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# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

*The Journal of Campus Activities Practice and Scholarship* (JCAPS) is a social science peer-reviewed journal. It focuses on publishing rigorous, relevant, and respected scholarship related to postsecondary education co-curricular campus activities, and translating such scholarship to practice. It especially encourages submissions from practitioners throughout higher education.

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Professional development for staff and faculty who work with students

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# JCAPS

# DEFINING AND ADDRESSING PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT IN CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

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*Professional burnout is a growing concern in campus activities units. We have collected several anecdotal reflections from student affairs professionals, which we share to illustrate how the dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and a lack of self-efficacy can show up in our daily work. We will provide suggestions reexamining organization structures and professional practices to combat feelings of burnout and establish new and innovative career pathways for campus activities professionals.*

As a profession, we might be in the *perfect storm* as it relates to retaining talent, recruiting future professionals, and identifying how to establish new models for encouraging morale and self-management within the profession. A *perfect storm* arises from a number of negative and unpredictable factors that create a critical state of affairs (Oxford, n.d.). As we reflect on the last two years, we recognize that an unpredictable global pandemic collided with existing concerns around mental health on campus. Those factors were compounded by our country responding to a racial injustice pandemic, and increased demands for administration to address the inequities that have plagued our campuses for centuries. Finally, the Great Resignation resulted in many professionals leaving their campus positions leaving offices understaffed and demands for student support increasing. These negative and unpredictable factors contribute to attrition in the field reaching a critical state of affairs.

A national survey that included several student affairs units within its data collection (see CUPA-HR 2022 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey), notes that "higher ed in general is facing a crisis in retaining its talent" (as cited in Moody, 2022, para 6). Recognizing the importance around retaining talent within student affairs units has consistently been part of discussions surrounding the future of the profession. Looking further into the CUPA-HR2022 survey data four broad conclusions are highlighted: 1) employees are seeking a position with a higher salary, 2) remote work opportunities are not being provided as an option, 3) employees are working longer hours and harder than in recent years, and 4) clear areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are identified in their work environment.

Reflecting on the growth of our profession, higher education institutions have experienced numerous shifts and expansions since the early 1900's that have resulted in changing organizational structures, specifically in how student success outside the classroom is managed. Increasing student enrollment and diversity resulted in an increase in student affairs personnel charged with providing meaningful learning experiences outside the academic classroom (Schwartz & Stewart, 2017). Student activities has seen a tremendous growth in positions that support the out-of-class experience of students on college campuses, including expanding areas for support for student organizations, leadership programming, and campus event coordination. While we have seen these units' grow, many positions are often filled by new professionals (i.e., those in their first five years of employment post graduate school) and retention is an issue. Staffing growth being attributed to positions designed for new professions is significant to note. Holmes, et al. (1983), found in an early study that 60% of professionals who held a master's degree in the profession left the profession in a 6-year period; decades later, that percentage has remained consistent (Lorden, 1998; Tull, 2006; Marshall, et al., 2016).

Most recently, *The Compass Report: Charting The Future of Student Affairs* (2022) found that the top three factors that could contribute to student affairs professionals leaving the field include inadequate compensation, crisis management roles that lead to burnout, and feeling underappreciated by the institution. Throughout the last few decades, numerous authors have suggested that burnout could be the leading cause of professionals leaving the field (as cited in Lorden, 1998; Connor, 2021; Carter, 2019; Mullen, et al., 2018). There is no doubt that burnout is a key factor in student affairs professionals' decision to leave the higher education environment. Mullen, et al. (2018), investigated student affairs professionals' level of job stress and burnout in relationship to their job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The authors concluded that "[h]igher levels of job stress and burnout were positively associated with turnover intention and negatively associated with job satisfaction" (p. 105). While these are not necessarily surprising findings, they do indicate a profession-wide inability to address the issue over several decades – and the problem may have gotten worse over the past few years. In this article, we focus on professional burnout and how campus activities units address could address burnout. We have collected a number of anecdotal reflections from student affairs professionals, which we will share to illustrate the concepts we highlight in the article. These were not intended to constitute qualitative research, but it was interesting to note how frequently the themes elicited for this article matched those of previous research. To understand more about how to address burnout, it is important to begin with defining burnout in the workplace.

## DEFINING WORKPLACE BURNOUT

While many professionals use the word "burnout" to describe a variety of negative feelings associated with the world of work, a general consensus of its properties has built over the past 35 years among those who study it. Three basic dimensions exist: 1) A sense of *exhaustion*, where the person experiences a loss of energy and bouts of fatigue while engaged in or thinking about the work; 2) *Cynicism* and feeling a sense of detachment and depersonalization from the job and the people encountered within it, where the person feels irritable, lacking concern, and feels motivated to withdraw; and 3) A *lack of self-efficacy* in carrying out one's responsibilities, where morale is low and the person is perplexed or frustrated with their self-perceived lack of accomplishment (Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Many professionals can think of examples from the past two years when they have experienced these dimensions in some way.

### Pathways to Burnout

Relatively recent research (Leiter & Maslach, 2015) suggests four different structures of professional work burnout, each mediated to some extent by the degree of social support and social engagement experienced within the workplace. One pathway, described as "Overextended," is simply traversed by experiencing steadily increasing amounts of exhaustion within one's work. While a person on that pathway might not initially feel more cynical or ineffective than a typical employee, over time they must continually bolster themselves to show up at work, be engaged in work activities, and attend meetings. Eventually, the exhaustion becomes so strong that they leave. A second pathway, the "Disengaged," describes professionals who express consistent cynicism about their job and maybe overall profession. These employees might feel energized and effective in their roles, but their energy is negative and directed towards all they perceive is wrong with their work environment. A third, less prevalent, pathway, titled, "Ineffective," describes professionals who perceive themselves as lacking the capacity for comprehensively completing their various roles effectively, consistently finding fault with their performance, even if others may not agree with their self-assessments. The final pathway, titled simply "Burnout," describes professionals who exhibit highly elevated amounts of at least two of the three stressors.

### Interrelationship of Dimensions

While these dimensions and pathways are largely agreed upon across the social sciences, some disagreement exists regarding their interrelationships. For example, a "transactional" model of burnout (e.g., Cherniss, 1980) suggests that an initial stage of too many demands outstripping one's resources for success in one's work leads to a second stage of exhaustion and inefficacy, which then leads to an increasing degree of cynicism and defensiveness. Another model suggests that emotional exhaustion due to continued high-degree work demands then leads to depersonalization within one's work, which causes a drop in energy and idealism thus leading to a feeling of inefficacy and lack of personal work accomplishment (e.g., Maslach, 1982). Other scholars (e.g., Golembiewski & Murzenrider, 1988)

suggest that cynicism is the initial factor, which then leads to feeling a lack of accomplishment, then to exhaustion. The interrelationship of the dimensions is evident in the data we shared earlier about reasons for leaving the profession (see CUPA-HR 2022 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey (2022) and The Compass Report (2022)). As we think about pathways for the profession to combat professional burnout, we are hopefully simultaneously addressing how to improve the work environment for campus activities professionals to feel successful.

## ADDRESSING BURNOUT IN CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Addressing burnout in campus activities units begins with understanding *where* change can happen structurally and *how* professionals are told to engage with the campus. The campus culture and subculture within student activities units contributes to unspoken expectations about how much time and energy professionals should give to their role. Using the lens of the three basic dimensions associated with burnout we will explore how these show up in our work. Additionally, we will reexamine where structures could change and how to create expectations around role engagement in our campus activities units.

### Exhaustion

Working in campus activities units offers an opportunity for staff to create the learning and engagement on campus that we know students remember as significant moments in their collegiate journey. Engaging in such transformational work has been associated with professionals' feeling a loss of energy and uneven bouts of fatigue during the academic year. Professionals are often in a day-to-day rotation of staffing late night campus events and then being required to be on campus for administrative meetings the next morning. To be clear, the role of staffing those late-night events is explicitly situated in the job descriptions of the newer professionals (e.g., those with less than 5 years of experience). However, we question the institutional imperative of additionally requiring those professionals to be engaged during the typical administrative workday (e.g., 8 am – 5 pm). Supervisors have long heard comments from professionals about working upwards of 60-80 hours a week, multiple times, during an academic term. Repeated requirements to maintain such a schedule can lead to exhaustion and subsequent burnout.

During the pandemic, campus activities professionals we spoke to reported feeling stuck in a repetitive cycle of high expectations with low resources and high accountability. They simultaneously felt the pressure to be innovative in engaging students outdoors, through online venues, and with social distancing protocols thrust upon them by campus administration. Pines and Aronson (1988) assert that individuals are at risk of experiencing burnout after "long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations" (p. 9). The work that has been required of campus activities professionals prior to the pandemic was exhausting, and challenges of the past few years have left some professionals with a loss of energy and bouts of fatigue that have resulted in feelings of professional burnout. For example, an activities coordinator with 4 years of experience in the field shared,

> "When the pandemic hit, I was already on the verge of burnout. I was in my first year as a new professional. The pandemic made things so much worse. There were budget cuts that made me feel like I needed to prove my worth. They had begun laying people off. I went from being someone who was already overworked to someone doing several people's jobs. I was told to just make it work, no extra money, no extra resources. I was working 60-70 hours every week for the next year and half. I started considering leaving higher education. What I thought was burnout pre-pandemic was not even close to what I was feeling after the pandemic."

The pathway to exhaustion as a primary stressor is linked to professionals' articulation of being overextended. Professionals who are attracted to the work in student affairs units often find their joy in helping to create conditions for students to develop holistically (e.g., including increasing cognition, exploring individual identities, and understanding how to relate to others). Creating those experiences for students requires teams of people who often collaborate to design, implement, and evaluate student programs.

The feelings of being exhausted are not limited to campus activities units. The pandemic has also caused student affairs professionals in senior level positions to feel overextended. One dean of students, who recently decided to pursue a career outside of the collegiate environment shared, "I left student affairs not because I don't believe

in the work, but because the work we did to support others no longer supported me." As student affairs units continue to struggle with large numbers of unfilled positions, feelings of being overextended can be found in the remaining staff shouldering an even larger-than-normal share of the work. A residence hall director with six years in the profession put it more plainly, saying that through the pandemic, "It…became clear how my institution saw me; a cog that needed to keep turning, regardless of damage caused, so the revenue continued flowing. Ultimately, if you stop turning, you are hastily replaced with another cog that will." These anecdotal quotes provide insight into how a lack of energy and bouts of fatigue can be pervasive in student affairs units, especially when our work environment is not viewed as a healthy social network.

**Addressing Exhaustion in Campus Activities**

Given the anecdotal information that time on task within our campus activities units can be a leading stressor that leads to burnout, we advocate for addressing the systemic problems associated with how professionals spend their time. Critically examining our organizational structures, job responsibilities, and how units collaborate are critical in rethinking our work and how we might mitigate exhaustion and burnout.

*When Professionals Work*

The first recommendation is to not repeat our past patterns of behaviors. Our organizational charts guide work distribution for our units. They both illustrate, and to a certain extent, dictate how power and authority is nested at the top and flows down in a consistent fashion throughout the organization. In this frame, adding tasks to a new professional's job descriptions simply because senior professionals don't want to do anymore can be an easy temptation. It's clear how this can directly lead to exhaustion in our new professionals. When examining your organizational charts, accurately assess how much time on task it takes to do the work and distribute those responsibilities equitably throughout the unit. For example, recognize that work weeks may exceed 40 hours, but no one's work week should consistently exceed 40 hours during an academic term.

Additionally, how might it change the way we approach our work if the traditional organizational chart was inverted – with entry level positions at the top and senior leadership at the bottom, providing support. This might illustrate the kind of organization we are envisioning and for which we are advocating. In this format, the organizational chart would not reflect how work is distributed, but how support is allocated. We aren't necessarily suggesting institutions change their organizational charts. Doing so without concrete changes would be a symbolic gesture at best. But we want to encourage organizations to be as mindful about the ways they offer support as they are of how they distribute authority.

*How Professionals Work*

Identify your staple programs (i.e., recurring each year) and what programs are flexible (i.e., additional programming, often requested by students, unique in any given year), and examine how they all fit together into a realistic portfolio of programmatic work. In a classic piece (1995) Nichols talked about the tendency of colleges and universities to add new responsibilities, programs and even missions without thought as to what old initiatives they might replace. He wrote, "Change will not come easily, or even purposefully, as long as higher education as an industry perceives itself to require neither greater efficiency nor a heightened sense of accountability" (p. 6). When we say "yes" to everything, we reduce our capacity to physically and psychically invest in all our work, often leading to exhaustion. Create a means for assessing the potential for new program success and say "no" to new requests that do not meet requirements. Additionally, remove programs that are no longer effective. You can also indicate that a program could be done in the future and negotiate the removal of an existing program to make room for the new. Being able to establish a manageable set of programs for your staff and document the time on task for your staff will be critical to help reduce exhaustion. We do not claim that this task will be easy or that a unit will avoid push-back to continue to do all that is asked of them. However, recognizing how to document time on task for your staff, distributing time equitably between staff members, and evaluating your programs for effectiveness are factors that can contribute to reducing exhaustion in your unit. Done together, those data and practices help create a supportive and healthy work environment.

**Cynicism**

So, what happens when the capacity to care for students holistically is diminished? The short answer is that it can lead to feelings of disengagement. As we mentioned, cynicism is expressed through feelings of detachment and depersonalization from the job and people in those work environments. The pathway to cynicism as the primary stressor in burnout is expressed through a focus on negativity toward the toward the work and the environment. The work of a campus activities professional is dependent upon the professional being able to have the support necessary to construct experiences for a changing student population. Professionals who are being asked to provide support to students while armed with fewer resources and in suboptimal work conditions unsurprisingly often express feelings of negativity toward the work and environment. A campus life manager with 20 years of experience in the field explained this phenomenon, saying:

> "The cycle of hard and time-consuming work and direct impact and appreciation from students and institutions sustained me for a long time. Even at the height of pandemic, I still had excitement for new approaches to student services and differing communication with students. But suddenly, I found myself highly micromanaged with across-the-board proclamations from student affairs leadership without adequate knowledge of background, context, or impact. I spent my own energy with students and staff addressing concerns, encouraging persistence, and considering workable alternatives to nearly every obstacle. I could not expect the same [from my own supervisors]."

The conditions that create feelings of cynicism can be complex. Revisiting findings from *The Compass Report: Charting The Future of Student Affairs* (2022) can give us some insight into the factors that may contribute specifically to student affairs professionals expression of cynicism. The report notes that "[n]early nine in 10 respondents said that salaries and compensation packages are not competitive enough given the level of experience and education required for the job" (para. 4). Compensation will always be a critical component in looking at retaining personnel. However, compensation alone will not address burnout. Compensation is one indicator a professional can use to judge if they feel valued and appreciated by the institution. While addressing compensation in campus activities work would require an entire article itself, we can summarize its impact on burnout by considering it in combination with how professionals are recognized for their contributions. A director of student activities, who recently left the field shared,

> "I loved my time in higher ed and student activities...until the pandemic. COVID shined a very bright light on all the inequities in higher ed and student affairs. I had been content to just keep putting up with things because I figured 'I chose this field, I'm good at it, it's all I know.' Turns out that I had a wealth of skills that work really well in other fields!"

The inequities that professionals may experience in their roles on campus lead to feelings of cynicism. Feelings of wanting to disengage are often associated with the negativity we experience. It is important to acknowledge that our senior leaders are also experiencing these challenges, as one vice president for student affairs shares,

> "The COVID-19 pandemic along with ongoing racialized incidents and a nationally divisive political climate has made the past few years in higher education very difficult. Our brains are not wired to be in continual crisis mode and I have felt a level of weariness physically, emotionally, and professionally these past months and now years. In my role on campus, it's been important for me to maintain a positive and professional demeanor while also recognizing and acknowledging the challenges we've all faced. I try to strike the right balance, to not be Pollyanna or exhibit "toxic positivity" but also not give in to the darkness that can so easily overtake how we think and feel about our lives and work. I talk a lot about our circle of control – what can we reasonably control in our work, our space, our lives. Focus on those things and try to let go of those things in our circles of concern and to some degree our circles of influence. Narrowing down gives us a chance to regain some of our own control and footing and is a way I've found to give my brain the break it needs."

The degree of support an employee feels from those around them in their work environment and within their personal lives can directly affect their capability to manage each of the three central aspects of work-related burnout. When an employee perceives themselves as part of a healthy social network at work and feels support for their

co-workers and supervisor, such perceptions can help reduce or delay feelings of exhaustion, even if these feelings may not directly address feelings of depersonalization, cynicism, and inefficacy within one's job (Halbesleben, 2006). Alternatively, the same meta-analytic research suggests that feeling part of a healthy social network *outside* of work can help alleviate or reduce feelings of cynicism and ineffectiveness but hasn't been shown to alleviate or reduce feelings of exhaustion within the work environment (Halbesleben, 2006). It is interesting to think that one's friends and family might have a larger role in helping professionals make sense of their work effectiveness and sense of idealism within their jobs than those that are actually embedded within those jobs, especially one's supervisor. Still, the fact that burnout and social support are strongly negatively correlated is not surprising.

## Addressing Cynicism in Campus Activities

Cynicism is a feeling that is associated with a professional's lens within their work. Thinking about how we address cynicism begins with developing and understanding what factors contribute to expressions of negativity.

**Transparency and Trust.** Reflecting on where you can structurally address cynicism requires a focus on transparency and trust. Since cynicism that leads to burnout manifests itself as a behavior of negativity, it is important to understand how practices (e.g. sharing information, implementation of policies, salary negations, etc.) within your organization might create negative responses. The key is not only being transparent with reports and information, but also being able to articulate why an action was taken, as well as being able to share when you are unable to provide an explanation. As professionals, building trust in supervisors and other administrators within the organization is critical to understand when information might be confidential and to not respond negatively when you are not privy to that information.

