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the eighth Vector

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AND NEW PROFESSION-



Words from our Chair: Danielle A. Morgan

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AND SO MUCH MORE!

Happy Autumn SCGSNP!

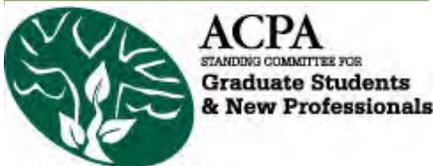
Welcome to another exciting academic and ACPA filled year! If you have just entered a graduate program or the field as a new professional - welcome to SCGSNP! If you are starting a doctoral program and part of our group once again we are glad to have you!

Graduate students and new professionals make up a substantial part of ACPA's membership and SCGSNP is here to voice your concerns and advocate for your needs. If there is something in particular you'd like to discuss, please feel free to contact me at danielleamorgan924@gmail.com, or work with one of our fabulous Committee members.

SCGSNP works to provide networking opportunities for graduate students and new professionals - both at Convention and throughout the academic year. Connect with your peers across the country by joining our **Facebook Group ACPA SCGSNP and being our fan**; and through our **Committee-wide listserv** by clicking to receive our emails under the ACPA membership page once you log in.

SCGSNP publishes this newsletter, coordinates scholarships, case study competitions, programs tailored to your needs, awards, and professional development opportunities all year long. We hope that you will make SCGSNP your home and find a way to get involved - submit an article, participate in one of our events, or work with our Membership coordinators to volunteer on activities throughout the year with our Committee, with Convention, and with the ACPA Foundation.

There are a lot of wonderful things happening in ACPA, and graduate students and new professionals are at the forefront of many of these initiatives - it looks to be a very exciting year for our group. I look forward to getting to know and working with you this year!



DIONTREY THOMPSON

Scholarship Winners' Convention Experiences

As a child, I loved to read a book called “*Curious George*”, which featured a little monkey who explored the world around him with amazement. George went about his day carefully examining things that he did not quite understand in hopes of satisfying his curiosity. Although I am no longer a child, I still love this book because I can relate to George in many ways and it explains my adventures attending ACPA national convention in Boston, Massachusetts.

During my undergraduate experience I had the opportunity to attend multiple national and regional conferences through NASPA, so I had an idea of what to expect at a higher education conference. Surprisingly, ACPA was completely different from what I initially expected. As a first time ACPA attendee and scholarship recipient I was interested in attending workshops and programs that would increase my knowledge in the field of student affairs. Additionally, allow me to network with individuals across the state and share stories and best practices at our various intuitions.

My first day at the conference I was shocked by how many of the attendees were new professionals, upcoming graduates of various higher education programs, and first year graduate students like myself. It was refreshing to be around individuals who were going through some of the same transitions and adjustments I was making to graduate school. The conference really provided me a place to engage and create some meaningful relationships with individuals in the field. The conference did a great job of allowing me to get involved with multiple standing committees that were very beneficial to my own professional development.

Secondly, because of my scholarship I was informed about the *Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals*, which turned out to be a worthwhile experience. I felt motivated and inspired after attending my first SCGSNP e-board meeting, because it was great to be in a room with professionals across the country whose sole purpose was to make sure our (graduate students & new professionals) voices were heard by the national organization. The SCGSNP members made me feel like an active contributor to the discussion rather than simply observing them conduct a meeting. Having the opportunity to interact with the board members and being provided a mentor to help me navigate the conference was a great benefit. The idea of having a mentor connected with the scholarship recipient was great because they provided guidance on what events, socials, and workshops to attend.

Overall, I found the conference to be amazing, informative, and a great place to network. As a graduate student, I gained so much knowledge and information about particular fields I am interested in, such as retention in African American men and best practices that help students understand their identity. Furthermore, my involvement with SCGSNP really allowed me to see the impact and influence I have as a graduate student within the conference. The biggest lesson learned at the conference was that ACPA was a place that encouraged my development as a future professional.



JULIE TIEU

My experience at the ACPA Annual Convention in Boston far exceeded my expectations. Throughout my professional and graduate experiences, I have attended various professional development events. I just assumed a national convention would be similar, except only bigger. This assumption did not prepare me for the rich experiences that ACPA and SCGSNP offered.

First, the convention was a wonderful place to network and engage with student affairs professionals from around the country. From socials to innovative sessions, I was pleased to hear and learn from different perspectives. Likewise, it was interesting to hear other professionals discuss common issues that affect our field. I found it very inspiring to see everyone support one another, especially as higher

education is encountering unprecedented challenges.

Of the many sessions scheduled during the convention, I was excited to attend various sessions about student veteran issues. Prior to the convention, I wrote a literature review on student veterans to expand my knowledge of this population. My budding interest in student veterans flourished after attending educational sessions at the convention. I was fascinated by the innovative practices and services offered at various institutions. It compelled me to further my professional development so that I can advocate and provide adequate services for student veterans.

Furthermore, I quickly learned to expect the unexpected when networking. For example, I would sometimes have random conversations with another student affairs professional and it was not uncommon to find out that we had mutual colleagues, acquaintances or experiences. While I knew the field of student affairs was small, I did not expect to find so many commonalities, especially since I flew to Boston from California.

