

*College Student Personnel Association of  
New York State*

**Guide to Graduate Programs in  
Student Affairs and Higher Education  
in New York State**

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**Considering a Career in Student Affairs**  
**By Dr. Patrick Love**

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Are you looking for a meaningful career? A career in which you can make a difference in the lives of other people? A career where you could work at a small liberal arts college, a community college, or a big university? A career where you will be challenged to develop skills in a variety of areas, such as leadership, advising, administration, or supervision? If so, then you are in the right place, because the field of student affairs provides just such careers.

The purpose of this essay is to provide information about the field of student affairs to users of this directory, especially those users from outside the field. This brief essay identifies:

- the roots of the student affairs profession;
- foundational documents and beliefs;
- what jobs student affairs professionals hold (e.g., residence director, academic advisor, dean of students);
  
- the types of departments in which student affairs professionals work (e.g., financial aid, orientation, career services);
- the types of institutions in which student affairs professionals work (e.g., community colleges, liberal arts colleges, research universities);
- where student affairs is going (our future); and
- why you might consider a career in students affairs.

### **History of Student Affairs**

The field of student affairs arose from a variety of strands of college work. One strand emerged from the advising and counseling positions that developed on campuses--the personnel movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The other was through the proliferation of administrative and management functions as institutions of higher education grew in size and complexity during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first Dean of Men was appointed at Harvard University in 1870. The number and type of advising, counseling, administrative, and management positions have continued to increase throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century to meet the evolving needs of institutions and the students who attend them. Other factors that contributed to the development of the field of student affairs include the proliferation of colleges and universities during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the inclusion of women and students of color, the rise in the importance of extracurricular activities, and research conducted on the experience and development of college students. More recent trends influencing the field include the expansion and integration of developmental theory and a most recent refocusing on the learning experiences of students.

### **Foundational Documents and Beliefs**

There are core beliefs and principles of student affairs practice that have persisted throughout this century and there are those beliefs and principles that have evolved and emerged as institutions of higher education and the needs of our society have changed. One of the most important early documents that attempted to capture the emerging complexity of the field was the Student Personnel Point of View, published in 1937 by the American Council on Education. It was reviewed and rewritten in 1949. Since then additional documents have been produced that have attempted to capture the beliefs and principles of the field, while providing vision and guidance for future development in the field. These documents have included: Student Development in Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy (1972); the COSPA statement (1975); A Perspective on Student Affairs (1986); The Student Learning Imperative (1993); and Principles

of Good Practice for Student Affairs (1998). These are all relatively brief documents and it is highly recommended that anyone considering a career in student affairs would do well to read them.

An analysis of the documents reveal some of the ideals toward which we strive as a profession. They include:

A belief in the dignity, uniqueness, potential, and worth of each individual.

A belief that our role is to enhance student learning and student development.

A belief in the development of the whole person, including the importance of intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual elements.

A belief that learning occurs in diverse places and diverse ways.

A belief in supporting the goals of individuation and community, recognizing the powerful role of community in learning and development.

A belief in communities where diversity is desired, mutual respect is expected, and where ideas and assumptions are to be explored and questioned.

A belief in encouraging conversation and communication, instead of stifling it, no matter how offensive the ideas may be to some.

A belief that the mission of student affairs flows from the mission of the institution.

A belief that higher education and student affairs have roles in assisting in transforming our society into one that is a learning society.

### **Roles, Functions, and Institutions**

At its broadest definition, student affairs could be said to consist of any advising, counseling, management, or administrative function at a college or university that exists outside the classroom. However, the traditional notion of student affairs often includes a mixture of the following functions taking place in the following departments.

Functions - Student affair professionals will perform a varied mixture of leading, educating, individual and group advising, counseling, supervising, teaching, training, planning, program development, inquiring, managing, financial management, and assessment and evaluation. Emerging functions include resource attraction and grant writing, entrepreneurship, outcomes assessment, political negotiation, and cultural assessment.

Departments - Department and program areas typically associated with student affairs include residence life, commuter services, admissions, new student orientation, financial aid, counseling centers, advising centers, leadership development, Greek affairs, student activities, student unions, leadership development, community service, service learning, career planning and placement, discipline and judicial affairs, alumni relations and development, services for students with disabilities, developmental learning services, and advocacy and support programs (e.g., for students of color, lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender students, veterans, women, adults).

Institutions - Student affairs professionals work in every kind of institution including private liberal arts colleges, community colleges, public colleges and universities, research universities, women's colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, tribal colleges, urban institutions, and for-profit institutions.

## **The Future**

The student affairs field recognizes the on-going changes and transformations that are occurring in society and affecting institutions of higher education. The field and the professionals within it are dedicated to meeting those challenges. However, at its core, the student affairs profession will be called to continue its traditional responsibilities of helping to shape our institutions to continue to improve in meeting the learning and developmental needs of all students and humanizing the college campus. To achieve these goals we will need to learn how to make colleges supportive, learning rich environments for all students, including traditional age students, adult students, part-time students, commuters, students of color, students with disabilities, and poor and otherwise disadvantaged students. In addition, student affairs practitioners will need to develop policies and practices that allow students to stay connected to each other and the institution in the face of technological and societal trends that will increasingly foster disconnectedness.

## **Considering a Career**

Given the wide variety of needs being addressed and the wide variety of roles and functions, the field of student affairs seeks individuals from varied backgrounds, and with varied experiences, skills, and interests. What we hope is common in the individuals seeking a career in student affairs are the values listed earlier in this essay, especially a desire to assist in the growth and development of all college students, and a willingness to continue to grow and develop in one's abilities to meet the needs of our students and the needs of our institutions.