**The Need to Care.** The term "compassion fatigue" was first coined by Figley (2013) to describe a secondary traumatic stress that can impact those who work with others in stressful circumstances. In describing the concept, he wrote, "[t]here is a cost to caring. Professionals who listen to… stories of fear, pain, and suffering may feel similar fear, pain, and suffering because they care. Sometimes we feel we are losing our sense of self to (those) we serve" (p. 1). Simply stated, caring for others can make student affairs professionals more susceptible to compassion fatigue. Campus activities professionals are often the support for students who are struggling on campus. Figley (2013) observed, "Those who have enormous capacity for feeling and expressing empathy tend to be more at risk of compassion stress" (p. 1). Since empathy involves experiencing the emotions of others, these experiences over time can lead to burnout. Viewed in this frame, empathy can be a double-edged sword. While our care for students brings meaning to our work and helps foster the type of culture in which students can thrive, we also must understand our care can contribute to burnout. Being cognizant of how to share the load of compassionately supporting students between staff is essential. As a field, we need to be more effective in creating an environment where it is acceptable for a professional to recommend a student to another professional when they don't have the emotional capacity to work with that student in that moment. This should be a shared role among all professionals in the unit.

## Lack of self-efficacy

A lack of self-efficacy refers to a perceived lack of accomplishment and the low levels of morale that result from this perception. Bandura (1977) initially defined self-efficacy as "… the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce (desired) outcomes" (p. 193). In our work, when we observe a student display a lack of self-efficacy, we often intervene to help the student identify the barriers to their success and outline a plan for overcoming those challenges to produce the desired outcomes. However, what happens when the professional responsible for providing that support feels ineffective?

A feeling of lack of self-efficacy is not commonly the primary stressor that leads to professional burnout. Still, a lack of self-efficacy often contributes to burnout when connected to either exhaustion, cynicism, or both. For example, we acknowledge that campus activities professionals often find joy and satisfaction working directly with students who frequently share their appreciation with them directly. However, changes to how campus activities professionals conduct work on campus can result in their feelings of being ineffective. The culture of our campus environments does not often provide space for professionals, at any level, to express how they may

feel ineffective. A chancellor shared,

> "The truth is presidents and chancellors cannot talk about having professional burn out. There is not going to be empathy for someone who is compensated as highly as we are. We are paid to weather the stress and storms facing our institutions. On the other hand, I have to be vulnerable and authentic, so I often talk or write about the fact that it is OK not to be OK, but I follow that up with providing resources and tell about ways that I have used those resources to try to role model that it is safe to do so."

It is important to appreciate that feelings of being ineffective are human. As an academic institution we want to think about how we make space for all professionals to ask for support to reach their desired outcomes.

**Addressing Lack of Self-Efficacy in Campus Activities**

Self-efficacy, as we stated earlier, results from someone feeling they will be successful in acting to achieve desired results. Therefore, we might think about addressing a lack of self-efficacy in two parts: 1) Providing clear communication about desired results; and 2) possessing a mental model for how to intervene to create those results. While this seems simple, consider the challenges to professionals in campus activities over the past few years. Building innovative programming in an online environment with an ambiguous timeline. Supporting students from a variety of marginalized identities who possessed the energy and societal momentum to want to create new programs focused on social justice and equity. Determining how to effectively collaborate with students and professional colleagues through unfamiliar virtual environments. And perhaps most fundamentally, navigating life in the midst of the worst global pandemic in over a century.

While many of our campuses have resumed more "traditional" in-person programming, we are still navigating how to make meaning of what we should continue to use from these last few years. These challenges call for defining the priorities of campus activities work (while being able to let other priorities slip down the list), and for building in professionals the mental models that help them achieve the highest priorities. Combating a lack of self-efficacy requires intentional professional development programming. That programming needs to exists at all levels of a campus professionals work environment. Earlier in this article we discussed the importance of providing. The unit should be providing opportunities for employees to build their skills, competencies, and dispositions with the intention of providing them with a career pathway within the profession.

# CREATING CAREER PATHWAYS

Creating conditions to decrease burnout within our units will improve the morale and working conditions within our campus activities units. But creating those conditions might not be easy or result in implementing convenient solutions. Lorden (1998) reviewed the existing literature surrounding student affairs attrition through 1998, and notes that career patterns in student affairs are not documented to help identify patterns for advancement or areas for improvement. Over twenty years later, no clear pattern for promotion in the profession exists within the multiple functional areas that are considered student services (e.g., career services, student activities, residence life, Greek life, leadership development, etc.). In too many instances, the only clear promotion for campus activities professionals is to take the role that is currently held by one's supervisor, leading many young and effective professionals to move-out of an institution in order to move up in the organizational structure. As Carpenter, Guido-DiBrito, & Kelly (1987) note "[t]he bad news is that there is not enough room at the top for all the talented people…the good news is that preparation and experience…are very much applicable and transferable to other endeavors" (p. 13).

Numerous professional associations, including NACA (www.naca.org), ACPA (www.myacpa.org) and NASPA (www.naspa.org), have created explicit professional competencies that professionals should master within student affairs. NACA.org, for example, lists detailed individual and organizational competencies addressing student organization advising, program management, human resource management, and community building. However, how professionals are judged or expected to demonstrate mastery of these competencies are currently absent beyond platitudes pointing to non-specific opportunities for career advancement. The narratives and

literature we shared above strongly indicate that campus activities professionals are interested in advancing within the campus organization chart, earning higher salaries, and being provided with flexibility – both in hours and physical location – for fulfilling their responsibilities. If we are to fundamentally reduce the number of high-achieving young professionals who experience professional burnout and end up leaving not just their role but the profession as well, we must address the root causes. Addressing those issues, will result in a paradigm shift for how we organize our units, as well as structure promotion opportunities within the profession.

One potential radical-sounding idea might be to mirror more closely the way faculty are promoted. Academic faculty (including tenure track, non-tenure track, research scientists, etc.) are provided with promotion opportunities that include three tiers. Essentially an entry level, mid-level, and senior level title. Many of us are most familiar with tenured faculty ranks. Full-time academic faculty begin their careers as Assistant Professors, if they achieve tenure, are promoted to Associate Professor and can also be promoted to full Professor, and ultimately retire from their role. All three titles are often associated with teaching and advising students, scholarly research and writing, and service to their profession and campus. At each promotion level larger salary bumps are provided to retain the faculty talent. The difference is that promotion is awarded, through campus committees, from the review of the individuals work by peers. Given that, it is no wonder that faculty roles often experience higher retention rates.

This model also exists in some institutions (see Indiana University - https://ovpue.indiana.edu/strategic-initiatives/advisor-promotion.html) for academic advisors. This structure mimics the academic faculty promotion structure. The fundamental shift in student affairs would be to create pathways to promotion that allow high-achieving professionals to continue to do what they are good at and that provide them energy and personal fulfillment – without requiring them to exhaust themselves in ways that will likely lead them to leave. Utilizing the already established competencies in the profession offer an opportunity to design standards for success that could provide promotion levels within our existing organization structures. For example, student activities coordinators could be able to hold their same role and be promoted to an association coordinator, and a senior coordinator WITHOUT having to wait for a position to vacate in the unit. Some additional areas ripe for discussion include increasing flexibility to address office hour staffing patterns, the ability to divide time on task for programming more equitably for ALL staff in the unit, and how to intentionally build experiences that would increase professionals' competencies in the field.

Another proposal might be to institute a culture of cross-training across student affairs units. Consider a high-achieving campus activities professional with five years of experience who has become exhausted advising student organizations – along with a high-achieving campus recreation professional with the same years of experience similarly exhausted after years managing the campus intramural sports program. Both skill sets are similar; but they are not nearly identical and are carried out in very different contexts. A culture of institutional cross-training might allow each to essentially switch jobs, continue learning, gain energy doing something new, and become a stronger candidate for an advanced administrative role given their increased breadth of experience.

## CONCLUSION

To be clear, we are not suggesting the ideas we shared above as panaceas for burnout or employee retention issues. But they do represent steps in the right direction, and the discussions that would be necessary to potentially implement them might result in other ideas – unique to any particular campus – to better address burnout and retention within each unique campus context.

While the CUPA-HR 2022 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey presents a gloomy outlook for higher education employment, we must remember that these data have prompted us to consider the factors that are leading to professionals leaving our collegiate campuses. Luckily, we also have current data to help us understand our own profession and how they are viewing their work environments. As we shared at the beginning *The Compass Report: Charting The Future of Student Affairs* (2022) outlined the top three factors that could contribute to student affairs professionals leaving the field. The report also highlighted that 81% of the respondents indicated they feel underappreciated/undervalued by their institution and yet, 61% plan to stay in the field for the next five years, and nearly that many (57%) would recommend the field to others. The COVID-19 pandemic represented one of the largest crises to student affairs work that has emerged in the past century, while also disrupting the

way campus activities professionals interact with students and the greater campus. Now, while the perfect storm is still fresh, might be the best time to make headway on these issues that have long been in existence.

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# IMPACT OF FIRST-GENERATION STATUS, LIVING IN AN LLC, AND CAMPUS CLUB INVOLVEMENT ON SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE FIRST SEMESTER

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*To determine if first-generation status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement affect students' sense of belonging in their first semester of college, the researchers surveyed first-year college students enrolled at a large, public research institution during their first semester. Multiple regression analyses found campus club involvement to be a significant predictor of sense of belonging on all four subscales of the Sense of Belonging Scale: perceived peer support, perceived classroom comfort, perceived isolation, and perceived faculty support. Living in an LLC was also found to be a significant predictor of perceived peer support, but not in perceived classroom comfort, perceived isolation, or perceived faculty support. First-generation status did not emerge as a significant predictor for any of the four areas of sense of belonging. Findings revealed the significant role campus involvement has on college students' sense of belonging in the first semester.*

With an increase in state and federal funding availability tied to graduation rates becoming more common at many U.S. institutions, it is understandable that retaining students is more important than ever to university administrators. Those who work in higher education often hear retention conversations focused on students' sense of belonging. Research over the past few decades has shown that, while not the only indicator, students' sense of belonging or connectedness to an institution remains important as to whether they will persist and earn a degree from that institution (Strayhorn, 2018). It is well known that students who feel they do not belong or have not established a connection to an institution are far more at risk of leaving (Tinto, 1987, 2012; Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007). While there are many subsets of student populations on campus, one group gaining more attention from university leadership in recent years is first-generation (first-gen) students (http://firstgen.naspa.org). This study focused on examining the sense of belonging among first-year students during their first semester of college through the lenses of first-gen status, students' environment (housing situation), and campus club involvement.

## SENSE OF BELONGING

While several past studies have examined sense of belonging among college students, very few of these studies have a common definition of sense of belonging. According to Haggerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwseman, and Collier (1992), sense of belonging is defined as "the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment" (p. 229). Most research on sense of belonging among college students focuses on first-year students, not necessarily first-gen, first-semester students. In a study that investigated the role of first-year college students' sense of belonging to their university, Hausmann et al. (2007), used multilevel modeling to determine whether a sense of belonging predicted intentions to persist. They found that a greater sense of belonging at the beginning of an academic year was associated with peer-group interactions, interactions with faculty, peer support, and parental support. Hausmann

et al. (2007), also found that "sense of belonging is a significant predictor of both institutional commitment and intentions to persist, even after controlling for student background, integration, and support variables" (p. 830).

In another study on the intention to persist and retention of first-year students, Morrow and Ackerman (2012) cited previous research where it was determined that "sense of belonging is related to academic progress, academic achievement and social acceptance" (p. 484). In their study, Morrow and Ackerman (2012) distributed the Sense of Belonging Scale (Hoffman et al., 2002) via email to first-year students; this scale consists of four sense of belonging subscales: peer support, faculty support, classroom comfort, and perceived isolation. A standard multiple regression was performed to assess if the sense of belonging was related to students' intention to persist. Results found that students are more likely to continue if they experience perceived support from faculty and peers.

Prior research cited by Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, and Leonard (2007) indicates that it is common for first-gen college students to have difficulty adapting to the college environment, resulting in a lack of sense of belonging. When students are dissatisfied with their academic and social experiences in higher education, they may leave an institution and higher education altogether (Tinto, 1975). The first term in college, especially the first six weeks, is crucial because students tend to be most susceptible to feelings of marginality (Tinto, 1987).

While numerous studies in the last two decades have focused on college students' sense of belonging related to various variables, limited research exists on the sense of belonging among first-generation students during the first semester. This is especially true when considering housing choice and campus involvement as possible influencing variables. Therefore, a look at the relationship between housing situation, campus involvement, and sense of belonging is warranted.

## DEFINING FIRST-GENERATION

According to the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), "the concept of first-generation students was introduced into federal policy by the TRIO community in 1980 (http://www.coenet.org/)." In a 1998 report entitled, "First-Generation Students: Undergraduates Whose Parents Never Enrolled in Postsecondary Education," the National Center for Educational Statistics defined a first-gen college student as one whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma or less. However, a recent literature review indicates that the definition of first-gen often varies among institutions. With an increased focus on first-gen students, it is essential to establish an operational definition. Peralta and Klonowski (2017) reviewed the literature related to first-gen college students and defined a first-gen college student as "an individual who is pursuing a higher education degree and whose parents or guardians do not have a postsecondary degree" (p. 635). This definition is used in this study.

## FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT CHALLENGES

Prior research by Stebleton and Soria (2018) indicates that first-gen college students are more likely than non-first-gen students to possess additional factors (e.g., lower socioeconomic status, lower test scores, lack of familial support) that may disadvantage their pursuit of a college education. NASPA and the Suder Foundation established an online resource center focused exclusively on first-gen students: Center for First-Generation Student Success (http://firstgen.naspa.org). This Center assists college and university leaders in meeting the unique needs of first-gen students. As stated on the Center's website, its mission is to serve as "the premier source of evidence-based practices, professional development, and knowledge creation for the higher education community to advance the success of first-generation students."

Additionally, the COE collaborated with NASPA's Center for First-Generation Student Success and launched the inaugural National First-Generation Celebration on November 8, 2017. Because of this initiative's success in 2017 and 2018, there are plans in place to make this an annual event. A Google search of "first-generation week" shows that many institutions now choose to celebrate and focus more on first-gen students. The creation of the NASPA Center for First-Generation Student Success and an increase in first-gen student initiatives across the country indicate that higher education leadership has a vested interest in retaining first-gen students.

# LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Previous research has determined that Living Learning Communities (LLCs) or Residential Learning Communities (RLCs) on college campuses have a positive effect on students' success, especially among first-year students (Zhao & Kuh, 2004). Additionally, students participating in such communities were more likely to persist in college (Tinto & Goodsell, 1993), were more engaged overall, and showed greater gains in intellectual and social development (Shapiro & Levine, 1999) when compared to their peers who were not involved in an LLC. There is also evidence that participation in LLCs leads students to feel more connected to the college or university (Pike, 1999; Inkelas et al., 2007; Wawrzynski & Jessup-Anger, 2010; Flynn, Everett, & Whittinghill, 2016).

Further, Means and Pyne (2017) found that community building within residence halls enhanced a sense of belonging among first-generation first-year students. This sense of belonging from the residence halls was also critical for participants who typically avoided social relationships. Museus, Yi, and Saelua (2017) found that future research is needed to "shed light on how living conditions (living on campus, near campus, or at home) might shape how students experience culturally engaging environments and how these environments impact outcomes such as sense of belonging" (p. 210). While there is evidence that living in residence halls can increase the sense of belonging among first-year students, there is a gap in the research on whether participation in LLCs is a predictor of sense of belonging among students in their first semester of college.

# CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Similarly, research has also shown that involvement in campus clubs or organizations can positively affect the college student experience. Astin (1993) found that the amount of time spent participating in campus clubs or organizations was positively correlated with students' public speaking ability, leadership abilities, and interpersonal skills. Research by Cooper, Heally, and Simpson (1994) found that first-year students who join student organizations have a stronger sense of purpose than their peers who do not join student clubs or organizations. Foubert and Granger (2006) found that involvement in student organizations was positively associated with students' psychosocial development in the following areas: clarifying purpose, educational involvement, career planning, life management, and cultural participation.

Moreover, Strayhorn (2018) argues that college students' sense of belonging is related to their involvement on campus. A review of four previous studies he was involved in found that students frequently involved in meaningful college activities report a stronger sense of belonging. Specifically, "students who were involved in campus clubs, organizations, and committees tended to have a greater sense of belonging in college than their peers who were not involved in clubs or were involved less frequently" (p. 147). Limited research exists examining the impact of campus involvement on sense of belonging, specifically among first-year students in the first semester.

# RESEARCH PURPOSE

This study aimed to investigate whether first-gen status, housing situation, and campus club involvement impact sense of belonging among first-year college students. There was one research question for this study: Do the variables of 1) first-generation status, 2) living in a living-learning community (LLC), and 3) campus club involvement have a significant relationship with the sense of belonging levels among first-year college students in their first semester? The dependent variables were students' average scores on each of the four subscales of the Sense of Belonging Scale (SBS, Hoffman et al., 2002).

# METHOD

### Design

This study was a quantitative, non-experimental design that examined information collected through an online student survey. Potential limitations of survey research include: 1) a low response rate means low validity, 2)

response bias (e.g., social desirability bias), and 3) survey fatigue or nonresponse among participants negatively affect data collection (Robinson & Leonard, 2019). The survey in this study was created in QuestionPro, the university's online survey tool, and included the revised SBS items and demographic questions. Statistical analyses were conducted with SPSS.

## Participants

Participants in this study were selected through convenience sampling of the incoming fall 2019 freshman class at a large public research institution in the southeastern part of the United States. The total number of undergraduates enrolled at this institution during the 2019-2020 academic year was over 20,000, with around 5,000 students designated first-year students.

Most first-year students enrolled at this institution during this academic year were enrolled in an online, zero-credit first-year seminar class. The researchers used this course roll to identify potential participants for this study. Based on a sample size table by Johnson and Christensen (2016), the recommended sample size for a population of 5,000 is 357 and 361 for 6,000. Therefore, the target sample size for this study was roughly 358 participants.

To obtain an adequate sample size, all students (approximately 5,000) enrolled in the first-year seminar received an email invitation to complete the online survey. There was no incentive offered for participation. A total of 434 students completed the survey. Of these respondents, 103 (24.3%) identified as first-gen, 137 (32%) indicated they lived on-campus in an LLC, and 308 (71%) indicated they participated in at least one campus club/organization. The majority of respondents (66%) identified as female, and 34% as male. Additionally, most respondents (78%) reported their residency classification as in-state compared to 22% out-of-state. The racial/ethnic demographics of participants included 1) White: 79%, 2) Black or African American: 7%, 3) Asian: 5%, 4) Multiple races: 3%, 4) American - Indian or Alaskan Native: 2%, 5) Other race: 2%, 6) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 1%, and 7) Prefer not to answer: 1%.