Finally, I was really happy to meet the SCGSNP directorate. I never had exposure to the meetings that take place within a professional organization like ACPA. I found my experience

at the directorate meeting to be very interesting. I was amazed by the dedication that each officer had for their role and the Standing Committee. I am especially appreciative of my mentor, Danielle Morgan. I enjoyed having a conversation with her about her involvement in ACPA and SCGSNP. It really opened my eyes to the possible ways I can get involved.

Overall, I am so glad I went to the ACPA Annual Convention. I learned so much and met so many amazing professionals. As I graduate from the M.S. in Counseling, College Counseling/ Student Services program at CSU Northridge this May, I hope to continue furthering my professional development and involvement with ACPA.

Redefining the Graduate Experience: Graduate Assistants as Campus Leaders

As a new graduate student in higher education and student affairs, it is a humbling experience to go from being an undergraduate student leader to being in a group of past student leaders. In just one Master's degree cohort there are multiple people who were student body presidents, Greek executive board members, or orientation leaders...just like you. Making the transition from being a student leader where you were in the spotlight to a graduate assistant where your job is to focus on developing undergraduates and undergraduate student leaders can be difficult.

However, this challenge is an opportunity for graduate students to apply the skills they learned as undergraduate student leaders to become leaders through their work as Graduate Assistants (GAs). The purpose of this article is to share leadership tips from Hefietz and Linsky's (2002) book titled *Leadership on the Line* to help graduate students make the transition from undergraduate student leader to Graduate Assistant leaders.

Lessons from *Leadership on the Line*

The title of Hefietz and Linsky's (2002) text refers to the idea that leadership can be dangerous. This article will highlight how four key points from *Leadership on the Line* can be utilized by Graduate Assistants to successfully transition into their Graduate Assistant roles. The four points are: go on to the balcony, find out where people are, determine the song beneath your words, and lead by example (Hefietz & Linsky, 2002).

Go on to the Balcony

To become a leader in a Graduate Assistantship position, I challenge GA's to get on to what Hefietz and Linsky (2002) call "the balcony." The dance floor is where the action happens. In this case, it is the GA's workplace. As a leader, a GA must step away from the action and observe it to gain a holistic perspective. It is not entirely clear what the "dancing" looks like if you are always dancing the steps.

Hefietz and Linsky (2002) state that stepping out onto the balcony requires self-reflecting and recognizing the importance of engagement and disengagement in one's work. The balcony approach encourages dancers to take a break

from the dance floor to go upstairs to take a seat on the balcony. Look down and observe. What does your supervisor's dance look like? How about your students' dance? Do your colleagues want to join in on the dance? Is everyone dancing? Are they all dancing together? What song is playing? Are your programs going with the beat of the music? What can you learn from watching people dance that will help increase your effectiveness as a leader? These are questions that could not necessarily be answered if the GA is always deeply engaged on the dance floor. Sometimes disengaging is just as important as engaging. It is during disengagement that a GA can reflect and gain a clear view of what is happening.

However, when stepping off the dance floor, there is a risk of missing out on an opportunity. But there is also the chance that by taking time to stand on the balcony and observe, that key insights for increased effectiveness will be gained. These opportunities may never have become evident if you do not take the opportunity to see the view from the balcony.

Find Out Where People Are

Effective communication will help to accomplish Hefietz and Linsky's (2002) point that leaders need to "find out where people are." This concept is about taking time to ensure that you are on the same page with your co-workers, students, and colleagues.

To get on the same page with others it is first important to realize that all individuals are unique. It also helps to realize that you are not the only person going through a transition. Your students are adjusting to a new adviser/supervisor and your supervisor is also transitioning from working with your predecessor to working with you. Everyone learns the dance differently and nobody is going to be perfect, including you. Take the time to get to know yourself and your co-workers. By learning the language of those you interact with on a daily basis, a rapport is built and helps to establish you as a leader.

Determine the Song Beneath Your Words

In regard to learning the language of

others (Hefietz and Linsky, 2002). Do you find yourself using "safe words" instead of what you truly mean to say? What do you really mean? Do others hear your song? People knowingly or unknowingly speak without depth. A simple statement could mean so much more than those few words. During times of feedback, think critically about what words you chose versus what your words really mean. You are less likely to generate success if you are dancing around what you really mean to say. Journaling and/or discussing your experience with others might help you determine your song.

Lead By Example

Actions and/or reactions of just one person can influence an individual or and/or an entire group. You have the power to set the stage. I challenge graduate assistants to "lead by example" (Hefietz and Linsky, 2002). If you want others to be enthusiastic and hardworking, then model that for them. As a leader, your vision begins with you.

Just as you have an influence on others, others have influence on you. Every action sends a message. It is important to receive every message, but what you do with the message is even more important. Seek to build from the encouraging messages and learn from the challenging messages. You have the choice to set your own stage or let someone else set it for you.

Conclusion

Graduate Assistants play an instrumental piece to campus life. Practicing Hefietz and Linsky's (2002) five keys to leadership can facilitate the transition from undergraduate student leader to Graduate Assistant leader. By going out on the balcony, finding out where people are, determining the song beneath your words, and leading by example, Graduate Assistants will be positioned to make positive contributions to their respective campuses and the students they serve. I encourage GAs to dance the night away, but also take some balcony time to learn key insights that are not always visible from the dance floor.

