THE
COMPASS
REPORT

Charting the Future
of Student Affairs

NASPA
Student Affairs Administrators
in Higher Education

March 2022

FUTURE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS TASK FORCE MEMBERS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Foreword

Things do not always turn out the way you initially imagined them. Yet from the unexpected, new opportunities for understanding can emerge. The process, conceptualization, and final report of the Future of Student Affairs Task Force is one such example.

The creation of the task force was prompted by cumulative shifts in higher education that were driving changes within student affairs practice and how student affairs goals were achieved within colleges and universities. In summer 2019, when the NASPA Board of Directors approved the appointment of a 1-year task force, higher education was in the midst of several macro trends that would provide the foundation for the work of the Future of Student Affairs Task Force.

Some of those key change drivers at the forefront of discussions in summer and fall 2019 include:

- The projected decade-long decline in high school graduates was anticipated to begin in 2026—what many in the media described as the pending "enrollment cliff."
- Demographic changes were occurring among students enrolled in 2- and 4-year colleges and universities, including increases in Latinx/a/o and other racially minoritized students enrolling in higher education. In addition, adult learners, parents, students who work full time, and part-time students comprised the majority of "new-traditional" students, as opposed to first-time, full-time students, a demographic that was the majority for much of the past 30 years.
- Inequities persisted in completion rates for Black, Latinx/a/o and Indigenous students, in addition to first-generation and lower-income students.
- The mental health crisis among college students was deepening. Nearly 1 in 3 students identified as having a major psychological disorder. Counseling centers were at capacity and health and wellness programs and initiatives were expanding nationally.
- The American public was increasingly questioning the value of a college education. The majority of Americans who identify as Republican were the most likely to question the value of a college degree. The polarization of politics in America was seeping into perceptions and behaviors that directly affected higher education.
- Issues of affordability were evident across the spectrum of higher education institutions. More students needed financial assistance to stay enrolled in college. Emergency aid funds, food pantries, completion grants, and other financial strategies were increasingly commonplace at all 2- and 4-year colleges and universities—even the most elite and selective institutions.

Kevin Kruger
NASPA President

"The creation of the task force was prompted by cumulative shifts in higher education that were driving changes within student affairs practice and how student affairs goals were achieved within colleges and universities."

In summary, a range of changes occurring in higher education required new responses from student affairs. In summer 2019, it was a common refrain that the job of a student affairs professional was quantitatively different than even 5 years before. In addition, it had been nearly a decade since the 2010 publication of the final report of the ACPA and NASPA Task Force on the Future of Student Affairs. Clearly, much had changed since that report was issued, and it was time to reframe the work of student affairs within the context of current issues affecting higher education.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The effect of the pandemic on higher education was swift and profound. For the task force members, it meant a reframing of our work to include the pandemic as a powerful driver of change in higher education and society at large. While the drivers of change that existed in 2019 did not subside during the pandemic, operating under crisis conditions prompted a reorientation of priorities that will have both immediate and lasting impacts on higher education and student affairs. These conditions include:

- the rapid and large-scale shift to remote learning and the increased need for online and virtual student services;
- the role of student affairs in the strategy of public health decisions and frontline public health roles that often fell to student affairs;
- the national and global movement that focused on addressing a common history of violence and systemic racism against Black people and the need for accountability to make changes in politics, media, sports, business, and higher education;
- the levels of burn-out and exhaustion that have resulted in unprecedented staffing challenges for those working in higher education;
- the significant increase in affordability issues for college students throughout the pandemic;

- changes in college and university enrollments resulting in fewer students moving from high school to college and dramatic decreases in 2-year and community college enrollment; and
- the pandemic's impact on the college journey of students and ongoing equity issues around race, ethnicity, and family income status.

The impact of these forces of change may be felt for years. As such, the report that follows attempts to address the issues affecting student affairs before the pandemic as well as the unknown impact the pandemic will have on the student affairs profession. Task force members did not intend for findings to be entirely driven by the pandemic but, rather, to weave those issues into the larger change drivers that had been influencing student affairs and higher education for the last decade.

This is not the report we initially envisioned. It is our hope that these findings prompt conversations among current and emerging practitioners about where the student affairs profession is headed in addressing both today's challenges and future priorities. What is most important as student affairs emerges from the pandemic is to "fulfill the promise of higher education," as expressed in the NASPA vision statement.

Kevin Kruger
NASPA President

Executive Summary

The student affairs profession has evolved over the last half century in response to the ever-changing landscape of higher education. The profession must constantly reassess program offerings, services, and staffing to keep up with the dynamic and growing list of student needs, to establish strong connections with students, and to ensure student success and degree completion. Now, the unparalleled events of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced faster changes in higher education, and the profession must review current practices and craft an appropriate vision for the near- and long-term future.

In keeping with its unwritten mandate of constant reassessment and reevaluation, in 2020 NASPA initiated a yearlong project to identify issues and trends that could influence student affairs professionals and respective functions in the years ahead. The project was guided by a national task force of leaders in student affairs and NASPA staff, who regularly convened to discuss emerging topics. The task force conducted 18 focus groups with a total of 97 student affairs faculty, graduate students, and administrators across all position levels, as well as a national survey of professionals who hold student affairs positions at colleges and universities of all sectors and sizes within the United States.

Findings from the Future of Student Affairs Task Force's discussions and extensive data collection efforts revealed four areas as most critical to the future of student affairs within the next 5 years.

"In 2020 NASPA initiated a yearlong project to identify issues and trends that could influence student affairs professionals and respective functions in the years ahead."

Student Needs and Expectations

Although demographic challenges were already leading to declining enrollment prior to 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic amplified this long-term challenge. These concerns, coupled with the need to better demonstrate the value of higher education and provide tailored supports, require the student affairs profession to respond accordingly. The large-scale shift to remote learning and flexible student supports across multiple modalities has also demonstrated the potential of technology to deliver programs in inclusive ways. However, student affairs professionals require training and the elevation of student perspectives to use all available tools effectively.

Social Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Supporting students from an equity-minded lens is critical. While operationalizing commitments to advancing social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) is an institutionwide responsibility, student affairs staff must have a shared understanding of the vision, strategies, opportunities, and challenges for change. In addition to developing anti-racist programming and identity-affirming supports for students, senior leadership needs to address bias and inequities among staff and faculty. Student affairs leaders also need guidance to develop personal advocacy as well as students' capacities for advocacy.

Professional Preparation and Development

Now is an optimal time to assess career development processes and resources to identify possible areas for improvement. There is some debate within the profession on the need to identify and support student affairs roles that require specialist knowledge along with those that require generalist knowledge. Budget cuts, reorganizations, and other factors are increasingly leading professionals to work across multiple functional areas in their divisions.

Workforce Satisfaction and Retention

Senior leaders who are able to provide additional professional development resources can help ensure staff and administrators are adequately prepared to handle the decisions, challenges, and opportunities that come with role advancement and portfolio shifts. Despite the growing number of challenges and demands, student affairs professionals still find their work affirming. Still, the harsh reality is that more early and mid-level professionals are leaving the field for other pursuits. The future of the profession may require a closer examination of how institutions can demonstrate espoused values and student affairs leaders can find balance in meaningful ways while contending with a growing portfolio of responsibilities.

As the field grapples with questions about sustainability and visions for the path ahead, staff, faculty, and administrators at all levels must share responsibility for shaping the future of the profession. The Future of Student Affairs Task Force offers five strategic imperatives for consideration.

IMPERATIVE I	Strengthen data capacity and highlight evidence about the impact of holistic student support programs and activities.
IMPERATIVE II	Operationalize student-centered commitments to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
IMPERATIVE III	Optimize use of technologies to deliver high-quality in-person and virtual student experiences.
IMPERATIVE IV	Approach the need for greater staff care systemically.
IMPERATIVE V	Align student affairs preparation and talent management approaches with the evolving needs of the profession.

The Compass Report: Charting the Future of Student Affairs is intended to prompt conversation about the future of the profession and what senior leaders, student affairs practitioners, and associations, in collaboration with faculty and other partners, should consider as we plan for the next 5 to 10 years. To learn more about the Future of Student Affairs Task Force and the next phase of work, visit **https://www.naspa.org/project/ naspa-future-of-student-affairs-task-force**.

The Journey of Student Affairs
Then, Now, and in the Future

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

A Chronicled Evolution of Student Affairs

For as long as our profession has existed, student affairs has turned a critical eye inward; we are constantly asking ourselves if we are doing right by our students and colleagues. And we have always been an important voice at our institutions, pushing them to include, acknowledge, support, and center students of every background and circumstance. The student affairs profession was born of a need that arose from the changing landscape of higher education, and so in our very DNA is a penchant for anticipating, dissecting, and responding to change.

Our history is full of critical documents that have stopped us in our tracks—that have caused us to consider and reconsider our purpose on campus, in the lives of students, and within the institutions where we work. In the United States, early philosophy about student affairs professionals was grounded in the need for administrators to manage matters of student conduct, discipline, and advisement. The idea to call a meeting for "deans of men" (now called deans of students) to share ideas and discuss issues related to student personnel was first documented in 1918 (NASPA, n.d.). The work of student affairs slowly gained recognition following World War I, and early iterations of professional associations formed around this time (Long, 2012). The American Council on Education's (ACE's) 1937 *Student Personnel Point of View* (SPPV) was a landmark report for the profession. SPPV gave us an early blueprint of what we needed to be in order to assure our value within higher education and advance the academic missions of institutions.
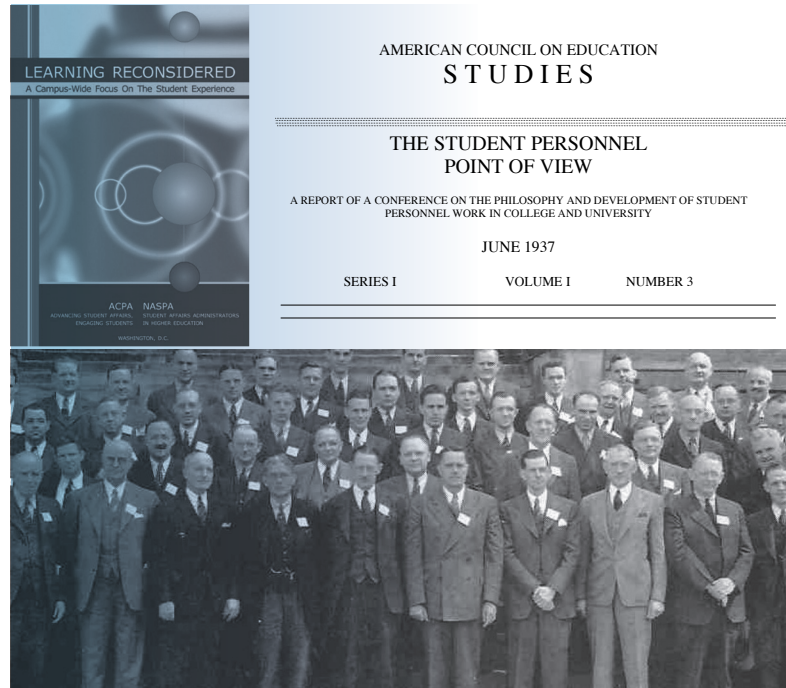
With increased student enrollment following World War II, in 1949 ACE offered a revised iteration of SPPV (Williamson et al., 1949). The update broadened the initial blueprint to include engagement with a global community and cemented the need for specialization and graduate study programs for student affairs. Introduced in 1972, *Student Development in Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy* emphasized the importance of our role in advancing student learning and aimed to further legitimize the value of student development theory (Brown, 1972). NASPA's (1987) *A Perspective on Student Affairs* offered a set of renewed assumptions and beliefs about our work and reinforced the profession's commitment to student learning. Following greater

