Guiding Principles: A Review and Analysis of Student Affairs Philosophical Statements.

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Abstract
Over the last decade a number of reports have been issued by the leading student affairs associations, particularly the American College Personnel Association and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, in an attempt to shape the future direction of the student affairs profession. Reports such as the Student Learning Imperative (SLI) (ACPA, 1996), Principles of Good Practice (ACPA/NASPA, 1997), and Powerful Partnerships (Joint Task Force, 1998) have been hailed for introducing a new student affairs philosophy focused on student learning and encouraging collaboration between student and academic affairs professionals. Certainly these reports have had the effect of energizing student affairs professionals and providing a rallying call for the field. For instance, the SLI was featured in a special issue of the Journal of Student Development (1996). Included in that issue were reaction papers prepared by several prominent scholars discussing implications of the SLI for student affairs scholarship and practice. In addition, a cursory review of the ACPA conference programs for the last several years highlights the number of collaborative initiatives that have been developed between student affairs and academic affairs professionals as well as the increased focus on student learning as an outcome.

Disciplines
Higher Education | Other Education | Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education | Student Counseling and Personnel Services

Comments
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Guiding Principles: A Review and Analysis of Student Affairs Philosophical Statements

Nancy J. Evans with Robert D. Reason

Over the last decade a number of reports have been issued by the leading student affairs associations, particularly the American College Personnel Association and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, in an attempt to shape the future direction of the student affairs profession. Reports such as the Student Learning Imperative (SLI) (ACPA, 1996), Principles of Good Practice (ACPA/NASPA, 1997), and Powerful Partnerships (Joint Task Force, 1998) have been hailed for introducing a new student affairs philosophy focused on student learning and encouraging collaboration between student and academic affairs professionals. Certainly these reports have had the effect of energizing student affairs professionals and providing a rallying call for the field. For instance, the SLI was featured in a special issue of the Journal of Student Development (1996). Included in that issue were reaction papers prepared by several prominent scholars discussing implications of the SLI for student affairs scholarship and practice. In addition, a cursory review of the ACPA conference programs for the last several years highlights the number of collaborative initiatives that have been developed between student affairs and academic affairs professionals as well as the increased focus on student learning as an outcome.

However, a review of earlier philosophical statements suggests that these ideas are not new. Indeed, a careful reading of the Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV) (ACE, 1937/1983a), the work of Lloyd-Jones and Smith (1954), Brown’s (1972) monograph—A Return to the Academy, documents associated with Phase II of the Tomorrow’s Higher Education (THE) project (ACPA, 1974; Miller & Prince, 1977; THE Project, 1975), and other student affairs position papers indicates that although the context and language may have changed, the core values of the profession have generally remained consistent over the last century. In addition, they are grounded in the philosophy of pragmatism exemplified by the work of Dewey in the first half of the 20th century (Young, 1996).

To truly understand what student affairs practice is all about, it is crucial to understand its roots. Thelin (1996) noted that knowledge of landmark events and historical precedents is necessary to provide the background for considering the

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complexities facing higher education today. Caple (1998) pointed out that, History can, if approached seriously, explain how we have gotten to where we are, give meaning to present behavior, and stimulate debate over where we are going next. It will not allow us to predict the future, to be sure, but it can help us choose the direction in which we move. (p. vii)

In this paper, we review a number of the major documents that have guided the student affairs profession, briefly noting the historical context and purpose of each statement and then summarizing its message. We next identify the underlying themes that have guided our profession throughout its history, demonstrating how these themes emerged and evolved over time. Emphasis is placed on the historical origins of current thinking about the roles and functions of the student affairs field and the need to recognize and acknowledge this history in order to move forward in implementing the suggestions provided in our most recent documents. A look toward the future concludes the discussion.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR DOCUMENTS
Thirteen major student affairs philosophical statements were reviewed. One of these, Phase II of the THE Project, actually consisted of three separately published works but were considered one statement because the espoused principles were similar in each document.

The Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV; 1937)
The student affairs field developed early in the 20th century (Nuss, 1996). Several factors contributed to the need for professionals who were responsible for overseeing the out-of-classroom activities of students. First, faculty, following the model of the German research universities, were devoting less attention to the well-being of their students to focus more time on their research endeavors (Nuss). Second, the population of young adults entering college was becoming more diverse (Crowley, 1949). In particular, women began entering college in greater numbers (Nuss). These “new students” created a perceived need for increased “adult” supervision to satisfy parents that the welfare of their children was being addressed (Caple, 1998). Third, higher education was no longer the sole purview of those studying for the ministry and “learned” roles in society (Crowley). The world of work was expanding and college graduates had many more opportunities from which to choose. Experts were needed to assist students in determining a career direction and finding employment following graduation (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). The first deans were usually faculty members who had a strong interest in students but who also could garner the respect of their faculty colleagues (Young, 1996). Early on, the need for
specialized training was recognized and preparation programs were developed, the first one at Columbia University prior to 1920 (Nuss).