We encourage you to talk with people already working in the profession. We are sure you will hear stories of challenge, frustration, even discouragement. But we also know that you will hear stories about the joy of knowing you have positively influenced someone, the satisfaction of knowing you have made a difference at your institution, the exhilaration of meeting challenges and overcoming obstacles. Working in the field of student affairs is an exciting adventure. We hope you will consider joining us!

## **Suggested Readings**

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## **Selecting A Student Affairs Graduate Program**

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Is graduate school right for you? The most important question is whether or not you really need a graduate degree in student affairs. Graduate school requires a significant amount of time and effort, and the return on investment may not be what you have in mind. Be aware that job requirements for education and skill tend to increase over time. What may not require a graduate degree now may require one later. It is rare for someone to become successful in middle or upper management in student affairs without a graduate degree.

How do you select the right graduate program? Making a selection among the many student affairs graduate preparation programs is a personal and complicated task. There are many issues to consider that are shared by most people, and each person has a unique set of issues to consider. Getting information about programs is becoming easier and easier each year. This Directory, the ACPA Commission XII web site, the NASPA web site, StudentAffairs.com and gradschools.com are all good sources for information. Once you get preliminary information from these sources, make direct contact with the program coordinator or lead faculty and request an information packet, a graduate catalog and application materials.

Should you get an MA or MS? The clear distinction between a Master's of Arts and Master's of Science has been lost over time. Traditionally, the degrees referred to academic disciplines, but now the degree offered by a specific program is a matter of tradition.

Should you write a Thesis or not? A Master's thesis generally requires two course equivalents or six semester hours. There are good arguments for writing a thesis, and good arguments for using the semester hours in more applied classes. Some Ph.D. program admissions committee members prefer students who have the research experience from a thesis, since the Ph.D. is a research degree, and others do not.

Should you attend full-time or part-time? Many student affairs programs are designed for full-time recent college graduates. Most programs also take part-time students who need to work and can only take one or two classes each semester. This is a personal decision based as much on economic interests as on anything else.

Should you pursue an on-campus education or use distance education? Now that student affairs classes are becoming available using distance education technologies, students have a choice to go to campus, or to stay at work and take classes. Most of the evidence to date on distance education indicates that there is no difference in educational outcomes between on-campus and distance education. The experiences for the learner are quite different though. Using E-mail and the telephone for contact with classmates and faculty may not be what you want. On the other hand, distance education can offer you education that is available and convenient.

How do I choose between graduate programs? While the media makes it appear easy to rank undergraduate programs, the criteria they use are open to lots of discussion. Using a spreadsheet or chart to compare programs on whatever criteria you believe to be important can be effective and reduce the confusion. The criteria suggested here for choosing between programs is only a guide.

There are four criteria from ACPA's Commission XII which earn a program recognition:

1. Program has at least one full-time faculty member.
2. Program has at least four content courses about student services/affairs/development and the college student/environment.
3. Program is at least two academic years in duration.
4. Program has at least one student personnel practicum opportunity for students.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) has a set of criteria for preparation programs in student affairs available from Commission XII at <http://www.acpa.nche.edu/comms/comm12/casstdrd.htm>. The Council of Graduate Schools (<http://www.cgsnet.org>) provides a collection of quality information on all aspects of graduate education and is worth examining.

Program prestige has more to do with notoriety than actual quality of education (Astin, 1985). Asking student affairs professionals to rank graduate programs would generate a list based more on recognition and perceived prestige, than on educational excellence.

Curriculum emphasis in student affairs graduate preparation programs ranges from counseling to higher education administration. Counseling has become a licensed profession in the majority of states, and licensure generally requires 60 semester hours of graduate preparation in specific areas, along with an extensive internship in counseling. Higher Education master's programs sometimes include student affairs as a specialty area within the curriculum. Many programs list themselves specifically as student affairs, and within that area contain a range of curricular emphases. Programs may be viewed as having an emphasis in Counseling, Student Developmental or Administration, as practice based or as theory based depending on the curriculum.

Required hours for graduation fall somewhere between 30 and 48. ACPA Commission XII - Student Affairs Graduate Preparation, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards recommends that a curriculum cover two years of academic study. This is interpreted as being anywhere from 36 semester hours to 48 hours depending on course load and summers enrollment.

Program pedagogy, how the courses are taught, is an important consideration in selecting a graduate program. While this can be difficult to discern from a distance, contacting students currently in the program will help determine if the classes are based on lectures, discussions, distance education, case study or seminar format.

Accrediting for graduate preparation programs in student affairs is an interesting issue. Those programs meeting the four ACPA Commission XII criteria are recognized as such in the Directory. The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) has created a set of criteria for many areas of student affairs, and includes professional preparation programs. The full text of the CAS standards are available from the ACPA Commission XII web site. The Council for Accrediting Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is composed of representatives from professional organizations covered by the standards. ACPA no longer has representation in CACREP because CACREP was proposing eliminating Student Affairs as a specialization. Prior to 1988 CACREP accredited 5 programs in Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education - Counseling emphasis, 2 with a Developmental emphasis and 1 with an Administrative emphasis. Under their 1994 standards they accredited 29 programs in Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education - College Counseling emphasis and 13 programs in Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education - Professional Practice emphasis.