A Need to Pause and Take Stock of the Situation

The history of student affairs shows how the profession responded to new contexts and enduring challenges, which were often centered on demographic changes, resource constraints, student activism, government intervention, and catastrophic events (Dungy, 2018). Reflecting on our successes and any shortcomings of our approaches to complicated issues, many of which existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, allows us to continuously improve and reorient ourselves as a profession. Although we may now have access to more technological tools and data than ever before, our efforts are still limited by resource constraints and outdated systems, policies, and structures. Additionally, political pressures and a widening scope of responsibilities have heightened our levels of exhaustion and threaten the sustainability of the profession and the quality of student care we can give. We must also work collaboratively and act in response to calls to recognize and address institutional racism in higher education and advance social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion on campus. Student affairs must respond to these issues, among many others, against the backdrop of the global pandemic and its lasting implications for our future. Effectively moving through crises and sustaining positive change requires alignment of decisions with key priorities for the future of the field.

calls for accountability in education, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA, 1996) issued *The Student Learning Imperative,* which pulled us in the direction of assessment and outcomes targeting our merit as educators. *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Student Learning* (American Association for Higher Education et al., 1998) set aside association differences to unite us around common goals for student learning. *Principles of Good Practice* (NASPA & ACPA, 1997), *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004), *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* (ACPA & NASPA, 2010b), and *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators* (ACPA & NASPA, 2015) reflected an increased awareness about the need to take a more inclusive and holistic approach to supporting students. A task force report jointly led by ACPA and NASPA (2010a) also demonstrated the call to continuously improve as a profession. The report highlighted the need to respond to key trends of that decade and declared that "[w]e must focus on our missions and the values they embody while rethinking the tools—the assumptions, structures, roles, constituents, and partners—that enable us to live by and manifest our core purposes" (ACPA & NASPA, 2010a, p. 16). These documents are just a few among a long list of significant works that enabled the profession to respond to pivotal changes in education and that guided us to where we are now.

RECALIBRATING THE COMPASS
An Updated Understanding to Navigate Our Future

The next important moment in our history is happening right now: It is time for us to assess our assumptions and perspectives about our current practices to shape our vision for the near- and long-term future. For example, as student demographics have changed over time, so too has our understanding of who these students are and how our current systems were not designed with their diverse experiences and needs in mind. Insights from today's diverse profile of students and professionals, alternative student development theories, and evidence-based practices should inform how we reimagine ways to adapt the way we work, support student learning, and foster inclusive campus environments. Moreover, we know that one-size-fits-all approaches do not work for today's students and that they require differentiated, timely supports. Our students' needs and perspectives must be our North Star as we navigate the coming years.

We also know we cannot make the journey alone. We need institutionwide approaches—including offices such as enrollment management, institutional technology, institutional research, academic affairs, and business affairs—to help us along the path toward advancing student success and achieving equitable completion outcomes. We must not only leverage our existing expertise and resources but also determine what we can glean from other industries and professions to inform our updated approaches. We must think strategically about what skills, competencies, and connections other professionals have and how they can be adapted and applied to address our various needs. Our navigation system is not entirely broken, but it is due for a recalibration.

In an effort to direct our course toward an envisioned destination for the profession, NASPA formed the Future of Student Affairs Task Force in the summer of 2020. Comprised of 18 NASPA members who are leaders in student affairs as well as 10 NASPA staff from cross-functional areas at the association, the task force met regularly to discuss current issues facing the profession and offer recommendations to consider for the future. This report is informed by task force discussions; qualitative data gathered from 18 focus groups with a total of 97 student affairs faculty, graduate students, and administrators across all position levels; and a national survey of professionals who hold student affairs positions at colleges and universities of all sectors and sizes within the United States.[1] Focus groups met and survey data were collected between the winter of 2020 and the summer of 2021, and professionals were asked to share perspectives about their current experiences and areas for anticipated and aspirational change over the next 5 years. Details regarding the survey methodology and characteristics of respondents are included in Appendices A and B.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an important time to document insights about the future from various professionals in the field. *The Compass Report* reflects discussions about our current state, the way we live out our core values, and how we should adapt to new contexts in ways that are equitable, student centered, and sustainable for the long-term future of the profession. Created through a collaborative process, this report is one part of an effort to imagine our future; to act, rather than react; and to lead, rather than follow. Its intended audiences include student affairs administrators and faculty at all levels, senior-level leadership, and professional associations—all have a common interest in fulfilling the promise of higher education and preparing students to lead lives of purpose in an increasingly complex world, to generate knowledge and understanding that serves as a platform for a positive future.

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[1] NASPA's research for this project focuses on student affairs topics that pertain to institutions in the United States. As a result, the findings and proposed recommendations that follow are primarily for an audience of U.S. higher education professionals.

Areas for Further Exploration

Findings from the Future of Student Affairs Task Force's discussions and extensive data collection efforts reveal several issues that are essential to the sustainability of the student affairs profession. While not an exhaustive list of all the needs for institutions and professionals to consider based on research findings, issues broadly fall under four key areas:

🎓	**Student Needs and Expectations**
👥	**Social Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**
📚	**Professional Preparation and Development**
✋	**Workforce Satisfaction and Retention**

This section of the report explores each of these areas in detail and provides further insights into the current capacity of institutions and student affairs professionals to effectively address the challenges that directly affect the future of the profession. The pervasiveness of these themes over time—and their continued salience during a global pandemic—speak to the need to reflect on our collective and updated understanding of them and consider how we can address them differently and effectively in the future. These areas have implications that overlap, and they offer background and context for the direction of this report's imperatives and recommendations.

Student Needs and Expectations

A top priority for student affairs professionals is to ensure that all students have access to the resources and services they need to have a meaningful and successful college experience. This charge may seem simple, but meeting it involves addressing the complex and evolving needs and expectations of today's college students. We are currently seeing shifts in the enrollment and the demographic makeup of students. In addition to being more racially and ethnically diverse, students increasingly have full-time jobs, attend school part time, are parents, and are enrolled in online courses. Institutions must adequately respond to these shifts in order to create an environment in which students feel a strong sense of belonging and have the tools and resources they need to be successful.

To better understand current priority areas at institutions, NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Survey asked professionals to what extent they think their institution is responding to student demographic and enrollment changes. Only 33% of respondents believe their institution is taking the necessary actions to best address demographic changes, and 45% believe their institution is adequately responding to changes in enrollment (see **Table C1** in Appendix C). This finding highlights the need for student affairs professionals and leaders to understand the unique makeup of their student body and to assess how well their current policies, structures, and practices are meeting the unique needs of various student populations.

Along with these demographic changes, we are also seeing changes in what students expect from their college experience, which directly affects how our institutions design and implement services and programming to meet student needs. One participant in a focus group of senior-level student affairs professionals explained how they have noticed a shift in how students ascertain an institution's value:

This generation has a different value set and makes values-driven decisions. I recently got to sit down with a group of rising high school seniors to talk about the top five things that [they're] looking for in an institution. How good that institution is considered, as it relates to their major, didn't make the list until number five or six. Ten years ago, that wouldn't have been the case. The things that institutions are doing, outwardly, to align themselves and their values with the values of the population that they're trying to attract, I think, changes the way that we do our work.

The shifting demographics and expectations of today's students highlight the need to focus on their mental health and basic needs, technology and online engagement, learning inside and outside the classroom, and cross-institutional collaboration.

INCREASING MENTAL HEALTH AND BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT

Students are coming to college with a greater need for mental health support. The need for student supports was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as the mental health and financial situations for some students have significantly worsened during this time (Active Minds, 2020). Addressing students' ongoing mental health concerns is one of the top three areas Future of Student Affairs Survey respondents identify as an issue that their institution is responding to effectively, with over half (52%) saying their campus is very responsive to rising mental health concerns (see Table C1 in Appendix C).

Looking to the future, 70% of respondents anticipate having an increase in responsibility to handle crisis management for students in the next 5 years, and 50% anticipate having an increased responsibility with student counseling (see Table C6 in Appendix C). However, respondents are optimistic that they can handle increases in these responsibility areas, with 90% believing they are either adequately or somewhat prepared for increases in providing crisis management support for students, and 83% believing they are either adequately or somewhat prepared for any additional efforts in counseling students (see Table C7 in Appendix C).

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Technology continues to play an important and increasing role in how we can do our jobs. With in-person learning and engagement activities no longer the only option, student affairs professionals have been identifying new and innovative ways to build community and provide virtual supports for students. COVID-19 forced many institutions to use technology for traditionally in-person services, such as orientation, academic and career advising, and other engagement activities (Wesley et al., 2021).

Four of the top 10 areas that NASPA survey respondents anticipate will increase as part of their current roles in the next 5 years directly relate to technology—online student communications (75%), leveraging technology to foster community engagement online (72%), online services (69%), and information technology use (66%). Additionally, the top student engagement-related changes from the pandemic that survey respondents anticipate their institution will keep in place include:

79% — More psychological counseling will occur using secure, HIPAA-compliant telecounseling platforms.

77% — Advising (e.g., academic, career, financial) will include more virtual appointment options.

67% — Student orientation will include more virtual delivery options.

63% — Career fairs will have an online component.

55% — Student activities programming will use more online engagement technology at scale.

The large-scale shift to remote engagement presents an important opportunity to assess the impact of virtual support services and operations and determine promising practices to sustain and improve upon in the future.

RETAINING A FOCUS ON STUDENT LEARNING
Despite the ongoing need for student affairs divisions to address crises, survey data suggest that the contributions of student affairs professionals will not be reduced to this singular focus. Student affairs work will continue to play an important part in positively impacting students' learning and engagement experiences. When the survey asked about the components of the *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (NASPA & ACPA, 1997), 60% of respondents report that "Engages students in active learning" applies to the current state of student affairs to a great extent, and 77% think that this component will apply to a great extent in the future (see **Tables C3** and **C4** in Appendix C). This is promising news, especially as divisions of student affairs continue to provide high-quality learning environments.

PROMOTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH COLLABORATION
Student engagement is a fundamental part of our job and is likely to be an area that our profession will continue to help lead. Approximately 40% of survey respondents anticipate interacting with students more in the next 5 years as part of their role responsibilities, and the vast majority (96%) feel adequately or somewhat prepared for this anticipated increase (**Tables C6** and **C7** in Appendix C). Student affairs professionals bring a high level of capacity to integrate student perspectives into decision-making discussions in collaboration with other departments and divisions across their institutions. Of the 63% of respondents who anticipate collaborating more with units across

the institution as part of their role responsibilities, the majority think that they will be working more closely with academic affairs, the diversity office, and enrollment management (81%, 66%, and 55%, respectively; see **Table C8** in Appendix C). These survey data affirm that cross-institutional partnerships—particularly between student affairs and academic affairs—are critical to future student success initiatives.