-Litsa E. Orban

Austin, A. E. (2002). Preparing the next generation of faculty: Graduate school as socialization to the academic career. *The Journal of Higher Education, Special Issue: The Faculty in the New Millennium*, 73(1), 94-122.

Hefietz, R. A., & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: staying alive through the dangers of leading*.

From Soup to Nuts:

A truly rewarding internship experience

Eight months have passed since the start of my summer internship search process. It is hard to believe that resume updating, institution contacting, phone interviewing, packing, moving, adjusting, enjoying and heading back home all have fluttered away. I count myself as one of the very fortunate interns because I can honestly state that I have learned an amazing amount from my internship experience, had a phenomenal summer, and grew personally and professionally during the past months.

Now, as I return back to my home institution and get back into the swing of my graduate program, I am enjoying being able to sit back and reflect on everything I have learned from start to finish of my internship experience.

Someone mentioned as I started searching for a summer internship that I should outline what I wanted to get out of the experience first, and then see what experiences were available. In terms of the search process, this could have

been the best advice given to me. I created my list and could then sift through postings accordingly; saving both myself and those hiring valuable time in a long process happening during a stressful part of the year.

Coming from a larger housing department to a smaller one this summer provided a lot of opportunity to really be able to be a part of the team. I was fortunate enough to end up in a department that actually took the views of the interns and listened to thoughts from “the outside”, rather than just be thankful to have another body to cover duty, though I know some were indeed happy with just that.

I chose to step back the first week, ask questions, and absorb as much information about the professionals, history, goals, and future of the department before I dove in with my views. I would recommend this tactic for those seeking internships in the future as well. While it may seem a “no-brainer” to many, others would be shocked at how many individuals overlook the “take-in-your-surroundings-before-speaking approach”.

Additionally, I learned an amazing amount about advising and truly putting students first in decision making. When an entire professional staff takes time every week to discuss an article on a current topic or issue facing students, the discussions sounding work move from “what do we need to do?” to “what do the students need us to do?” I am extremely happy with the amount of professional development I received and I am sure I will be referencing articles and conversations for a long time.

Honestly, I did not expect to find myself at an institution with such a different student population. I did expect and greatly looked forward to differences such as being more diverse and coming from different locations. But I encountered students with completely different life experiences and outlooks. I am very grateful for the time I was able to spend with some of the students learning about what drives them. I learned a lot about motivational advising and



challenging students to believe in themselves, as well as the importance of making sure you are providing the most developmental environment as possible.

One reflection can simply not do justice to the plethora of items that I could touch on regarding my internship experience. My only regret is that I did not seek out opportunities such as this during my undergraduate work as well. It is clear that my summer internship has equipped me with a number of experiences to aid me throughout a career in student affairs, but has also helped me define the professional that I would like to become.

-Justin Shuch

Although it's only
September,

SUMMER INTERNSHIP OPPETUNITIES

Resources to keep in mind:

Housing: acuho-i.org

Orientation: fye.indiana.edu/noda

Other: summerinternships.com



Full of Wanderlust, Bright with Passion: A Student Personnel Grad Student's Journey through the Fulbright Application Process

As a graduate student in the field of higher education, are you craving an alternative adventure before settling into a traditional student affairs career? Does the prospect of living abroad sound exciting to you? Do you have the desire to experience something new? As a fellow future student affairs professional with nomadic inclinations, let me encourage you to explore options that can accommodate your wanderlust. You may be worried about tainting your credibility as a professional by indulging your desire to wander the globe. Instead, I invite you to view traveling abroad as the epitome of personal and professional development. An exchange of ideas from another side of the globe undoubtedly yields insights applicable to improving and expanding our own approach to higher education. In this article, I will recount my journey through the application process for a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Macau. I will offer advice for those interested in similar opportunities and include a listing of programs and resources to help you begin your own journey.

The Roots of Rootlessness

I was an infant when my family moved to a remote rainforest village on the African equator, where my parents were missionaries for the first ten years of my life. I feel fortunate to have spent part of my childhood among the Gokana tribe of Nigeria, which was a catalyst for my travels to other parts of the world. During high school, I spent a paradigm-shifting summer learning about German language and culture by living with a host family through an exchange program to Germany. A few years later, I backpacked through several European countries and further cultivated my linguistic abilities through a German language program at the University of Salzburg in Austria. As is common among those who travel, my desire to discover more of the world has only intensified through each of these opportunities.

A glimpse of my most recent journey may explain why I have become captivated by Asia and was delighted to find that the Fulbright Foundation provides opportunities to teach English there at the collegiate level. After two weeks of research and travel throughout Taiwan last summer through my graduate program, I stayed an additional two weeks to explore the island independently. My first destination was Green Island, small isle off the coast of Taiwan where few natives speak English. Here, my solo traveling ended and amazing friendships began when five Taiwanese travelers whom I met on the island invited me to join them on the rest of their journey. Throughout our time together, we enjoyed a playful exchange of coaching each other on our English and Mandarin language skills. While I pointed out minor grammatical slips and introduced American slang to my already-proficient friends, they helped me practice and build upon the basic phrases I had learned through survival Mandarin courses. As we said goodbye at the airport, they left me with the gift of a language-learning computer program, teasing, "Next time we see you, you'll be fluent! Now you have no reason not to come back."

