

**Student Affairs Final reflection**

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EPPL 530 – Introduction to Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education

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### **Final reflection**

Over the course of this semester, I have embarked on a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted world of student affairs, delving into its philosophy, functions, and mission within the broader context of higher education. Guided by our course objectives and the rich array of resources provided, including readings, class presentations, and discussions, I have gained invaluable insights into the complexities and challenges facing student affairs professionals today. As I reflect on this transformative learning journey, I am not only compelled to articulate the issues that have most profoundly impacted me and how my perspective on the profession and higher education has evolved but also the strategies I am actively envisioning and planning to employ to address these issues effectively. I would also like to express my appreciation to you Ginger, for how the course was structured. Its practical nature was indeed helpful.

### **Identification of Surprising/Inspiring/Unsettling Issues**

Of the subjects that were extensively tackled in the course, some looked to me as if they had significant and lasting effects. The matter of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) was not only interesting from the perspective of a panellist to scrutinize its complexity but also as a facilitator lobbying for the creation of inclusive environments (Magolda & Baxter Magolda, 2011). The fact that systemic discrimination is omnipresent and that thoughtfully deconstructing it in higher education institutions has always created an open wound that has forced me to dig into my prejudices and privilege.

The presentation on the experiences of first-generation students was particularly enlightening. It illuminated the unique challenges these students face, such as navigating unfamiliar academic and social environments, financial constraints, and a lack of familial support. Witnessing their determination to overcome these obstacles has advocated for programs

that address their specific needs. Moreover, at the Office of Community Values and Restorative Justice, where I serve as a graduate assistant, I have understood the workability of restorative justice, which is a good channel for community building on the community and campus.

### **Impact on Perspective**

This journey has definitely influenced my view of the profession of student affairs and the function of higher education as a collective. I have learned to value very much the awesome burden to which we are answerable as caregivers of young minds' orientation and defenders of social justice. My perception of the relationship between theory and practice has broadened while the level of social justice and tolerance in all aspects of my work has increased.

Furthermore, I have had a chance to meet amazing people from all over the world and get in touch with cohorts, professors and professionals like you, Ginger, which has expanded my horizons and helped me see things from a new perspective (Schuh et al., 2017). The ever-evolving cross-fertilization of insights and experiences of students has been translated into peer support and mutual respect, which constitute a basis for a transformation in the role of student affairs professionals. My position in the Office of Community Values and Restorative Practices has provided me with the privilege of working with my counterparts to shape restorative justice programs that focus on reconciliation and rebuilding relationships.

### **Strategies for Response and Education**

Because of the problems that affected me, I am determined to follow through by engaging in actions that will try to cause positive change. In the context of my daily practice as a conduct case administrator, I am fully aware of the key role played by a culture of accountability. Yet, compassion and restorative justice should also be considered as integral elements. I will continue to promote fair disciplinary procedures that look after both the students' opportunities to progress

and rehabilitation (Lake, 2011). In addition, I am inspired by the desire to integrate my DEI knowledge into practical approaches to campus diversification that would welcome students of all cultures.

Additionally, I see immense value in collaborating with colleagues across functional areas, including the Office of Community Values and Restorative Practices, to implement holistic support systems that address the intersecting needs of diverse student populations (Magolda & Baxter Magolda, 2011). By harnessing the collective expertise of student affairs professionals, we can create transformative educational experiences that empower students to thrive academically, socially, and personally.

### **Crisis Management**

Crisis management enhances readiness and responsiveness as the appropriate ways of protecting campus communities from crisis. Identifying the nuances of crisis response, as well as working with campus partners in formulating large-scale emergency plans, is vital for my student affairs professionals (Schuh et al., 2017). By following up on the latest developments in crisis management techniques and guidelines, I am able to take up unpredictable instances and serve students in times of crisis.

### **Conclusion**

As I conclude this reflection, I am filled with gratitude for the transformative learning experiences afforded to me throughout this semester. The journey through the landscape of student affairs has challenged me to confront my assumptions, expand my horizons, and embrace the complexities inherent in our work. Armed with newfound insights and a renewed sense of purpose, I am encouraged to continue advocating for equity, justice, and student success within

the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, both in my role at the Office of Community Values and Restorative Practices and beyond.

### **References**

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Magolda, P.M. & Baxter Magolda, M.B. (Eds.). (2011). Contested issues in student affairs: Diverse perspectives and respectful dialogue. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

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