> *"If the student affairs profession wants to affect the lives of students in the best way possible, leaders must forge strong relationships with colleagues and cabinet members outside their divisions. Student affairs professionals who truly are committed to meeting student needs must forge these strong relationships—not necessarily friendships—throughout the institution."*
>
> *"Students simply want their needs met; they do not care what organizational function can address their needs. Student affairs must be able to blur those organizational lines and move outside functional boxes to build relationships and meet student needs."*
>
> Wilson, V. K. (2021). Cross boundaries, blur organizational lines. *Leadership Exchange*, *19*(3), 36.

Social Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

BUILDING INCLUSIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTS

As student affairs professionals, we play an important role in helping institutions to create safe and inclusive learning environments that recognize and celebrate differences, allow students to respectfully express themselves without retribution, and provide space for students to critically challenge each other's thoughts. A majority (86%) of NASPA survey respondents think that the principle of building supportive and inclusive communities should apply to the future of the student affairs profession to a great extent (see **Table C4** in Appendix C). Another 62% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they work in a welcoming and inclusive environment that values social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI).

> *"The concept of intersectionality can help the student affairs profession meet increasing demands for addressing social inequities and for dismantling the permeating influence of White supremacy in oppressive educational systems that produce disparate outcomes. By addressing the multiple dimensions of identity, potential discrimination, and training needs of staff as advocates of change, an intersectional approach can position student affairs divisions and leaders to more effectively respond to the multiple social challenges faced by students."*
>
> Batista, A. (2021). Cultivating a sense of belonging. *Leadership Exchange, 19*(3), 36.

Student affairs professionals are increasingly focused on supporting institutional equity efforts and fostering inclusive environments. Of survey respondents, 62% believe advancing and investing in JEDI initiatives is a top priority for their institution in the next 5 years (*n* = 589). The number of racially based incidents that have received national attention in recent years position JEDI work as a timely focus area for many institutions. During a focus group, one senior-level professional stated the following:

> *One of the other major issues across the nation that student affairs is looked to, along with our office of diversity, equity, and inclusion, is dealing with many of our race relation issues that are taking place and trying to ensure that students are given a voice. As far as ensuring that they have an opportunity to express themselves in a way, I think, that also intertwines with their mental health and sense of well-being. Their feeling of belonging. Their feeling of impact at the university, and their feeling of being able to contribute to something that's larger than them.*

However, although the importance of JEDI efforts is acknowledged, only 32% of survey respondents think that their institution is actively and adequately addressing concerns and needs related to racial justice, campus climate, and equity (see **Table C1** in Appendix C). These results underscore the need for institutions to think more about how they can build their capacity for JEDI work, particularly around professional development for their staff and making JEDI efforts institutionwide.

At a rally at The University of Mississippi, Buka Okoye, president of the campus NAACP, reads from a prepared statement requesting that the administration cease displaying the Mississippi state flag because of the confederate symbol it contains.

PREPARING FOR JEDI WORK

Student affairs professionals recognize and feel somewhat confident in their ability to implement JEDI principles and practices into their work. NASPA survey results indicate that 83% of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement that they have a high capacity to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into their work with students. When asked whether they are prepared to support JEDI work at their institution, 91% of respondents agree or strongly agree. However, only half (53%) agree or strongly agree that they are prepared to lead JEDI work at their institution (see Table C5 in Appendix C). JEDI practices are constantly evolving, and continuous professional development in this area is needed. Important ways for institutions to support student affairs professionals to lead JEDI work include providing access to training and professional development opportunities for all staff and faculty; implementing equitable hiring policies and practices; integrating JEDI work into job expectations, goals, and performance assessments; investing in human resources (e.g., staff, time); investing financial resources into JEDI-related programming; and empowering staff at all levels to influence decision making (see Table C11 in Appendix C).

Professional Preparation and Development

INCREASING RESPONSIBILITY ACROSS MULTIPLE AREAS

A leading theme from the research is the extent to which student affairs professionals will need to acquire additional knowledge, skills, and abilities to prepare for their future work. As the landscape of higher education continues to shift, NASPA survey data indicate that student affairs professionals anticipate the focus in their current roles changing across multiple areas in the future (see Figure 1 below and Table C6 in Appendix C). Specifically, the survey asked 957 professionals about 40 areas of responsibility and whether they anticipate these areas increasing, staying the same, or decreasing in the next 5 years.[2] Survey results indicate that nearly 100% of respondents (*n* = 957) anticipate having an increase in responsibility in at least one area, compared to 42% who anticipate a decrease in responsibility in at least one area. Those who anticipate an increase in responsibility in the next 5 years expect the increase across an average of 19 different responsibility areas. Those who anticipate a decrease in at least one area during this time span expect the decrease to affect an average of only three different responsibilities. Anticipating the need to take on more responsibilities without any redistribution of existing workload aligns with what we know about the prevalence of burnout and exhaustion in the profession.

FIGURE 1 | **Most Frequently Selected Areas of Anticipated Increase in Responsibility in the Next 5 Years (*n* = 957)**

Area	Percent
Social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts	84%
Online student communications (e.g., email, social media, SMS text, chat bots)	75%
Leveraging technology to foster community engagement online	72%
Crisis management for students	70%
Online services (e.g., advising, orientation, career services)	69%
Information technology use	66%
Strategic planning	66%
Implementing new initiatives/redesign efforts	65%
Data use	65%
Assessment and evaluation	64%
Collaboration with other units outside of student affairs	63%

Note. NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Survey (June 2021)

[2] Respondents were also given the option to indicate that an area was not relevant to their role.

FIGURE 2 | **Top Areas in Which Professionals Feel Underprepared* (*n* = 957)**

Area	Percentage
Grant management (i.e., federal, local, state)	53%
Institutionwide fundraising/development (institutional advancement)	51%
Student affairs fundraising/development	42%
Leverage technology to foster community engagement online	34%
Personal and professional opportunities for civic and global engagement	28%
Online services (e.g., advising, orientation, career services)	27%
Reviewing federal policies	26%
Reviewing state policies	26%
Information technology usage	26%
Online student communications (e.g., email, social media, SMS text, chat bots)	25%
Legal and compliance issues	20%

*Top percentages of respondents who identified these as potential areas of increase in their roles in the next 5 years who feel not at all prepared or a little prepared to deal with these changes.

Note. NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Survey (June 2021)

PREPARING FOR EMERGING RESPONSIBILITIES

Survey results indicate that levels of preparation to take on changes in role responsibilities are uneven. Increased interactions with students, for example, stands out as an area in which professionals feel especially well prepared. While only 40% of respondents (*n* = 387) anticipate having more interactions with students as part of their roles in the next 5 years, 83% of those same respondents feel adequately prepared for this change (see **Table C7** in Appendix C). Advising, coaching, and mentoring students is another area of anticipated increase in focus that respondents feel especially prepared for, with 67% feeling adequately prepared and 26% feeling somewhat prepared (*n* = 433).

One important area in which data suggest that professionals are only somewhat prepared is assessment and evaluation. Of the 616 survey respondents who expect an increase in assessment and evaluation responsibilities as part of their role in the next 5 years, 36% feel adequately prepared for this change and 47% feel somewhat prepared for it. As we continue to direct our attention to students' health, safety, well-being, engagement, and learning, we must regularly assess our progress and maximize efficiency.

Among respondents who report feeling especially underprepared in any one area, survey results suggest that they may benefit from further professional development and training related to

grant management and fundraising, technology and online student supports, civic engagement and advocacy, legal and compliance issues, and federal and state policy (see Figure 2 above and Table C7 in Appendix C). The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of these areas. For colleges and universities with declining resources and budgets, institutional advancement and fundraising will be essential. The pandemic also highlighted the need to provide timely and tailored communications across online and on-campus spaces, especially during times of crisis or uncertainty. National discussions about racial inequities and systemic racism also emphasize the need for student affairs professionals to provide programming for students related to enacting social change at the federal, state, local, and campus levels. Finally, as institutions continue to grapple with issues of safety and security and attempt to align campus policies with state and federal requirements, professionals will need to increase their understanding of relevant federal, state, and local regulations and policies.

DEVELOPING SUPERVISOR CAPACITIES

Issues related to additional workload and readiness highlight the need for capacity building among the profession and the role of supervisors. A little under three fourths of professionals surveyed supervise at least one full-time staff position, and 20% supervise at least 10 full-time staff (see Table B6 in Appendix B). Most respondents (73%) either strongly agree or agree with the statement that their supervisor empowers them to lead and enact change when possible (see Table C18 in Appendix C). And while most respondents who expect an increase in supervisory responsibilities in the next 5 years feel prepared to handle this responsibility in the future (see Table C7 in Appendix C), data from a mid-level professionals focus group suggest that development and training around effective talent management practices is still needed:

We do a lot of professional development into the theories and things of student development, but we don't do a lot of professional development around how to be an effective manager or kind of the nuts-and-bolts skill pieces. And I think sometimes that is missing.

Another individual from a focus group with new student affairs professionals noted the important role supervisors can play in workforce retention efforts:

How do we get mentorship across the profession? In our own office sometimes, we have our boss and supervisor. Now we need them to be our mentor and to be an advocate and supporter for us and kind of sponsor us through our first 5 years. And I know there are a lot of statistics about that, right? The first 5 years is a make or break for student affairs professionals. You're either in it or leave.

NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Survey results also indicate that 42% of respondents either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that they are able to easily find mentorship at their institution from professionals who hold similar or shared identities to their own (see Table C19 in Appendix C). As a profession, we will need to dedicate greater attention to building supervisory, management, and mentorship skills and competencies among administrators and staff.

BALANCING A MIX OF GENERALIST AND SPECIALIST RESPONSIBILITIES AND KNOWLEDGE

As student affairs professionals continue to provide a wide scope of programs and services to students, many will do so with varying levels of experience and knowledge. Professionals, especially those who have completed graduate study in student affairs programs, may have a strong understanding of the foundational aspects of higher education; however, focus group data suggest that student affairs work requires professionals to have more specialized knowledge as well. While it may be ideal for professionals to prioritize generalist and specialist knowledge equally, the future will likely challenge many of us to focus on one more than the other.