I was hooked and knew I had to see more of Asia. Back in the United States, I lamented to a friend about my yearning to return. She suggested that I look into Fulbright. That suggestion changed my world for the next several months; I swiftly became obsessed with the prospect of revisiting beloved Asia through Fulbright.

After eagerly perusing the Fulbright webpage, it soon became clear that I needed to apply through my institution and contact my campus Fulbright advisor. That is how I found Margaret, an advisor in the University of South Carolina's Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs, who guided and inspired me throughout the process of applying for a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship. Margaret was patient with me as I browsed through the Fulbright booklet for the first time, allowing my hatching thoughts to brim to the surface in the presence of such an invested, warm advisor. I vocalized my internal debate to her and she endured my scattered concerns that took our conversation to all parts of the world. I babbled about *how much I would love to return to Taiwan*, but *I wouldn't be working in higher education there and my*

passion is to work with college students and I would love be in a warm climate...ooh...maybe Latin America! She remained patiently interested as I read further and she heard, perhaps for the hundredth time, a lament that *I don't speak Spanish so I can't go to a Latin America country.*

Eventually, I decided to apply for an assistantship in Macau, a special administrative region of China, where I would spend a year teaching English to college students as well as coordinating cross-cultural programs. It sounded like the ideal program for an adventure-seeking college educator with itchy feet and an obsession with Asia.

Challenges

Little did I know how long and arduous the application process would be. I began the Fulbright application in August, wrote and rewrote essays, completed the tedious forms, and asked references to write and rewrite letters and fill out forms. Half a year later, I am still waiting to discover my fate. I found out in January that my Fulbright was selected for a final review in the host country, but may not hear for several more months whether I have been selected to travel halfway around the world. If I am awarded the Fulbright, an entire year will have passed between the time I began process and when I will actually be living in Macau.

On one hand, the length of the process adds an element of difficulty and frustration that might dissuade qualified potential applicants from pursuing this exciting opportunity. On the other, the length of the process ensures a more sustained interest in the venture during the wait, probably leading to a more enthusiastic and committed Fulbright representative. In my case, Fulbright takes priority over other employment opportunities, perhaps in part because of the demanding investment of time. The hours that I spent engaged in self-reflection, researching my country of interest, imagining an exciting future life in Macau, and refining every component of the application proved to me, and hopefully to those reviewing my application, that the position is an

Continued pg. 7



DOING COLLEGE BACKWARDS

I started out like most young American girls... wanting to be a teacher. I was inspired by the dedicated teachers I was fortunate enough to have, as well as the infamous tenured "teachers" that are notorious for long coffee breaks and internet surfing. Throughout high-school I strategically placed myself in all the right places at all the right times. I was a three season athlete, a band-geek, the teacher's pet, and the perfect daughter. I was on all the right tracks, paths, and any other proverbial route one can think of.

From high-school, I went to a local community college to save money (My momma didn't raise no fool). Here I obtained my Associates Degree in Humanities and Social Sciences and then enrolled in the most reputable colleges in the area specializing in teaching certification. My three years at this residential college were thought provoking, inspirational and life changing... too bad I didn't realize this until my first semester of grad school.

While at my undergraduate institution I was devoted to my studies. I was excited about the differences that I was about to make in students lives, much like my high-school teachers. I also picked up a History degree, subscribing to the stereotypical "nerd" mentality. I enjoyed reading hundreds of pages of multiple texts each week. I enjoyed writing the fifty page papers. I enjoyed the late nights in the library. What I did not enjoy was my nonexistent social life.

It wasn't until my second year at SUNY Potsdam that I realized how board I was. With my 4.0 GPA, and my uneventful, unfulfilled social life, I sought out something to fill the void that History and Secondary Education could not. Through a referral by a high school friend who also happened to be a Resident Assistant at Potsdam, I found Residential Life. Residential Life was the catalyst that propelled me to the realization that I hated the cloud I was riding on all the way to my American Dream. While in my first year in Residential Life I became involved in multiple committees, and social organizations around campus. Before this turning point in my life, I was ignorantly unaware of the opportunities that were available to me, a typical student.

That made me think... scratch my head really. How was it that I was unaware of all the events, programs, and offerings my college provided? Was I really that oblivious to the marketing of "the college experience"? I've come to realize that I was so consumed in the academic part of my education (that's what I was paying for away way right?) that I forgot to focus on the social part.

Ahhh, epiphany number 1... it's ok to have a social life in college.

I was neglecting the part of college that my counterparts seemed to be excelling at; a life. From a year and a half in Residential Life and my newly found friends, I realized that there is a crucial balance of academics and social activity to be had. I enjoyed the history

and education classes I was in, but was now able to supplement my academics; the perfect situation.