The 2001 CACREP Standards provides standards for Student Affairs Programs as a specialization area with no sub areas, and as with all previous standards, CACREP accredited programs must be 48 semester hours. CACREP requires course work in 8 core areas (Professional Identity, Social and Cultural Diversity, Human Growth and Development, Career Development, Helping Relationships, Group Work, Assessment, Research and Program Evaluation), a 100 hour practicum, a 600 hour internship and specialized course work in the Foundations of Student Affairs, Contextual Dimensions of Student Affairs and Knowledge and Skill Requirements for Student Affairs Professionals. These new standards go into effect in 2001.

Program location determines the types of undergraduates on campus. While graduate student culture is removed from undergraduate culture on a campus, in professional preparation programs in student affairs working with undergraduates is integral to the learning process. Program location will determine the kinds of experiences that you will get while on campus.

Assistantships and Scholarships are available in most graduate programs, but the work and compensation can vary tremendously between programs. This work may form the basis of your resume as you enter the job market. Assistantships are work done in return for pay. Generally 20 hours of work per week is required during the semester. These are best considered as pre-professional work experiences and can provide a student with significant work experience. Some assistantships involve little more than office assistance work while others involve running a residence hall of 400 students. When considering a graduate program, closely examine what duties are required of a graduate assistant. In some graduate programs assistantships are available on other campuses. In general, assistantships do not carry graduate credit and are generally considered taxable income.

Compensation varies for assistantships even on a single campus. Some campuses will connect an assistantship with a scholarship, creating an attractive package. Some campuses will increase the assistantship amount, and expect the student to pay tuition. On some campuses, graduate assistants only pay in-state tuition, and on other campuses graduate assistants are no different than other students.

Scholarships are money given directly to you with no expectation of work. Scholarships are non-taxable income. On most campuses, scholarships cover the cost of in-state or out-of-state tuition depending on the student's status. On many campuses, there are additional "fees" that a student must pay that are not covered by a scholarship.

Program faculty are an integral part of any graduate program. Since you will spend most of your academic time with the faculty, getting to know them is important. This information may be available on-line, in the program material that is sent to you, through the professional organizations or through an on-line search. Not all of the faculty teach all of the time, so learn who teaches which course when, or you may be disappointed if you are expecting to be taught by a 'big name' faculty member.

As with colleges, faculty receive prestige through name recognition often based on publications. The relationship between research and quality of teaching is near zero. Brown and Mayhew (1965) concluded that "Whenever studies of teaching effectiveness are made as judged by students, no relationship is found between judged teaching effectiveness and research productivity." Feldman (1996) found that ". . . on the whole, scholarly accomplishment or research productivity of the college and university faculty members is only slightly associated with teaching proficiency." Good research and good teaching each take a substantial amount of time, to do both well takes more time than most faculty have.

Diversity among the students, program faculty and student affairs staff is important. But who gets to define what diversity means? McEwen (199x) suggests seven areas of identity development (Racial, Sexual, Gender, Ability, Social Class, Religious and Geographic) which make a good starting point to discuss diversity in a graduate program.

Graduation and placement rates and information about how long program graduates remain in student affairs should be readily available.

The quest for information and the application process requires organization. Some people use folders, some use spreadsheets and some use checklists. Different pieces of the application may need to be sent to different addresses. For example the Graduate School may require your transcripts, fee and a general graduate school application, while the Department requires a separate application, essay and letters of recommendation. You may want to include a self addressed stamped post card so that the department can let you know that it has received your application. Organization is essential in tracking the application process.

Applicant evaluation criteria are generally consistent among programs; most graduate programs rely on similar pieces of information to decide who to admit. The decisions are complicated and generally involve multiple people or a committee. Using the available information, the admissions committee is trying to determine first: Can this applicant succeed at the academic work? And second: Is this the type of individual we want in our program? In many ways students self select into programs where there is a good 'fit', so the second question is often not an issue.

Standardized test scores provide a number used to compare individuals from different educational backgrounds and predict their chances of academic success. Standardized admissions tests are inherently biased and should be interpreted carefully. Educational Testing Service, which administers the GRE has published three important works on Fairness, Access, Multiculturalism, & Equity in testing. The required use of standardized test scores for MA and MS graduate education is an open question. Graduate programs who use standardized test scores are no better or worse than those who do not. The increasing cost of the GRE is a consideration for some admissions committees and the limited predictive validity in MA and MS programs is a further concern.

The GRE is multiple choice computer adaptive test and is among the most sophisticated achievement tests in use today, and is considered by many faculty to be the most useful test to predict graduate success. The three parts of the exam, Verbal, Quantitative and Analytical assess different aspects of an individual's abilities and knowledge. GRE scores range from 200 to 800, and GRE reports that students in "Student Counseling and Personnel Services" have Mean scores of: 425 Verbal (<http://www.gre.org/verb9497.html>), 471 Quantitative (<http://www.gre.org/quant9497.html>), and 509 Analytical (<http://www.gre.org/anal9497.html>). All three scores are important and are approximately equal in predicting first year graduate GPA, but none is equal to undergraduate GPA as a predictor of first year graduate GPA (page 24, Guide to the Use of Scores). The Sex, race, Ethnicity, and Performance on the GRE General Test - Technical Report is very informative and is available on-line. There are many excellent preparation books for the GRE and it is generally worth while to prepare for the exam.

The MAT is a 50-minute, 100-items analogy completion test that strongly weighted to verbal and analytical skills and to general knowledge. It is not widely known and used, but it is much less expensive and quicker exam than the GRE. There are many excellent preparation books for the MAT and it is generally worth while to prepare for the exam.

GPA and Coursework are two of the best predictors of graduate success. Many admissions committee members are interested in what courses a student took, and what grades the student was given in different types of courses. Minimum GPA requirements run from 2.00 to 3.25, depending on the graduate program, and program material, graduate catalog, and program web pages should publish minimum GPA standards. Many programs require a background in specific curricular areas, or have a general requirement to ensure that the application has appropriate preparation in the behavioral sciences.