The future may present this choice of generalist or specialist knowledge often, especially as budget cuts, reorganization, and other factors could lead to some professionals working across multiple functional areas in their division. For example, student affairs work requires both general knowledge of higher education topics and specialized knowledge of functions such as orientation and advising. Similarly, student affairs professionals need to broadly understand student development theory as well as understand the specific details for creating a program budget. A mix of generalist- and specialist-level knowledge could be helpful in practice, but it is unclear how professionals should prioritize their training needs, as many will need to choose the level at

which more experience is necessary. Recruitment strategies should consider the appropriate level of specialization needed for the future of the student affairs workforce. The following quote from a vice president for student affairs, shared during a focus group, describes this consideration area well:

> *Siloing tends to happen. We reinforce career tracks, and it is harder to be a generalist in student affairs anymore. There are very few truly generalist positions. So, once you're tracked as a career [advising] person or a student union person, it's hard to shift to a different student affairs domain of practice. And I think that limits our profession a great deal.*

As the nature of student affairs work continues to evolve, it will be important for professional associations, graduate preparation programs, and institutions to identify viable options for professionals to gain the skills they need to do their daily work. Survey data indicate that the types of professional development preparation that will be most helpful to respondents in the next 5 years include: training from regional or national organizations through association programs, services, and events (65%); self-paced online short courses on targeted subjects (56%); and short-term credentials, such as specialized certificates (52%), followed by long-term credentials (36%) and graduate degree programs (18%). The issue of professional preparation is one that institutions, student affairs divisions, and professional associations will need to continue addressing together in the future.

Workforce Satisfaction and Retention

One of the most frequently asked questions regarding the future of student affairs is whether the profession, in its current scope and form, is attractive enough for people to continue pursuing in the next decade. NASPA survey results indicate that 61% of 957 respondents plan to continue working in the student affairs profession for the next 5 years, and 57% would encourage someone to enter the profession during this same time frame (see **Tables C20** and **C23** in Appendix C). Although the majority of student affairs professionals recognize the benefits and value of their work, there is still some uncertainty about the future of the profession. A little less than a third of respondents do not know if they will continue working in the field in the next 5 years, and a quarter of them do not know if they would recommend that someone else enter the profession.

Focus group data suggest that many professionals are considering multiple career options, including roles that are adjacent to traditional campus positions. Professionals with more extensive experience and senior-level roles share concern about declining numbers of professionals pursuing the path to leadership roles in the future. The following quote from a vice president of student affairs, shared during a focus group, describes the sentiment:

> *It's much trickier to mentor young professionals right now. The path to VP is a little bit different. What is the incentive to choose this as a lifelong career? Given all the things that everyone's talking about, it seems like the funnel has become narrower for those aspiring to be a dean of students or vice president for student affairs. It's not necessarily because the path isn't there, but it's because of the lack of interest in doing what they see [as the work of a VP].*

Survey and focus group data confirm that the future of the student affairs profession will reflect several challenges that require immediate attention, given the pervasiveness of the issues and their potential to increase in severity in the next few years. These challenges, if unaddressed, threaten the sustainability of the profession, as some individuals may determine that the requirements of their student affairs roles are too demanding, and the experiences do not meet their expectations. A dean of students in one focus group shared the following:

> *When we look at the senior leaders in student affairs, they're working 80-hour work weeks. They seem overwhelmed. They seem overtaxed, while at the same time they seem undervalued and underappreciated at their home institutions. I don't think that's attractive to our early career student affairs professionals.*

The most frequently mentioned areas of potential concern relate to salary and compensation and work environment. Despite challenges, there is still a great deal of opportunity to improve workforce satisfaction and address retention concerns.

PROVIDING CLEAR AND REASONABLE JOB EXPECTATIONS

Thirty-nine percent of survey respondents report that their institution is not discussing or prioritizing changes in the student affairs workforce (see Table C1 in Appendix C). This finding signals a great need for institutions to focus more on how student affairs professionals enter the field and the reasons why they depart for other opportunities. The mismatch between a professional's salary and compensation with their level of job responsibilities is a leading factor that could significantly impact their decision to leave the field or stay. For example, 88% of respondents think that individuals who leave the field do so because salaries and/or compensation packages are not competitive for

the experience and education required (see Figure 3 below and Table C19 in Appendix C).

Many professionals are aware that student affairs work will involve a variety of job requirements. In practice, however, the wide breadth of duties could become too demanding and result in an unsustainable pace of work. As institutions attempt to simultaneously provide integrated learning activities, engaging social spaces, and safe and inclusive environments, professionals are challenged with doing so while managing shrinking resources and constant crises. This expansive list of priorities requires staff to work at exceptionally high levels and often for long hours, which is not sustainable in the long term, as the resulting strain of such work conditions and expectations can lead

FIGURE 3 | **Factors That Could Contribute to Student Affairs Professionals Leaving the Field*** (*n* = 957)

Factor	Percentage
Salaries and/or compensation packages not competitive for the experience and education required	88%
Level of stress and crisis management responsiveness required for the role, which may lead to burnout	84%
Feeling underappreciated/undervalued by the institution	81%
Salaries and/or compensation not aligned with functions/duties	70%
Amount of hidden responsibilities that are not transparent in job descriptions or communicated up front	68%
Unhappiness with long days and weekends	54%
Inadequate institutional support for addressing racism and racial inequities	53%
Conflicts between personal values and values espoused and observed by an institution	51%
Student affairs field does not meet new professionals' expectations	32%

*Most frequently selected factors that respondents think contribute to student affairs professionals leaving the field.

Note. NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Survey (June 2021)

to recurring staff turnover. For example, 84% of survey respondents think that individuals leave the field because stress levels and crisis management responsiveness required for the role lead to burnout. Another 68% of respondents think that individuals leave the field because of the number of hidden responsibilities that are not transparent in job descriptions or communicated up front.

ENABLING FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS AND LOCATIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that many institutions, with appropriate preparation, can deliver high-quality virtual experiences. For example, many colleges and universities modified their on-campus operations and developed new processes and practices. Although such plans were accelerated and, in many instances, not determined to be permanent options, some professionals feel that they have adapted well to working remotely and would like to maintain this flexibility moving forward. In fact, many survey respondents expect a new working environment in the future, as 61% reported that they think their institution will offer more flexibility to work remotely in the next 5 years and 43% think their institution will offer more flexible work hours (see **Table C13** in Appendix C).

The continued expansion of online courses, programs, and services creates more opportunities for students to engage with the institution virtually and more opportunities for professionals to serve students remotely. However, such decisions about the optimal mix of in-person and virtual supports and remote operations will vary by institutional type and across functional areas. Institutions will need to take a holistic assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of remote operations across different support areas as they consider the needs and priorities of the future workforce.

"In fact, many survey respondents expect a new working environment in the future, as 61% reported that they think their institution will offer more flexibility to work remotely in the next 5 years and 43% think their institution will offer more flexible work hours."

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS

As professionals regularly address unexpected events, deliver routine programs and services, and respond to other student or division needs, their work deserves recognition. Survey data suggest that the sustainability of the profession could rely on it, as 81% of respondents think that individuals leave the field because they feel underappreciated or undervalued by their institution (see **Table C19** in Appendix C). Despite challenges faced, 94% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they are able to make a positive impact on students in their current role (see **Table C18** in Appendix C). We must commit to identifying approaches that are working well and celebrating each other's successes.

Imperatives and Recommendations

Achieving an ideal future for student affairs will hinge on the profession's responsiveness to enduring and emerging challenges, anticipated trends, and opportunities for innovation. In the next 5 to 10 years, student affairs will need to prioritize efforts to reaffirm long-standing values and reimagine how to apply them in new contexts. As the field grapples with questions about sustainability and visions for the path ahead, now is the time for staff, faculty, and administrators at all levels to accept their shared responsibility for shaping the future of the profession. NASPA's Future of Student Affairs Task Force synthesized the perspectives and insights of more than 1,000 professionals to help inform five strategic imperatives for consideration. Each of the five imperatives includes recommendations segmented for institutional leaders in cabinet-level roles, practitioners, graduate preparation faculty, and professional associations in the field. The imperatives are not ordered by level of importance, and application of specific recommendations will vary by institutional contexts.

Strengthen data capacity and highlight evidence about the impact of holistic student support programs and activities.

Faced with questions about whether the value of higher education justifies its cost, we must highlight how our work contributes to some of the biggest issues affecting students' persistence and completion outcomes, including ensuring that their basic needs are met and supporting their financial, academic, mental, social, and personal concerns and goals. Student affairs professionals should be equipped to collect, analyze, and communicate the impact of data relevant to the unique student population and contexts at each institution. Understanding our students and deriving meaning from data is an essential competency that we should regularly practice and leverage in our work. As institutions strive to center students in evidence-based decision making, student affairs professionals will serve as vital advocates and institutional liaisons for students with increasingly diverse preferences, needs, experiences, and goals. Moreover, taking holistic approaches to student success involves having collaborative data systems that empower students with timely and tailored information at multiple points throughout their journeys in higher education. Cross-institutional assessment efforts can help administrators, faculty, and staff provide students with seamless experiences and supports.

■ *Institutional leadership:*
- Analyze, review, and share data to determine how student affairs programming and services impact student outcomes, such as persistence, completion, and job acquisition.
- Update and align communications about the operations and value of student affairs across all levels of the institution, including the governing board level.
- Use data to inform decisions to prioritize or scale back efforts depending on what students validate as being most helpful for their success.
- Promote collaboration between student affairs and other departments, such as academic affairs and enrollment management, to support resource and knowledge sharing in student success efforts.
- Create opportunities to incorporate and center student perspectives into decisions made at all levels of the institution.

■ *Student affairs practitioners:*
- Become familiar with the ways the institution collects, analyzes, and reports on student success metrics.
- Prioritize building data analysis and assessment capacities to better understand and scale the impact of student supports.
- Partner with institutional research professionals to identify relevant metrics to track any progress and impact of programming and activities.
- Tailor communications about assessment findings for senior leadership and other stakeholders to inform institutional planning about student success.

■ *Student affairs/higher education graduate preparation faculty:*
- Provide graduate assistantships, internships, and other opportunities to practically apply curriculum knowledge about data assessment and examine the impact of student services on performance.
- Establish foundational knowledge about equitable assessment practices and strategies for centering students in the design and administration of data instruments.
- Share promising practices for data visualization, storytelling, and communication to highlight the impact of student affairs work on student completion, retention, and postgraduation outcomes with institutional leaders.
- Continue to identify opportunities for cross-institutional data partnerships and highlight the impact of holistic approaches.

■ *Professional associations:*
- Provide professional development and resources about institutional finance topics and related competencies, such as fundraising, donor interactions, and resource advocacy.
- Invest in and conduct research that examines the impact of student affairs work on student completion, retention, and postgraduation outcomes.

Operationalize student-centered commitments to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As part of ongoing efforts to critically assess how core justice and equity values are demonstrated in changing contexts, student affairs will need to consider what renewed JEDI commitments mean for the ways work is carried out and students are supported. Even for those who don't have JEDI initiatives listed as a formal job function, preparing to support students from an equity-minded lens will be critical. Operationalizing JEDI commitments is an institutionwide responsibility and will require professionals to have a shared understanding of the vision, strategies, opportunities, and challenges for change. Student affairs professionals, whose roles are often heavily student-facing, will need guidance for developing both their personal advocacy and the advocacy capacities of students. In addition to developing anti-racist programming and identity-affirming supports for students, senior leadership will need to address bias and inequities among staff and faculty. Proposed strategies for this imperative will vary by institutional contexts, missions, priorities of each unique student population, and more.