With my second to last semester at Potsdam coming to an end with student teaching and completing my certification requirements I decided it was time for a change. Radford University found me through a series of circumstantial events. Before I knew it I was taking a day off from student teaching to gather my application materials for the Graduate school and the Special Education program, conducting a phone interview with the Office of Housing and Residential Life, and finding the perfect thank you present for my former Resident Director for sending me the job opportunity link (I settled on a gift certificate from a local chocolate shop).

By the next month I was moving to Virginia.

I was enrolled in a field that I found fulfilling and gratifying; Special Education, and I had landed a position as a Resident Director. I had shuffled my degree requirements around enough to be able to graduate after taking a winter economics class online at a different university, and planned on returning to walk in graduation at the end of the following semester. I said goodbye to my friends and family, and moved to Virginia.

Ahhh, epiphany number 2... Friends don't stop being friends when you leave the state.

On the 10.5 hour drive down I-81, I remember laughing out loud when I hit the Virginia state line. "What did I just

do"? I moved four states south, to a town where I knew no one, in the middle of an academic year where my future co-workers already had made the bonds that I had missed while in New York student teaching.

Ahhh, epiphany number 3... Transitioning is hard.

Once I arrived for my "baptism by fire" (as a my 5 day training was referred to by a supervisor), I was thrown into my first semester of graduate level classes, conduct responsibilities in a 950 occupancy residence hall that was predominantly Freshmen, and supervising a staff. Although this transitioning process was difficult, I somehow managed to tread water and fight off depression at the same time.

By the second month of getting my feet under me and figuring out the dynamics of my new co-workers and environment, I realized that I needed something more. I needed more on my plate, and more interpersonal interactions. My classes were mostly on-line, which limited the amount of people I met. I needed to have a conversation with people about something other than work... I needed people in general.

Ahhh, epiphany number 4... It's ok to need people and human interactions.

So I talked to my boss. I told her that I needed something more. I told her that I seem to enjoy my job more than I did my classes. She took note of this and linked me with the University's Conduct Board and a Diversity Taskforce. From here

Continued pg. 7



Assistant at Potsdam, I found Residential Life.

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Wonderlust CON'T.

ideal fit for me. This may be a clever tactic by the Fulbright Foundation to decrease the likelihood of a homesick Fulbright scholar quitting the program before the commitment has been completed.

Advice from One Wanderer to Another

If you are considering the pursuit of a Fulbright assistantship or open to similar alternatives, read on for more advice and resources. My advice for those planning to travel through Fulbright is to make certain that you are fully invested in this endeavor for the long haul before you embark on the application process. This is not just another job application that asks you to turn in a resume and cover letter, and then a couple weeks later you receive an interview. There is no immediate gratification. There will be hours and weeks of research, writing, introspection, and interviewing, then waiting. And waiting. On a brighter note, know that the process will be one of positive development, self-discovery, and the opportunity to dream.

The first step to pursuing opportunities abroad is to reflect on your answers to these questions:

- What do I hope to accomplish by pursuing this opportunity? What are my goals?
- Where do I want to go?
- Why do I want to do this?

If your institution has a fellowships office, meet with a fellowships advisor to discuss your options.

Create an account at <https://apply.embark.com/student/fulbright/international/20/>

If you decide that you want to apply for a Fulbright Fellowship, here is where to begin:

- If your institution has a fellowships office, meet with a fellowships advisor to discuss your options.
- Create an account at <https://apply.embark.com/student/fulbright/international/20/>
- Find instructions at http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/online_application_instructions.html

There are multiple programs besides the Fulbright program that allow graduate students to teach or volunteer abroad.

Volunteer Abroad Opportunities

- Cross Cultural Solutions www.crossculturalsolutions.org
- Global Volunteers www.globalvolunteers.org
- Habitat for Humanity International www.habitat.org

Teach Abroad Opportunities

- Chile Ministry of Education: University Teaching Assistants Program www.ingles.mineduc.cl
- Appalachians Abroad: Teach in China www.marshall.edu/gochina
- Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE) www.ingles.mineduc.cl
- French Teaching Assistantship Program www.frenchculture.org
- The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) www.jetprogramme.org
- Teach English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) www.tefl.com
- World Teach www.worldteach.org

- Hannah Nicol



BACKWARDS Con't.

I was able to hone my desires. As I began to dislike my classes more and more, and began to stay in my office until 12:00 AM out of desire, I came to realize that I might be on the wrong life path. (At this point I was still in denial).

Ahhh, epiphany number 5... Ask the people around you for help. They get just as much gratification helping you, as you do helping others.

As I continued to become more and more involved with our Office of Residential Life team, I became more and more aware that instead of my Resident Director position being a job; it was turning into a career.

I realized that the part of my education degree that I enjoyed the most was the opportunity to impact someone else's life, not to teach economics or global history.

So after becoming involved in our Residence Hall Association, invited to attend multiple Residential Life functions, and participating in a state and national conference, I was well aware that I was in the wrong program. Upon returning from a National Conference in San Diego I started thinking about how jealous I would be of my multiple friends who were to begin a Student Affairs/Higher Education program the following year. It was then that

I began researching different graduate programs around the country.

Ahhh, epiphany number 6... It's ok to be part of a statistic.

You aren't proving anything to anyone if you realize you should change your major/program and you don't because you don't want to shake the status quo... you just throw off the statistics. Go ahead and do College backwards, it can be a foret h i n k i n g experience.

