education. In *Misbehavior Online in Higher Education* (Wankel & Wankel, 2012), the authors provide a platform for exploring the myriad of opportunities for misconduct to arise in the higher education arena through a series of varying lenses. The collection of essays and articles provides guidance for student affairs administrators and policy makers, as well as direction for faculty to address misbehaviors in online environments.

Increased social and academic pressures, and how higher education responds to these increases, are addressed in several chapters. In chapter 3, "Say That to My Face," Barbara Ritter examines the nature of disembodiment in online environments and suggests that individuals seek to categorize online experiences with preexisting socially constructed face-to-face experiences (p. 27). Unfortunately, these face-to-face experiences often include learned racial prejudice, gender bias and gender roles, as well as culture and class stigmatization. Several contributors suggest that the anonymity of

online environments may allow online users to engage in misbehaviors without fear of accountability.

Anonymity online and harassment (particularly cyberbullying) are discussed in several chapters, while other chapters focus on social media, photo sharing, first amendment rights, and academic integrity issues including plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation. Central to each chapter is the theme that higher education cannot operate without consideration to the social and academic arenas of online environments. Policies and expectations of student online behavior must be addressed before problems occur. Higher education can no longer be reactive to the presence of students in virtual environments. Just as academic policies and procedures exist to inform and protect students, faculty, and staff in physical spaces so should policies exist to inform and protect students, faculty, and staff in virtual spaces to reduce misbehavior.

In this volume, the authors have collected relevant and "hot" topics for easy access and reference. The volume should be looked at as a collection rather than a series of interlocking chapters. Nevertheless, higher education administrators, faculty, staff, and students should explore *Misbehavior Online in Higher Education* as a starting point for discussions both inside and outside of the classroom. Areas of discussion not covered in the volume include hacking, spamming, registration bots, and defamation to name a few. Comparatively, any resource or discussion of online environments will change rapidly and the chapters should not be viewed as final but rather as a foundation for discussion and continual exploration.

Notes from the Keynote: Kevin Kruger

Dr. Kevin Kruger became the first president and CEO of NASPA in March 2012. He serves as a national advocate for students and as a spokesperson for the student affair profession, drawing on more than 30 years of experience in higher education.

What excites you about working in student affairs?

Student Affairs is a noble profession: tens of thousands of student affairs professionals working to ensure the success of millions of college students. It is important work that we do – so I am honored to be a part of this work. As most student affairs professionals would attest – there is nothing more meaningful than knowing you have helped a single student.

What does your role at NASPA entail?

As president/CEO of NASPA, I really have two separate but related jobs. The first is to help guide the association in partnership with the NASPA Board of Directors, our hundreds of volunteers and the NASPA staff. This role involves strategic leadership. Helping align staff, resources and programs to our overall strategic objectives. The second part of my job is a little less defined. It involves representing the entire student affairs profession and reinforcing the value of our contributions to audiences for whom that may not be an obvious conclusion. So, I spend a lot of my time talking to media, college presidents, provosts, and other higher education associations that work in the higher education arena.

What are your ideas for more collaboration between TACUSPA and NASPA?

Texas is a huge state representing many different types of institutions. There are certainly more opportunities to partner and collaborate on programs that would meet the needs of student affairs professionals in Texas. NASPA also has the advantage of having a very elaborate infrastructure. Since TACUSPA operates largely by volunteers, who already have full-time jobs, there could be partnership ideas that leverage NASPA's administrative and back-end expertise.

There are moments in each of our lives and/or careers that led us to the point we are today. What was that moment for you?

It was my interview in 1994 for the Associate Executive Director of NASPA. It was that interview that tapped into my interest in working on national-level issues that affected all of

higher education. That was a big change from my earlier thinking that was only campus-based.

You have written books and lecture frequently on using technology in student affairs. What are three things every student affairs professional should be doing from a technology perspective?

First thing is the easiest. You have to use the technology your students use. You have to be where they are and understand the potential for community building and engagement using the same tools used by your students. The second and related point is that the college experience is becoming increasingly less place-based. As such, we will need to think over the next five years or so about how to pivot traditional student affairs to meet the growing needs of online learners. These online learners will have some of the same socio-emotional needs as our residential students. How can we use technology to serve them? We might want to be thinking of "flipped" student affairs in the same way we think about "flipped" classrooms.