◼ *Institutional leadership:*
- Establish accountability metrics for assessing institutional efforts to address systemic and individualized racism in higher education.
- Ensure institutionwide alignment on JEDI-related goals and definitions.
- Include diverse perspectives—in terms of racial and ethnic identities, position level, and functional area—in the development, review, or improvement of institutional policies and practices.
- Integrate JEDI work into job expectations, goals, and performance assessments for all campus professionals.
- Implement equitable hiring policies and practices to increase representation of racially diverse staff and faculty across campus and in leadership positions.
- Provide ongoing and differentiated training and professional development opportunities related to advancing intercultural capacities.
- Invest in institutionwide human and financial resources as needed for JEDI-related programming.
- Establish a clear and consistent approach for monitoring and improving the campus climate, including mechanisms for the campus community to report incidents of bias and discrimination and learn about investigation outcomes.

◼ *Student affairs practitioners:*
- Commit to ongoing personal and professional development of JEDI capacities by staying current with JEDI-related readings; engaging in self-assessment tools; and participating in workshops, programs, and dialogues.
- Ensure policies, processes, and practices support and affirm differences across student identities, preferences, and needs.
- Develop programs and resources that will help students learn how to advocate for change, navigate political systems, and engage with conflicting perspectives.
- Review and correct institutional communications and policies for racist, ableist, sexist, and heteronormative language.

◼ *Student affairs/higher education graduate preparation faculty:*
- Demonstrate how to apply theoretical discussions about racism, power, privilege, and intersectionality in higher education when performing essential student affairs duties such as budgeting, supervision, and program management.
- Partner with student affairs educators to audit and revise curricula and cocurricular activities and programs with a focus on social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

◼ *Professional associations:*
- Provide JEDI training and professional development opportunities tailored for faculty and staff who have differentiated needs and levels of cultural competencies.
- Amplify research and perspectives that reflect attention to intersectional identities and social justice.
- Advance national discourse about the need for state and federal policies to address systemic racism in higher education.
- Create and support the development of events, resources, and frameworks for student affairs professionals about advancing JEDI efforts.
- Collaborate with other higher education organizations, including associations, to advocate for the importance of pursuing student success with a focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

JEDI-RELATED RESOURCES FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS

Amason, T., & Barnes, Y. M. (2021). *Five things student affairs professionals can do to embed racial justice into their work*. NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. https://www.naspa.org/report/five-things-student-affairs-professionals-can-do-to-embed-racial-justice-into-their-work

Davidson, C. E. (Ed.). (2021). Power and place: Indigenous worldviews of higher education [Special issue]. *Leadership Exchange*, *18*(4). https://www.leadershipexchange-digital.com/leadershipexchange/2021winter/MobilePagedReplica.action?pm=2&folio=Cover#

Harper, J., & Kezar, A. (2021). *Leadership for liberation: A leadership framework and guide for student affairs professionals*. USC Pullias Center for Higher Education. https://pullias.usc.edu/download/leadership-for-liberation

Jones, T. B., Guthrie, K. L., & Osteen, L. (2016). Critical domains of culturally relevant leadership learning: A call to transform leadership programs. In K. L. Guthrie, T. B. Jones, & L. Osteen (Eds.), *Developing culturally relevant leadership learning* (New Directions for Student Leadership, No. 152, pp. 9–21). Jossey-Bass. https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20205

Kansas State University. (2020). *Culturally relevant leadership learning (CRLL) self study—Application to practice, pedagogy, and research*. https://www.k-state.edu/leadership/research/CRLLSelfStudyWorksheet.pdf

Kezar, A., Holcombe, E., Vigil, D., & Dizon, J.P.M. (2021). *Shared equity leadership: Making equity everyone's work.* American Council on Education; USC Pullias Center for Higher Education. https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Shared-Equity-Leadership-Work.pdf

Kowalski, J., & Kavanagh, S. (n.d.). *The basics of equity in budgeting.* National Civic League. https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/ncr-article/the-basics-of-equity-in-budgeting

LaBanc, B. H., Fernandez, F., Hutchens, N., & Melear, K. B. (2020). *The contested campus: Aligning professional values, social justice, and free speech*. NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

Museus, S., & Smith, E. J. (2016). *The culturally engaging campus environments model and survey.* NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. https://www.naspa.org/report/the-culturally-engaging-campus-environments-model-and-survey

Wallace, M. B. (Ed.). (2022). *First-generation professionals in higher education: Strategies for the world of work*. NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

Wesley, A., Dunlap, J., & Russell, P. G. (2021). *Moving from words to action: The influence of racial justice statements on campus equity efforts.* NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. https://www.naspa.org/report/moving-from-words-to-action-the-influence-of-racial-justice-statements-on-campus-equity-efforts

Wesley, A., & Newkirk-Kotfila, E. (2021). *(Mis)Understanding students: Approaches to affirming student identities.* NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, Advising Success Network. https://www.advisingsuccessnetwork.org/engagement-and-communication/misunderstanding-students-approaches-to-affirming-student-identities

Optimize use of technologies to deliver high-quality in-person and virtual student experiences.

The use of technology will be integral to student affairs for a variety of reasons. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic unscored the importance of translating critical in-person supports and a sense of community into virtual settings. Large-scale use of existing technologies during this time (e.g., telehealth and wellness apps, chatbots) has unearthed additional insights about virtual student engagement opportunities. As we remain committed to validating and documenting learning in cocurricular settings and across each student's journey, we can continue to use and evolve tools, such as comprehensive student learning records and digital badges. With students increasingly engaging across multiple platforms and modalities, both online and in person, we must integrate technologies into strategies for advancing student learning, development, and success. Moreover, an increasingly online world requires student affairs professionals to promote ethical and responsible use of data while also helping students develop responsible online behaviors and cultivate their digital identities. Student affairs professionals can serve as leaders in ensuring student perspectives are integrated into discussions about the utilization, validation, and improvement of technologies and online support strategies.

■ *Institutional leadership:*
- Determine the appropriate role of technology and vision for virtual supports in alignment with institutional contexts, strategic plans, and student needs.
- Uphold flexible and inclusive design principles in the implementation of online engagement and technology utilization strategies.
- Take an institutionwide inventory of existing technologies to determine utilization rates and opportunities to streamline processes.
- Establish a collaborative approach to developing technology selection criteria and protocols that engage key stakeholders, including students.
- Ensure cross-institutional alignment with marketing and communication opportunities on social media, email, and other online platforms.

■ *Student affairs practitioners:*
- Regularly conduct trend analyses, feedback sessions, and needs assessments related to technology utilization, online communications, and student experiences with digital spaces and systems.
- Conduct student outreach about the availability and benefits of online offerings and virtual engagement opportunities.
- Identify opportunities to strategically streamline and tailor online student communications (e.g., email, texting, chatbots, website announcements, social media).
- Gather student data about the impact and utilization of virtual supports and programming, to inform continuous improvement efforts.

■ *Student affairs/higher education graduate preparation faculty:*
- Develop holistic curricular and cocurricular opportunities for students in online and hybrid programs.
- Codevelop trainings for students and staff about available online resources and digital identity, which sets expectations about appropriate behavior and interactions in virtual formats (ACPA & NASPA, 2015).
- Acknowledge and respond to the opportunities and potential of online student affairs work in graduate student curricula.

■ *Professional associations:*
- Identify and share effective practices for online student engagement and ways to cultivate digital citizenship.
- Conduct research about the impact of social media on crisis management, student engagement, and communication plans.
- Provide learning opportunities about effective communication and engagement with students online.

Approach the need for greater staff care systemically.

The increased pace of work and resource constraints during the pandemic have exacerbated preexisting feelings of exhaustion. Structural and systemic changes to address staff care and improve work–life balance are critical to the sustainability of the profession. As our responsibilities as student affairs professionals evolve over time, we need to update our job descriptions and clearly articulate our position expectations. The time and level of skills required for effective cross-institutional collaboration and participation on task forces, for example, should be captured. Adjusting policies and messaging should be one part of a comprehensive and long-term effort to reframe shared assumptions and cultural norms about the pace of work and the space needed for restorative rest. Policy adjustments should be contextualized and informed by an examination of processes, behaviors, and systems driving feelings of dissatisfaction.

◼ *Institutional leadership:*
- Ensure transparent salary information, clear processes for financial incentives, and equitable promotion policies among all staff and faculty at the institution.
- Establish policies and guidance that enable staff to work flexibly.
- Collect and use workplace climate and staff capacity assessment data to inform guidance, policies, professional development, training, organizational structure, and job responsibilities as necessary.
- Prioritize staff wellness and retention as part of strategic planning—including clear goals, objectives, and assessment metrics—and offer guidance that is routinely updated as necessary.
- Leverage existing external resources and provide professional development related to supporting staff wellness.
- Regularly communicate progress on efforts to prioritize staff wellness.
- Use recurring feedback methods such as stay interviews to gather current professionals' perceptions of the work environment and identify areas for improvement.

◼ *Student affairs practitioners:*
- Familiarize yourself with market trends, pay, compensation structure, and responsibilities of the profession by leveraging existing resources, such as tools and research shared by Glassdoor or the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources.
- Determine processes and policies for promotions and compensation increases by meeting with your institution's human resources department.
- Explore existing groups of student affairs professionals for community building, resource sharing, advocacy opportunities, and guidance from peers who have navigated similar experiences.
- Advocate to your supervisor or team for time to rest (e.g., physical, mental, sensory, creative) and determine a personal definition of self-care.
- Set and clearly communicate time boundaries (e.g., have a predetermined calendar time block each week without internal meetings) and clarify when a response should be expected if you're unavailable.

◼ *Student affairs/higher education graduate preparation faculty:*
- Develop opportunities through program orientation, graduate assistantships, and other practice-based experiences for students to understand the requirements and nature of student affairs work.
- Include résumé development, interviewing skills, and salary negotiation preparation as part of the curriculum and career-advising opportunities.

◼ *Professional associations:*
- Conduct and share results from landscape research about pay scale industry trends and routine responsibilities of the profession.
- Gather and share knowledge about how institutions handled budget cuts while prioritizing staff and student supports.
- Provide resources for professionals related to managing personal finance and financial well-being.

Align student affairs preparation and talent management approaches with the evolving needs of the profession.

While some professionals argue that the field needs more generalists, others claim that specialization is needed for certain areas: JEDI, legal and compliance, mental health counseling, and community partnerships. This tension emphasizes the need to ensure that graduate students and new professionals have accurate expectations about the day-to-day realities of student affairs work through graduate study, participation in conferences and workshops, and a transparent recruitment and hiring process. Developing the talents and identifying areas for growth and leadership among more tenured professionals is also critical. Mid- and senior-level professionals should have space and opportunities to build upon core competencies when they need to update their knowledge. One forthcoming option that may help individuals manage gaps between their generalist and specialist knowledge is a student affairs professional certification, and NASPA is leading a multi-association effort to develop one. The process, which involves extensive data collection and feedback from professionals at all levels, will ultimately result in the creation of a validated instrument that can be used to assess one's attainment of necessary skills to perform student affairs duties. Institutions must also provide staff who have supervisory roles with sufficient direction and training regarding talent management and supervisee development. The field will also need to consider how to recalibrate organizational structures and respond to short-staffed offices in the long term, as the expectation for staff to take on more responsibilities without adequate resources is not sustainable.