- Ashleigh Williams



Setting Goals for a Masters Education

Many of us working towards master's degrees in higher education and/or student affairs programs were drawn to this field as a result of being active, involved students at our undergraduate institutions. We are walking testaments to what can be learned and gained from outside

the classroom experiences. The experiences we had were so meaningful and educational because a professional staff member designed them that way. In addition, as undergraduates, many of us were fortunate to have mentors who took the time to help us set goals and then followed up to make sure we were accomplishing them. We all are aware of the benefits of setting goals; yet, as busy graduate students, we often forget to take the time to establish goals for our graduate education. The purpose of this article, therefore, is to discuss general guidelines on how to set meaningful goals that are achievable, and to lay out the personal goals and outcomes I have set for myself for graduate school and beyond.

Guidelines for Goal Setting

While goals are personal and unique to each of us, there are guidelines that can serve as a starting point for creating goals for your graduate school experience. The first set of guidelines is "SMART Goals," which stand for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-based (Whited, 2008). These basic guidelines are important to keep in mind because if just one goal is set too high, it is easy to get frustrated and, as a result, to give up on trying to accomplish the rest of the goals. The best goals are ones that will be challenging, and yet, at the same time, achievable. Goals that fit these guidelines will allow you to be intentional about gaining the experiences you desire during graduate school.

Are your goals SMART?

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Timely

My Personal Goals

To give an example of what a set of goals and outcomes might look like for a graduate degree program, I have set the following SMART goals and resulting outcomes I intend to accomplish before completing my Master's degree in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program at the University of South Carolina. Goals and outcomes are separated because, to me, goals are short-term, tangible things that can be accomplished and checked off a list. Outcomes, on the other hand, are the long-term results derived from accomplishing those goals. Also, one outcome can be achieved by accomplishing a variety of goals, so, in the interest of not repeating those outcomes several times, I have separated them out.

Personal Goals for my Master's Education:

- Work or volunteer in as many offices as possible either through required practicum classes or on my own.
- Co-teach University 101 – USC's first year experience class.
- Work closely with, and advise, undergraduate students as much as possible thereby allowing me to understand how students perceive how the university operates.
- Mentor an undergraduate student.
- Attend at least three professional conferences.
- Have domestic and/or international travel experiences through a graduate class
- Participate and/or observe campus-wide events: Greek Week competitions, intramural sports, etc.
- Submit an abstract to present at a conference.
- Present at a conference.
- Author an article that is published in a journal (can now say this one is checked off the list J).
- Identify a mentor.
- Make connections and friends with people from each cohort with whom I interact (my own, the one in front of me and the one after me).
- Develop a lasting connection to HESA and USC.

Desired Learning Outcomes:

- Intentionally translate theory I am learning into my practice as a professional.
- Understand how a variety of offices at USC operate and how they interact with other offices.
- Define and articulate my personal values and strengths.
- Articulate new ideas clearly and concisely to various campus constituents.
- Adjust and adapt to a new university smoothly.
- Additional examples of goals that you might put on your list include, among others: visiting as many institutions in a state/region as possible, getting involved with a sorority/fraternity as an alumni member/advisor, volunteering in the local community on a regular basis, etc.

Conclusion

When starting a new chapter in your life, the first thing on your mind most likely is not goal setting. You probably are more concerned with learning your way around a new campus and trying to figure out how to balance classes and homework with having a job and a life. While this is completely understandable, it really is important to take the time to set personal goals for this new chapter. Doing this will ensure that you gain as much as you can from the experience, while helping you stay focused on achieving the specific goals you have outlined for yourself.

- Danielle Beasley

Prevention Practices: What to Know About Substance Abuse as a Higher Education Professional

Substance abuse is an alarming public health issue facing college campuses across the country. Substance abuse is the overuse or misuse of alcohol, prescription drugs, and illegal drugs. The focus of this article is alcohol abuse as, “more than 1,700 students die each year because of drinking” (Dowdall, 2009, p. 4). When this risky behavior occurs on campuses, how can higher education professionals keep students safe and allow them to achieve their highest potential? The purpose of this article is to inform higher education graduate students and new professionals on the negative effects of alcohol on college students and how institutions of higher education can successfully combat students’ drinking behaviors.

Overview of Alcohol Abuse on College Campuses

Whether pre-gaming for sporting events, taking part in “Thirsty Thursday,” or staying in for a night of drinking games, students are abusing alcohol and adversely impacting their collegiate experience. “Alcohol abuse is a pattern of drinking that results in harm to one’s health, interpersonal relationships or ability to work” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008, para. 15). A study published in 1997 by Grant and Dawson shows that if students begin drinking at a young age they are more likely to develop alcohol dependency or alcoholism, which means their drinking, can impact them long after graduation. Many alcohol-related injuries occur on cam-

puses and, “599,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol” (Dowdall, 2009, p. 55). The likelihood of sexual assault taking place increases when alcohol is involved. “Alcohol is clearly present in many of the crimes of violence among college students, and in more than 7 of 10 rapes that occur among college women” (Dowdall, 2009, p. 90). Not only are there physical and emotional impacts associated with alcohol abuse, but students tend to lose their academic drive. Students who choose to drink on a regular basis often engage in negative academic behaviors, including oversleeping, missing class, and falling behind on homework and projects. “About 25 percent of college students report academic

consequences of their drinking” (Dowdall, 2009, p. 55). When looking at these side effects, it is scary to see the ripple effect alcohol abuse has on students’ college careers; however, these costs are not what students think of when someone is offering them another cold beer on a Saturday night.