## Measures

The first part of the survey focused on measuring sense of belonging, which was done with the SBS (Hoffman et al., 2002). This scale consists of 26 total items and measures sense of belonging on four different subscales: 1) perceived peer support (8 items), 2) perceived classroom support (4 items), 3) perceived isolation (4 items), and 4) perceived faculty support (10 items). The SBS is scored using a fully anchored, five-point scale. Sample items from each scale include 1) I have met with classmates outside of class to study for an exam. (perceived peer support), 2) I feel comfortable contributing to class discussions (perceived classroom comfort), 3) I rarely talk to other students in my class (perceived isolation), and 4) I feel comfortable talking about a problem with faculty (perceived faculty support). The SBS has been widely used to measure sense of belonging and has good reliability and validity.

Part II of the survey focused on demographic questions, including first-gen status, first-semester housing situation, and campus club involvement. The survey included an operational definition of first-gen, and participants were asked to either identify as first-gen or non-first-gen. For housing situation, respondents were asked to choose one of the following options: 1) on-campus in a traditional residence hall, 2) on-campus in an LLC, 3) off-campus alone, 4) off-campus with roommates, 5) off-campus with parents, or 6) off-campus with other family members. Those who selected an on-campus option received a follow-up question asking which type of dorm room they lived in (traditional or suite-style) and the number of roommates. If respondents selected the off-campus option, they received follow-up questions about the number of people they live with and their commute time to campus. For campus club involvement, participants were also asked to select the types of clubs/organizations in which they were involved. Options for clubs/organizations included 1) arts, 2) athletics, 3) club or intramural sports, 4) ethnic or cultural, 5) Greek Life, 6) political, 7) religious, 8) other, 9) none, and 10) prefer not to answer; respondents were asked to select all that applied to them. Answers to this question were then used to create a total score for campus involvement.

## Procedure

After IRB approval, participants were emailed a link to an anonymous survey via their university email addresses during the first week of November 2019. This time was chosen because it was near the end of the semester after students have had time to make connections during their first semester, but before end-of-semester course evaluations were sent to all students.

Upon clicking the link to the survey, participants were first presented with a consent form, at which point they had the option to continue or exit the survey. The consent form addressed the following: 1) potential risks, 2) the amount of time expected to complete the survey, 3) a reminder that participants' responses are anonymous, and 4) to clarify that participants have the option of discontinuing the survey at any time once they begin. The next portion of the survey focused on measuring students' sense of belonging using the SBS, followed by first-gen status, housing situation questions, level of campus club involvement, and additional demographic questions. The final page of the survey thanked participants for their participation and included the researcher's contact information should they have any follow-up questions.

**Data Analysis**

Survey results were exported from QuestionPro into a Microsoft Excel workbook to organize data for statistical analyses. All data were cleaned before conducting analyses of the survey results, as Morrow (2017) recommends. Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions were used to identify missing data and to summarize the demographic data. Missing data appeared to be non-random and the result of a few participants skipping questions. Because the amount of missing data was less than 5% (Morrow, 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2018), responses with missing data were excluded from the regression analyses. After the data cleaning process was completed, data were analyzed using SPSS. Regression analyses were conducted for each dependent variable to test the hypotheses. The null hypothesis states that none of these variables are a predictor of sense of belonging, while the alternative hypothesis states that at least one of these variables is a significant predictor of sense of belonging.

# RESULTS

Standard multiple regression analyses were conducted to test if first-gen status (no, yes; coded as 0,1), living in an LLC (no, yes; coded as 0,1), and campus club involvement (continuous) significantly predicted sense of belonging (DV) among first-year college students in their first semester. Other independent variables such as race and off-campus living arrangement were excluded from the analysis due to a small sample size among the different sub-groups. Most participants identified as White (n=368), and most reported they lived on-campus (n=398). Four distinct types of sense of belonging were measured and utilized as dependent variables: 1) average perceived peer support, 2) average perceived classroom comfort, 3) average perceived isolation, and 4) average perceived faculty support. Table 1 shows the multiple regression results indicating the effect of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement on all four of the sense of belonging dependent variables. Following the table, findings for each sense of belonging variable are discussed in more detail.

*Table 1*
**Multiple Regression Results**

| | R | Adj R2 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DV: Perceived Peer Support** | 0.23 | 0.05 | | | | |
| **IV** | | | **B** | **ß** | **sri2** | **Sig.** |
| First–gen status | | | 0.038 | 0.015 | 0.010 | 0.758 |
| Living in an LLC | | | 0.284 | 0.122 | 0.014 | 0.012 |
| Campus club involvement | | | 0.206 | 0.180 | 0.030 | 0.001 |
| **DV: Perceived Classroom Comfort** | 0.20 | 0.03 | | | | |
| First–gen status | | | –0.139 | | 0.002 | 0.283 |
| Living in an LLC | | | 0.224 | 0.090 | 0.008 | 0.063 |
| Campus club involvement | | | 0.184 | 0.151 | 0.022 | 0.002 |
| **DV: Perceived Isolation** | 0.22 | 0.04 | | | | |
| First–gen status | | | 0.035 | 0.015 | 0.000 | 0.760 |
| Living in an LLC | | | –0.198 | –0.089 | 0.008 | 0.067 |
| Campus club involvement | | | –0.207 | –0.189 | 0.035 | 0.001 |
| **DV: Perceived Faculty Support** | 0.15 | 0.14 | | | | |
| First–gen status | | | –0.036 | –0.019 | 0.000 | 0.692 |
| Living in an LLC | | | 0.064 | 0.038 | 0.001 | 0.442 |
| Campus club involvement | | | 0.110 | 0.132 | 0.017 | 0.008 |

### Perceived Peer Support

A standard multiple regression was performed in SPSS using first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement as IVs and students' average perceived peer support scores as the DV. The f-test for the standard multiple regression, $F(3,412) = 7.687$, $p < .001$, $R = .23$ and *Adj. $R^2$* = .05 revealed that the R was significantly different from zero. Thus, the combination of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement significantly predicted perceived peer support among first-semester students. Examining the IVs in the regression model revealed that living in an LLC ($ß = .122$, $sri^2 = .002$) and being involved with campus clubs ($ß = .180$, $sri^2 = .030$) are significant predictors of perceived peer support, however, first-gen status ($ß = .015$, $sri^2 = .010$) is not a significant predictor. Therefore, students living in LLCs and those more involved in campus clubs are predicted to have a higher level of perceived peer support than those who do not live in LLCs or are not involved in campus clubs. Overall, the IVs tested accounted for 5% of the variance in students' perceived peer support.

### Perceived Classroom Comfort

A standard multiple regression was performed in SPSS using first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement as IVs and students' average perceived classroom comfort scores as the DV. The f-test for the standard multiple regression, $F(3,418) = 5.743$, $p < .001$, $R = .20$ and *Adj. $R^2$* = .03 revealed that the $R$ was significantly different from zero. Thus, the combination of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement significantly predicted perceived classroom comfort among first-semester students. Examining the IVs in the regression model revealed that campus club involvement ($ß = .151$, $sri^2 = .022$) is a significant predictor of perceived classroom comfort, however, first-gen status ($ß = -.052$, $sri^2 = .003$) and living in an LLC ($ß = .090$, $sri^2 = .008$) are not significant predictors. In other words, students more involved in campus clubs are predicted to have a higher level of perceived classroom comfort than those not involved in campus clubs.

### Perceived Isolation

A standard multiple regression was performed in SPSS using first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement as IV. Respondents' average perceived isolation score represented the DV. The f-test for the standard multiple regression, $F(3,415) = 7.250$, $p < .001$, $R = .22$ and *Adj. $R^2$* = .04 revealed that the $R$ was significantly different from zero. Thus, the combination of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement significantly predicted perceived isolation among first-semester students. Examining the IVs in the regression model revealed that more campus club involvement ($ß = -.189$, $sri^2 = .035$) is a significant predictor of perceived isolation, however, first-gen status ($ß = .015$, $sri^2 < .001$) and living in an LLC ($ß = -.089$, $sri^2 2 = .008$) are not significant predictors. Thus, students more involved in campus clubs are predicted to have lower perceived isolation than those who are not involved in campus clubs.

### Perceived Faculty Support

A standard multiple regression was performed in SPSS using first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement as IVs and students' average perceived faculty support scores as the DV. The f-test for the standard multiple regression, $F(3,418) = 3.027$, $p = .029$, $R = .15$ and *Adj. $R^2$* = .014 revealed that the $R$ was significantly different from zero. Thus, the combination of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement significantly predicted perceived faculty support among first-semester students. Examining the IVs in the regression model revealed that campus club involvement ($ß = .110$, $sri^2 = .017$) is a significant predictor of perceived faculty support, however, first-gen status ($ß = -.019$, $sri^2 < .001$) and living in an LLC ($ß = .038$, $sri^2 = .001$) are not significant predictors. Therefore, students involved in campus clubs are predicted to have a higher perceived faculty support level than those not involved in campus clubs.

# DISCUSSION

### Summary of Results

This study explored the impact of first-gen status, living in an LLC, and campus club involvement on first-year students' sense of belonging in their first semester of college. Sense of belonging was measured using the SBS

(Hoffman et al., 2002), which has four subscales: perceived peer support, perceived classroom comfort, perceived isolation, and perceived faculty support. Results confirmed the hypothesis that at least one of the independent variables would predict a sense of belonging among first-year students in their first semester. In this case, campus club involvement was the one variable that predicted a sense of belonging as measured by all four subscales of the SBS. Additionally, living in an LLC predicted first-year students' level of perceived peer support. However, living in an LLC was not found to predict first-year students' perceived classroom comfort, perceived isolation, or perceived faculty support. First-gen status did not predict first-year students' sense of belonging on any of the subscales used to measure it. This study supports previous research (Strayhorn, 2018; Gillen-O'Neel, 2019) that campus involvement or engagement influences students' sense of belonging. The link found between perceived peer support and living in an LLC supports previous research findings that students living in an LLC report a greater sense of belonging than non-LLC students (Spanierman et al., 2013; Johnson et al., 2020; Flynn et al., 2016).

### Limitations

The primary limitation of this study is that the sample was obtained from a predominately White institution (PWI). Most respondents identified as White, so generalizations are limited to similar samples of participants. A more diverse sample is needed to fully understand the interrelationships among these variables. Because this study used a quantitative scale to measure sense of belonging, it was not possible to get a richer understanding of these interrelationships. In addition, only 24% of students in the sample identified as first-gen, so studies with a larger sample size might find that first-gen status is a predictor of first-year students' sense of belonging. Campus type and size are also possible limitations to this study. Predictors of sense of belonging might look different at smaller, private campuses or community college campuses.

### Implications

The results of this study serve as a reminder of how important it is for first-year students to get involved on campus during their first semester in college. Getting involved early promotes a sense of belonging among students, potentially increasing their likelihood of being retained. Not only does campus involvement result in a stronger sense of belonging among students (Strayhorn, 2018), it also has positive effects on students' leadership and interpersonal skills (Astin, 1993), their sense of purpose (Cooper et al., 1994), and their psychosocial development (Foubert & Grainger, 2006). For instance, students with higher levels of involvement in student organizations reported greater psychosocial development in establishing and clarifying purpose, educational involvement, career planning, life management, and cultural participation (Foubert & Grainger, 2006).

In addition to promoting involvement in campus clubs and organizations during New Student Orientation sessions and Welcome Week activities, one idea to encourage campus involvement among first-year students is to consider incorporating it as a requirement or extra credit in first-year seminar courses or other general education core classes required of all students. Additionally, student affairs administrators in functional areas such as housing, admissions, new student orientation, campus life, academic advising, and academic coaching should consider promoting campus clubs and LLCs in materials for prospective first-year students and through conversations with new students and parents. Since social media is a common way for universities to promote campus activities and events, it is important that administrators post campus involvement opportunities on the social platforms that are popular with incoming students at the time. Students could be asked about their preferred platform during orientation registration, check-in, or during orientation sessions about campus involvement. Other ways to promote campus involvement opportunities might involve including a statement on the course syllabus referring students to a campus clubs/organizations website or posting an announcement on the campus learning management system during the first couple of weeks of classes. Ongoing assessments of campus clubs and organizations are also essential as they can provide insight into why students join in the first place, why they stay involved, and why they leave.

### Future Research

Qualitative or mixed-method studies that explore the extent to which students are involved in campus clubs could provide additional insight and richer context into this area of research. For example, focus groups or interviews with first-semester students offer the opportunity to ask more details about the level of involvement,

including follow-up questions for clarification, if needed. Research on understanding which types of campus activities, including club types and level of involvement, are most beneficial to students' sense of belonging is also warranted. Perhaps the overarching question for future research is what is it about being involved on campus that influences students' sense of belonging?

# CONCLUSION

Campus club involvement is a predictor of a sense of belonging among first-year students in their first semester of college. Living in an LLC also predicts students' perceived peer support among first-year students. First-gen status does not predict sense of belonging among first-year students in the first semester. This study provides insight into how student affairs professionals in housing, admissions, orientation, academic advising, and academic coaching could promote a sense of belonging among first-year students, leading to greater retention rates. Ongoing research is needed to determine what other factors might also impact students' sense of belonging in their first college semester and if these factors impact their sense of belonging over time.

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# CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES AS IDENTIFIED BY MEMBERS OF MEN'S COLLEGE SOCIAL FRATERNITIES

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*This study sought to examine curricular and co-curricular activities associated with organizational values and their contribution to a holistic development process for fraternity men. Few previous studies have focused on this relationship for social fraternities. 423 undergraduate fraternity members examined the identification of curricular and co-curricular activities that were associated with their fraternity's values. This study examined the espoused and enacted values that fraternity members associate with curricular and co-curricular activities. Values were examined using four universal themes (openness to change, self-transcendence, conservation, and self-enhancement). A discussion is included based on findings related to values and associated activities. Implications for greater emphasis on values development through curricular and co-curricular activities and recommendations for further research, particularly for the openness to change value type, are included.*

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The current literature review includes previous research in several areas pertinent to the study. These include men's college social fraternities, curricular and co-curricular activities, universal and fraternal values, and the connection between these two bodies of literature. Previous literature has informed our study, helped in identifying a framework for analysis, and was important for the design of our methodology.

### Men's College Social Fraternities

Men's college social fraternities in North America trace their earliest beginnings with the chartering of Phi Beta Kappa at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA in 1776 (Chandler, 2014; DeSantis, 2007). Phi Beta Kappa was founded as a Greek letter society recognized as the most prestigious society for scholarly excellence in the liberal arts and sciences in the United States (Phi Beta Kappa, 2022). The Kappa Alpha Society was founded next at Union College in Schenectady, NY, on November 25, 1825 (Chandler, 2014; Syrett, 2009). The Kappa Alpha Society is known for being what most resembles today's men's college social fraternities. It later spread to other college and university campuses, primarily in the northeastern United States in the early to mid-1800s.

The earliest men's fraternities gathered as select groups with an educational focus, many as literary societies. It was believed there needed to be an educational reason for students to gather (Syrett, 2009). While the motives

appeared pure and educational purposes for gathering were noble for these college men, "as high-minded as they inspired to be, these groups were also segregated institutions, reserved only for wealthy, white, Christian men." (DeSantis, 2007, p. 4). Men's college social fraternities have been known for positive aspects such as offering supportive communities, opportunities for personal development, friendships that extend beyond college, as well as professional networks (North American Interfraternity Conference, 2022; Syrett, 2009). The tension between the academic and social pursuits of fraternity men has existed since their founding, and continues to be a focus for those who advise them. Fraternity culture overtaking the educational mission was often a concern at Williams College before fraternities were ultimately eliminated in the 1960s (Chandler, 2014).

Men's college social fraternities have seen their memberships ebb and flow over the years, with growth experienced in significant ways after World War II and with greater college enrollment of men in the successive decades (DeSantis, 2007). Fraternities have continued to exist to foster community and develop personal and group-level values among their members (North American Interfraternity Conference, 2022b). While current membership for fraternities is not fully known, in 2021, "there [were] an estimated 750,000 fraternity and sorority members in college and more than nine million alumni in the United States. Membership ranges from less than 5 percent on some campuses to more than 50 percent on others" (Barshay, 2021, para. 7). Research on fraternity members, particularly their development around values and positive outcomes, has not often been explored from an inside view. Research from an insider perspective would add to the literature on fraternity members around these themes (DeSantis, 2007).

**Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities**

Contemporary colleges and universities organize their programs and services along two primary lines (curricular and co-curricular). At many institutions, these would fall under academic affairs and student affairs, each engaged in inside-the-classroom and outside-of-the-classroom activities, respectively. An intertwining between the two dichotomies has been extolled as having relevance beyond a student's time in college (American College Personnel Association, 1994). The intertwining of curricular and co-curricular activities has been described as "establishing coherence among learning experiences within and beyond the classroom" (American Association of Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, & National Association of Personnel Administrators, 1998, p. 2). This can contribute to greater personal development and improve the overall experience for members of men's social fraternities (American Association of Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, & National Association of Personnel Administrators).

Fraternity membership allows college men opportunities to make valuable connections between their individual and organizational values through curricular and co-curricular experiences. This is true for upper-class students who have described deeper learning compared to underclass students who have described more surface-level learning (Kimber, et al., 1999; Leets & Matthews, 2010). The level of commitment to values also plays an important part in the learning process. Those with lower levels have shown a preference for surface-level learning, while others with higher levels have preferred deeper learning (Matthews, 2004). Direct relationships between adopting specific personal values and learning strategies have also been found (Ismail, 2016).

Meaningful connections have emerged between curricular and co-curricular activities with regard to learning and student development for college students. The integration of these activities has been promoted as even more important to the learning and student development processes (Tinto, 1993; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2009). The connection between civic values and curricular/co-curricular activities has been the focus of much previous research (Lott, 2013; Pascarella, et al., 1988; Rhee & Dye, 1996). This has strong potential for the holistic development of college students, where important connections can be made between activities that support student success (Tinto, 1993; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2009). The impact on the development of civic values has been examined through the use of grades, leadership experiences, and interactions with faculty and staff (Pascarella, et al. 1988).