During the years of the Great Depression, the needs of students for vocational guidance and psychological counseling increased and the responsibilities of student affairs professionals expanded and became more complex (Caple, 1998; Nuss, 1996). Members of the new profession began meeting together and formed professional associations to learn from each other to more effectively address the issues facing the students with whom they worked. The need to clarify the role of “student personnel workers” (as they were then called) was recognized. In 1937, the American Council on Education convened a group of leading scholars, including Esther Lloyd-Jones, W. H. Cowley, C. Gilbert Wrenn, D. G. Paterson and others, to develop a statement to guide the work of student affairs professionals.

The SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a) was foremost a statement of philosophy rather than an outline of services to be provided on college campuses. Its authors were heavily influenced by the pragmatic philosophy of education advocated by John Dewey (Dennis Roberts, personal communication, March 27, 2001). Esther Lloyd-Jones, one of the primary authors of the SPPV, was a student at Columbia when Dewey was on the faculty of that institution (Young, 1996). Citing the work of Childs (1956) and Taylor (1952), Young listed the following tenets of pragmatism: (a) every individual is worthy of respect; (b) knowledge is best gained from experience; (c) cognition, affect, and morality are intertwined, and each is an important component of knowledge; and (d) every individual has the potential for growth.

The authors of the SPPV stated that, “it is the task of colleges and universities so to vitalize this and other educational purposes as to assist the student in developing to the limits of his [sic] potentialities and in making his [sic] contribution to the betterment of society” (ACE, 1937/1983a, p. 76). They stressed that this mission required institutions to “consider the student as a whole...[and] puts emphasis, in brief, upon the development of the student as a person rather than upon his [sic] intellectual training alone” (p. 76). In addition to this holistic consideration of the student, the SPPV authors stressed the role of student affairs professionals in the improvement of instruction; emphasized collaboration with faculty, parents, and other constituencies; and called for research and development of empirically grounded theory to guide student affairs practice. Finally, Caple (1998) pointed out the attention given to context in the SPPV:

Reflected throughout the document was the Experimentalists’ [i.e., pragmatists’] assertion that human beings were not discreet [sic] and separate from society but developed as unique personalities as a result of participation in the social structure.
It embodied the Experimentalist’s philosophy of achieving greater linkage between institution and community, of the growth of a unique personality through interacting with the environment, of the wholeness of the human organism, and of the individual student not being allowed to get lost among the masses of students. (p. 45)

Student Personnel Point of View (1949)

World War II had a major impact on the country and on higher education (Caple, 1998). The United States expanded its vision beyond its boundaries to play a major role in world politics. A cold war between the Soviet Union and the United States quickly developed as the ideologies of the two countries clashed. Patriotism and conservative societal conditions became prevalent, as the country perceived that the values it had so recently fought to preserve might be in jeopardy. In addition, military advances, including the development of the atomic bomb, led to an increased emphasis on science, technology, and bureaucracy and a concomitant devaluing of individualism and creativity.

Higher education was greatly affected by these shifts in policy and philosophy. A major factor was the huge influx of veterans into colleges and universities as a result of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act (the GI Bill), passed in 1944 to address the needs of returning war veterans for training to reenter the work force (Nuss, 1996; Thelin, 1996). This legislation led to increased diversity in the student bodies of most institutions and the need for expanded services to meet the varied needs of these new students (Nuss). In 1946, President Harry Truman established a commission to consider the role of higher education in the changing nation (Caple, 1998). Its report, issued in 1947, called for expanded access to higher education, more extensive financial aid for students, and a broader curriculum including more focus on global issues (Nuss).

Recognizing the changes in society following World War II and the resulting growth of the student affairs profession, the American Council on Education convened a group of faculty and student affairs professionals to review and revise the SPPV (Caple, 1998). Chaired by E. G. Williamson, the group developed an expanded philosophical statement, greatly influenced by the Truman Commission report, which emphasized education for democratic citizenship, internationalization of higher education, and the application of education to solve social problems. The influence of the scientific, militaristic, and bureaucratic values of the time was also evident in the document.