Letters of recommendation are considered important by most admission committee members. While the material in a letter is not objective, a good letter will help 'round out' the picture of an applicant. The best people to write letters of recommendation are faculty who know your academic work, and from whom you got good grades. Faculty or staff who know your experiences in student affairs will also be good references. You should meet with the people who you are asking to write letters and explain your graduate school and professional goals. Some graduate programs have specific forms for letters of recommendation, and other graduate programs do not. If there is not a specific form, the letter must be hand signed and on letterhead. Make sure to thank the people who wrote you letters of recommendation as it takes significant time and effort to do this.

Transcripts generally are sent directly from the Registrar's office where you attended school to the Graduate Admissions Office. Transcripts are usually required from all undergraduate schools attended. The Graduate Admissions Office has staff to examine transcripts to make sure that each one is original, and that each has been received.

Experience and extracurricular activities can be important. Most applicants to graduate programs in student affairs were very active in residence halls, student organizations, student government and student activities as undergraduates. Experience is an important factor in the admissions process so it is in the applicant's best interest to make sure that the admissions committee has a complete list of the applicants student affairs and related experiences.

Essays are taken seriously by admissions committee members. What the applicant says, and how it is said are important factors in preparing answers to essay questions. The possible consequences of the essay are much greater than a single paper for a class, so care should be taken in preparing this document. Typically questions cover your short and long term career goals, your interest in student affairs, and something about yourself. This must be typed, well written, grammatically appropriate and to the point. Keep a copy for yourself.

Interviews are growing more common. Many Graduate programs and assistantship sites require an on-campus interview. Typically these are scheduled between February and April, and you should receive a specific invitation to campus for the interview. On-campus interviews are carefully orchestrated events to allow you to get to know the campus, the faculty and the student affairs staff. It also allows the faculty and staff to get to know you, so professional behavior is required, even during social events.

Resumes are often a required as part of the admissions packet. The resume should be up-to-date, typed and professional. A visit to the campus career center may improve the quality of anyone's resume. One to two pages should suffice, and the resume is a way to list all of your activities with brief explanations. Quality application materials are important; appearances count. The admission committee member's first impression will be from your papers, consequently, quality counts.

How many programs should you apply to? If you were to ask graduate admissions professionals this question, you would probably get six answers. The easy answer is "Enough".

### **Doctoral Programs**

Should you get a doctorate? The key question is whether or not your current credentials and experience will get you to your career goals. A doctoral program is a three to four investment of time and energy, requiring at least one full-time year as a student. Consider your age and your professional experience and when you will be ready. Examine the barriers and advantages may you have because of your age and experience. Are you willing to take a risk, to give up what is good and comfortable and known for the potential of new knowledge and new experiences at another place?

How do you learn about doctoral programs? Attend conference programs and ACPA Commission XII Commission meetings and workshops related to getting a doctorate and issues in doctoral programs. Attend conference presentations by faculty or doctoral students at programs you are considering. Talk with students about their experiences in the program. Visit the program socials at regional and national conferences. Visit the campus and faculty and students in the program, attending a class if possible.

How do you learn about a specific program? Develop a list of questions and topics for your search, and as you search ask about whatever is important to you, ask to speak to a current doctoral student and ask to see recent graduates' dissertations. The following list of topics and questions is a good start. Pay attention to how you are treated in the admissions/interview process, as this may be indicative of your experience in the program.

What are the students like and who will be your classmates? They may likely be significant, long-time professional colleagues and collaborators. How are dissertation topics determined? What are the faculty researching? What is the faculty-student ratio and how much interaction is there between faculty and students? Is the interaction social, based on research, does it involve professional presentations or projects?

What are the opportunities for assistantships/employment and other avenues of learning? What faculty and/or student affairs professionals are there to connect with and do they mentor students? Is there an individual faculty member with whom you could feel comfortable working closely for an extended period of time? If faculty do not know the answers to your questions, are efforts made to find out the answers? Do full-time, degree-seeking students finish their degrees in a timely fashion? Are students completing their degrees (not remaining ABD)?

"Fit" with a program is key. You should look at the faculty's level of involvement with students, research interests, professional involvement, philosophy about practitioners in the classroom, diversity in composition and professional interests and find out if their retirement is imminent. Examining the environment is your second step in determining fit. Answering the following questions will help.

Is the program located in a place you could live for 3-7 years?

Does the program support different lifestyles?

If you are from a cultural/ethnic group that is not the "majority" at the institution, is there a way for you to have community?

Is it (the program or institution) a political environment? How do you feel about that?

Does the program have a good reputation? How old is that reputation? What does it mean?

Is there a cohort group of doctoral students? Is having a cohort group important to you?

Is the program accredited? Is that important to you and your ultimate career goals?

Are the faculty/practitioners going to be able to help you make the connections you will need upon graduation?

Are students given a "voice" in shaping the program and/or program's activities?

Diversity is important in any endeavor. Learn how diversity is defined in a program and ask how diverse the faculty and students are within this definition? Learn how important diversity is to the program and what evidence there is for valuing diversity. Are the faculty teaching and valuing diversity in multiple ways?

Curriculum in doctoral programs have many similar elements across programs, so points of comparison are course choices, statistics courses, comprehensive examinations, dissertation, residency and internships. What are the "hoops" in the program, how rigid or flexible are they, and are there supports for jumping through them?