**Universal and Fraternal Values**

Values have been described in the literature as "beliefs…[that] refer to desirable goals… transcend specific actions

and situations…[and] serve as standards or criteria," (Schwartz, 2012, p. 4). Many values have been identified as directing our activities, particularly those we deem important (Schwartz, 2012). Values have been identified universally over time and have been categorized into four major types with several sub-types that include the following: "self-enhancement (achievement, power), openness to change (hedonism, stimulation, self-direction), conservation (security, conformity, tradition), self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence)," (Schwartz, 2012, p. 13). The Schwartz Model, including those values types and sub-types identified above, "portrays the total pattern of relations of conflict and congruity among values," (2012, p. 8); these are displayed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.**
*Values Themes (Schwartz, 2012, pp. 9-10)*

| Theme | Values |
|---|---|
| Self-Enhancement | Power and Achievement<br>Achievement and Hedonism |
| Openness to Change | Hedonism and Stimulation<br>Stimulation and Self-Direction<br>Self-Direction and Universalism |
| Self-Transcendence | Universalism and Benevolence<br>Benevolence and Tradition<br>Benevolence and Conformity |
| Conservation | Conformity and Tradition<br>Tradition and Security<br>Conformity and Security<br>Security and Power |

While a universal set of values have been identified, the prominence placed on each by individuals and groups varies based on the relative priorities assigned to them. This prominence, either by individuals or groups, has been identified as going beyond specific situations (Gau & James, 2014)

Fraternal values have been promoted as important "in recruitment activities, the new member education process, and the membership experience" (Matney, et al., 2016, p. 224). An integration or values adoption process for fraternity members is important for subscribing to new values systems. A three-phase process has been outlined that includes: "(a) separation from the past, (b) transition, in which the individual begins to interact with new setting[s] and people, and (c) incorporation in which the individual adopts the norms and expectations of the new group," (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2009, p. 414).

Upon becoming a member of a fraternity, college men have increased opportunities to make critical connections between their personal and organizational values, which are more universal (Tull & Cavins-Tull, 2017). Identification of these values will assist in their ability to make important decisions on all levels (Schutts & Shelly, 2014) and have a greater impact on overall development (Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 2018). A fraternity member's ability to develop a values congruence framework can be important in many aspects beyond graduation (Schutts & Shelly).

**Connecting Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities with Universal and Fraternal Values**

Little research has been conducted on the connection between curricular and co-curricular activities and values for college students in higher education. What does exist frames most around educational outcomes of these forms of learning and development. Research examining the connection between curricular and co-curricular activities and values for members of men's college social fraternities is even more rare. One study that examined a cross-section of 276 first-year and graduating students at a mid-sized university in the Midwest found that first-year students and women identified curricular activities as more important to their development, while

graduating and male students identified co-curricular activities as more important (Pearson & Bruess, 2001).

Membership in fraternities has been found to positively impact engagement and performance in curricular and co-curricular activities (Asel, Seifert, & Pascarella, 2009; Hayek, et al., 2002; Tull & Cavins-Tull, 2017; Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). A descriptive qualitative study with 15 universities in the Southeast, "revealed the respondents did experience gains related to the espoused values of scholarship, leadership, service, and friendship" (Long, 2012, p. 15). The study recommended continued class preparation, development of study habits, and a focus on career-oriented activities as connectors between curricular and co-curricular activities and their values. An extensive quantitative study of 4,193 seniors from 17 institutions "found no statistically significant general effects when examining the outcomes of critical thinking, moral reasoning, need for cognition, positive attitude toward literacy activities and psychological well-being for students affiliated with fraternities and sororities," (Hevel, et al., 2015, p. 467).

This study is different from others that have been conducted on fraternity men related to values (Long, 2012; Matthews, et al., 2009; Matney, et al., 2016; Schutts & Shelley, 2014), in that it seeks to explore the connection between values and other activities (curricular and co-curricular) outside of one's membership in a fraternity. This was seen as important by the authors, as it placed both espousal and enactment of values in more universal contexts. This was informed by the work of Schwartz (2012), as previously identified. Universal values theory (Schwartz) also was used as a framework for data gathering and analysis. The selection of this framework has important implications as it allows for identifying ongoing development and practice opportunities for values beyond the college-going years for fraternity men.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND QUESTIONS

The present study used qualitative research techniques to collect and analyze data. Qualitative data has been described "in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers," (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006, p. 431). Specifically, data used for the study were in the form of written comments from a survey asking members to identify curricular and co-curricular activities that they associated with their fraternity's values. Text-based data in response to open-ended survey questions and narrative responses have been identified as qualitative data sources (Kendrick & Wellman, 2002). Qualitative techniques have been regularly used in examining fraternity men (Alexander, 2020; Harris & Harper, 2014; Garcia, 2020). The research methodology in this study was inductive analysis, where researchers were most concerned with how detailed information can be classified into categories (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). This has been further described as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

Several research questions were developed after a review of the literature related to values, fraternal values, and their connections to curricular and co-curricular activities. Research questions for the present study included the following:

1. How do fraternity members describe curricular activities associated with the four themes of the Schwartz Values Theory of Basic Values?
2. How do fraternity members describe co-curricular activities associated with the four themes of the Schwartz Values Theory of Basic Values?
3. How do fraternity members describe curricular and co-curricular activities associated with the main goals of each of the four values themes?

## METHODS

### Participants

Participants in the study were from an accessible and convenient population of fraternity members (from universities and fraternities) located close to the researcher's home institutions. A total of 423 undergraduate fraternity members participated in the study. These members were affiliated with 15 chapters from 11 different national fraternities hosted on four university campuses. All campuses are located in the Southwest region of the United States.

Each fraternity chapter and university was not identified and, as such, have been assigned pseudonyms. Participant numbers for each fraternity and university that participated in the study are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.**
*Universities, National Fraternities, and Number of Participating Members*

| University/Fraternity | Number of Members |
| --- | --- |
| University A | Total 100 |
|     Alpha Fraternity | 25 |
|     Beta Fraternity | 32 |
|     Gamma Fraternity | 43 |
| University B | Total 176 |
|     Delta Fraternity | 22 |
|     Epsilon Fraternity | 44 |
|     Theta Fraternity | 51 |
|     Gamma Fraternity | 59 |
| University C | Total 93 |
|     Zeta Fraternity | 23 |
|     Eta Fraternity | 24 |
|     Iota Fraternity | 18 |
|     Kappa Fraternity | 28 |
| University D | Total 55 |
|     Epsilon Fraternity | 4 |
|     Eta Fraternity | 24 |
|     Zeta Fraternity | 24 |
|     Lambda Fraternity | 3 |

University A is a mid-sized religiously affiliated private university, where approximately 50% of male students are affiliated with 10 men's social fraternities. University B is a mid-sized religiously affiliated private university, where approximately 50% of male students are affiliated with 13 men's social fraternities. University C is a large-sized public state university, where less than 5% of male students are affiliated with 10 men's social fraternities. University D is a mid-sized regional state university, where 3% of male students are affiliated with five men's social fraternities.

**Measures**

Two survey versions were used by participants in the present study. Participants completed only one version each. The first version (The Values Recall Survey) asked participants to recall each of the values for their fraternities from memory by listing them in a column on the left-hand side of the survey. The second version (The Values Recognition Survey) asked participants to recognize (from a list provided of all fraternities' values included in the study) the values for their fraternities by listing them in a column on the left side of the survey. The number of values differed for each fraternity, with the lowest having three and the highest having seven values. Through free responses, both survey versions then asked participants to identify one curricular and one co-curricular activity that they associated with each value listed on the left side of their survey.

**Procedures**

Researchers contacted fraternity members at chapter meetings of fraternities in person. Researchers provided instructions from a prepared consent form used at all survey locations and administrations. Members of the research team personally collected data through paper surveys distributed at chapter meetings of the 15 fraternities. Only members formally initiated into their fraternity were asked to participate. This was because they had completed a new member program and would have had ample opportunities to learn their fraternity's values.

The researchers described all appropriate research protocols, including informed consent and voluntary participation, as part of the process. No incentives were provided as part of the study. The method of consent and the survey were through paper copies signed and completed by fraternity members. All participants were notified that they, their fraternity, and their host university would remain anonymous in the study. All data collected for the study has been maintained under strict standards to protect confidentiality. Identifiers were created, as described above, to mask both the fraternities and universities participating in the study.

**Data Analysis**

In response to research question one (How do fraternity members describe curricular activities associated with the four themes of the Schwartz Values Theory of Basic Values?), researchers organized all written free responses into a database grouped by each value theme within each fraternity. To aid this process, researchers used previous research (Tull & Shaw, 2018) to create a framework for analysis, which examined the alignment of fraternity values with Schwartz's values themes (e. g., "tradition" was classified as a value related to conservation). In the Tull & Shaw study, values for each fraternity were classified under one of the four themes associated with the Schwartz Values Theory of Basic Values (2012). For example, "under openness to change included: self-support, integrity, wisdom, perseverance, and authenticity" (Tull & Shaw, 2018, p. 5). This same inductive analysis was again conducted in response to research question two (How do fraternity members describe co-curricular activities associated with the four themes of the Schwartz Values Theory of Basic Values?). In some cases, fraternity members classified similar curricular and co-curricular activities for multiple values. This characteristic of qualitative research is hard to control, as researchers focus on the meaning that participants communicate vs. their own (Creswell, 2014).

# RESULTS

In response to research questions one and two, study results are organized below for each of the four values types and by curricular and co-curricular activities identified by fraternity members who participated. In response to research question three, results related to an analysis of curricular and co-curricular activities related to the main goals for the type of each value identified by fraternity members were included.

**Conservation**

*Curricular Activities.* 34 themes emerged for curricular activities for conservation. Five nascent values included: academic honesty, group projects, lending academic support to others, putting forth an honest effort, and respecting and engaging with professors. These themes are explained below, with examples of activities provided by fraternity members. Academic honesty examples included: following the honor code, and doing honest work. Group work examples included: commitment to team in group projects, and development of appropriate study groups. Activities framed as lending academic support to others included: helping friends achieve their goals, and helping brothers prep for exams. Putting forth an honest effort activities included: dedication to studies, doing your best, doing your share, and having high moral standards. Respecting and engaging with professors' activities included: paying attention to teachers, and meeting with teachers.

*Co-Curricular Activities.* 28 themes emerged for co-curricular activities for conservation. Six nascent values included: athletics and intramurals, community service, fraternity membership and activities, friendships and relationships, leadership roles in the fraternity chapter, and participation in student organizations. These themes are explained below, with examples of activities provided by fraternity members. Athletics and intramurals activities included: athletics teams, and fraternity/high school sports. Community service activities included: commitment to community, and working with charities. Fraternity membership and activities responses included: care for fraternity brothers' well-being, and brotherhood events. Friendship and relationships activities included: maintaining friendships and relationships. Leadership roles in the fraternity chapter activities included: serving as a member of the executive board. Participation in student organizations activities included: student ambassadors, conduct board, orientation leader, student government, and campus ministries.

**Self-Enhancement**

*Curricular Activities.* 35 themes emerged for curricular activities for self-enhancement. Four nascent values included: coursework, group projects, non-academic student organizations, and putting in an honest effort. Coursework activities included: participation in classes, and studying. Group projects activities included: taking leadership in a group or lab project, and study groups. Non-academic student organizations activities included: ROTC, band, orientation leaders, and student government. Putting forth an honest effort activities included: competitiveness in school, continuing education, respect and overall wellness, and scholarship.

*Co-Curricular Activities.* 29 themes emerged for co-curricular-related activities for self-enhancement. Four nascent values included: athletics and intramurals, leadership roles in the fraternity chapter, and personal development. Athletics and intramurals activities included: being leading an intramural team, and being fitness enthusiasts. Fraternity membership and activities included: conversations about brother's interests. Leadership roles in the fraternity chapter activities included: being active in an executive position, serving as an IFC delegate, and taking charge of a fraternity event. Personal development activities included: being able to lead people, excellence, outside reading, travel, and continuing education.

**Self-Transcendence**

*Curricular Activities.* 35 themes emerged for curricular-related activities for self-transcendence. Eight nascent values included: academic honesty, community service, completing homework, going to class, group projects, making new connections, philanthropy, and putting forth an honest effort. Academic honesty activities included: being truthful, following a code of conduct, and holding high academic standards. Community service activities included: doing service at preschool, food bank, and volunteering on own time. Completing homework activities included: completing assignments on time. Going to class activities included: never missing classes. Group projects activities included: being accountable in group work, and leading group projects and discussions. Making new connections activities included: forming study groups, and getting to know classmates. Philanthropy activities included: charity, and raising money. Putting forth an honest effort activities included: asking others for help, taking pride in performance, and being organized.

*Co-Curricular Activities.* 29 themes emerged for co-curricular-related activities for self-transcendence. Seven nascent values included: athletics and intramurals, community service, fraternity membership and activities, friendships and relationships, personal development, sense of responsibility, and working. Athletics and intramurals activities included: captaining a team, team building activities, and sportsmanship. Community service activities included: doing service with the fraternity. Fraternity membership and activities included: brotherhood events and fraternity team building. Friendships and relationships activities included: being accountable as a friend, and doing nice things for others. Personal development activities included: being open in any setting, becoming a better person, being bold, making mistakes, and self-evaluation. Sense of responsibility activities included: duty to family and friends, and following the code of conduct. Working activities included: being a good adult at work and performing duties for my job.

**Openness to Change**

*Curricular Activities.* 35 themes emerged for curricular-related activities for openness to change. One nascent value included: putting forth an honest effort. Putting forth an honest effort activities included: doing good in school, doing things that make me uncomfortable, and pushing oneself.

*Co-Curricular Activities.* 29 themes emerged for co-curricular related activities for openness to change. Two nascent values included: fraternity membership and activities and personal development. Fraternity membership and activities included: on-campus events, and study hours. Personal development activities included: being myself, getting out of my comfort zone, and learning from mistakes.

**Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Associated with Goals of Values Types**

After a review of the identified curricular and co-curricular activities associated with each value above, we re-

turned to Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values to examine how the curricular and co-curricular activities identified by fraternity members were aligned with the main goals of each values type. What follows are results from our examination of research question number three. Three goals exist for the conservation values type (security, conformity, and tradition).

*Security.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included following the honor code, and doing honest work. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included holding brotherhood retreats, caring for fraternity brothers' well-being, and trusting one another.

*Conformity.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included following the honor code. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included acting in an upstanding manner, serving on the fraternity's judicial or standards board, participation in student government, and campus ministries.

*Tradition.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included following the honor code. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included commitment to community, and campus ministries.

Three goals exist for the self-enhancement values type (hedonism, achievement, and power).

*Hedonism.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included being competitive in school. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included competitiveness in intramurals, and achieving excellence.

*Achievement.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included being named to the honor roll. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included holding and carrying out an executive leadership role, and continuing education.

*Power.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included taking leadership roles in a group or lab. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included being a club sports or intramural team leader, and holding chair positions within the fraternity.

Two goals exist for the self-transcendence values type (benevolence and universalism).

*Benevolence.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included following the academic honor code, being accountable in group work, and taking pride in performance. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included teambuilding activities, spending time with fraternity members, duty to friends and family, and being open in any setting.

*Universalism.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included: holding high academic standards, and being accountable in group work. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included doing service with church, and doing things for others.

Three goals exist for the openness to change values type: self-direction, stimulation, and hedonism.

*Self-direction.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included: doing things that make one uncomfortable and pushing oneself. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included: being oneself, exploring learning, getting out of one's comfort zone, learning from mistakes, and working hard through tough times.

*Stimulation.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included doing things that make one uncomfortable and pushing oneself. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included reading, travel, working through tough times, and learning through mistakes.

*Hedonism.* Curricular activities aligned with this goal included meeting scholarship requirements. Co-curricular activities aligned with this goal included: being oneself, reading, and traveling.

# DISCUSSION

A discussion follows organized around the three research questions related to curricular activities associated with values themes, co-curricular activities associated with values themes, and curricular and co-curricular activities associated with the goals of each values type used in the study.

## Curricular Activities Associated with Values Themes

The first research question sought to identify curricular activities associated with organizational values for fraternity members who participated in the study. Curricular activities identified by fraternity members associated with values themes were aligned with universal examples of values (beyond the fraternity and college experience). For the conservation value, those curricular activities identified (e. g., respect for oneself and others), were representative of hallmarks of an educated person, such as "a coherent, integrated sense of identity…integrity… and civic responsibility (American College Personnel Association, 1996, p. 1). This becomes important as maintaining ethical standards is an important outcome inside and outside the classroom. The development of good habits, both academically and in one's personal life, was identified as important by fraternity members. This was related to the value of self-enhancement, where one begins to develop in ways that extend beyond their intellectual development (Ismail, 2016; Tull & Shaw, 2018).

Fraternity members commonly identified civic engagement as related to the value of self-transcendence. Civic engagement has been regularly identified in the literature as an important value for members of college fraternities (Matthews, et al., 2009). Opportunities for greater engagement and critical connections between a fraternity member's personal and organizational values have been found to exist (Tull & Cavins-Tull, 2017). This was true in the results of the present study, as fraternity members regularly identified curricular activities that would be connected to those that are more universally found (Schwartz, 2012) and would serve them well beyond the college experience.

## Co-Curricular Activities Associated with Values Themes

The second research question sought to identify co-curricular activities associated with organizational values for fraternity members who participated in the study. Co-curricular activities identified by fraternity members were also associated with values themes found in many ways to be aligned with universal examples of values. This was particularly true for those related to altruistic pursuits and concern for others, which often require, "appreciation for human differences" (American College Personnel Association, 1996, p. 1). Fraternity members also regularly identified civic responsibility as related to the conservation value. This too was in alignment with previous research on the topic (Lott, 2013; Pascarella, et al., 1988; Rhee & Dye, 1996). Developing values related to self-enhancement is essential as the benefits can be realized beyond the student development process while fraternity members are in college. "An ability to apply knowledge to practical problems encountered in one's vocation, family or other areas of life" (American College Personnel Association, 1996, p. 1) are true hallmarks of values congruence between personal, organizational, and universal values systems.

Like self-enhancement, self-transcendence-related values identified by fraternity members could also be deemed critical beyond college and be more universal in their effect (Schwartz, 2012). Examples of activities that forced fraternity members out of their comfort zones and allowed them to learn from prior mistakes were important findings related to the value theme of openness to change. This can have a great impact on the ability of one to adopt new approaches when faced with similar situations in the future (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2009). It can result in a more enduring effect for fraternity members and be in greater alignment with universal values.

## Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Associated with Goals of Values Types

The third research question sought to identify curricular and co-curricular activities associated with specific goals of values types (Schwartz, 2012) for fraternity members who participated in the study. The goals provide greater specificity for examining the alignment of activities associated with the larger values themes. This allowed researchers to examine fraternity members' responses more closely by examining the specific goals related to each value theme as presented. This also provided another level of analysis that allowed for richer connections

between the curricular and co-curricular activities associated with values themes. This becomes more important for those seeking to identify future values-related activities. This could inform the design and delivery of new learning strategies (Ismail, 2016) and deeper (vs. surface level) learning experiences (Kimber, et al., 1999; Leets & Matthews, 2010; Matthews, 2004). This would be important for connecting curricular and co-curricular values to personal, organization, and universal values systems.

## Limitations

We note several limitations in our study. Each emerged during our study and is worth addressing. These may also be cautionary for those engaged in similar research in the future. We used Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values as a framework to inform our study and as a basis for data collection and analysis. "Using theory has some inherent limitations in that researchers approach the data with an informed but, nonetheless, strong bias. Hence, researchers might be more likely to find evidence that is supportive rather than non-supportive of a theory" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). With fraternity members first identifying their values, we assume they will be able to do this accurately. This was not the case for all who participated, limiting the analysis of activities only to those that were properly recalled or recognized. While we were seeking responses related to direct curricular and co-curricular activities (e. g., task related to being a college student or being an engaged member of a fraternity), in many cases, fraternity members provided responses that were more behavioral and not task-related. Some curricular and co-curricular activities were listed under multiple values by fraternity members. While the researcher's left the interpretation up to fraternity members, gaps may exist between how these would be classified. This is also true between activities that fraternity members might associate with individual or group effort. This can create some ambiguity for readers as they read about associated activities identified by fraternity members. The number of responses was not evenly distributed across the four values types, with the most responses related to self-transcendence and the fewest responses related to openness to change. Other samples may net different amounts of responses for curricular and co-curricular activities for each of the four values types.

## Implications for Practice

Several implications for practice have been developed. We hope that each will be considered by those interested in our work and engaged in extending it. Regarding implications for practice, we recommend greater emphasis on values development during the new member education process. Fraternal values hold great promise for connecting important member beliefs and behaviors to the curricular and co-curricular activities that come with college attendance. These should also be an area of focus for fraternity members, as they can be connected early and often with more universally found values (Schwartz, 2012). This would have the effect of better helping members realize the importance and use of values beyond college. The connection between curricular and co-curricular activities with values can be an important learning opportunity for fraternity members, particularly those new to their organizations. A focus should be placed on these as a means for both the espousal and enactment of personal and organizational values. Both campus-level fraternity and sorority life professionals and those at national headquarters can also ensure that values development remains an important component of the new member education process. All professionals working with fraternity members can help members make meaningful connections between their fraternal values and those that can be found on a universal level (Schwartz, 2012).

## Directions for Future Research

In the area of recommendations for future research, we recommend greater exploration of the openness to change value type. We received the least amount of data related to this value type. We feel that more is needed to identify curricular and co-curricular activities that fraternity members associate with it. It may be that a different study sample would produce more results in this area with future studies. Researchers should also explore surface vs. deep learning, particularly when comparing under and upper-class fraternity members. Some variations were present between responses provided on curricular and co-curricular activities. We recommend continued research on the relationships between curricular and co-curricular activities with values and encourage greater detail in the definition and operationalization of these terms. Lastly, further research might be done longitudinally with fraternity members. Comparisons might be made between responses given shortly after participating in new member education programs and initiation and the senior year of college. Identifying curricular and co-curricular activities associated with the four values types may change over time or exhibit deeper vs. surface-level learning.

# CONCLUSION

Authentic engagement in men's college social fraternities holds great value for complimenting curricular and co-curricular activities as part of the process of student development. The values associated with fraternities can often be aligned with critical outcomes for both learning types identified. They also can be linked to important universal outcomes that extend well beyond a student's time in college. Our goal was to bring light to the alignment between curricular and co-curricular activities and values held by fraternity members. Members of fraternities, as well as those that advise them, should continue to identify linkages between learning outcomes and their values. This can help enhance the collegiate student development process and effectively prepare members for personal and professional experiences after college.

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# JCAPS

# RESISTIBLE:
# HOW THE SDSU COMMON READ ENCOURAGED MORE CONSCIENTIOUS USE OF TECHNOLOGY

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*Heavy use of digital media is known to reduce psychological well-being. A recent campus Common Read program, which included reading* Irresistible *(Alter, 2017) and attending a series of events, attempted to promote more conscientious relationships with technology, thus supporting psychological well-being. Changes in mobile phone dependence and self-reported technology use behaviors were evaluated with questions grounded in the theory of planned behavior, measuring students' attitudes, subjective norms, behavioral control, and intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology. Noteworthy interactions included Common Read participants (n = 148) reporting less discomfort during times of mobile-phone abstinence and engaging in fewer social media platforms compared to control (n = 88). Common Read participants also consistently measured more favorably regarding behavioral control and screen time. Although participants' intentions to reduce their non-educational technology use were not changed, other indicators support the conclusion that participants became more conscientious about their behavior due to Common Read programming participation.*

Common reading programs are not new to the world of higher education. These programs have been credited with community building and common conversations, particularly among incoming students (Ferguson, 2006; Laufgraben, 2006). Unless otherwise noted, the terms *college students* or simply *students* refer to undergraduate students generally enrolled at physical campus locations. The Common Read program at South Dakota State University (SDSU) began in 2009. While many collegiate Common Read programs occur during new student orientations, our Common Read takes place over much of the fall academic semester. It is an opportunity for students to share in a common intellectual experience with one another while also enhancing faculty and student engagement. The SDSU campus and community Common Read is built upon characteristics attributed to dynamic and successful programs of this nature, such as the engagement of campus with local communities (Laufgraben, 2006), and serves as a great example of a gown and town program where the Brookings, SD community and SDSU collaborate to invest in an enriching educational experience.

Further, the SDSU Common Read program committee is comprised of students, faculty, staff, community members, and high school curriculum professionals. Librarians, noted for their unique enhancement of the success of such programs (Boff, Schroeder, Letson, & Gambell, 2005), have been central to our own process of book selection, programming, and resource development. Our Common Read builds upon the imperatives for campus activities described by Dungy and Peck (2019), particularly in focusing on quality engaging events, institutional priorities, enhancement of practical skills, and implementation of student-centered assessments. Further, our program incorporates high-impact practices associated with educationally purposeful activities (Komives, 2019).

A recent survey of common reading programs at six large public universities revealed that programs of this type are particularly effective at enhancing self-reported academic performance, multicultural appreciation, and sense of belonging among many other positive outcomes (Soria, 2015). Like many others, the SDSU campus and

community Common Read serves as a vehicle for academic challenge and supports our cross-curricular mission of enhancing diversity, inclusion, equity, and access. While some of the broad-reaching outcomes of common reading programs have been published and referenced above, little is known about the impact of these programs on planned behaviors related to specific topics among participants.

Our goal was to engage in conversations designed to elevate awareness about addictive behaviors as well as the intended and unintended consequences of our current level of engagement with technology. Themes of Access, Behavior, Connection, and Safety were developed to represent the ABC'S of the conscientious use of technology. We hypothesized that participation in the Common Read would lead to more conscientious use of technology, specifically manifested as reduced technology use, exhibition of less dependence, and reported intentions to decrease non-educational technology use following the semester-long program.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

**Technology**

After careful consideration of numerous nominations, campus and community members of the Common Read Committee selected Adam Alter's original, *Irresistible,* as the 2019 Common Read. This text offers insight into the "addictive nature of technology and the business of keeping us hooked." Alter takes us on a non-judgmental journey exploring technologies that people have adopted thinking that would enrich their lives and the myriad reasons why the average adult spent a mere eight minutes per day on cell phones in 2008 compared to two hours and forty-eight minutes in 2015 (Alter, 2017).

The first issue of the *Journal of Campus Activities Practice and Scholarship* featured an article on how campus activities can be pivotal in addressing the needs and changing demographics of the modern student (Dungy & Peck, 2019). For a college to remain relevant and to address the needs of each new generation, college activities shall be designed within an understanding of the myriad factors which have shaped the students. One such factor that has shaped the current and future generations of students, perhaps more than any previous, is the advancement and abundance of technology. Today's youth are constantly immersed in screen-based technologies within their homes and educational contexts (D'Angelo, 2020). This level of immersion raises questions about such use and its implications on positive and negative outcomes such as addiction and other or unhealthy behaviors. One positive outcome of engaging in screen-based technology is developing a more extensive social support network (Viswanath, 2008). That is, people engaged in social media platforms have more access to information and support from other individuals, possess a platform for self-expression, and can build new relationships (Royal Society for Public Health, 2017). A recent survey found that "routine use," or regular use, was positively correlated with social well-being, positive mental health, and self-rated health (Bekalu, McCloud, & Viswanath, 2019).

On the other hand, the nature of internet addiction is complex. Predicting addiction is not as easy as assessing psychosocial maturity or self-efficacy. Indeed, addiction depends on myriad contributing factors, including abnormalities in the brain's dopaminergic system (Kim, Baik, Park, Kim, Choi, & Kim, 2011; also see Wang, 2001). The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) does not currently have diagnostic criteria for behavioral addiction except for gambling disorder. However, the organization has deemed an Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) worthy of consideration and has emphasized the need for further research. Although our manuscript does not focus solely on internet gaming, it would be included under the umbrella of non-educational technology. All behavioral addictions require clinically significant impairment in important areas of one's life (e.g., work or interpersonal relationships).

Specifically, nine diagnostic criteria for Internet Gaming Disorder are outlined in the DSM-5. A person must exhibit 5 of the nine symptoms for an IGD diagnosis. The diagnostic criteria are 1) preoccupation with Internet games, 2) withdrawal symptoms when Internet gaming is taken away; 3) tolerance; 4) unsuccessful attempts to control the participation in Internet games; 5) loss of interest in previous hobbies and entertainment as a result of, and with the exception of, Internet games; 6) continued excessive use of Internet games despite knowledge of psychosocial problems; 7) has deceived family members, therapists, or others regarding the amount of In-

ternet gaming; 8) use of Internet gaming to escape or relieve a negative mood; and 9) has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of participation in Internet games (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Prevalence estimates for the proposed Internet Gaming Disorder are still forming. One recent study of over 1,800 adults who had used a massively multiplayer online game (MMO) in the last 12 months estimated that 4.2% of the sample would meet the criteria for the disorder (Carlisle, 2021).

Additionally, time spent on internet gaming or social networking sites harms one's mental health. In one study of Canadian children and adolescents (grades 7-12), 2 hours per day on social networking sites appeared to be a threshold where users reported more psychological distress and suicidal ideation (Sampasa-Kanyinga & Lewis, 2015). Adults aged 19-32 showed similar effects; those that visit social media sites the most were at a significantly increased odds of exhibiting depression symptoms (Lin et al., 2016)

Investigations into cell phone addiction among college students have revealed some differences between men and women (Roberts, Yaya, & Manolis, 2014; Kim, Kim, Kim, Ju, Choi, & Yu, 2015), but an overarching effort to establish social connections appears to be one commonality (Roberts, Yaya, & Manolis, 2014). Further, positive correlations between smartphone addiction and depression have been identified in college students (Kim et al., 2015; Jeong, Lee, Kim, Park, Kwon, Kim, Lee, Choi, & Lee, 2020). According to a Pew Research Center report, 48% of adults aged 18–29 are online "almost constantly" (Pew Research Center, 2021).

Though the risk factors for smartphone or screen addiction remain relatively elusive, the impacts of addiction among college students are clear. College students, who are still developing, are especially susceptible to internet addiction due to ready access and even an expectation of use (Kandell, 2009). Given these factors, it's no wonder that student performance can be impacted as addictions develop. Mishra and colleagues (2014) reported that unfettered access to technology among college students could result in academic success that is inversely related to the level of student internet addiction. Many studies on this topic are correlational, so they cannot wholly explain the well-being and digital media relationship. It could be that heavy digital media use leads to lower psychological well-being, including anxiety and depression. Alternatively, it could be that lower psychological well-being leads to heavier digital media use. Experimental research that can establish cause and effect relationships has supported the former interpretation of the connection. For example, when undergraduate students limit their use of Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat to 10 minutes per platform per day, they exhibited significantly fewer loneliness and depression symptoms (Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young, 2018). In an older age group (M age = 34), participants who took a break from Facebook, operationalized as no Facebook use for one week, reported increased life satisfaction and positive emotions (Tromholt, 2016). While these studies were different in many respects, data from both highlighted the role of users' envy while browsing social media platforms. Specifically, when participants were engaged in social media activity, they compared their own lives and activities to the lives and activities presented by others. Because the activities one sees presented online are idealized, it is easy to come up short by comparison.

### Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991, 2014) is a widely used model to predict people's behavior based on multiple factors. The theory assumes that a person's behavior can be traced back to their intentions to engage in a targeted behavior. Intentions can be traced back to the person's attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms about the behavior, and perceived behavioral control. For example, according to the Theory of Planned Behavior, a person wearing a seat belt in a moving vehicle can be traced back to the intentions to do so and their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Specifically, an attitude is a person's beliefs about the behavior (e.g., wearing a seat belt) and their evaluation of the outcomes related to that behavior. In other words, a person's attitude is a gauge of whether they favor or disfavor engaging in the behavior. Subjective norms involve how significant others around the individual, like friends and family, feel about the behavior (i.e., normative beliefs) and how motivated the individual is to comply with those norms. Perceived behavioral control is whether the person feels in control of the behavior in question. Putting it all together, the Theory of Planned Behavior could predict a person's likelihood of wearing a seat belt by knowing their intentions, attitudes about wearing seat belts, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Francis and colleagues (2004) suggested a behavior (e.g., wearing a seat belt) should be defined with the Target, Action, Context, and Time (TACT) carefully considered. For example, in the current paper, the target behavior was, "In the next three months, 2019 Common Read participants will decrease their use of non-educational technology such as, but not limited to, social media, gaming, and online entertainment." The target was all participants involved in the Common Read program; the Action was to decrease non-educational related technology use, the Context is the addictive nature of technology, and the Time is the next three months.

## CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY COMMON READ

The South Dakota State University campus and community Common Read program occurs in the fall semester of each academic year. The program and associated campus activities are promoted to the entirety of our campus community and the local community. Though all undergraduate and graduate students are welcome and encouraged to attend, our attendees are most commonly first-year students. Several first-year seminars and a few upper-level courses require students to read the book and attend one or more Signature Events.

One of the largest courses to require participation is the Honors Orientation course for first-year students pursuing honors distinction. Assignments related to the Common Read comprise up to 40% of the total available points in the 1-credit Honors Orientation course. In 2019, students were asked to attend three Common Read events of their choosing and to complete a guided reflection on each, drawing connections to the text and the programmatic themes. Students went on to complete a group project related to technology. In this assignment, teams were asked to investigate an area of technology of particular interest, design a research question, and design a small experiment to address the question. Students presented the background, findings, and relevance to the Common Read via an infographic and final paper. Finally, students completed a summative reflection on their experience with the Common Read. The Honors Orientation Course represents one of the most in-depth curricular implementations of the Common Read each year. The level of engagement among first-year courses varies from reading the text to engaging in one or more events and a related assignment.

In 2019, Kulp and colleagues characterized campus-based signature events as large-scale events with high attendance by heterogenous populations with high impact (Kulp, Pascale & Grandstaff, 2021). The Signature Events associated with our Common Read are designed with these criteria. In the fall of 2019, SDSU offered 12 Signature Events (see Figure 1) free to the campus and local communities. Many of these events were planned by the Common Read committee, and several were sponsored and hosted by campus and community partners. The 12 Signature Events can be categorized as: interactive, film, lectures or forums, or independent passive events.

**Figure 1.** *Marketing materials highlighting Signature Events of the Common Read Program.*

### Interactive Events

Three of our 12 Signature Events were designed to be highly interactive. The first was a *Campus and Community Common Read Kickoff* event designed to be highly interactive, introducing the text and programmatic themes. Participants were guided to several interactive stations to explore various facts about technology. The SDSU Psychology Club (a student organization) hosted a *Technology Resource Fair* in the main hallway of the University Student Union. This resource fair showcase technology-related resources available on campus and in the community while addressing the influence of Common Read programmatic themes in everyday life. Finally, a hallmark of our Common Read program each year is a *Writing as Reflection* event. Participants in the 2019 event spent an evening with guided journaling focused on the technologies in our lives and the impact of those technologies on ourselves and our relationships with others. These interactive events are among the most highly attended.

### Films

Two films were integrated as Signature Events. Community partners hosted both to reach broader audiences within the community. A feature film, *Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age,* set the stage for a community-wide exploration of the impact of technology uses on families and academics. This event was sponsored by community partners, the Brookings Human Rights Commission and the Brookings Public Library. The Brookings Public Library hosted a second featured film, *Submit the Documentary*. The film highlighted the complexities of cyberbullying and provided a launching point for a robust community discussion. Both events were promoted through local schools and the Boy and Girls Club to involve educators and parents in the discussions.

### Lectures or Forums

Six lectures or forums were offered in our line-up of Signature Events. In each of these events, attendees were encouraged to participate via a robust question and answer session at the end of the event. The SDSU Office of University Marketing and Communications led a discussion on digital accessibility, complete with tips and justification. This event was selected to promote understanding of why digital accessibility is important within the community, in addition to tips for creating accessibility. Each year, the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences hosts a public lecture on a topic of importance. In 2019, they hosted *Liberal Arts and Technology: Our Need for Ethics* which dovetailed wonderfully with the Common Read program. The student-led University Program Council (UPC) hosted a *Technology Forum* to discuss the impacts of technology on personal, professional, and collegiate lives. The Office of Multicultural Affairs, UPC, and the SDSU Van D. and Barbara B. Fishback Honors College jointly hosted an event featuring technology expert and Latino author to explore the impacts of technology on the Latina/o/x communities in the U.S. This event shed light on how specific communities and identities are portrayed or not portrayed in the media. The SDSU Department of Psychology hosted a lecture, "*Technology Does What to Your Memory?!*" featuring lead author Tyler Miller an Associate Professor of Psychology. The line-up of Signature Events culminated in a lecture and forum from Adam Alter, author of *Irresistible*. Alter offered a provocative exploration of the addictive nature of technology and continued to address a breadth of questions from the audience.