Unlike the 1937 SPPV, the 1949 statement focused extensively on the structure and administration of student personnel services. What services were to be provided and how the student affairs division was to be organized were of primary concern.
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With the increasing attention paid to functional specialization, the role of student affairs in informing instruction and collaborating with faculty was much less evident in the 1949 statement.

The authors of the revised SPPV very much built on the earlier statement, however, and retained the pragmatic philosophy evident in the original SPPV. A holistic understanding of students undergirded the recommendations concerning student affairs programs and initiatives. In addition, the authors of 1949 statement went a step further in stressing the importance of recognizing individual differences in students and stressing that students are agents in their own development and should be included in decision-making. The document's creators also recognized that higher education is very much influenced by external events and context. A call for the intentional use of out-of-class activities to educate students was added. The importance of assessment and evaluation of services was clear, demonstrating that the 1949 authors continued to understand the value of student affairs being an empirically based profession.

Student Personnel Work as Deeper Teaching (1954)

The early 1950s saw a deepening of the conservative atmosphere that began after World War II (Caple, 1998). The McCarthy Hearings, interrogations of suspected communist sympathizers, epitomized the anticommunist feeling and disregard for civil liberties that existed in the country. In the face of the reactionary nature of these hearings and related legislation, most attempts at social reform were thwarted and the intellectual climate of colleges and universities was negatively affected.

Bucking this climate, in 1954 Esther Lloyd-Jones and Margaret Smith published a book encouraging the student affairs profession to return to their roots as educators to facilitate the development of students. They “decried the way the student affairs profession was emulating large, impersonal, specialized organizations” (Young, 1996, p. 90) and becoming just “an adjunct of education” (Lloyd-Jones & Smith, 1954, p. 348). Echoing the 1937 SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a), they stressed the importance of collaboration with faculty to achieve a strong campus community in which learning could take place. Throughout this book, the tenets of Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy ran deep: belief in the worth of the individual; the equal role of feeling, thinking, and working in the person’s life; the importance of experience in learning; and the notion that each person has important roles to play in the various settings he or she occupied (Young, 1996).

The Hazen Report (1968)

The 1960s were a time of turmoil in American society as the Civil Rights movement
and the Vietnam War called into question the conservative values of the 1950s (Caple, 1998). On college campuses, trends included increased involvement of the government in the form of financial aid and regulations, a shift from in loco parentis to a contractual relationship with students, a greater focus on equal access, changing demographics including more adult and part-time students, and increasing levels of student activism and civil disobedience (Nuss, 1996). In student affairs, increasing specialization occurred in an attempt to meet the needs of the larger and more diverse student population. In addition, research on the impact of college on students increased.

The turmoil on college campuses in the 1960s led to recognition of the need for a deeper understanding of college students’ developmental processes and issues. The Hazen Foundation pulled together a committee to examine existing behavioral science research and theory and commissioned a report that was published in 1968. The basic premise of this report was that higher education needed to be more intentional in facilitating the total development of students because college is a major agent in the developmental process. The authors stressed the importance of using research findings to guide the development of curriculum, learning strategies, and extracurricular programs.

The report’s authors summarized existing research related to adolescent development, pointing out ways in which colleges and universities influenced students and recommending additional steps that could be taken to enhance developmental outcomes. A great deal of attention was placed on student learning, both in and out of the classroom, and the importance of addressing affective as well as cognitive development. Attention to individual differences in the design of learning experiences was stressed. The importance of recognizing students’ agency in the developmental process was an important theme throughout the report.

A Return to the Academy (1972)

In response to significant changes anticipated in higher education as a result of the rapid societal change experienced in the 1960s, ACPA launched its THE project in 1968 (THE Project, 1975). The first step was commissioning Bob Brown to prepare a monograph focusing attention on the changing roles of the student affairs profession in light of these changes (Nuss, 1996).

Very much echoing Deweyian philosophy and the beliefs of Lloyd-Jones and Smith (1954), Brown’s (1972) major assumption was that “student development has been and must remain one of the primary goals of higher education” (p. 7). This premise was based on a holistic view of the student in which affective and cognitive development are seen as being equally important and individual differences
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in students are recognized. Brown advocated intentionally addressing all aspects of development in the classroom and urged student affairs professionals to become involved in the academic arena, working with faculty in a collaborative manner to influence curriculum and encourage developmental teaching approaches. He also encouraged student affairs professionals to assume the role of behavioral scientists, engaging in research and theory-building to further our knowledge base with regard to students. Finally, Brown called for colleges and universities to be more accountable to students and the public and to prepare students for the challenges they would face in a changing society.