Applications to doctoral programs are similar to master's programs, but typically require GRE or MAT scores and five letters of recommendation. For a doctoral program several letters of recommendation should be from people who know your academic work. Since the doctorate is the apex of academic preparation, applications are taken very seriously.

How do I prepare for the transition into a doctoral program? Take a course or two in advance, to get back in the "swing" of taking classes and managing time to study. Check with the program -- perhaps you can take something that can apply to the program requirements. Consider a statistics review. If the move to a doctoral program involves others, how much have they been considered? Have you and your partner set mutual goals for the move? Do not underestimate the transition. Consider what you can do to prepare for the transition. One strategy is to be involved in one "outside" professional activity/community such that those "connections" will stay with you as you move.

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Updated 10/00 to include the new 2001 CACREP Standards.  
New York State Student Affairs Programs

## Funding Your Graduate Education

Graduate school can be a frightening prospect, when trying to figure out how you're going to financially support the cost of tuition, supplies, books, housing, etc. There are four basic ways to finance your education: fellowships, assistantships, scholarships, and loans. Even if you have enough money to finance your education, or if you're paying for classes as you attend part-time, you should understand the options. Fellowships and assistantships often involve receiving first-hand knowledge and skills needed in a successful graduate program, and may also begin a basis for your resume.

**\*Fellowships**-fellowships for graduate study are grants that are generally awarded on basis of academic merit. They are intended to attract the most highly qualified students to graduate programs. They can be either portable, given by an agency for study at an institution of the student's choice, or institutional, offered by the university or department for study only at that institution. Some fellowships are intended for certain people underrepresented in the institution's population, like children of deceased policemen, people of color, women, or veterans.

Deadlines for fellowships vary, but usually occur early in the calendar year. The competition is usually fierce, so it's best to apply early.

**\*Assistantships**-Academic assistantships usually involve leading a discussion section, supervising a laboratory, grading papers, and meeting with students. The typical assistantship involves about 20 hours of work per week. An assistantship is usually for a salary or stipend (sometimes fee and/or tuition remission) and may be reported as taxable income. It's usually best to check with the institution.

While not directly related to an academic program, there are positions, like assistant residence directors, resident advisor, or support staff opportunities that provide valuable skills, room and board, and/or a stipend. They also provide experience that will reflect well on your resume, because you'll be gaining skills in your field.

The department or graduate office that admits you should have a listing of positions you can apply for.

**\*Scholarships**-Scholarships are generally awarded on academic credentials. Although there are some scholarships awarded for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Scholarships do not need to be repaid, and are usually not need-based. There are also scholarships set up for people of color, veterans, women, and other groups.

Check with the university, financial aid office, and department for listings of scholarships.

**\*Grants and Loans**-These are an important source of support for graduate students. This aid may come from the university, the state, the federal government, or an employer. Some of these may be need based, some are not.

Loans are both need-based, and non-need based (meaning anyone can get them, as long as they've never defaulted on an educational loan)

Grants are generally need-based, and you usually do not have to repay them.

Need-based aid requires that applicants fall within certain income and asset guidelines. Current federal regulations make virtually all graduate students independent of parental support, unless you are claimed on your parents' income taxes. For independent students, parental income and assets are not considered in the awarding of financial aid. However, your previous year's salary is figured into the aid package. A portion of this income has to be figured into the package as available to pay for graduate school expenses.

A basic resource about financial aid is the **Department of Education publication, "The Student Guide."** This free booklet offers general information on student need, eligibility, dependency status, and how to apply.

Some of the federal monies that may be available to you are:

Direct and FFEL Loans (Stafford or Direct Loans)  
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants  
Federal Work Study  
Federal Perkins Loans

In New York State, there is also the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) available to New York State Residents who have not used all of their TAP points.

Although federal loans are subsidized and carry a lower interest rate than bank loans, you will still be incurring a debt. But, people often have to invest money, to make money. Think of these loans as an investment in your future earning power.

### **Timetable for Applying for Financial Aid**

Regardless of whether you will be taking a loan or not, most universities will require you to fill out the Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to award scholarships, grants, or assistantships, and loans.

**Deadline for FAFSA is February 15**—even if you have to estimate your income from the previous year’s income taxes, it’s a good idea to do it early. You can file as early as January 1. You can always revise your FAFSA later on when you finally get your income tax returns filed.

**Start contacting departments about assistantships, fellowships, scholarships, and grants, as soon as you apply to the programs.** This is very competitive, because this money is generally “free” money, and does not have to be repaid.

## **New York State Student Affairs Programs**

### **Alfred University ([www.alfred.edu](http://www.alfred.edu))**

Address:

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Division of Education

Alfred University

26 N. Main Street

Alfred, NY 14802

Telephone: (607) 871-2339

Fax:

E-mail:

Degree Options:

M.S.Ed. College Student Development

### **Binghamton University**

Address:

School of Education and Human Development

Division of Education

Binghamton University

PO Box 6000

Binghamton, NY 13902-6000

Phone: 607-777-2727

Fax: 607-777-6041

Description:

The Master of Science in Educational Studies program is designed for professionals working in schools in non-teaching positions, or in community colleges, human service agencies, or other education-related settings; for international students studying American education; and for teachers seeking permanent certification in an area not offered by SEHD.

The Doctorate in Education (EdD) in Educational Theory and Practice is designed for experienced educators seeking to integrate theory, knowledge, research, and practice to increase understanding and improve teaching and learning in early childhood, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational settings and related fields.

Degree Options:

M.S. Ed., Ed. D.