### Independent Passive Events

For the first time in the history of the SDSU Common Read, we hosted a passive event. One week in early October was dedicated to our passive event, the *Technology Challenge*. Each day, the Common Read posted a new technology use-related challenge, such as reducing screen time or calling home. Students, staff, and community members were encouraged to engage on their own time.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This study examined the effect of the co-curricular "common read" program on students' non-educational technology behaviors. For the Common Read survey, we used a repeated measures research design and a control group to evaluate change resulting from Common Read participation. Specifically, we used a mixed randomized repeated-measures

research design with a quasi-independent variable *Condition* (Common Read or Control), an independent variable *Time* (Time 1 and Time 2), and dependent variables consisting of participants' responses to survey questions (see Measures below). Furthermore, for the One-time Signature Event survey, we examined whether different event types (Interactive, Film, or Lecture/Forum) would elicit different levels of intention to change for students and non-students. We also examined changes in intentions over time using data from the One-time Signature Event survey.

## Sample

In all, 236 students (Common Read n = 148, Control n = 88) completed all aspects of the study (Common Read completion rate = 46.9%, Control = 82.2%) and were included in subsequent data analyses (see Tables 1-2). Data included their Grade Point Average (GPA), American College Testing (ACT) score, participant age, and academic college. High school GPA has been a strong predictor of student success in college (Allensworth, & Clark, 2020). The ACT is the most commonly used standardized test in the Midwest and South Dakota State University. These demographics, along with academic college and age, are also easy for students to recall when completing a survey. Common Read participants came from several courses that included required Common Read activities (e.g., Honors College Orientation and Biology First Year Seminar). Control group participants were all surveyed from a General Psychology course which did not include required Common Read activities. As an evaluation effort, this research did not require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. However, all participants were informed of the research purposes and agreed to complete the survey.

**Table 1.** *Participant demographics.*

| | | Gender | | | | |
| Condition | Female | Male | No Answer | GPA | ACT | Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Read | 104 | 41 | 3 | 3.48 (0.63) | 25.89 (4.72) | 18.69 (0.59) |
| Control | 67 | 21 | 0 | 3.05 (0.90) | 21.61 (3.71) | 19.16 (2.07) |

*Note.* GPA = Grade Point Average (0-4) for Fall 2019. ACT = American College Testing standardized test performance (1-36). Values in parentheses indicate standard deviation.

**Table 2.** *Academic college distribution among study participants*

| Major College | Common Read (*n* = 148) | Control (*n* = 88) |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences | 34.46% | 4.55% |
| Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences | 14.19% | 28.41% |
| Education and Human Sciences | 10.81% | 26.14% |
| Engineering | 8.78% | 1.14% |
| Natural Sciences | 18.24% | 5.68% |
| Nursing | 7.43% | 32.95% |
| Pharmacy & Allied Health Professions | 4.73% | 1.14% |
| No Answer | 1.35% | 0.00% |

## Measures

Theory of planned behavior. We followed Francis and colleagues (2004) manual to create questions grounded in Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior (TPB). Creating one's own questions is common and used to measure a variety of planned behaviors such as the likelihood of adhering to a prescription medication regimen, engaging in pro-environmental behavior, or texting while driving (Ben-Natan, & Noselozich; Lakhan, 2018; McBride, Carter, & Phillips, 2020). Our questions were written to examine behavior change related to technology use behaviors. In all, there were 11 Likert-style questions to measure students' attitudes (4 questions), subjective norms (3), and behavioral control (4) about decreasing their use of non-educational technology in the near future. There were also 3 Likert style questions to measure participants' intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology in the next three months. Participants answered all questions on a Likert Scale ranging from one to seven (see Table 3 for sample questions from each question area).

**Table 3.** *Theory of Planned Behavior example questions.*

| Question Area | Question and Scale |
| --- | --- |
| **Attitudes** | Decreasing my use of non-educational related technology in next 3 months would be ... <br> 1 (Harmful) to 7 (Beneficial) |
| **Subjective Norms** | Most people who are important to me think that I should decrease my use of non-educational technology in the next 3 months. <br> 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) |
| **Perceived Behavioral Control** | I am confident that I could decrease my use of non-educational technology in the next 3 months <br> 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) |
| **Intentions** | I intend to decrease my use of non-educational related technology in the next 3 months <br> 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) |

**Self-reported technology behaviors.** We measured participants' self-reported technology behaviors about screen time, their use of social media platforms, and some safety behaviors related to technology use. Participants reported how much time per day (in hours) they engaged in screen time for non-educational purposes (including mobile phone and computer screen time). They also reported the number of social media platforms they use and how often they use them from a list (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook). Finally, we asked participants about their safety-related behaviors, such as making social media profiles private and reviewing their posts periodically to remove potentially offensive content.

**Test of Mobile Phone Dependence.** We also measured participants' mobile phone dependence using the Test of Mobile Phone Dependence Brief questionnaire (TMDBrief; Choliz, et al., 2016). The TMDBrief is a valid and reliable instrument that measures mobile phone dependence using 12 items representing four distinct factors. The four factors are 1) *Abstinence,* 2) *Abuse, interference with other activities,* 3) *Tolerance,* and 4) *Lack of control.* The *Abstinence* factor items refer to the discomfort felt when one is unable to use their mobile phone or using one's mobile phone to relieve psychological discomfort (e.g., "I don't think I could stand spending a week without a mobile phone."). The "*Abuse and interference with other activities*" items refer to interference with everyday functioning. Tolerance items refer to needing to use one's mobile phone more and more to achieve similar positive effects. The fourth and final factor featuring "*Lack of control*" items measure one's inability to stop using their mobile phone.

**One-time Signature Event survey.** Finally, given the Common Read events were open to the public, we also gathered some information from attendees by asking them to indicate their intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology in the near future.

**Procedure**

**Common Read Survey.** We invited students to participate in the Time 1 Common Read survey on August 29-30, 2019, through an online survey software. The following week, eligible students received multiple reminder emails with invitations to participate. Following all Common Read programming, students received invitations and reminders to participate in the Time 2 Common Read survey on November 21-22, 2019.

**One-time Signature Event survey.** Following each Signature Event, Common Read committee volunteers distributed half-sheets to audience members as they walked out the door containing two questions. The first question asked the audience member to indicate if they were a student or non-student. The second question asked them about their intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology. Respondents completed the 2-item survey and returned it immediately.

**Data Analysis**

For the primary survey, there are three statistical effects that this research design can reveal. First, for the main effect of Condition, we can compare the measurements for the TPM, TMD, and self-reported behavior questions from the Common Read and Control conditions. This effect reveals whether there are differences among conditions regardless of Time. Second, for the main effect of Time, we can compare measurements from Time 1 to Time 2 regardless of condition. Most important, though, is the interaction effect. The interaction effect is the most revealing because it shows the specific contribution of the common read program. It considers the simultaneous effect of the Condition and Time, referred to as an intervention effect.

For the One-Time Signature Event Survey, we used ANOVA to determine the relative effectiveness of event type (i.e., interactive, film, or lecture/forum) to elicit more intentions to decrease the use of non-educational technology on students and non-students. Second, we examined whether intentions to decrease the use of technology would become more pronounced over time using descriptive statistics (e.g., whether the effects of attending multiple events would be additive for students and non-students). No data were collected following the *Technology Challenge* event because participation was independent. We predicted that as attendees participated in more Signature Events, the message about conscientious use of technology would accumulate, and they would report more intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology.

# RESULTS

The Results section is presented below. Data from the Theory of Planned Behavior survey (i.e., attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and planned usage) is presented first, followed by planned usage data from the One-Time Signature Event survey. Next, data from the Test of Mobile Phone Dependence survey is separated by the factor structure (i.e., abstinence, abuse and interference with other activities, tolerance, and lack of control). Finally, at the end of the section, we report the self-reported technology behaviors regarding screen time, number of platforms, and safety behaviors.

**Theory of Planned Behavior**

**Attitudes.** We conducted a repeated measures ANOVA for the planned behaviors data and will present them in order below for attitudes, norms, perceived behavioral control, and intentions. Recall that all responses were on a 1-7 Likert scale, where 1 is less favorable to the aim of the study. At Time 1, participants reported favorable attitudes toward reducing their use of non-educational technology ($M = 5.15$, $SE = .08$) but their attitudes were unchanged when measured at Time 2 following the Common Read program ($M = 5.11$, SE = .08; $F(1,199) < 1$). Similarly, there were no differences between conditions and no interaction effect ($F$s < 1).

**Subjective Norms.** An important aspect of behavioral change is the pressure one feels from important others to change. At Time 1, participants did not report feeling pressure to decrease their use of non-educational technology ($M = 2.80$, $SE = .09$). At Time 2, participant's perceived social pressure was unchanged ($M = 2.80$, $SE = .09$; $F(1, 199) < 1$). Like attitudes, there was no interaction effect or differences between conditions ($F$s < 1).

**Perceived behavioral control.** In terms of how "in control" participants felt about their ability to decrease their use of non-educational technology, participants reported generally feeling in control at Time 1 ($M = 5.21$, $SE = .07$), but all participants' feelings of control declined at Time 2 ($M = 5.03$, $SE = .07$; $F(1, 199) = 5.78$, $p = .017$, np2 = .03). The main effect of condition was also significant where participants in the Common Read ($M = 5.28$, $SE = .08$) condition felt more in control than the control group ($M = 4.96$, $SE = .09$; $F(1,199) = 6.69$, $p = .010$, $n_p^2 = .03$), but this effect was not due to the Common Read intervention, specifically, the interaction effect was not significant ($F < 1$)

**Planned usage of non-educational technology.** Finally, participants reported their level of agreement with a statement about decreasing their use of non-educational technology. Participants generally did not report strong agreement or disagreement about decreasing their use. Specifically at Time 1, participants were near the middle

of the scale ($M$ = 4.00, SE = .10) and remained in that neutral position at Time 2 ($M$ = 3.94, SE = .11; $F(1, 203)$ < 1). Overall, participants in the Common Read condition were more in agreement with planning to decrease their use ($M$ = 4.08, SE = .11) compared to the control condition ($M$ = 3.83, SE = .13), but, the difference was not significant ($F(1, 203)$ = 2.48, p = .117, $n_p^2$ = .01). The interaction was not significant ($F$ < 1). 0

**One-time Signature Event survey.** For reference, participants in the Common Read condition attended approximately 3 events ($M$ = 3.24, $SE$ = .26) and participants in the Control condition attended nearly 2 events ($M$ = 1.78, $SE$ = .30). In all, we received 1,274 responses to the One-Time Signature Event survey. Each event type (Interactive, Film, Lecture/Forum) was equally effective in eliciting change in respondents' intentions to decrease the use of technology ($F$ < 1). Overall, non-students were more likely to report intentions to decrease their use ($M$ = 4.72, $SE$ = .19) compared to students ($M$ = 4.08, SE = .05; $F(1, 1,391)$ = 10.33, p = .001, $n_p^2$ = .01). The interaction was not significant ($F(1, 1,391)$ = 1.06, p = .348, $n_p^2$ < .01). Second, to determine change over time, or the additive effect of attending more than one lecture, we calculated the average mean difference in intentions for Signature Events 1-11. The average intention for Event 2 minus the average intention for Event 1 and so on for all events. When the difference is positive, the later event elicited more intentions to decrease than the earlier event. The average mean difference was positive ($M$ = 0.1). Therefore, on average, attendees at later events reported similar but increased intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology compared to earlier events (see Figure 2).
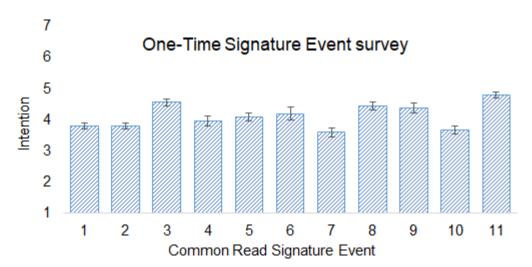
**Figure 2.** *Intent to decrease non-educational technology use in the next three months.*



**Test of Mobile Phone Dependence**

The analysis of the Test of Mobile Phone Dependence (Brief) responses presented below follows the four-factor structure identified by Choliz and colleagues (2012, 2016). For the first factor, *Abstinence,* which measures discomfort felt when respondents are not using their mobile phones, the analysis revealed Control condition participants felt more discomfort ($M$ = 2.55, $SE$ = .07) than Common Read condition participants ($M$ = 2.22, $SE$ = .07; $F(1, 188)$ = 11.85, p = .001, $n_p^2$ = .06). The main effect of time was not significant ($F$ < 1). Finally, the interaction effect was marginally significant, indicating Common Read condition participants felt less discomfort at Time 2 than Time 1 whereas Control condition participants felt more discomfort at Time 2 than Time 1 ($F(1, 188)$ = 3.23, p = .07, $n_p^2$ = .02).

Statistical tests on the second factor, *Abuse and interference with other activities,* revealed Control condition participants reported more abuse and interference ($M$ = 2.68, $SE$ = .06) than Common Read condition participants ($M$ = 2.49, $SE$ = .05; $F(1, 189)$ = 5.72, p = .018, $n_p^2$ = .03). The other tests, for the changes over time and the effect of the intervention were not significant ($F$ < 1).

The *Tolerance* analysis, which captured participants' escalating need to use the mobile phone more often to achieve similar results, showed an interesting and troubling pattern. The main effect of condition and interaction effects were not significant ($F$ < 1). However, the main effect of Time was significant such that at Time 2 ($M$ =

2.26, $SE = .05$) all participants exhibited more tolerance-like behaviors surrounding mobile phone use compared to Time 1 ($M = 2.14$, $SE = .04$; $F(1, 188) = 7.01$, $p = .009$, $n_p^2 = .04$).

Factor 4, *Lack of Control,* showed a similar pattern to Tolerance. Specifically, at Time 2, participants reported less control of their mobile phone use ($M = 2.57$, $SE = .05$) compared to Time 1 ($M = 2.65$, $SE = .05$; $F(1, 188) = 3.07$, $p = .081$, $n_p^2 = .02$). Common Read condition participants indicated more control overall ($M = 2.40$ $SE = .07$) than Control condition participants ($M = 2.81$, $SE = .07$; $F(1, 188) = 17.71$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .09$). and the interaction effect was not significant ($F < 1$).

### Self-Reported technology-related behaviors

**Screen time.** The average screen time of all participants did not change from Time 1 ($M = 4.58$ hrs/day $SE = .13$) to Time 2 ($M = 4.53$ hrs/day $SE = .12$), nor was the interaction significant ($Fs < 1$). There was however, an effect of condition where participants in the Common Read condition had fewer hours of screen time ($M = 3.98$ hrs/day, $SE = .13$) compared to Control ($M = 5.12$ hrs/day, $SE = .15$; $F(1, 205) = 34.78$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .15$).

When participants reported their screen time in hours per day, they also indicated what information they used when deciding what to report. There were three options, participants could indicate they were "just estimating" or that they had "checked a screen time tool on my mobile phone," or finally, if they had "checked a screen time tool on my mobile phone and added computer screen time." We considered the "just estimating" response the least conscientious option. A Wilcoxson matched-pair signed-rank test indicated the Common Read condition shifted from "just estimating" at Time 1 to indicating they were checking screen time applications at Time 2 ($z = 2.77$, $p = .006$). In contrast, participants in the control condition continued to rely primarily on estimates of their screen time ($z = 0.67$, $p = .525$).

**Platforms.** Overall, Common Read condition participants reported using fewer social media platforms than the ten available to select. Participants in the Common Read condition selected less than 5 platforms ($M = 4.67$, $SE = .13$) whereas Control condition participants selected over 5 platforms ($M = 5.63$, $SE = .14$; $F(1, 233) = 21.40$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .08$). Although the main effect of time was not significant, there was a significant interaction effect, or an effect that is directly attributable to the intervention. Common Read participants selected fewer platforms at Time 2 ($M = 4.32$, $SE = .17$) than Time 1 ($M = 5.01$, $SE = .13$), conversely, Control condition participants selected more platforms at Time 2 ($M = 5.75$, $SE = .22$) than Time 1 ($M = 5.52$, $SE = .18$; $F(1, 233) = 11.51$, $p = .001$, $n_p^2 = .05$).

**Safety.** There were no statistically significant effects related to reviewing one's posts periodically or changing privacy settings to more private when it was an option ($Fs < 1$).

### Summary of Results

As an evaluation effort, we examined several effects of Common Read participation on students and community members. A concise and integrated summary of results for the main areas of interest follows. Participants viewed limiting their use of non-educational technology favorably. Still, their attitudes, changes in screen time, plans to decrease use in the future, and perceived social norms did not change as a result of participation. An important finding was that both groups of students (i.e., the Common Read and Control condition) felt their control over their use of technology declined from Time 1 to Time 2. This lack of control was corroborated in the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Test of Mobile Dependence survey responses in the current study and relates to the previous literature on self-control failures. Specifically, people's desire to use social media is difficult to resist even when it conflicts with other goals and is more likely to lead to self-control failures than other desires (Hofmann, Vohs, & Baumeister, 2012).

Both groups of participants indicated more tolerance-like behaviors at Time 2; specifically, they reported an escalation of use to achieve the same effects. Control group participants did report more abuse and interference with other activities. Finally, a critically important finding, Common Read participants reported less discomfort when they were away from their phones for a period of time. In the area of self-reported technology-related behaviors, Common Read participants became more aware of their technology use by checking screen time applications and reported engaging in fewer social media platforms at Time 2.

# LIMITATIONS

**Methodological Limitations.** A limitation of the current study was that our data collection did not allow for tracking specific individuals over time throughout the program. The fact that we could still discern differences between the Common Read and Control groups without more than two time-points speaks to the power of the information. Students in our control group were not prohibited from attending Common Read events. They attended an average of 1.78 events, roughly half of the average events attended by students in the Common Read Group. Once again, the fact that students in the Control group attended just 1-2 events fewer on average than the Common Read group means that some of the participation effects may have been lessened.