Tomorrow’s Higher Education, Phase II (1975, 1977)

In the 1970s, the United States experienced economic challenges including increased unemployment, failing businesses, and declining productivity (Caple, 1998). The public became disillusioned with politics as special interest groups fought for control of the major parties and an election scandal forced President Nixon to resign his office. Sex and gender roles became less defined as the women’s rights movement increased options for women in the workforce and contraception provided greater freedom (Caple).

Partially in reaction to these issues as well as to the campus unrest of the previous decade, the 1970s saw decreasing support for and confidence in higher education (Thelin, 1996). Access continued to be an issue, along with the added pressures of addressing social justice issues and providing appropriate supports for a more diverse student body. Concerns over academic standards were heard in reaction to increased access. Student affairs professionals, often criticized for failing to control students during the turbulent decade of the 1960s, felt a strong need to rethink their role and purpose (Caple, 1998).

In 1974, Harold Grant, then president of ACPA, called together a group of leading scholars, chaired by Ted Miller and including Bob Brown, Dick Caple, Melvene Hardee, Burns Crookston and others, to develop a new operational model for student affairs as Phase II of the THE project (Caple, 1998; THE Project, 1975). ACPA published A Student Development Model of Student Affairs in Tomorrow’s Higher Education (1974) outlining the work of this group. A later conference in 1976 exploring organizational issues led to the publication of The Future of Student Affairs by Ted Miller and Judith Prince in 1977. This book provided guidelines for implementing the principles advocated in the THE project (Caple).

Those who worked on Phase II of the THE project stressed the importance of student affairs focusing on student development, being intentional in educating student affairs professionals, and being proactive in the face of rapid change and
growth in higher education. A holistic view of students underscored these writings, as it did prior statements. The authors of these documents, however, more specifically noted that a developmental perspective requires being inclusive of student diversity. An interactionist perspective was also more clearly evident in the following comment from "A Student Development Model": "The students' milieu is a significant factor in development and includes both place and time not scheduled by the institution" (n.p.). Ongoing rigorous evaluation of programs and collaborative initiatives with faculty were viewed as crucial to the success of student affairs programs. In phase II of the THE project, the involved scholars stressed the importance of preparation of student affairs professionals in the areas of goal setting, assessment, instruction, consultation, and milieu management.

Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education (COSPA; 1974)
Concurrently with the THE project and in reaction to the same issues facing the student affairs field in the 1970s, the Commission on Professional Development of COSPA developed a new statement of philosophy and professional preparation. This group included representatives from the American College Personnel Association, the Association of College and University Housing Officers, the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors, and other student affairs associations. Although Alva Cooper chaired the committee, the final statement was largely written by Harold Grant, George Jones, and Gerald Saddlemire, and was published in the Journal of College Student Personnel in 1974.

The authors of the COSPA statement viewed students as active participants in their own learning. They stressed the developmental role of student affairs in working collaboratively with students to achieve their potential for self-direction. They also highlighted the need to be proactive in policy formulation and decision-making to positively impact students. Administrative, instructional, and consultant roles were proposed for student affairs professionals. Skills in goal setting, assessment, and facilitating development were viewed as crucial in carrying out these roles. The authors of the statement went on to outline recommendations concerning educational preparation to insure that student affairs professionals would be able to develop the skills necessary to carry out their functions.

A Perspective on Student Affairs (1987)
The decade of the 1980s saw continuing deficits in the federal budget. Social problems, including addiction, poverty, crime, and mental health issues were increasingly apparent (Caple, 1998). The vicissitudes of funding were of increasing concern in higher education and led to greater reliance on outside funding to sustain
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programs, as well as increased initiatives to recruit previously underserved students (e.g., students of color, adult students) (Caple; Thelin, 1996). Marketing, fund-raising, and recruitment became buzzwords for educators (Thelin). Decreased resources also caused institutions to reexamine their missions and goals (Caple). Along with their faculty colleagues, student affairs professionals took time to consider their role in this new environment.

With 1987 marking the 50th anniversary of the SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a), then NASPA president Judith Chambers established a committee to reexamine the SPPV and develop a new statement delineating the assumptions and purposes underscoring student affairs work. This group, the Plan for a New Century Committee, was chaired by Arthur Sandeen and worked in collaboration with the American Council on Education. The group issued A Perspective on Student Affairs (1987) with the stated intention of presenting a document that would “stimulate greater understanding of student affairs among leaders in higher education” (p. iv). The paper was distributed to ACE members (including college presidents and senior academic and financial officers), senior student affairs officers who were NASPA members, and faculty (Kuh, personal communication, 1987).