▪ *Institutional leadership:*
- Provide guidance to build staff supervisory capacities, including ways to nurture supervisee professional growth and develop skill areas needed for advancement.
- Acknowledge existing differences by professional level or experience in the field and provide differentiated professional development supports.
- Respond to identified skill gaps with relevant professional development and training to enhance staff capacities.
- Revise graduate preparation programs to more closely align with current and emerging needs of student affairs professionals, including familiarizing new professionals with typical responsibilities, crisis management scenarios, and ways to navigate bureaucratic systems and political pressures from stakeholders.

▪ *Student affairs practitioners:*
- Leverage existing resources from student affairs organizations to get familiar with emerging practices and topics of interest at the national level.
- Partner with faculty to ensure that programmatic learning outcomes are aligned with competencies learned in the classroom.

▪ *Student affairs/higher education graduate preparation faculty:*
- Ensure that curricula, assistantships, internships, and other practical learning opportunities prepare students to apply foundational concepts and learn the operational facets of student affairs.
- Provide tools and exercises that empower practitioners to self-assess and apply existing skills and expertise in new contexts.

▪ *Professional associations:*
- Identify opportunities to integrate business/strategic management, legal and regulatory compliance, data management, and risk mitigation skills into professional development offerings.
- Provide space and opportunities for faculty and graduate students to share emerging research and form supportive networks.
- Create and elevate scholarship and training related to supervision.
- Create and implement a professional certification program—validated by current professionals—used to assess skills and contributions in the field.

Conclusion

As institutions think about the future and ways to support students and their needs holistically, the role of student affairs professionals will be critical. Despite the many possible challenges that may arise for student affairs professionals in the years ahead, they have countless opportunities to have a meaningful impact on students' experiences. However, the work to deliver a transformational college experience cannot effectively happen in silos. Moving closer to our vision for the future will involve institutionwide efforts that include students, faculty, and professionals from all divisions. Institutions that can prioritize these recommendations will be well positioned to help students reach their full potential and to support the student affairs professionals whose well-being is integral to students' success and the future of the field.

"Moving closer to our vision for the future will involve institutionwide efforts that include students, faculty, and professionals from all divisions."
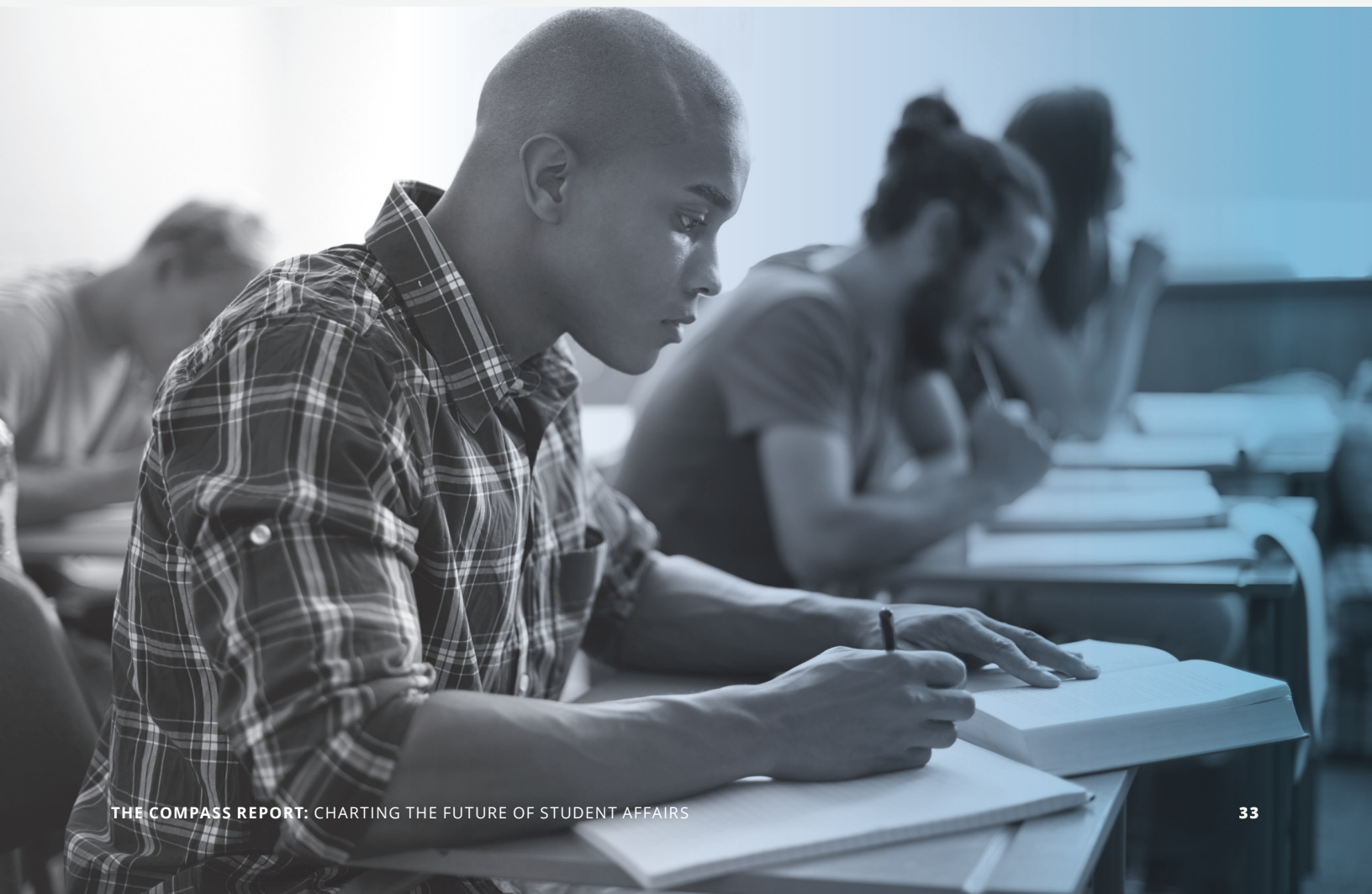
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Appendix A

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered in Qualtrics, and invitation emails were sent to the survey audience by NASPA's communications team. The email invitations, which included a unique survey link for each recipient, were sent on May 20, 2021, with reminders sent on June 4, 2021.

The survey was sent to current NASPA members and former members whose membership expired within the past 3 years. Membership status was determined as of May 17, 2021. The survey audience included professional, faculty, and student members who consented in their online member profile to receive communications from NASPA. Professionals affiliated with corporations and nonprofit organizations, professionals based outside the United States, honorary members, and emeritus members were not included in the survey audience. A total of 18,375 individuals were invited to participate in the survey.

After the survey closed on June 14, 2021, the survey data were analyzed in Stata. A total of 1,005 individuals responded to the survey—a response rate of 5%. Responses from individuals who did not provide a professional level, those who indicated they are retired, and those not employed at a higher education institution were excluded from the survey results (n = 48).

Please see **Appendix B** for respondent characteristics and **Appendix C** for the results for all quantitative survey questions.

Appendix B

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

TABLE B1 | With which professional subgroup(s) do you most closely identify? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Undergraduate student	0.5%	5
Graduate student—master's	1%	14
Graduate student—doctoral	7%	75
Faculty	8%	82
New professional	6%	64
Mid-level professional	39%	392
Senior-level professional	22%	222
Assistant Vice President	14%	138
Vice President for Student Affairs	17%	171
Retiree	1%	14
None of the above	2%	16
Total	N/A	1,005

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE B2 | How many years have you been in the student affairs profession?

	Percentage	Frequency
Less than 1 year	<0.5%	3
1–5 years	10%	95
6–10 years	17%	162
11–15 years	19%	185
16–20 years	15%	151
Over 20 years	39%	379
Total	100%	975

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B3 | **Which of the following best describes your career path?**

	Percentage	Frequency
Worked at higher education institutions within student affairs for entire career	63%	614
Worked at higher education institutions within both student affairs and other areas	22%	216
Moved in and out of higher education	7%	66
Worked in an industry outside of higher education for most of my career	3%	33
Faculty member for most or all of my career	2%	21
Current student	<0.5%	4
None of the above	2%	21
Total	100%	975

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B4 | **Are you currently employed at an institution of higher education?**

	Percentage	Frequency
No	2%	18
Yes	98%	957
Total	100%	975

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B5 | **How many years have you been in your current role?**

	Percentage	Frequency
Less than 1 year	9%	83
1–5 years	54%	516
6–10 years	24%	231
11–15 years	8%	77
16–20 years	3%	24
Over 20 years	3%	26
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B6 | How many full-time staff positions do you supervise?

	Percentage	Frequency
Zero	27%	261
One	9%	87
Two	8%	73
Three	7%	71
Four	6%	60
Five	7%	65
Six	5%	45
Seven	4%	42
Eight	4%	40
Nine	3%	24
10 or more	20%	189
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B7 | Which of the following functional areas are relevant to your work? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Academic advising	23%	223
Admissions	15%	147
Adult-learner services	11%	103
Alumni programs	5%	49
Campus activities	45%	427
Campus recreation	21%	202
Campus safety	17%	164
Career services	24%	225
Civic learning and democratic engagement	23%	222
Clinical health programs	14%	138
College unions	22%	207
Community service/service-learning	25%	238

	Percentage	Frequency
Commuter student services	24%	229
Compliance	18%	176
Counseling services	28%	269
Disability support services	22%	211
Enrollment management	14%	133
Financial aid	10%	92
First-generation student services	29%	280
Fraternity and sorority life	23%	222
Graduate and professional student services	17%	161
Intercollegiate athletics	8%	78
International student services	14%	133
Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion	38%	367
Learning assistance/academic support services	14%	130
Military-connected student services	12%	119
On-campus dining	13%	126
On-campus housing	28%	269
Orientation/new student programs	37%	357
Post-traditional student services	8%	73
Queer/trans (LGBTQIA+) student services	21%	201
Registrar	8%	72
Spirituality, spiritual life, campus ministry	13%	122
Student affairs assessment	35%	335
Student affairs fundraising/development	14%	131
Student affairs research and evaluation	19%	180
Student conduct/academic integrity	25%	238
Student conduct/case management	34%	330
Student media	11%	109

TABLE B7 | **Which of the following functional areas are relevant to your work? (Select all that apply.)** *(continued)*

	Percentage	Frequency
Title IX	25%	238
TRIO/educational opportunity	9%	83
Wellness programs	30%	288
Women's and gender center	9%	89
None of the above	3%	30
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE B8 | **Please select the sector of the institution where you are currently employed.**

	Percentage	Frequency
Public, 4-year	60%	570
Private nonprofit, 4-year	31%	301
Private for-profit, 4-year	1%	9
Public, 2-year	7%	68
Other	1%	9
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B9 | **Please select the total enrollment of the institution where you are currently employed.**