Another methodological limitation of the current study was two of the three survey instruments. We followed a manual to construct surveys based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Francis et al., 2004). Even so, the survey we created and used was not a psychometrically validated survey. Furthermore, the self-reported technology behaviors survey we created had similar methodological limitations. In contrast, the Test of Mobile Phone Dependence is a psychometrically validated survey (Chóliz et al., 2016).

### Discussion & Future Directions

Overall, the analyses revealed more favorable responses from Common Read condition participants compared to a control group. Common Read participants indicated less discomfort in times of mobile phone abstinence, fewer behaviors indicative of mobile phone abuse or interference with daily activities, more control over mobile phone use of non-educational technology, less screen time, and fewer social media platforms.

**Demographics.** The two conditions' demographic characteristics differed in age and achievement (i.e., grade point average, ACT performance). For example, Common Read participants were approximately half a year younger than the Control condition participants. Assuming younger students are newer to college, where there can be more free time for students, they may still be discovering their routines and have not started using as many social media platforms. This interpretation is supported by the pair of findings suggesting all participants exhibited more tolerance-like behaviors and decreasing control of mobile phone usage from Time 1 to Time 2.

Many respondents from the survey identified as female (72%), with 70% and 76% of respondents identifying as female in the Common Read and Control groups, respectively. This was not unexpected as 60% of the honors student population at SDSU identifies as female and recent surveys, including the honors student population, yielded participation rates between 70 and 79% female (Kotschevar, Ngorsuraches, & Bott-Knutson, 2018; Kutzke, Nold, Gonda, Hansen, & Bott-Knutson, 2020) which aligns with previous reports (Porter, & Whitcomb, 2005; Sax, & Bryant, 2003). Thus, a future direction for continued research exists within the composition of respondent gender identity and possible subsequent representation of planned behavioral differences.

**Type of Event.** Signature events have been reported to have more profound impacts on student success criteria such as GPA, persistence, and retention than other campus-based activities such as welcome week activities or predictable, routine events (Kulp, Pascale, & Grandstaff, 2021). Our annual Common Read programs are designed around a suite of signature events. Yet, before the current study, we didn't know whether different kinds of signature events were more likely to influence the planned behavior of students. We did not observe any difference in efficacy of one type of signature event (interactive, film, lecture) over another. One might anticipate that highly interactive events may impact a participant's planned behavior more than a passive event. However, our data indicate that exposure to the topic was more important than the type of exposure. This finding adds to the literature on co-curricular experiences promoting student thriving (Vetter, Schriener, McIntosh, & Dugan, 2019). Vetter and colleagues described the importance of involvement quality rather than the quantity of involvement. From the current research, we would add that quality experiences can come from a variety of events. Therefore, future Common Read programming will continue to offer a variety of event types. Our goal will be to expand the appeal of participation through continued dedication to hosting a variety of campus and community activities in the hopes that a wide swath of people will be attracted to one type of event over another, thus increasing the total

number of people who are exposed to the topic. Additionally, we recommend that faculty promote attendance through their classes and that student affairs professionals integrate one or more events into their planned programming. When combined, these tactics should create the opportunity and encouragement for exposure.

**Time Frame.** Immediate change is infrequent in behavioral studies. Our study revealed small but positive changes within the short timeframe of the Common Read program. It is possible that if measured over a longer period, we would have witnessed more robust changes. The Common Read program spanned 7-8 weeks in 2019, roughly the amount of time it takes to establish some degree of automaticity in new habits (Lally, 2009). Had a student's earnest engagement with the Common Read begun midway through the program, we would not expect to have witnessed significant habitual changes. We were encouraged to see some shifts in planned behavior.

**Knowledge vs. Willingness to change.** Many would acknowledge the ills of heavy technology use (e.g., Royal Society of Public Health, 2017). Even when such information is readily available, one may not have the value-set that would necessitate changing one's behaviors. One relevant example is climate change action. There is more information now about climate change than ever before, yet change is not happening as quickly as many hope. It is feasible that the Common Read increased knowledge related to the use of technology that may or may not has manifested as planned changes in behaviors to reflect a changed value-set.

**Campus and Community Involvement.** The Common Read is a campus and community program; it might also be called a "town and gown" program. The findings from the primary survey are limited to students, but as we saw earlier, there was a fair amount of community engagement. One may see similar effects from the community related to the number of social media platforms, screen time, and comfort in abstinence. Based on the One-time Signature Event survey results, where non-students were more likely to report intentions to decrease their use of non-educational technology, one might predict even more favorable outcomes from non-students. In 2019, Komives discussed the transition from the terminology "student activities" to "campus activities" to more accurately reflect that while engagement includes students, it also extends into non-student populations such as faculty, staff, and members of the community (Komives, 2019). The authors are intrigued by the fact that non-students were more likely to report intentions to decrease the use of non-educational technology. The non-student population could include faculty, staff, and community members. Assuming that this group is older, perhaps they're able to reflect upon more past personal experiences of times when a non-technology-based focus was either rewarding or prudent. Theoretically, these non-student participants would have a larger sphere of influence within the greater community through family, neighbors, or civic engagement. Thus, the opportunity for indirect exposure of an even larger audience to the Common Read program is enhanced, further augmenting the impact of this campus program.

**Establishing Awareness.** Common Read programs offer a transient opportunity to introduce ideas and deep thinking about those ideas. We view the role of the Common Read as an opportunity to guide participants in exploring a topic, equip them with the skills to think critically about the topic, and prepare them with a tool kit that they may leverage as life-long learners. We specifically point out that the culmination of each Common Read program is not the end of a discussion, but rather an affirmation that participants are prepared to continue the conversation independently of the program. It is common for members of the Common Read committee to hear students talking about their Common Read experiences and subject through their years at SDSU. Future research could track changes in intentions, dependence, or use well beyond the semester-time frame used here.

## CONCLUSION

The Common Read program affected students in several positive ways. From participants' self-reports, we know that the program led to students pulling back from social media activity and a greater awareness of screen time. The Common Read program changed the narrative for participants about the need to be constantly connected online. Perhaps they thought about the negative consequences of near constant connection and became aware of the time spent on their devices. Future research using direct observations of technology use among students could corroborate these findings.

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# JCAPS

# *NEW DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP* SERIES REVIEW

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*This review aims to introduce the New Directions for Student Leadership series and to offer insight on how the content in the series may be useful to campus activities professionals.*

In today's globally connected world, there is a need for inclusive, innovative, and informed leaders. Transforming leaders such as these are essential for initiating and realizing organizational and societal change (Astin & Astin, 2000; Burns, 1978; Dugan, 2017). "The call to action … is that postsecondary leadership learning environments are materially important to the development of upcoming generations of societal leaders" (Chunoo & Osteen, 2015, p. 17). Through their daily observation of student learning and development and the delivery of services that improve the student experience, campus activities professionals (McCullar, Peck, DeSawal, Rosch, & Krebs, 2020, p. 6), are on the front line in the realm of developing students into these much-needed leaders.

Much of the leadership literature focuses on either a currently popular approach or scholarly research. Books designed to reach a wider audience often take a basic, simplified approach, utilizing a story or metaphor to aid the reader in applying the concepts to practice. At the other end of the literature continuum is research on leadership conducted in many organizational settings - business, non-profit, and education - but with less scholarship focused on youth and college students. While research findings offer implications for application, depending on the specific focus of the study as well as the context and participants, it can be a challenge for professionals to conceptualize application to practice. Recently there has been a renewed interest in college student leadership education and development. While there are numerous areas on a college campus where this learning and development may happen, such as classrooms, residence halls, or campus events and speakers, campus activities professionals are often at the forefront of developing such experiences. To prepare students to be the leaders campuses and society needs today and in the future, campus activities professionals (CAPs) must put intentionally designed, evidence-based concepts into practice. This review aims to introduce campus activities professionals to the critical insights on scholarship and application explicitly focused on the leadership development of youth and college students offered by the *New Directions for Student Leadership* (NDSL) series.

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Conceptually, we understand that leadership can emerge from anywhere and is practiced in numerous ways on a college campus. Recent societal events have shown that young people in the United States are stepping up and leading in ways to bring about positive social change. We have only to look at examples of students across the country who have felt empowered to act, addressing issues of racism, sexual violence, food insecurity, and climate concerns.

Our understanding of student leadership models, styles, and the impact of leadership education is informed by a breadth of scholarship. Leadership models specifically focused on college students have been developed (e.g., Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2013; Komives, Wagner, & Associates, 2017; Kouzes & Posner, 2008; Shankman & Allen, 2008). Research on college students and leadership has focused on leadership styles, behaviors, or approaches (Haber, 2012; Harper & Kezar, 2021; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000), and the impact of specific leadership development initiatives or experiences (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Haber & Komives, 2009; Rosch & Stephens, 2017). This literature provides insights into how students perceive leadership and frame insights for practitioners regarding the "best" leadership behaviors to consider when developing initiatives.

Yet many student leadership education approaches still "rely on leadership fads, reductionistic platitudes, and non-developmental approaches" (Owen, 2015, p. 8). With a shift toward viewing leadership as a social process and societal calls for transformational leadership, college student leadership education approaches must also shift. "College student leadership development is about fostering learning and growth in leadership contexts and teaching socially responsible and ethical leadership to the next generation of leaders" (Barnes, 2020, p. 100). The *New Directions for Student Leadership* series provides a foundation for CAPs and other higher education professionals to address the development of socially responsible leaders.

## OVERVIEW OF THE *NEW DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP* SERIES

To address the gap in the student leadership literature, and as part of their more extensive series on leadership, Jossey-Bass (a division of Wiley Publishers) launched *New Directions for Student Leadership* (NDSL) in 2015. NDSL is published quarterly to aid leadership educators in exploring "the dimensions of the development of leadership in high school youth and college students" (Komives & Guthrie, 2015, p. 1). The NDSL volumes expand beyond the traditional-focused research to address the role of identity in leadership development, followers as leaders, and the role of leadership educators in this developmental process, to name a few areas of focus. The conceptualization of leadership development across the NDSL volumes dovetails with the NACA: National Association for Campus Activities (hereafter NACA) framing regarding the role CAPs play in the development of college students. Series editors Komives and Guthrie note, "the world today needs more and better leaders from all contexts able to work together on messy problems. We feel this *New Directions* series will provide current and relevant information for educators and administrators working with students of all ages to develop their leadership capacity and leader identity" (Wiley Online Library., n.d.).

The series grounds itself in scholarship that features practical applications and good practice, and the insights gained can span leadership education and development across age groups. The journals' chapters, featuring authors who are scholar-practitioners whose experiences range from traditional education to non-profit organization settings, offer insight into timely research, examples of theory in action, and suggestions for implementation in various settings. The series spans topics such as innovative learning, developmental readiness, assessment, integration of critical perspectives, and spirituality to highlight just a few areas of focus; for a complete listing, visit https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/23733357. Given that the development of youth and college student leaders crosses many boundaries of practice, the series volumes provide useful knowledge and practical application for professionals engaged in any aspect of leadership education and development, whether as a full-time component of their work or as a portion of their work. Ultimately, this series is for you if you work with youth or young adults.

The NACA mission focuses on creating experiences through inclusive learning and meaningful connections (NACA, 2020). Building upon this mission and given institutional leadership demands for evidence-based and data-informed decisions, NACA developed a research agenda and launched the *Journal of Campus Activities Practice and Scholarship* (JCAPS). The NACA research agenda aims to guide the work of campus activities professionals in connecting emerging scholarship with practice (2021). The research agenda was designed, in part, "to advance the campus activities profession, and, in turn, the contributions of campus activities professionals to the student learning experience" (NACA, 2021, p). The NACA mission and research agenda are where the NDSL series can contribute to advancing the campus activities profession. This series aims not to perpetuate traditional views of leadership (e.g., hierarchical, male-oriented, extroverted), but to offer critical insights on scholarship and application specifically focused on the leadership development of youth and college students. NDSL can aid in integrating relevant, evidence-based approaches into the practice of campus activities professionals.

## WAYS TO USE THE NDSL SERIES

"As leadership educators, today's student activities professionals value evidence-based practices. We are thrilled that the NDSL series has provided a stream of practical, cutting-edge scholarship to guide these intentional practices. We are grateful for all the scholar-practitioners who have written about their experiences in our over 30 issues to date" (S. Komives, personal communication, January 7, 2022). Given the aim of the NDSL series to

offer practical insights on creating evidence-based practice, suggestions, and examples, highlighting aspects of specific volumes are offered as ways campus activities professionals might utilize the content. This is not meant to be an exhaustive examination of possibilities but to prompt campus activity professionals' interest in further exploration of individual volumes and the series in the course of their work.

**Designing Initiatives**

When developing or redesigning a leadership education initiative, reading volumes that speak specifically to the initiative's focus can offer evidence-based insights to consider. Understanding that good practice calls for utilizing theory to inform design, *Innovative Learning for Leadership Development* (Owen, 2015), offers insight into the recent scholarship on teaching and learning as well as "critically examin[ing] the intersections of learning and leadership" (Owen, 2015, p. 5). The authors within this volume approach their scholarship from three suppositions:

1. That leadership can and should be learned;
2. That the learning and development leadership capacities are inextricably intertwined; and
3. That leadership educators can purposefully foster learning environments that help students integrate knowledge, skills, and experiences in meaningful ways (Owen, 2015, p. 5).

Throughout this volume, chapter authors use Fink's (2013) taxonomy of significant learning experiences to scaffold and frame content related to aspects of leadership education. Fink's categories for promoting significant learning - foundational knowledge, application, integration, valuing the human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn – offer examples of ways to construct leadership education initiatives. This taxonomy can be useful whether designing leadership workshops, emerging leader programs, or training students within specific roles (i.e., peer advisors). How to consider developmental sequencing in design, integrative approaches that address "leadership for what?", and applying emotionally intelligent leadership are just a few examples of applying theory and evidence-based practice in this volume.

Expanding upon the concepts identified in Innovative Learning for Leadership Development (Owen, 2015) for professionals tasked with the development of a credit-bearing leadership course, Barnes (2020) notes the focus of student leadership programs on understanding self and others as a key foundation (p. 100). A discussion of the guiding questions developed by the International Leadership Association (ILA, 2009) provides a helpful starting point for course development. Questions such as what conceptual framework will guide the curriculum, students' level of developmental readiness, and identification of teaching and learning methods that can contribute to maximum student learning provide curriculum development direction.

**Importance of reflection**

Multiple volumes offer ways to best incorporate reflection activities in leadership initiatives by recognizing the value of reflection to students' developing sense of self. Reflection can be built into intentional programs or in more informal settings with individual students to aid them in making sense of their experiences. *The Intersectionality of Leadership and Service-Learning* (Wagner & Pigza, 2016), for instance, makes a note of the benefits of critical reflection, which leads participants to investigate their underlying assumptions and beliefs, to question power dynamics [in service-learning], and to consider the difference between charity and change. Numerous chapters in this volume examine how practitioners can explore and respond to tensions surrounding context, reciprocity, power and privilege, and commitments to change and justice. Owen (2016) champions critical reflection as a tool for shifting students' thinking from an individual to a systems level where change may affect many.

Additional approaches to reflection through the use of case studies and assessment approaches are offered that provide useful direction for practitioners. This type of critical reflection also has benefits that extend beyond service-learning arenas. Kelly and Bhangal (2018) provide a framework for the utilization of life narratives as a way to move students from simple to critical self-reflection. This concept moves beyond teaching storytelling skills to engaging students in a journey of deep self-reflection around perspective, social identity, and power. This approach to critical self-reflection can directly contribute to the development of the socially conscious leaders noted earlier.

### Addressing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Recent societal events (e.g., the #BlackLivesMatter movement and the storming of the U.S. Capital) have renewed the need to focus on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the leadership development of college students. Dugan (2018), in *Integrating Critical Perspectives Into Leadership Development,* challenged "that without critical social theory as an integral part of leadership development, not only will we fail to prepare young people to engage with the realities of the world as it is, but we create limiting thresholds to envisioning a more democratic and equitable future" (p. 6). To build upon the challenge Dugan (2018) set, Barnes, Olson, and Reynolds (2018) argue that leadership development curricula must examine the role of power in our society. They offer several reflective questions for leadership educators to consider related to their own preconceived notions of leadership, characteristics of a "good" leader, and what role power plays in constructing learning experiences (pp. 82-83). Examples within this volume of utilizing a life narratives approach and an exercise that explores implicit leader prototypes provide CAPs with additional approaches to incorporate into leadership education.

Given that campuses may struggle to involve a diversity of students in initiatives, Kidd Houze (2021) in *Leadership Learning Through the Lens of Social Class,* addresses the expectation that traditional positional student leader roles (i.e., student government, housing, orientation) require obligations related to money, time, and flexibility that some students are not able to meet. One example offered to expand the engagement of poor and working-class students in leadership experiences is to examine applications for such roles. Selection rubrics could be adjusted to acknowledge and value the work responsibilities, academic commitment, and other outside obligations these students would bring to an experience (Kidd Houze, 2021).

### Assessment and Accountability

In this time of increased accountability in higher education, gaining knowledge on good assessment practices is beneficial. *Assessing Student Leadership* (Roberts & Bailey, 2016) addresses the need for CAPs to develop a structured assessment plan incorporating multiple methods over time and experience, particularly given increased institutional focus and priority on student learning. The development of such plans should include consistent language across initiatives, decisions on what to assess, and with whom collaboration might be possible (Roberts & Bailey, 2016). Building upon the concept of reflection noted earlier, Preston and Peck (2016) offer several examples of reflection in learning as ways to not only prompt students to think but also to assess the impact on student learning of the leadership experiences provided. Their examples range from episodic, the most common form of reflection, to periodic to metacognitive. For those campus activities professionals who are newer to the concept of assessment, Piatt and Woodruff (2016) provide practical suggestions for developing a comprehensive assessment plan, sharing examples from two institutions to provide contextual understanding.

### Global Leadership

As we continue to see an increase in globally connected organizations, leadership education needs to keep pace. But many CAPs may be less familiar with ways to guide the development of global leaders. Roberts and Roberts (2018) offer background and insights on cultivating international perspectives as well as several examples of practice in their volume *Cultivating Students' Capacity for International Leadership*. "It is our belief…that advocating for an international perspective in leadership learning is not an add-on; it is core to a fulsome understanding of leadership in today's world" (Roberts & Roberts, 2018, p. 5). Specifically, addressing global leadership might offer a collaboration opportunity with an office of international student services and a study abroad office to engage international and domestic students in developing a global leadership mindset. Additionally, Widner-Edberg (2018) offers a model of global leadership as well as several best practices for implementation.