The authors of this report took the position that “the academic mission of the institution is preeminent” (p. 9) and that student affairs should support rather than compete with this mission. The responsibility of student affairs professionals to their institutions as well as to students was stressed. Reflecting back on the pragmatic roots of the profession, however, the uniqueness of each student and the importance of respecting differences were also key points in the statement. The need to understand and address affective as well as cognitive aspects of student learning in and out of the classroom was noted. Other Deweyian assumptions included in the report included the need to create a positive environment in which learning could occur, the responsibility that students have for their own lives, and the importance of teaching effective citizenship.

Reasonable Expectations (1994)

The 1990s saw a major transformation of United States society caused by continuing economic challenges, the explosion of technology, demographic changes, globalization, increasing government regulation, and changing social norms (Woodard, 1998). “Doing more with less” became the motto for higher education and student affairs (Thelin, 1996, p. 19). Several reports appeared in the 1990s as the profession attempted to legitimize its role in the face of these significant challenges.

First, another NASPA project was launched in 1994. Titled Reasonable Expectations,
the purpose of this project was to examine what students and institutions should expect from each other in five areas: teaching and learning, curriculum, institutional integrity, campus life, and educational services. The authors of this piece, George Kuh, James Lyons, Tom Miller, and JoAnne Trow, attempted to focus attention on the quality of undergraduate education. They recognized the diverse nature of higher education in the United States and provided expectations that fit a wide range of students. Individuality, context, and holistic development of students were stressed. Cooperation and collaboration between faculty and student affairs administrators were assumed and a great deal of focus was placed on instructional and curricular expectations.

The Student Learning Imperative (1996)
In the fall of 1993, ACPA President Charles Schroeder convened a group of scholars and leaders in higher education (including George Kuh, Alexander Astin, Helen Astin, Theodore Marchese, Ernest Pascarella, and others) “to examine how student affairs educators could enhance student learning and personal development” (ACPA, 1996, p. 5). The final version of the Student Learning Imperative was published in 1996. In the statement, the authors asserted that demands for accountability would require a reprioritizing of the goals of higher education. They suggested that student learning should be the primary goal for everyone involved in higher education, including student affairs professionals.

Although the SLI is often cited as moving the student affairs field in a new direction, the authors of this document reframed and restated many of the themes identified in earlier philosophical statements, beginning with the 1937 SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a). Collaboration was a key to the “seamless environment” advocated in the SLI. An interactionist perspective was implied in the suggestion that milieu management be used to create environments in which learning can occur. Clearly, the authors of this statement called on student affairs professionals to assume an educational role and to base their work on an empirically grounded and tested knowledge base.

Principles of Good Practice (1997)
In 1996, ACPA President Paul Oliaro and NASPA President Suzanne Gordon commissioned a joint committee, cochaired by Greg Blimling and Elizabeth Whitt, to draft Principles of Good Practice. Inventories to assess good practice were prepared by a second committee led by the two presidents. A document including both the statement and the inventories was published in 1997. According to Oliaro and Gordon, “The principles and the inventories are designed to offer student affairs educators another tool to use in the creation of positive learning environments for our students.” (n.p.)
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The authors of this report defined good practices as those that encourage active learning, development of values and ethical behavior, high expectations for student learning, empirically based inquiry to enhance student and institutional outcomes, stewardship of resources, collaboration, and inclusive and supportive communities. Assumptions about the holistic development of students and the value of individual differences and potential supported these principles. The authors also noted that the principles must be read with historical and institutional contexts in mind.

Powerful Partnerships (1998)
A Joint Task Force on Student Learning, with representatives from the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), ACPA, and NASPA, issued their final report in June 1998. Titled Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning, this statement is based on the premise that “only when everyone on campus—particularly academic affairs and student affairs staff—shares the responsibility for student learning will we be able to make significant progress in improving it” (p. 1). The authors first summarized research findings about student learning and implications of this scholarship for teaching, curricula, learning environments, and assessment. Examples were provided of exemplary collaborative academic and student affairs programs designed to facilitate student learning.

The importance of collaboration for the purpose of achieving learning outcomes was stressed in this document. The authors noted that educators have a responsibility to model for students by working with others to achieve common goals. In presenting research findings related to student learning, empirically based practice was advocated. The learning principles that were presented underscored the importance of holistic development, attention to individual differences, creation of supportive environments, context, and student agency. Accountability to outside constituencies such as governing boards, communities, and accrediting agencies was recognized.