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Advice for New Professionals Through Economic Times

You didn’t plan to start your career in the worst economic climate since the 1930s. And yet, here you are. Recovery might be on the way, but it might take some time – some state economies (and thus state support for higher education) might not recover until 2014 or later (Blumenstyk, 2010). So how can you keep it together in tough financial times? I recommend trying to understand, empathize, assess, and innovate in the workplace. You should also take care of yourself in your personal life.

New professionals are constantly admonished to learn the culture of their new offices, departments, and institutions. That’s even more accurate in tough times. One of the first things you should figure out – probably even to the extent of asking about it in interviews – is how the economic downturn has affected your institution. Has it made cutbacks? Barr (2002) identified several possible reasons for budget cuts: lower student enrollment, reductions in governmental funding, lack of success in fund raising, unusual or costly events, or even a periodic “cutting of fat.” Understanding why your institution is making cuts can help you understand how to respond. For example, if your budget is hurting because of low student enrollment, you might be called on to provide more help with your institution’s recruitment

efforts. But the effects of a bad economy on an institution usually go beyond budget cuts. If you are an academic adviser for a business school, for instance, you’ll want to know if internship possibilities in your area have dried up.

Once you understand the situation at your institution, you can empathize with those affected by the bad economy. This starts with students. Financial turmoil among students and their families can create a whole range of stresses in their lives, affecting their development and growth in almost all areas. As a student affairs professional, it’s your job to provide support that will help students persevere despite those challenges. For example, if a student’s economic circumstances have changed, you should refer them to financial aid professionals, who can sometimes modify aid awards to reflect those circumstances. But even if a student’s financial situation is stable, economic concerns are likely on their minds. Students naturally worry about their financial futures in the context of a society where traditional ideas about payment for college, personal autonomy, and financial independence have rapidly changed (Karney-Hall, 2008; Schnaiberg & Goldenberg, 1989). It’s easy to get frustrated when a student seems uninter-

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Prevention con't.

Successful Alcohol Abuse Prevention Programs

The big question is why do college students turn to alcohol? Dowdall (2009) categorizes the top reasons college students choose to drink are: to enhance social activity, to give people something to do and talk about, and to have more fun. Is there a way for students to achieve these goals in a non-alcoholic environment? The answer to this question is yes, but it is important to remember that all campuses are unique and every student population differs when it comes to programming. It is essential that the activity or program engages the target student population, so campuses should not blindly attempt to transfer programming which was successful at another university because each campus culture is distinctive.

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention (n.d.) highlights successful alcohol prevention programs which fit their campus population. In 2005, Gonzaga University launched ProjectREAL; the goal of the program was to reduce high-risk drinking among students. Being a Jesuit

university, Gonzaga was able to utilize faith-based activities and settings to create safe, non-alcoholic, late night programming. "Since 2005, there has been a 6% increase in the number of on-campus students who abstain. Additionally, there has been a decrease in the number of students who consume alcohol ten or more days per month" (Department of Education's Higher Education Center

for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, n.d., para. 4). By finding a programming niche in their Jesuit community, Gonzaga was able to change student drinking habits and provide them with a new outlet, giving students something new to do and talk about.

Streamlining programming for a small private school is one thing, but how can this impact be made at a large state university? In order to make an impact on a larger campus it is necessary to target a specific sub-group. This is something that The Ohio State University did when implementing

"Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds" in October 2005. When reviewing alcohol and drug survey results, campus personnel saw "intramural and sport club participants at the Ohio State University engaged in more high-risk drinking and experienced more negative consequences related to their alcohol use." (Department of Education's Higher Education Center



for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, n.d., para. 1). For this reason they created a program which

focused on changing the alcohol culture of this sub-group. The program contained alcohol education opportunities for students, ranging from one-on-one alcohol counseling to alcohol education workshops and alcohol-free events. The program brought about change in the campus climate with a "4.7% decrease in binge drinking and a 10% decrease in the average number of drinks consumed per week" (Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and

for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, n.d., para. 4). OSU was able to pinpoint a campus subset, educate them, and bring about change in drinking habits. These two programs show how important it is to create programming that fits the campus culture.

Conclusion

Current and future higher educational professionals see first-hand the negative impact that alcohol can have on individual students and the community at large. When working on a college campus, it is easy to spot ways in which alcohol is having a negative effect on students' successes within the classroom, in their personal lives, and can bring harm to themselves or others. One reason students are drinking is because it allows for them to be more social with their peers. Are colleges and universities not providing safe programming in a sober environment where students can be sociable? It is the role of higher education to create safe environments where students can achieve this goal without using alcohol. It is time to take the next step, and make a difference!