How would you briefly say the student affairs profession has changed in the past 20 years?

We face huge changes in regulatory and compliance requirements. We are much more central to the crisis management part of the campus. Finally, as our student bodies have become more diverse, issues of equity and inclusion have become more central to the work of the entire profession.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing student affairs/higher education today?

We have to begin making progress in reducing sexual assault on campus and drastically improving the work we are doing with students to change the culture. This is huge and needs to be addressed more effectively TODAY. I also think a more subtle issue is increasing the way in which we orient our services to meet the needs of low-income/first generation students. I believe in ten years we will be judged on how well we have been able to help guide these students to graduation and meaningful careers.

What is the one thing that you hope TACUSPA conference attendees will take away from your keynote address?

We are in an unprecedented time in higher education. There are so many challenges we face that desperately need the expertise of student affairs professionals. But do not despair. Yes, we are challenged, but the history of student affairs has been an adaptation. I am very bullish on our future and our central importance in addressing these challenging issues – I want the TACUSPA audience to feel the same, while recognizing the many challenges we face.

Notes from the Keynote: Tom Rath

Tom Rath is cited as an expert on the role of human behavior in business, health, and economics. He has authored multiple books, including *How Full is Your Bucket*, *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, *Strengths Based Leadership*, *Wellbeing*, and *Eat Move Sleep: How Small Choices Lead to Big Changes*.

How can student affairs professionals better use a strengths-based approach in our work?

Student affairs professionals have probably done more to help people discover their strengths than any other group in the United States today. There is no other group, in corporate America or higher education, that has done more to create a concentration of people who have the opportunity to build their lives and careers around their natural talents. When I first started working on the StrengthsQuest program more than a decade ago, I was unsure if and how this could reach a critical mass of students. But thanks primarily to student affairs professionals and first-year programs, at least 2 million students have been through this program. So we're off to a great start.

I think the next phase is about making sure that building on strengths is a way of life during college, not just a one-time experience. If someone just learns about their strengths and does not have any conversations with an instructor, advisor, friend, or colleague, I am not even sure it does that much good over time. What I have learned over the years is that strength truly develops in the context of a relationship. Some of the great research I have seen on this topic, from teams at the University of Minnesota, suggests that students need to have at least five conversations about their strengths each year in order for this learning to truly make a difference.

Your most recent book is *Eat Move Sleep.* What is the one thing in each of these categories you would advise student affairs professionals to practice daily?

The important overarching finding is that these three elements of health and well-being are deeply interrelated. If you get a poor night's sleep, it leads to bad food choices, less activity, and so on. So the first thing is to think about all three elements in a more integrated manner. Then in terms of eating better, it helps to simply think about each meal as an opportunity to consume something that either gives you more energy for the

rest of the day or decreases your energy levels. From an activity standpoint, the most important learning for me is just to minimize the amount of time I spend sitting in a given day. All the research I have studied leads me to believe that reducing inactive time is even more important than getting 30 minutes of intense exercise everyday. A good general guideline is to aim for at least 10,000 steps a day. Then in terms of sleep, see if you can learn to view every additional hour of sleep as an investment instead of as an expense. When you need to be your best, give yourself an extra hour of sleep and it should increase your creativity and performance the next day.

What is the one thing that you hope TACUSPA conference attendees will take away from your keynote address?

I hope one take away is that we need to think about engagement and well-being on campus much more holistically. Right now it is easy to look at objective metrics such as first-year retention rates, achievement, or first-year-out salaries, but I would argue that there is much greater value to the overall college experience. I want my kids to grow up and attend a college that helps them to uncover their natural talents and match their strengths to the needs of the world. Even as I am looking at public grade schools for my young kids right now, I value the stories and opinions I hear about a school's culture far more than achievement scores. All that I've learned in the workplace suggests that metrics like intelligence and income are far less important than things like creating meaning, having great relationships, and making sure you have the energy you need to be your best every day. So I'm looking forward to spending some time discussing how these broader elements can be built into the expectation of what you are doing to serve students.