The Trends Project (1999)
The Trends Project grew out of an initiative of the ACPA Senior Scholars to identify a research agenda they could share with the newly identified ACPA Emerging Scholars (Johnson & Cheatham, 1999). In 1997, Susan Komives and doctoral students at the University of Maryland completed a trends analysis by reviewing existing literature and documents from numerous higher education professional associations. They identified eight trends that will affect the future of higher education. The Senior Scholars next prepared position papers focusing on each of these trends and developed a series of related research questions. These questions were then disseminated to encourage research activity in the identified areas.
The trends identified by the Senior Scholars included: (a) improving access and educational success for diverse students, (b) responding to the rising cost of higher education, (c) learning and teaching, (d) technology, (e) the changing nature of work in higher education, (f) collaboration and partnerships, (g) accountability for student affairs, and (h) changing government roles relative to higher education. Themes identified in previous statements reappeared in these papers. As we have noted, diversity, teaching and learning, collaboration, accountability, and the role and function of student affairs professionals have been familiar topics for student affairs professionals for decades. Newer areas of concern appear to be technology, affordability, and governmental relations, perhaps in response to external forces during a historical time when technological change was rapid and the value of higher education was being questioned.

UNDERLYING THEMES
The themes that emerged from the documents reviewed above include: a holistic perspective, attention to individual differences, student agency, an interactionist perspective, consideration of context, intentionality, empirically grounded initiatives, a role in instruction and learning, collaboration, functional focus, education for citizenship, and accountability. The first three of these themes focus on the manner in which students are viewed and the second two acknowledge the role of the environment in student development. The next five themes relate to the ways in which student affairs professionals carry out their work, and the final two themes suggest that student affairs must consider its larger responsibility to society. Table 1 includes a summary of the major themes identified in these reports.

View of Students
The most prevalent and foundational concept found in all of the statements we reviewed is the notion that the “whole” student must be considered in every educational endeavor. From the 1937 SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a) through the Trends Project papers (Johnson & Cheatham, 1999), the importance of recognizing affective as well as cognitive processes was a major theme. The authors of the various reports stressed that developmental and learning outcomes must be holistic in nature. Lloyd-Jones and Smith’s book, Student Personnel as Deeper Teaching (1954), as well as later statements focused on learning, advocated learning strategies that consider affective needs as well as cognitive learning styles.

Respect for individual differences is a second long-standing value of the profession. The early statements reflected a more simplistic understanding of this concept, calling for treating each student as an individual (ACE, 1949/1983b).
TABLE 1.
Themes Found in Student Affairs Position Papers

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<th>Theme</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SPPVI</td>
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<td>Holistic perspective</td>
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<td>Attention to individual</td>
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<td>differences</td>
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<td>Student agency</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Interactionist perspective</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Consideration of context</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Intentionality</td>
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<td>Empirically grounded</td>
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<td>initiatives</td>
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<td>Role in instruction</td>
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<td>and learning</td>
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<td>Collaboration</td>
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<td>Functional focus</td>
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<td>Education for citizenship</td>
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<td>Accountability</td>
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Note. *SPPVI = Student Personnel Point of View (ACE, 1937); SPPVII = Student Personnel Point of View (ACE, 1949); DT = Student Personnel Work as Deeper Teaching (Lloyd-Jones & Smith, 1954); Hazen = The Student in Higher Education (Committee on the Student in Higher Education, Hazen Foundation, 1968); Brown = Student Development in Tomorrow’s Higher Education — A Return to the Academy (Brown, 1972); THE II = Tomorrow’s Higher Education Project (ACPA, 1974, T. H. E. Project, 1975, Miller & Prince, 1977); COSPA = Student Development Services in Higher Education (COSPA, 1974); NASPA = A Perspective on Student Affairs (NASPA, 1987); RE = Reasonable Expectations (NASPA, 1994); SLI = The Student Learning Imperative (ACPA, 1996); PGP = Principles of Good Practice (ACPA/NASPA, 1997); PP = Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning (Joint Task Force, 1998); Trends = Higher Education Trends for the Next Century: A Research Agenda for Student Success (Johnson & Cheatham, 1999).
No laboration was provided concerning ways in which students might differ. As United States society became more complex and student populations became more diverse, the need to be more knowledgeable about older students, students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and various racial and ethnic populations was more explicitly stated. In addition to understanding and being sensitive to the needs of different types of students, authors of later statements also recognized the importance of educating all students about diversity, appreciation of differences, and respect for all people, regardless of background.

Assisting students to develop a sense of agency was recognized as a third important goal for student affairs professionals. Statements about the important role that students play in their own development were present in early philosophy statements as well as later documents. An underlying goal note in many of these papers was to provide students with opportunities to increase self-awareness and self-direction. Providing students with significant choice and meaningful educational experiences that enable them to engage in reflection and meaning-making was stressed throughout these reports.