### **Canisius College ([www.canisius.edu](http://www.canisius.edu))**

Address:

College Student Personnel Administration Program

Canisius College

2001 Main Street

Buffalo, NY 14208

Telephone: (716) 888-2760

Fax: (716) 888-2766

E-mail: [mmccarth@canisius.edu](mailto:mmccarth@canisius.edu)

Description:

Canisius College, a Jesuit institution, currently enrolls approximately 4,589 students. In the CSPA program at Canisius, you will study the academic foundations of the field and will have the opportunity to experience the demands characteristic of the profession. This unique program includes:

Emphasis on Private Institutions

There are over 3,500 colleges and universities in the United States. Of this number, approximately 1,900 are private institutions, the majority of which are at least four-year schools. Our focus on student personnel administration at private institutions will enhance your understanding of the profession and may increase your employment potential.

Conference Attendance

The full cost of attendance at a national conference for each year of the two-year program, including travel, hotel, and fees is included in the program cost for full-time students. It is essential to realize the importance of professional development and to learn, early in your career, the value of professional relationships with colleagues. Additionally, national conferences provide placement services and the opportunity to apply for a wide range of positions.

Professional Development

Involvement in professional organizations is very important to continued professional development. As a full-time student in this program, you will be enrolled in a national association for student affairs professionals. Through this membership you will receive publications and have the opportunity to participate in a variety of valuable activities.

Cohort Program

Full-time students will progress through the program with the same group of students, as a class. The synergy created by such a group can provide its members with tremendous support and encouragement and can serve as the foundation of future professional relationships.

Practical Experience

Practical experience is an invaluable asset of this program. You will be required to complete a two-semester internship during the second year. In addition, you will have the opportunity to apply for assistantships. In order to provide you with sufficient time for these experiences, classes are scheduled to meet on two consecutive weekdays.

Degree Options:

M.S. College Student Personnel Administration

**College of St. Rose**

Address:

School of Education  
432 Western Ave  
Albany, NY 12203  
Graduate school # 518 454-5136  
school of education fax # 518 458-5446  
Dr. Steve Birchak

Description:

Program in Counseling

The Counseling program (48 credit hours) is intended to prepare competent mental health professionals for the counseling field. The program offers concentrations in either School Counseling, Community Counseling or College Student Personnel, all leading to the M.S. in Education degree.

#### College Student Personnel Concentration

The College Student Personnel Concentration is intended to prepare professional counselors to address the diverse developmental and remedial needs of college and university students. Competencies in working with students, staff and administrators are developed through a combination of course work in theory, applications and field experience.

Course work in the American college experience and in student affairs programming along with a supervised internship in a college or university setting prepare students for college student personnel work. Competence in student affairs work is gained through course work in student development theories, programming strategies, consultation and diversity. The internship in college student personnel (300 hours) is served in a college or university setting and provides students with a supervised experience in a counseling, student affairs or administrative capacity, allowing students to integrate theory with practice. Interns are supervised by appropriate professionals at their internship sites and by a member of The College of Saint Rose faculty. All students regardless of concentration, have six credit hours of electives. Electives may include courses in counseling, multicultural education, educational psychology, special education or educational administration that fit into the program of study. Elective courses will be selected with approval of the advisor.

Degree Options:

M.S.Ed.

#### **Long Island University – CW Post Campus ([www.cwpost.liu.net](http://www.cwpost.liu.net))**

Address:

School of Education

Department of Counseling and Development-College Student Development

Long Island University, C.W. Post Campus

Brookville, NY 11548

Telephone: (516) 299-2129

Fax: (516) 626-2476

E-mail: [JuneSmith@liu.edu](mailto:JuneSmith@liu.edu)

June Smith--Chair

Degree Options:

M.S. Counseling – College Student Development

#### **New York University ([www.nyu.edu](http://www.nyu.edu))**

Address:

School of Education

Department of Administration, Leadership and Technology

New York University

300 East Building

New York, NY 10003

Telephone: (212) 998-5656

Fax: (212) 995-4041

email: [patrick.love@nyu.edu](mailto:patrick.love@nyu.edu)

Program Description:

The Program in Higher Education sets as its primary mission the development throughout higher education of knowledgeable and skilled leaders for positions of responsibility, such as administrators, research

specialists, and professors of higher education. Its main emphasis is on the education and training of administrative leaders. Individuals are prepared broadly for a variety of positions in institutions of higher education, rather than for specific areas of specialization (e.g., institutional research, student personnel, financial management).

The curriculum is based on the premise that "higher education" is not a discipline: it is a field of study drawing much of its content from such disciplines as economics, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology and the fields of administration. As a consequence, students enroll in course sequences, which permit them to understand the historic, philosophic, and cultural backgrounds of colleges and universities. Further, the curriculum helps students to comprehend and apply contemporary theories of organization and administration which are appropriate to the solution of educational and management problems (particularly as rigorous research has shown those theories to be useful). The applied aspects of the program aim at developing skills of interpersonal, group and institutional leadership. Finally, students are urged and helped to adopt for themselves a personal stance and sense of educational purposefulness, which will enable them to lead their institutions effectively and in accordance with humane social values. Thus, the program sets as a twin goal the development of leaders who can and will continue to explore the meanings and values of American higher education in our society and who can apply their skills and talents in imaginative and creative ways to the administration of their institutions.

The NYU Master of Arts Degree in Student Personnel Administration is intended for individuals preparing for, or currently employed in, entry level or middle management positions in the areas comprising student affairs and services. The program is specifically designed for those with career interests in enrollment management, financial aid, housing and residence life, career services and similar student affairs positions.