	Percentage	Frequency
Less than 5,000	24%	225
5,000–9,999	16%	153
10,000–19,999	19%	186
20,000 or more	41%	393
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Appendix C

SURVEY RESULTS

TABLE C1 | **To what extent do you think your institution is responding to the following issues and/or trends in the higher education landscape?**

	Very responsive and action is being taken	Aware and has a plan in place to respond effectively but little to no action taken	Aware but does not have the resources and/or plan in place to respond effectively	Not discussed or prioritized	Don't know	Total
Artificial intelligence and augmented reality	7% 69	13% 123	12% 112	33% 320	35% 333	100% 957
Budget reductions due to COVID-19 effects	56% 534	22% 213	11% 110	5% 44	6% 56	100% 957
Budget reductions due to enrollment declines	38% 361	22% 211	13% 125	13% 122	14% 138	100% 957
Campus climate, justice, and equity	32% 302	38% 365	25% 238	4% 39	1% 13	100% 957
Career and workforce development for students	44% 424	28% 272	14% 138	5% 45	8% 78	100% 957
Changes in the student affairs workforce	12% 111	21% 197	20% 191	39% 371	9% 87	100% 957
Civic and democratic engagement	27% 255	32% 308	24% 233	13% 120	4% 41	100% 957
College affordability	35% 333	30% 287	20% 194	9% 83	6% 60	100% 957
Enrollment challenges	45% 428	29% 280	16% 152	3% 29	7% 68	100% 957
Inequitable student outcomes	33% 313	35% 332	20% 191	6% 57	7% 64	100% 957
Ongoing mental health issues for college students	52% 493	26% 250	18% 170	3% 26	2% 18	100% 957
Racial justice	32% 303	37% 350	27% 254	4% 40	1% 10	100% 957
Student demographic changes	33% 318	32% 303	25% 242	4% 39	6% 55	100% 957

To what extent do you think your institution is responding to the following issues and/or trends in the higher education landscape? *(continued)*

	Very responsive and action is being taken	Aware and has a plan in place to respond effectively but little to no action taken	Aware but does not have the resources and/or plan in place to respond effectively	Not discussed or prioritized	Don't know	Total
Student organizing and activism	20% 192	30% 283	26% 246	19% 186	5% 50	100% 957
Technology innovations in teaching and learning	38% 365	28% 268	18% 175	5% 52	10% 97	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C2 | Which of the following are the top priorities for increasing student success at your institution in the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Advancing and investing in social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion programs and initiatives	62%	589
Building new opportunities for partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs	39%	371
Creating new opportunities to ensure equitable access to high-impact practices	33%	311
Establishing greater faculty–student affairs alignment and communication	28%	268
Hiring additional staff to increase capacity	23%	219
Improving civic learning and democratic engagement	20%	196
Improving data transparency and communication efforts	37%	354
Increasing financial resources	56%	540
Investing in new technologies	39%	377
Proactively engaging with student support systems (including parents and family members)	38%	362
Providing new training and professional development to increase capacity	29%	279
Updating and integrating cocurricular learning outcomes	41%	394
None of the above	5%	45
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C3 | **To what extent do the following components of the Principles of Good Practice in Student Affairs still apply to the current state of the student affairs profession?**

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	To a great extent	Total
Builds supportive and inclusive communities	2% 15	10% 97	28% 264	61% 581	100% 957
Engages students in active learning	1% 12	8% 75	31% 300	60% 570	100% 957
Forges educational partnerships that advance student learning	2% 23	15% 148	36% 343	46% 443	100% 957
Helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards	3% 25	13% 128	39% 370	45% 434	100% 957
Sets and communicates high expectations for student learning	2% 19	16% 154	45% 431	37% 353	100% 957
Uses resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals	3% 28	16% 155	34% 321	47% 453	100% 957
Uses systemic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance	4% 39	20% 189	40% 385	36% 344	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C4 | **To what extent should the following components of the Principles of Good Practice in Student Affairs apply to the future of the student affairs profession?**

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	To a great extent	Total
Builds supportive and inclusive communities	1% 6	2% 20	12% 111	86% 820	100% 957
Engages students in active learning	1% 7	3% 32	19% 183	77% 735	100% 957
Forges educational partnerships that advance student learning	1% 10	4% 43	23% 220	71% 684	100% 957
Helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards	1% 8	4% 43	25% 237	70% 669	100% 957
Sets and communicates high expectations for student learning	1% 10	7% 67	31% 292	61% 588	100% 957
Uses resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals	1% 7	5% 50	20% 196	74% 704	100% 957
Uses systemic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance	1% 14	6% 57	29% 275	64% 611	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

| **How useful have each of the following professional competency areas for student affairs administrators and staff been to you in your career?**

	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Extremely useful	Total
Advising and supporting	6% 55	19% 186	39% 369	36% 347	100% 957
Assessment, evaluation, and research	4% 42	19% 186	38% 366	38% 363	100% 957
Law, policy, and governance	10% 91	27% 257	35% 333	29% 276	100% 957
Leadership	4% 37	14% 131	37% 352	46% 437	100% 957
Organizational and human resources	10% 92	27% 261	36% 347	27% 257	100% 957
Personal and ethical foundations	7% 65	24% 233	37% 358	31% 301	100% 957
Social justice and inclusion	4% 41	13% 120	35% 331	49% 465	100% 957
Student learning and development	3% 31	12% 119	38% 366	46% 441	100% 957
Technology	8% 79	29% 273	39% 374	24% 231	100% 957
Values, philosophy, and history	8% 81	35% 338	39% 370	18% 168	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C6 | **In the next 5 years, how, if at all, do you anticipate the focus of your current role changing with regard to the following?**

	Increase	Remain the same	Decrease	Not relevant for the role	Total
Advising/coaching/mentoring students	45% 433	42% 404	5% 50	7% 70	100% 957
Assessment and evaluation	64% 616	33% 319	1% 9	1% 13	100% 957
Civic engagement/advocacy	56% 537	37% 356	2% 21	4% 43	100% 957
Collaboration with other units in student affairs	53% 508	44% 421	1% 8	2% 20	100% 957
Collaboration with other units outside of student affairs	63% 602	34% 329	2% 15	1% 11	100% 957
Counseling for students	50% 479	29% 278	4% 38	17% 162	100% 957
Crisis management for students	70% 671	20% 195	2% 19	8% 72	100% 957
Curriculum development	39% 375	37% 356	7% 63	17% 163	100% 957
Data usage	65% 620	32% 303	1% 11	2% 23	100% 957
Delivering training and professional development for staff or faculty	50% 478	43% 415	2% 22	4% 42	100% 957
Division-level budget management	29% 282	44% 422	3% 26	24% 227	100% 957
Facilities management	21% 198	45% 430	4% 38	30% 291	100% 957
Focus on social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts	84% 800	15% 139	1% 9	1% 9	100% 957
Grant management (i.e., federal, state, local, philanthropy)	29% 277	37% 353	3% 30	31% 297	100% 957
Implementing new initiatives/redesign efforts	65% 625	28% 267	2% 17	5% 48	100% 957
Information technology usage	66% 631	28% 271	1% 11	5% 44	100% 957
Institutionwide fundraising/development (institutional advancement)	32% 305	33% 317	2% 21	33% 314	100% 957
Interaction with students	40% 387	47% 447	10% 100	2% 23	100% 957

	Increase	Remain the same	Decrease	Not relevant for the role	Total
Legal and compliance issues	52% 497	41% 389	1% 6	7% 65	100% 957
Leveraging technology to foster community engagement online	72% 685	21% 201	2% 21	5% 50	100% 957
Mentorship for other staff or faculty	39% 375	49% 469	5% 44	7% 69	100% 957
Offering services to the profession and to professional associations	29% 279	54% 514	12% 119	5% 45	100% 957
Office or function budget management	34% 330	53% 504	4% 34	9% 89	100% 957
Online services (e.g., advising, orientation, career services)	69% 663	22% 210	2% 19	7% 65	100% 957
Online student communications (e.g., email, social media, SMS text, chat bots)	75% 716	21% 203	1% 10	3% 28	100% 957
Operational crisis management	49% 469	38% 361	2% 22	11% 105	100% 957
Personal and professional opportunities for civic and global engagement	37% 358	52% 502	6% 57	4% 40	100% 957
Policy analysis and implementation	43% 415	48% 464	1% 11	7% 67	100% 957
Program budget management	38% 362	50% 480	4% 38	8% 77	100% 957
Program management	36% 343	56% 535	5% 51	3% 28	100% 957
Research activities	34% 327	50% 476	7% 64	9% 90	100% 957
Reviewing federal policies	36% 345	52% 495	1% 10	11% 107	100% 957
Reviewing state policies	36% 345	51% 487	1% 14	12% 111	100% 957
Risk management	43% 413	43% 413	1% 12	12% 119	100% 957
Sexual and interpersonal violence prevention, education, or training	35% 333	46% 443	3% 27	16% 154	100% 957
Strategic planning	66% 633	31% 299	1% 10	2% 15	100% 957

TABLE C6 | **In the next 5 years, how, if at all, do you anticipate the focus of your current role changing with regard to the following?** *(continued)*

	Increase	Remain the same	Decrease	Not relevant for the role	Total
Student affairs fundraising/development	41% 388	28% 267	3% 27	29% 275	100% 957
Student program development	41% 391	46% 437	8% 72	6% 57	100% 957
Supervision and/or talent management	44% 420	47% 449	2% 18	7% 70	100% 957
Working with institutional leaders, faculty, and/or boards of directors	48% 462	45% 431	3% 26	4% 38	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C7 | **How prepared are you to deal with anticipated increases in focus of the following in your current role?**

	Not at all prepared	A little prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Total
Advising/coaching/mentoring students	1% 4	7% 30	26% 111	67% 288	100% 433
Assessment and evaluation	2% 11	15% 91	47% 291	36% 223	100% 616
Civic engagement/advocacy	2% 13	24% 127	49% 263	25% 134	100% 537
Collaboration with other units in student affairs	0% 2	3% 13	21% 107	76% 386	100% 508
Collaboration with other units outside of student affairs	1% 7	3% 20	30% 180	66% 395	100% 602
Counseling for students	4% 18	13% 64	34% 161	49% 236	100% 479
Crisis management for students	3% 19	8% 52	37% 246	53% 354	100% 671
Curriculum development	3% 12	16% 60	47% 177	34% 126	100% 375
Data usage	3% 18	15% 94	47% 291	35% 217	100% 620
Delivering training and professional development for staff or faculty	0% 2	8% 39	36% 173	55% 264	100% 478
Division-level budget management	3% 9	17% 49	34% 97	45% 127	100% 282