The Role of the Environment
An interactionist perspective threads through the majority of the reviewed student affairs philosophy statements. Strongly influenced by pragmatic philosophy and the early work of Burns Crookston and other scholars who stressed the important role played by the environment in student development, the authors of the field’s major documents called on student affairs professionals to “manage the milieu” and create supportive “learning communities.”

The statements also pointed out the importance of considering context when developing student affairs and academic initiatives. In some cases, particularly in the 1949 SPPV (ACE, 1949/1983b), context was defined as the whole world. The statement itself illustrated the influence of historical context with its references to helping students learn to live in a global society and become better citizens, overriding issues in the post-World War II era. In other cases, context referred to issues facing United States society (for example, Brown’s 1972 references to changing societal norms around religion and marriage and family) or to institutional values and mission (for example, the stress in Principles of Good Practice on being aware of the institutions’ goals and using resources to further those goals).

The Work of Student Affairs
Beginning with the 1949 SPPV (ACE, 1949/1983b), authors of all of the philosophical statements advocated an intentional approach to student affairs work.
Philosophical Statements

Merely providing services to students who showed up with needs and requests was viewed as inadequate for a profession that truly wishes to have an impact on students. The importance of identifying developmental and learning outcomes and designing interventions to achieve these outcomes was highlighted again and again.

To be intentional, the statements pointed out, the work of student affairs professionals must be grounded in research and theory. Indeed the first SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a) advocated for further research to increase understanding of student needs. Brown (1972) called on student affairs professionals to view themselves as behavioral scientists and to actively engage in research, assessment, and evaluation. Many of the statements, most recently Powerful Partnerships (Joint Task Force, 1998), began with a summary of research findings about student development or learning, followed by a demonstration of ways that practice could be informed by this knowledge base.

The role of student affairs in instruction was also a common theme in every one of the documents reviewed. Many student affairs professionals erroneously believe that student learning is a new initiative for the field. A careful reading of the SPPV (ACE, 1937/1983a) reveals that student affairs professionals were being called upon to teach and to advise faculty about learning principles and student characteristics as early as 1937. Although the authors of the 1949 SPPV (ACE, 1949/1983b) moved away from instruction as a central focus of student affairs, Lloyd-Jones and Smith (1954) quickly reminded the field of its importance. Brown's (1972) monograph is titled A Return to the Academy; in it he strongly advocated that student affairs work be done in academic settings and that student affairs professionals play a central role in instruction and education of students. Certainly the Student Learning Imperative restated and reemphasized the importance of student learning as the most crucial outcome of higher education and provided new energy for student affairs to assume an educational role in college and university settings.

Closely tied to the instructional role that the statements called on student affairs professionals to play, is the role of collaborator. Again, beginning with the first SPPV statement (ACE, 1937/1983a), cooperation with faculty and other agents of the institution has been seen as critical to accomplish the goals of student development and learning established for the profession. According to the authors of this statement and later ones, student affairs professionals need to collaborate in many ways. First, student affairs professionals are called on to provide information to faculty and others about the needs, characteristics, and developmental processes of students. Second, they work together with faculty to develop classroom initiatives and design curricular innovations to accomplish learning outcomes. Finally, they serve as co-instructors and program providers to carry out learning initiatives and
to build learning communities.

The organizational structure of student affairs was the focus of much of the 1949 SPPV (ACE, 1949/1983b). The manner in which student affairs professionals were to carry out their responsibilities was as important, if not more so, to the authors of this piece as the goals and principles of the field. This emphasis on function was also apparent in the documents of the 1970s—in the COSPA report (1974) and the second THE report (1975), the authors wrote extensively about the various functions that student affairs professionals should perform on campus. Later statements lack this emphasis on function.

Responsibility to Society

Less consistent, yet still apparent in several of the student affairs philosophical statements, were reminders to the field of its responsibilities to society. The authors of the 1949 SPPV (ACE, 1949/1983b) were probably the most adamant about the importance of preparing students to be good democratic citizens. Brown's (1972) statement also noted that student affairs professionals must consider the students' place in society and help them develop the skills to assume their roles in the larger environment. The authors of the 1987 NASPA statement and Principles of Good Practice (ACPA/NASPA, 1997) also recognized effective citizenship as an important goal of higher education.