Through an interdisciplinary course of study drawing on the full academic resources of a great university, students select a program of study from a wide range of courses and experiences. The 36 credit program requires 21 credits in Higher Education and 15 credits selected through advisement. The Higher Education courses include a concentration on students and student affairs administration as well as a choice of electives. In the selection of the remaining courses, faculty advisors assist students in developing a "minor" which complements their Higher Education concentration and also meets their individual needs. Areas in which such minors may be developed include guidance and counseling, general college administration, human resources management, international education, women's studies, and educational technology.

Academic course work is applied to practice through a Higher Education internship usually taken in the first year of the program. During the final semester of study, students must pass a comprehensive examination integrating the total experiences from the program. The exam is based on readings, course work and other program activities which relate to college student development and the administration of student affairs.

Degree Options:

M.A. Student Affairs Administration  
Ed.D. Higher Education  
Ph.D. Higher Education

**University at Albany ([www.albany.edu](http://www.albany.edu))**

Address:

Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies

Albany, NY 12222

Telephone: (518) 442-5080

Fax: (518) 442-5084

E-mail: [fred@wizvax.net](mailto:fred@wizvax.net)

Web site: [www.albany.edu/eaps/eapshome.html](http://www.albany.edu/eaps/eapshome.html)

Description:

Educational Administration and Policy Studies:

Graduate programs at the University at Albany EAPS Department provide study leading to Doctoral and Master's degrees and to the Certificate of Advanced Study. The three programs offer students graduate preparation for a wide variety of leadership and staff positions in school-wide and district-level administration, colleges and universities, and other organizations at local, state, national and international levels. The doctoral and certificate programs are approved by the New York State Education Department for school- and district-level administration certification.

Concentration:

Graduate study includes a concentration in one of three areas. The student's concentration should be selected in consultation with his/her advisor and should reflect the student's career goals and interests. These areas are:

I. Higher Education Administration. This concentration is designed to prepare students for administrative, policy and faculty positions in post-secondary and related institutions. In addition, it may be used to prepare for administrative and staff positions in adult and continuing education programs in other educational, business, industrial, and labor organizations.

II. Educational Policy Analysis. This concentration is designed to provide students with a working knowledge of social science and philosophical approaches to policy formulation and implementation. It is designed for students preparing for leadership and administrative positions in state and national organizations, including governmental positions and for university faculty positions.

Degree Options:

M.S., C.A.S., and/or Ed.D. in Educational Administration and Policy Studies

**SUNY Buffalo ([www.buffalo.edu](http://www.buffalo.edu))**

Address:

Educational Leadership and Policy  
SUNY at Buffalo  
468 Baldy Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14260  
Telephone: (716) 645-2471  
Fax: (716) 645-2481  
Dr. William Barba

Degrees:

Ph.D. Higher Education Administration  
M.Ed. General Administration  
M.Ed. College Student Services Development

**SUNY College at Brockport ([www.brockport.edu](http://www.brockport.edu))**

Address:

Department of Counselor Education  
350 New Campus Drive  
SUNY College at Brockport  
Brockport, NY 14420  
Telephone: (716) 395-2258  
Fax: (716) 395-2366  
E-mail: [jkandor@brockport.edu](mailto:jkandor@brockport.edu)  
Dr. Joe Kandor--Chair

Educational Administration

350 New Campus Drive  
SUNY College Brockport  
Brockport, NY 14420-2959  
Phone: (800) 521-0092 ext. 2661 or  
(716) 395-2661  
Fax: (716) 395-5517

Description:

The Department of Counselor Education aims to provide high-quality professional training to persons preparing to become professional counselors. The master's level programs (School, College and Community) are approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Purposes and Philosophy

To become an effective counselor, trainees are exposed to situations in which they must know and demonstrate performance according to:

1. effective self-utilization;
2. therapeutic skills and processes in interpersonal interactions;
3. specific knowledge appropriate to his/her role and function; and
4. multiculturalism.

In addition, the most effective counselors learn how to learn; that is, they learn the skills necessary to continue personal growth and professional involvement after their formal education has ended.

Throughout our program, students are expected to practice and improve skills related to self understanding and to introspective and interactive abilities. Self-learning is deemed vital to these tasks, and many courses in the program are devoted primarily, or in part, to such goals.

Practical and theoretical understanding of effective helping processes are emphasized. Professional counselors are expected to apply themselves effectively in such processes; several courses are partially or entirely devoted to such objectives.

The knowledge traditionally associated with the professional counselor's role provides the focus for other courses. Thus, the counselor trainee is expected to acquire a body of specific information deemed important in carrying out the primary functions of the position.

In summary, this program seeks to prepare professional counselors who are both models of effective living and possessors of appropriate knowledge and helping skills. Such counselors will necessarily make a significant positive impact on the individuals, agencies, institutions and/or communities which hire them. Their knowledge of human behavior and communication processes, and their understanding of themselves as the primary delivery systems, will enable them to function adequately within a variety of mental health settings that have vastly different histories and needs.

Degree Options:

M.S.Ed. College Counselor

M.S. Ed -Higher Education Middle Management

**SUNY College at Buffalo ([www.snybuf.edu](http://www.snybuf.edu))**

Address:

Student Personnel Administration  
Department of Educational Foundations  
Bacon Hall 306  
1300 Elmwood Avenue  
SUNY College at Buffalo  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
Telephone: (716) 878-4304  
Fax: (716) 878-3039  
Dr. Tim Gallineau--Chair

**Program Description:**

Student personnel administration courses are designed to provide experience and training for professional work in many college, university, and community settings. Emphasis is placed on the role of the professional student personnel worker in admissions, residence halls, financial aids, registration, orientation, academic and personal advisement, counseling, international student activities, placement and career counseling, judicial affairs, college union and activities, minority student services, disabled student services, and the administration of the student affairs program.