	Not at all prepared	A little prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Total
Facilities management	5% 10	22% 43	40% 80	33% 65	100% 198
Focus on social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts	2% 14	15% 117	53% 424	31% 245	100% 800
Grant management (i.e., federal, state, local, philanthropy)	21% 57	32% 90	33% 91	14% 39	100% 277
Implementing new initiatives/redesign efforts	1% 8	8% 49	40% 249	51% 319	100% 625
Information technology usage	3% 21	23% 144	52% 326	22% 140	100% 631
Institutionwide fundraising/development (institutional advancement)	18% 54	33% 100	35% 108	14% 43	100% 305
Interaction with students	1% 4	3% 11	13% 51	83% 321	100% 387
Legal and compliance issues	2% 11	18% 88	49% 245	31% 153	100% 497
Leveraging technology to foster community engagement online	5% 36	29% 197	49% 333	17% 119	100% 685
Mentorship for other staff or faculty	1% 5	8% 31	37% 138	54% 201	100% 375
Offering services to the profession and to professional associations	3% 7	20% 57	42% 116	35% 99	100% 279
Office or function budget management	4% 14	13% 42	42% 137	42% 137	100% 330
Online services (e.g., advising, orientation, career services)	4% 26	23% 150	49% 324	25% 163	100% 663
Online student communications (e.g., email, social media, SMS text, chat bots)	3% 25	22% 159	51% 362	24% 170	100% 716
Operational crisis management	2% 11	11% 52	44% 205	43% 201	100% 469
Personal and professional opportunities for civic and global engagement	6% 21	22% 79	47% 170	25% 88	100% 358
Policy analysis and implementation	2% 9	16% 68	43% 179	38% 159	100% 415
Program budget management	4% 14	13% 48	39% 141	44% 159	100% 362

	Not at all prepared	A little prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Total
Program management	1% 2	5% 18	31% 106	63% 217	100% 343
Research activities	3% 10	18% 58	41% 135	38% 124	100% 327
Reviewing federal policies	4% 13	22% 75	41% 142	33% 115	100% 345
Reviewing state policies	5% 16	21% 74	41% 142	33% 113	100% 345
Risk management	2% 8	12% 49	45% 185	41% 171	100% 413
Sexual and interpersonal violence prevention, education, or training	2% 5	12% 40	42% 141	44% 147	100% 333
Strategic planning	1% 6	13% 85	42% 268	43% 274	100% 633
Student affairs fundraising/development	13% 51	29% 114	40% 155	18% 68	100% 388
Student program development	1% 2	3% 13	30% 116	67% 260	100% 391
Supervision and/or talent management	1% 5	8% 34	37% 155	54% 226	100% 420
Working with institutional leaders, faculty, and/or boards of directors	3% 12	11% 51	43% 198	44% 201	100% 462

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C8 | **Which of the following departments/functions do you anticipate working with more closely? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Academic affairs	81%	488
Business office	29%	172
Diversity office	66%	397
Enrollment management	55%	329
Financial aid	31%	187
General counsel	40%	240
Institutional research	50%	298
President's office	36%	216
Registrar	23%	141
Other	10%	60
None of the above	0%	2
Total	N/A	602

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses. Only respondents who indicated they expected an increase in collaboration outside of student affairs answered this question.

TABLE C9 | **To what extent do you agree with the following statements related to social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
I have a high capacity to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into my work with students.	1% 11	5% 45	11% 108	47% 449	36% 344	100% 957
I am prepared to lead JEDI work at my institution.	3% 31	18% 170	26% 250	33% 312	20% 194	100% 957
I am prepared to support JEDI work at my institution.	1% 9	2% 23	7% 63	36% 340	55% 522	100% 957
I am able to access professional development resources to increase my capacity to support JEDI work.	2% 21	7% 64	15% 140	40% 380	37% 352	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C10 | **Where is your source for social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) professional development? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Community resources	48%	461
Consultants	19%	182
Institutes and workshops from other groups	57%	550
Institutions other than my own	27%	259
Membership associations	74%	707
My institution	68%	648
Self-directed resources (e.g., books, online resources, publications, etc.)	80%	770
Other	4%	40
None of the above	1%	9
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C11 | **Which of the following do you see as important ways for institutions to support student affairs professionals to lead social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Empowering staff at all levels to influence decision making	72%	691
Implementing equitable hiring policies and practices	83%	790
Integrating JEDI work into job expectations, goals, and performance assessments	83%	796
Investing financial resources into JEDI-related programming	80%	761
Investing in human resources (e.g., staff, time)	81%	777
Providing access to training and professional development opportunities for all staff and faculty	86%	819
None of the above	0%	3
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C12 | In what ways do you think student affairs professionals should approach social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work over the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Advocate for institutional investments of resources	72%	692
Create sustainable change mechanisms	69%	665
Develop programming and resources that support a wider range of student identities	73%	697
Develop programming and resources with greater recognition of intersectional student identities	74%	712
Increase institutionwide collaboration and approach to JEDI work	82%	784
Increase involvement in development, review, or improvement of institutional policies and practices	78%	743
Other	5%	47
None of the above. I do not think student affairs professionals should change how they approach JEDI work.	1%	14
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C13 | Which of the following operational changes from the pandemic do you think your institution will keep in place in the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Increased use of electronic signature for efficiency	72%	691
More flexibility to work remotely	61%	580
More flexible work hours	43%	413
More staff meetings conducted using video technology	74%	707
Reduced or eliminated use of hard copy documents	70%	673
Other	6%	54
None of the above	4%	43
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C14 | **Which of the following student engagement-related changes from the pandemic do you think your institution will keep in place in the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Advising (e.g., academic, career, financial) will include more virtual appointment options.	75%	717
Career fairs will have an online component.	58%	552
E-sports will be an increasingly important engagement opportunity.	40%	378
More psychological counseling will occur using secure, HIPAA-compliant telecounseling platforms.	74%	706
Recreation and wellness activities will be offered in remote video formats more frequently.	36%	342
Residence halls will provide more virtual engagement opportunities.	19%	186
Residence halls will reduce occupancy.	9%	89
Student activities programming will use more online engagement technology at scale.	51%	486
Student organizations will conduct meetings in virtual formats.	44%	421
Student organizations will include more virtual delivery options.	70%	669
None of the above.	4%	34
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C15 | What student engagement-related changes that occurred during the pandemic would you like to continue in the long-term future? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Advising (e.g., academic, career, financial) will include more virtual appointment options.	77%	741
Career fairs will have an online component.	63%	603
E-sports will be an increasingly important engagement opportunity.	33%	318
More psychological counseling will occur using secure, HIPAA-compliant telecounseling platforms.	79%	756
Recreation and wellness activities will be offered in remote video formats more frequently.	44%	417
Residence halls will provide more virtual engagement opportunities.	26%	244
Residence halls will reduce occupancy.	9%	89
Student activities programming will use more online engagement technology at scale.	55%	523
Student organizations will conduct meetings in virtual formats.	43%	413
Student organizations will include more virtual delivery options.	67%	641
None of the above.	4%	38
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C16 | **Which of the following types of professional preparation do you think will be most helpful to you in the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Graduate degree programs	18%	172
Long-term credentials (e.g., professional certifications)	36%	343
Self-paced online short courses on targeted subjects	56%	539
Short-term credentials (e.g., specialized certificates)	52%	499
Training from regional or national organizations (e.g., association programs, services, events)	65%	622
Other	4%	36
None of the above	5%	49
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C17 | **Which of the following types of professional preparation do you think will be the most helpful for student affairs professionals in the next 5 years? (Select all that apply.)**

	Percentage	Frequency
Graduate degree programs	46%	438
Long-term credentials (e.g., professional certifications)	53%	510
Self-paced online short courses on targeted subjects	70%	668
Short-term credentials (e.g., specialized certificates)	67%	316
Training from regional or national organizations (e.g., association programs, services, events)	73%	701
Other	3%	28
None of the above	3%	27
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C18 | Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ unsure	Total
I feel that I am receiving enough support to advance as a professional in this field.	8% 72	20% 189	15% 148	35% 333	22% 208	1% 7	100% 957
The nature of my work aligns with my initial expectations of the work.	5% 44	16% 156	11% 110	43% 408	25% 235	0% 4	100% 957
I am able to express opinions and perspectives without fear of retaliation.	9% 84	17% 159	11% 104	34% 329	29% 279	0% 2	100% 957
I work in a welcoming and inclusive environment that values social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.	4% 43	13% 126	20% 189	38% 363	24% 234	0% 2	100% 957
I work in an environment that allows me to be my authentic self.	4% 42	14% 136	16% 153	36% 345	29% 281	0% 0	100% 957
I am able to make a positive impact on students in my current role.	1% 5	1% 11	4% 43	42% 399	52% 494	1% 5	100% 957
I am able to easily find mentorship at my institution from professionals who hold similar or shared identities to mine.	15% 145	27% 254	21% 199	23% 224	13% 124	1% 11	100% 957
I have access to professionals with diverse racialized identities in my institution.	7% 71	19% 186	14% 130	37% 358	21% 204	1% 8	100% 957
My supervisor empowers me to lead and enact change when possible.	6% 60	9% 82	12% 115	31% 297	42% 398	1% 5	100% 957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C19 | What factors do you think contribute to student affairs professionals leaving the field? (Select all that apply.)

	Percentage	Frequency
Amount of hidden responsibilities that are not transparent in job descriptions or communicated up front	68%	648
Conflicts between personal values and values espoused and observed by an institution	51%	491
Feel underappreciated/undervalued by the institution	81%	779
Inadequate institutional support for addressing racism and racial inequities	53%	505
Level of stress and crisis management responsiveness required for the role lead to burnout	84%	804
Salaries and/or compensations are not aligned with functions/duties	70%	667
Salaries and/or compensation packages are not competitive for experience and education required	88%	846
The student affairs field does not meet new professionals' expectations	32%	304
Unhappy with long days and weekends	54%	513
None of the above	0%	4
Total	N/A	957

Note. Percentages will not sum to 100% due to respondents selecting multiple responses.

TABLE C20 | Do you plan to continue working in the student affairs profession for the next 5 years?

	Percentage	Frequency
No	10%	94
Yes	61%	585
Don't know	29%	278
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE C21 | Which of the following statements best describes your plan for working in the field for the next 5 years?

	Percentage	Frequency
I plan to continue working in the field of student affairs but have no plans to pursue a more advanced role.	35%	204
I plan to continue working in the field of student affairs and pursue a more advanced role.	61%	358
I plan to continue working in the field of student affairs but unsure if it will be at an institution.	4%	23
Total	100%	585

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Only respondents who indicated they expected to continue working in student affairs answered this question.

TABLE C22 | Which of the following best describes your plan for next steps in your career?

	Percentage	Frequency
I plan to remain in the field of student affairs but not work at an institution.	4%	4
I plan to pursue a career in a field other than student affairs.	43%	40
I plan to work as a consultant.	6%	6
I plan to retire.	30%	28
I plan to return to school (full or part time).	2%	2
Other	13%	12
I don't know	2%	2
Total	100%	94

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Only respondents who indicated they do not expect to continue working in student affairs answered this question.

TABLE C23 | Would you encourage someone to enter the student affairs profession in the next 5 years?

	Percentage	Frequency
No	19%	180
Yes	57%	541
Don't know	25%	236
Total	100%	957

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.