Accountability to society is a consistent theme in the position papers written in the 1990s. Again, the influence of historical context seems clear with regard to this concern. A rapidly changing society and increasing scrutiny by outside agents such as governing boards, state and federal legislators, and the media have sensitized higher education to the importance of its reputation with external audiences. To secure necessary support to accomplish its goals, accountability to society is likely to continue to be an important consideration for student affairs.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The 13 statements of philosophy we examined have guided student affairs practice and preparation for over 60 years. In reviewing these works, we are left with the feeling that the student affairs field has known what it is about since its inception. Student affairs professionals' responsibility to insure the total development of all students by creating supportive and responsive environments in collaboration with their faculty colleagues remains as vital a goal now as it was in 1937. Although the field's knowledge base has increased and the language used to describe its mission may have changed, its overarching goals remain constant and provide a clear and critical direction as higher education enters the new century.
Philosophical Statements

A closer examination of these works leads to some interesting conclusions, however. First, the common foundation of all these statements, and therefore of the student affairs profession, seems to be the pragmatic philosophy of John Dewey. The principles he advocated (e.g., the worth of the individual, a holistic approach, the importance of experience, and attention to the environment) are the common threads that have guided the student affairs profession from its beginnings.

Where more variation is apparent is in regard to the roles and functions of student affairs professionals. The 1937 SPPV was clearly focused on the collaborative and educational role of student affairs, but in 1949, the field seemed to drift away from this focus and adopt a more subordinate position. Specific out-of-class functions were listed in the revised SPPV and administration took precedence over instruction. Lloyd-Jones and Smith (1954), the Hazen Committee (1968), and Brown (1972) all took exception to this shift and called for a return to the original educational role of student affairs. In the 1970s and 1980s, however, the field again focused its attention on noninstructional functions and roles. The strongest statement of the support function of student affairs was found in the 1987 NASPA paper, which concluded that the “academic mission of the institution is preeminent” (p. 9) and that “the work of student affairs should not compete with and cannot substitute for that academic experience”; rather “student affairs enhances and supports the academic mission” (p. 10). The authors of statements written in the 1990s rejected this position, strongly advocating a return to a collaborative role with faculty and an educational mission for the student affairs field. Given the strong push for accountability over the last decade, certainly this position seems more tenable than one that suggests that the role of student affairs is merely extracurricular.

Have these 13 statements really had an impact on the field of student affairs or were they merely time-consuming writing projects to keep leading student affairs scholars busy? To the extent that new student affairs professionals read and absorb the statements, they do much to underscore the centrality of the student affairs field in higher education. In the largely positivist environment of the various academic disciplines, which focus on the life of the mind, scientific method, and finding the truth through disciplined study, the contrasting values represented by the pragmatic philosophy of student affairs are an important counterbalance. Although each of these statements did restate and reinforce core values presented in earlier position papers, the process of revisiting and confirming these values is healthy, particularly given the unfortunate lack of attention paid to the history of student affairs in most preparation programs. Serious study of the impact of these reports on the practice of student affairs is needed.

However, we are left with the nagging question, “Is that all there is?” In reviewing
the documents, the influence of education (student learning), psychology (development of students), and management (service to students) is clearly evident. But we wonder at the lack of attention to concepts from political science, anthropology, sociology, communication, and other disciplines that would seem to have additional and important ideas to contribute. Particularly in light of the rapidly changing demographics of higher education and the global perspectives institutions must consider, cultural perspectives from anthropology, principles of cross-cultural communication, and group dynamics and group process variables discussed by sociologists would seem informative.

Perhaps the reason that the student affairs field is still trying to justify its presence on the campus is because student affairs professionals have been too “nice.” Over and over, the field has stated that its role is to provide services needed by students, to support the academic mission, and to collaborate with faculty. Although these are admirable goals, to truly have an impact on higher education, perhaps it is time to be less cooperative.

Where are advocacy and activism in this list of student affairs functions? The authors of the documents that provide the philosophical foundations of the student affairs profession have failed to address the proactive role of advocating for the needs of students. Such advocacy is critically important, especially in light of the complex issues facing traditionally disenfranchised students. We believe that the next major philosophical statement of the student affairs profession—the one that will guide student affairs in the 21st century—must address the need for student affairs professionals to view their role on campus through a critical lens, to interject their professional values into their work, and to become change agents. In addition to being service providers and educators, to truly be effective, student affairs professionals must explicitly embrace the roles of student advocate and social activist.

A significant number of student affairs professionals currently do see themselves as student advocates and work to carry out this function on their campuses. In addition, some student affairs researchers are beginning to employ critical theory to examine higher education. However, the profession must institutionalize these values in a statement to be read along side those reviewed in this article. Given the changing nature of students attending college and the increasing complexity of society, we would argue that Deweyian principles are no longer enough. Rather, student affairs professionals should seriously examine critical theory as the lens through which to view the world.

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