### Professional Development

While the focus of leadership education and development is often on students, practitioners themselves can also benefit from enhancing their own professional development. Many volumes in the series offer insights on professional growth and development for practitioners and educators. In consideration of training for student organization advisors, for example, Kane (2017) provides contextual background on the role of student organization advisors that could be utilized as a springboard to a discussion about individual perceptions and challenges of

serving in such roles. "[W]hether the advisor spends time in maintenance roles, growth roles, or content roles…, advisor involvement offers the opportunity for leader development through interaction between advisor and student" (Kane, 2017, p. 62). This idea can then serve as an opportunity to work with advisors on developing intentional ways they can contribute to student leadership development.

Often campus activities professionals are charged with developing training, workshops, and other leadership initiatives but may not feel prepared, well-versed, or believe in themselves as leadership educators. *Becoming and Being a Leadership Educator* (Priest & Jenkins, 2019) provides numerous examples of ways an individual could enhance their view of self-as-leadership-educator or ways to design discussions and workshops for new leadership educators on campus. Reflective exercises offer the opportunity to identify one's distinct talents, experiences, and skills brought into their work. Seemiller and Crosby (2019) offer six specific exercises for leadership educators to utilize in their self-exploration and leadership educator identity development.

Additional ways to utilize NDSL volumes in professional development could include identifying a current issue on one's campus and using a related volume as a "book club" discussion activity. This offers campus activities professionals the opportunity to invite others to participate and to share their expertise as part of such discussions. In another example, individual chapters within a volume could be utilized to frame a leadership workshop for professionals from across a variety of functional areas.

These examples represent just a few ways that campus activities professionals could utilize the content, in whole or specific chapters only, to enhance their practice, expand their professional development, and contribute to developing innovative and inclusive student leaders. Utilizing NDSL supports NACA's mission and vision to "create inclusive learning, meaningful connections" and "create college communities where everyone belongs" (NACA: National Association for Campus Activities, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

The *New Directions for Student Leadership* series provides campus activities professionals with approaches to integrating theory and practice in practitioner-oriented ways. The series provides campus activities professionals with research and scholarship to create or enhance their own evidence-based leadership development practices. The content within each volume offers connections to and insights on NACA's research agenda foci on the influence of campus activities on student learning and the professional development and contributions of campus activities professionals (NACA, 2021). The volumes are written in a way that makes the content accessible, no matter one's functional area. I hope campus activities professionals will become more familiar with the NDSL series and utilize the volumes as resources in their work as a way to imagine and contribute to the creation of the future of leadership education and students-as-leaders within their sphere.

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# *CHARMED:* UNPACKING A WITCHY PORTRAYAL OF STUDENTS' COLLEGE NAVIGATION EXPERIENCES

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*This media review analyzes a contemporary reboot of Charmed (2018). Specifically, we illuminate the show's portrayal of student development, identity, and social and academic life through main character story arcs. While some aspects of the characters' experiences are well-intentioned, the writers often contradict themselves and misrepresent the social dynamics surrounding important issues of identity and self-exploration. Nevertheless, the nuances within season one can underscore opportunities for higher education practitioners to assist students in their college navigation and identity formation processes.*

Media portrayals of college and university life are commonplace. In the 1990s, shows like *Saved by the Bell* and *Moesha* depicted the transition from high school to college. Contemporarily, shows like *Greek* and *Grown-ish* tackle today's college experience. One *Grown-ish* review (Williams & Martin, 2019) underscored how and why we should think about media portrayals of college and what they mean for students whose college introductions come via media. Since more than half of all U.S. college students identify as first-generation, and a growing number hold minoritized identities, examining media portrayals of college can help us understand how students with few(er) ties to higher education conceptualize campus environments (Ives & Castillo-Montoya, 2020).

Upon watching a contemporary reboot of *Charmed* (2018), a show based upon a 1998 series of the same name and concept, we wanted to explore students' development, identity, and social and academic life representations. *Charmed's* (2018) writers underscore the role of co-curricular spaces in helping students understand the fluidity and shifting of one's identity over time (Covington et al., 2018). While often poignant, there are shortcomings to these representations. Namely, the writers contradict themselves in their character framings and discourse around real-world social issues and dynamics. Nevertheless, there are several considerations for student affairs professionals, especially those in campus activities. In the following sections, we review the context of the series, including the cast and characters, and analyze their connections to contemporary theories and practices in student affairs, closing with implications.

## *CHARMED* (2018): CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

The 2018 reboot of the supernatural television *Charmed* follows three (Afro)Latina sisters: Mel Vera (Melonie Diaz), Maggie Vera (Sarah Jeffery), and Macy Vaughn (Madeleine Mantock). The sisters, who discover they are witches destined to fulfill a prophecy to prevent the end of magic as their world knows it, are connected through their maternal lineage and shared campus context. The series begins with the tragic murder of their mother, Marisol Vera (Valerie Cruz). She served as Chair of the Women's Studies Department at Hilltowne University–a campus where the sisters serve as students and employees.

The sisters navigate emerging adulthood, identity development, belonging, and campus involvement throughout season one. The character diversity makes the series interesting to consider through a higher education lens. Maggie is enrolled as an undergraduate student, Mel is enrolled as a graduate student, and Macy serves as a professional in a university research lab. Not only do the characters differ in age and academic interests, but their on-campus involvement also adds a layer of diversity to their campus experiences.

## STUDENT AFFAIRS CONNECTIONS

Season one explores several critical areas of student development: moral reasoning, gender and sexuality, and race. There is specific attention to how student involvement and identity development impact a student's sense of belonging and what that means for interpersonal growth. Below we discuss these depictions and their practical implications.

### Greek Life Involvement and Belonging

Seeking a sense of belonging on campus, Maggie's character rushes the university's Kappa sorority. This storyline provides an in-depth view of her pledging experience, underscoring how the character can build a relational identity (Vignoles et al., 2011) and sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2019; Weiss, 2021) by engaging with others on campus. The show reinforces many negative stereotypes often associated with Greek organizations, such as partying, drinking, rape culture, and cultural appropriation. With this, the writers missed a valuable opportunity to illustrate a more nuanced perspective of Greek Life. Student affairs professionals must often work against negative Greek Life depictions through training, recruitment, and positive association marketing. If the writers had demonstrated Greek Life's value in philanthropy and leadership development (Williams et al., 2022; Tull et al., 2018), viewers might recognize how Greek Life can be additive to the campus context.

### Greek Life as a Moral Development Site

That said, viewers witness positives of Greek life through characters' struggles around morality and ethics within the rush process. Kolberg's (1981) theory of moral development is clearly displayed and especially contentious, such as when Maggie and Mel disagree about Greek Life's value. Maggie does not critique the stereotypes of Greek Life, remaining neutral as she pursues a Kappa bid while Mel rails against the problematic dynamics of the rush process.

Mel's inability to sway from her values illustrates stage six of Kohlberg's (1981) moral development theory, where people are guided by universal ethics. Mathes (2019) expands upon moral development theory to include social evolution. Mathes suggests that stage 6 includes a social justice mindset for all humanity. Mel is often shown viewing the world through a social justice lens, whereas Maggie's actions are consistent with the stage of interpersonally normative morality. Gaining the approval of others takes precedence over individual interests, and gaining Kappa acceptance serves as her greater priority (Kolberg, 1981). As Mathe's (2019) study would suggest, Maggie is less concerned with the greater good and focuses on remaining loyal to her friends in Kappa.

### Students' Moral Development Through Activism

In contrast to Maggie, Mel prioritizes her passion for women's equality and seemingly ignores the value of social involvement beyond this plight. Mel frequently references problems of victim-blaming, the trivialization of sexual assault, and sexually explicit jokes. Mel's campus involvement is rooted in activism and manifests through her critiques of systemic issues surrounding rape culture and sexual consent. Specifically, she organizes a rally against the reinstatement of a professor accused of sexually assaulting a female student. These portrayals reflect recent increases in student activism over the past two decades in off-screen college life (Stewart & Quaye, 2019; Stewart & Williams, 2019).

With Mel, informal campus involvement through student activism is depicted as equally impactful as formal involvement through student organizations or Greek Life (Ardoin et al., In Press). This is important for contemporary student affairs practitioners to understand as students of color, working-class students, and students at the intersections of both, are more likely to hold informal leadership roles (Ardoin et al., In Press; Williams et al., 2022). Mel and Maggie's contrasting stories reflect student development theory. While Maggie is searching for a

sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2019), Mel is challenged to find purpose (Maslow, 1954). Educating others about human rights is central to Mel's values of advocacy. Mel's ability to push against the status quo and challenge Greek culture in collegiate settings is similar to how student activism has erupted from student involvement opportunities that don't consider students' unique identities (Tillepaugh, 2019). Mel's values for her magical heritage and advocacy for others are the most salient parts of her identity; however, she struggles to find a sense of purpose aligning with these identities.

Mel's journey is best reflected in Baxter Magolda's (2001) phases of self-authorship and more recent research on authenticity (Jones, 2016; Jones, et al., 2012). She eventually realizes her academic pursuits are no longer desirable. Mel decides to create her own path by stepping away from her education to study magic and fight against evil full time. Her decision to trust her feelings and change her life's path reflects Magdola's (2001) internal foundation phase. Furthermore, Mel's decision to live authentically involves navigating a world that doesn't recognize her witch identity. Jones (2016) describes this journey towards authenticity as one that involves finding self while navigating away from others' perceptions.

**The Student Involvement Tightrope**

Depicted differences in needs, involvement, morality, and self-authorship align with current research on college students (Garvey et al., 2019). All students come to higher education with different needs and salient identities. *Charmed* underscores how a student's growth can be reflected in their moral decision-making and progress towards self-actualization and transcendence (Maslow, 1954). The intersections of the sisters' stories remind practitioners why they must listen to students to provide the resources and support that align with their individual values. While it is important to encourage formal and informal campus engagement practices, practitioners must consider the challenges such involvement presents (Williams et al., 2022). The characters face numerous obstacles around time management, self-discovery, and a sense of purpose, underscoring a need for comprehensive student support in campus activities and life.

For instance, Maggie struggles to balance Greek Life and academics. Campus activities professionals know this is a struggle for students, and viewers with similar struggles may feel more connected to the show and Maggie's experience. Maggie finds her balance with the help of others, reflecting the positive role of a robust support system in contemporary campus life (Garvey et al., 2019). Moreover, it speaks to the value of campus professionals creating space for student involvement that is capable of meeting students' varying availability, perceptions of their academic success, identities, and values.

## GENDER & RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: A BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT

The sisters' stories are often framed through racial identity. Specifically, Macy—the darker-skinned of the three sisters—draws on her personal understanding of identity to help Maggie and Mel develop their racial identity. In episode fifteen, Maggie and Macy attended a Kappa sorority Halloween party, where Maggie confronted Macy about the lack of feminine appeal in her Halloween costume. Macy uses this moment to tell Maggie about her own identity struggles growing up:

> I went to boarding school in Connecticut in a class of 100 kids. Two of us weren't white. In that environment, you had to solidify what type of minority you were before they decided for you. I was always the smart, serious one. I played that part for so long, I don't know how to be anyway else (Covington et al., 2018).

Macy understood herself and her identity because she was forced to navigate predominantly white learning environments early on.

Biracial students, particularly students with Black heritage like Macy, often develop an identity and way of being based on others' perceptions (Patton et al., 2016; King, 2008). Macy's story reveals her lack of agency in developing her identity. Collins' (2000) theory of Black Feminist Thought underscores the importance of self-definitions

and agency for Black women. Since Black women often face negative stereotypes that define what it means to be a Black woman, being able to define oneself holds immense value (Collins, 2000). To avoid negative labeling ascribed to many Black women, and given Macy's darker complexion, she decided to define herself solely as a successful student. Student affairs professionals must consider the impact of stereotypes and self-agency on the student experience when facilitating spaces for student engagement.

Maggie and Macy's conversation is an example of dichotomous dialogue within the show. This moment enabled Maggie to learn more about the impact of race and environment on Macy's identity, while Macy began to consider how creating an identity that is true to her rather than reflective of others can help her feel her most authentic self. This learning moment reflects the frustrations of many off-screen realities for students of color (Brown et al., 2021; Linder et al., 2019). How Macy's identity as the darker-skinned sister became a teachable moment for Maggie reflects another way Black people, and generally darker-skinned women, are forced to use their stories and traumas to teach others (Brown et al., 2021). Practitioners must, then, encourage dialogue across differences to expand the perspectives of students and encourage them to speak about complex social problems like race, identity, and privilege. However, the onus of those conversations must not require certain demographics of students to teach about realities like stereotyping and racism alone (Linder et al., 2019).

### Anti-Blackness as Pervasive

As practitioner-scholars, we appreciate the show presenting difficult conversations around race and privilege to help viewers deepen their understanding. However, the series frequently fails to fully conceptualize the realities and complexities of race and racialization in the United States. For example, Maggie discovers that the father she grew up with was not her biological father and that she is, in fact, Afro-Latina like Macy, with whom she shares a father. Maggie feels conflicted because she did not grow up immersed in Black culture. This particular identity exploration storyline becomes increasingly problematic when Maggie asks Macy whether it is ethical for her to apply for a scholarship meant for Black students when she only recently learned of her Black heritage.

Using a scholarship to have Maggie contend with her identity is rooted in anti-Blackness, as there is a common misperception among white people and white audiences that Black students have greater access to scholarships due to their race. This false assumption exists despite only about 5% of all scholarships being earmarked for members of a specific racial group (Cabrera, 2018). Furthermore, the story burdens the sister who lacks the privilege of choosing whether she will accept her Black heritage while absolving a sister who can choose when and where her Black heritage enters (Brown et al., 2021). Practitioners must understand how these within-group problems of identity function because doing so will require them to better disaggregate student data and resources within the broader racial hierarchy (Brown et al., 2021).

Maggie decides not to apply for the scholarship, but she joins the Black Student Union to connect more with her racial heritage. This choice exemplifies how student organizations can aid students in developing a stronger sense of self and belonging. In turn, this sense of belonging promotes "positive and or/ prosocial outcomes such as engagement, achievement, wellbeing, happiness, and optimal functioning" (Strayhorn, 2012, p. 22). By portraying the belonging Maggie feels within the Black Student Union, *Charmed* (2018) illustrates the value of spaces that welcome a range of experiences and identities.

### Dichotomist Identity Portrayals

The often-dichotomous presentation of race in the show is also evidenced in storylines about gender and conceptions of good versus evil. As both a lesbian and powerful advocate for others, Mel's character embodies numerous gender tropes, specifically the contemporary stereotype of lesbians as *social justice warriors*. Like many supernatural dramas, *Charmed* binarizes elements of good and evil by presenting good as light and bad or evil as darkness—a framing with cultural and social implications (Gray, 1995). As supposedly good witches, the Elders (the leaders of the magical world) wear white and inhabit bright, sunny rooms. The Sarcana (witches who oppose the Elders) dress in black clothing and dwell in dark rooms, signaling they are "bad."

An agent of the elders, the Whitelighter (a trainer and teacher) character also raises questions. Whitelighter Harry (played by Rupert Evans) is a cisgender-presenting, white, heterosexual male whose role is to support the sisters' development. While teachers of any race and gender can effectively foster growth and development, his positioning follows racialized TV tropes wherein women of color are presented as strong but desperately in need of a white savior to guide them (Aronson, 2017). The continuation of this trope furthers discursive (mis)perceptions audience members may hold about the sisters' agency and who/m can engage and lead on their own terms.

Another question at the nexus of race and gender in the show is the absence of definition of Macy and Maggie's father beyond his Blackness. Limiting him to his racial identity and role as a parent reinforces racialized and gendered stereotypes about Black men as absent fathers (Levs, 2015). While the story reveals that his absence is due to a curse placed on Macy, his absence still perpetuates harmful racial stereotypes and ignores an opportunity to highlight another Black character in the series.

While *Charmed* at times offers more than these binaries, the show's symbolism is important for higher education professionals. These depictions require practitioners to consider: What kinds of implicit and explicit bias might they display towards students? How does the pervasive nature of anti-Blackness and sexism impact which students feel most comfortable and confident in campus spaces? Does art imitate life, or does life imitate art when it comes to binarizing people? Researchers have written at length about how identity binaries, specifically for Black and brown people, can have catastrophic impacts on how students engage within the campus environment. Accordingly, practitioners must make these realities part of ongoing inclusion efforts.

## IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

*Charmed* (2018) offers several implications for practice. While there are disconnects between a supernatural television drama and daily practice, *Charmed* offers an understanding of how the writers perceived and decided to portray the college context. There are instances where highly publicized issues from contemporary, real-life campuses are accurately depicted (e.g., rape culture and student activism). Still, these stories are not the sum of the college context. Practitioners can tell a more holistic story of the experiences and issues students navigate in the college environment.

Since student involvement influences student development, *Charmed* requires practitioners to consider how students understand the college involvement landscape and imagine the campus environment. Campus climate surveys can help practitioners understand how students view their campuses and involvement opportunities. Data can inform how the campus needs to evolve to improve campus climate and engagement for students of varying identities.

Furthermore, an awareness of how media socializes new generations of students can help practitioners better support students in expectation setting, campus navigation, and activity selection (Williams & Martin, 2019). Such considerations will help practitioners facilitate greater alignment between students' engagement and their overall goals, perspectives, and ideals. Students entering campuses are older than traditional-aged students, come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and represent minoritized identities (Alexander, 2020; Levine & Van Pelt, 2021). Practitioners should offer resources and involvement opportunities that speak to this new generation of students. If college is one of the first places students can deeply interact across race, class, and gender differences, then practitioners can support them in their understandings of self and connection to others (Ardoin et al., In Press). There is value in helping students expect conflict, like awareness of differences. Practitioners can give students tools, such as the practice of intergroup dialogue, to interact with diverse environments (Adams et al., 2007).

Students' campus connections and sense of belonging are deeply intertwined with (in)formal student activities engagement. By weaving real-life campus issues into its supernatural plotlines, *Charmed* (2018) approaches difficult topics and conveys their significance to the audience. While there are missed opportunities to nuance student activities and space to critique racial stereotypes, the show underscores part of the broader societal conversations around what college is and means. Accordingly, the show is impactful both for students and practitioners.

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