- Diana Coyle

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Editor's Corner

I hope everyone is starting

to get into the swing of things as the new academic year is getting started! Along with the start of a new academic year comes the start of many firsts... first day at a new institution, first day of grad school, first paper in APA format, first day at your first professional job, first business card, first office, etc. Or the start of the new academic year can also be starting right back where you left of the year prior. It is my hope that with these firsts you also think about publishing your first article in *The Eighth Vector*, or if you have published before, I look forward to seeing new material!

There are a couple formats that work out well for the newsletter, roughly 500 words or roughly 1,000 words. Not sure what to write about? Try writing about hot topics, current/upcoming events, personal experience, how to..., etc. There are many different avenues to take to express yourself in *The Eighth Vector*.

Don't be afraid to ask your professors for suggestions or your colleagues!

If you have any questions please feel free to e-mail me, Amy Mauk, at the8thvector@gmail.com. The account was temporarily inactive but it is up and running again, sorry for the down time. Articles can be submitted at any point in time.

The next deadline for our November issue is October 31st... don't be scared! I look forward to seeing what you all have to share with your fellow colleagues!

- Amy Mauk

Economic Times Con't.

uninterested in learning and growth during college, focusing only on getting a degree and getting a job. But their priorities stem in part from societal context, not intellectual incuriousness. Your campus partners might also experience financial uncertainty. You might find it harder to get buy-in for new ideas or initiatives if your colleagues think they're being asked to do more with less. Again, empathize – acknowledging feelings of uncertainty or pressure won't make them disappear, but it shows that you're sensitive to those concerns. Try to ensure that you're creating win-win situations where both you and your campus partners will benefit from your new ideas. Alternatively, be prepared to prove that your plans are so important to the institution's overall mission that they should be near the head of the line for limited resources.

That leads to assessment. Assessment is not optional or something that you can rely on staff with more experience to do for you. You need to assess the quality and impact of your work with students or, at the very least, understand and explain the assessments of your work that others have made. Upcraft and Schuh (1996) identified two main reasons why assessment matters. First, you are a professional and you should care about the quality of the work you do. Second, in a political climate, you need to explain how your work aligns with the mission, vision, and goals of your institution. Campus politics isn't necessarily a good or bad thing, but it does exist and you can't ignore it because you're a new professional. Every time you explain what you do to a parent, student, or colleague, you're engaging in a political act. Ensure that you can quickly and clearly explain your work in a way that aligns with the priorities of your institution and gather data to support what you say. This will help you to go on getting the resources you need to do your job.

Still, if you're only focused on holding the line and preserving what you have, you're missing an

opportunity to innovate. One of the upsides of tight economic times is that they push people to be willing to try new ideas – perhaps from a mindset of, “Hey, things are already bad, what have we got to lose?”

Innovation can help you do your job more efficiently and it can help you align your work with institutional priorities. Innovation means different things for different schools, institutions, and functional areas, but you might think about how you can reach students in non-traditional ways or at non-traditional times. For example, students might find electronic communications more accessible than paper ones, improving their impact and saving printing and duplication costs. Working some evenings can help you reach students who aren't available during the day. This might save on utility costs and you can maintain balance by taking a morning off. Think about supporting groups of students that have been neglected historically. Think about using technology in new ways. Don't be shy about sharing new ideas with supervisors and colleagues, particularly if they will preserve resources or help you enact your institution's vision. At best, you'll create change that will benefit your students and your school. Even if your ideas are rejected, you might earn a reputation for trying to help your institution in tough times.

Finally, ensure that your personal financial situation is organized. You won't serve your students or your school well if your life is a financial mess. Some new professionals, earning a meaningful salary for the first time in their lives, splurge on new cars or new gadgets. Keep to a budget, live within your means, and ensure that you're saving for retirement. Try to sock away several months' salary in an emergency savings account. You probably owe money on student loans already; don't incur more debt if you can avoid it. Take advantage of opportunities to develop your financial literacy: audit an

financial advice books targeted at young professionals, or learn a little about behavioral economics. *Why Smart People Make Big Money Mistakes - And How To Correct Them* (Belsky & Gilovich, 1999) and *Freakonomics* (Levitt & Dubner, 2009) are light, interesting reads.

You can't control the economy, but you can control how you respond to the economy. Success in student affairs, as in life in general, results from making positive changes in areas that you can control. In your professional role, try to view economic problems as an opportunity to support your students and colleagues while innovating in the workplace. In your personal life, ensure you're managing your own financial situation.

-Jeffrey Ruder

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Register for ACPA now for a chance to win scholarships!

All graduate students that become a member or renew their membership in ACPA between August 1st and October 31st will be eligible for a reduced convention fee of \$99.00. These graduate students will also be eligible for the drawing for professional development grants that will cover registration, one night's hotel, and travel assistance to the ACPA Convention in Baltimore. There will also be some winners who receive a grant to cover convention registration only.

Be on the lookout for the graduate student SCGSNP scholarship for Convention as well—applications will be coming out soon. Any graduate student not job searching at ACPA in Baltimore is encouraged to apply for registration and some travel/hotel coverage scholarships. SCGSNP scholarship include invitations to SCGSNP socials and meetings, a convention mentor, and publication in *The Eighth Vector!*

Articles for the Next Issue Due October 31st

Email articles or questions to 8thvector@gmail.com.