Students may focus on courses and internships in four specialized areas: administration and management, counseling and student development, adult and community education, or research and evaluation. Additional opportunities to concentrate on community agency internships and other specialized electives, the program is of interest to individuals desiring to serve additional groups such as young adults and the aged. Often those presently engaged or interested in college personnel work are also attracted to community agency, health delivery, law enforcement, personnel, or teaching and consulting activities.

The objectives of the masters of science degree program in student personnel administration are:

- To examine the development, problems, and practices of higher education as a social institution from historical and contemporary perspectives and to project future circumstances.
- To study the historic and current role of student personnel services in higher education and anticipate needed future changes.
- To emphasize and apply the concept of student development and learning as a focal point of the program.
- To offer opportunities for the student, with faculty assistance, to set personal and professional goals, practice self-assessment, develop life skills, and become a better communicator.
- To provide the techniques and knowledge needed to understand and conduct research.
- To focus on social and cultural changes in the United States with emphasis on the roles of society's special and minority subcultures.
- To provide supervised practicum experience in several areas of student affairs administration and/or community services.
- To acquire an understanding of counseling theories and skills in the effective use of counseling techniques.
- To make students aware of the value of peers as learning resources and of the importance of self-direction to maintain a lifelong learning process.
- To help students understand the campus environment, apply learning and appropriate finance and management procedures.
- To recognize and evaluate the special importance of the student personnel professional as a humanistic and value-oriented educator, change agent, and learning facilitator within the framework of the university and society.

**Degree Options:**

M.S. Student Personnel Administration

**SUNY College at Plattsburgh ([www.plattsburgh.edu](http://www.plattsburgh.edu))**

Address:

Programs in Counselor Education-Student Affairs Practice  
SUNY College at Plattsburgh  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
Telephone: (518) 564-4177  
Fax: (518) 564-4161  
E-mail: [roarkml@splava.cc.plattsburgh.edu](mailto:roarkml@splava.cc.plattsburgh.edu)

**Program Description:**

The Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education program of 48 semester credits prepares students to work on college and university campuses in positions that require counseling background, knowledge of college student development, and skill in program design and implementation.

Completion of the Student Affairs Practice leads to a degree of Master of Science in College and Agency Counseling.

Program requirements include clinical and specialty courses, as well as the core curriculum. The program can be pursued on a full-time or part-time basis, up to the point of internship when a full-time commitment is generally required. A 600-hour internship in a college setting is required.

**Degree Options:**

M.S. Counseling – Student Affairs Practice

**SUNY Stony Brook ([www.sunysb.edu](http://www.sunysb.edu))**

Address:  
Student-Development Specialization  
SUNY Stony Brook School of Social Welfare  
Health Sciences Center, Level 2, Room 093  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-8231  
Telephone: (516) 444-3177  
Fax: (516) 444-7565  
E-mail: [angel.campos@sunysb.edu](mailto:angel.campos@sunysb.edu)

**Description:**

SUNY Stony Brook, a public institution, currently enrolls 18,000 students. The Student-Community Development (SCD) specialization offers a unique professional partnership between social work and higher education to prepare students to work on contemporary college campuses. The program emphasizes personal strengths, organizational and community development, and social change as vital components of practice.

**Degree Options:**

MSW - Student-Community Development

**Syracuse University ([www.syr.edu](http://www.syr.edu))**

Address:  
Department of Higher Education  
350 Huntington Hall  
Syracuse University  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
Telephone: (315) 443-4763  
Fax: (315) 443-9218  
E-mail: [HIED@sued.syr.edu](mailto:HIED@sued.syr.edu)  
Dr. Vincent Tinto--Chair

**Description:**

Syracuse University, a private, non-profit institution, currently enrolls approximately 14,719 students. The Higher Education Program at Syracuse University seeks to bridge the borders between theory, research,

and practice through the adaptation of collaborative models of graduate education. In both Masters and Doctoral degree programs, students and faculty work together on a variety of projects in which theory and research are employed to the solution of important issues of practice, in particular those concerning the education and degree attainment of all, not just some, students in both two and four-year college settings. The programs seeks to build an inclusive community of discourse about theory and practice by drawing upon the skills of faculty and student affairs professional from across the campus and from nearby institutions of higher education.

Degree Options:

M.S.Ed. Higher Education

Ed.S. Higher Education

Ed.D. Higher Education

Ph.D. Higher Education

**Teachers College at Columbia University ([www.tc.columbia.edu](http://www.tc.columbia.edu))**

Address:

Teachers College, Columbia University

Department of Organization and Leadership

Main Hall, Room 206

525 W. 120th Street

New York, NY 10027-6670

Telephone: (212) 678-3750

Fax: (212) 678-3743

E-mail: [rlp12@columbia.edu](mailto:rlp12@columbia.edu) or [llk6@columbia.edu](mailto:llk6@columbia.edu)

Description:

Teachers College at Columbia University, an independent institution, currently enrolls approximately 4,737 students. The Higher Education program at Teachers College is dedicated to the mission of helping provide exceptional leaders to colleges and universities, both in the United States and abroad. The Student Personnel program uses a pedagogical approach that incorporates four primary perspectives: administration and leadership, adult development theories, counseling, and multicultural and diversity issues and concerns.

Degree Options:

M.A. Higher Education Administration

M.A. Student Personnel Administration

M.Ed. Higher Education Administration

M.Ed. Student Personnel Administration

Ed.D. Higher Education Administration