**ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies Self-Assessment and Development Plan**

**(Post- Assessment)**

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The following metrics will allow you to assess your own knowledge, skills, and experiences related to the 10 professional competency areas that ACPA – College Student Educators International and NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, two major professional associations in higher education and student affairs, have outlined. On the right, you will be asked to assess your level of skill and/or experience in relationship to a specific outcome. On the right, you will assess the degree of importance the outcome is to your Practicum experience. Please note that you will not be penalized for needing development or lack of proficiency in any outcome. Proficiency in every outcome is not at all expected.

**ADVISING AND SUPPORTING**

The Advising and Supporting competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals and groups through direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance. Through developing advising and supporting strategies that consider self-knowledge and the needs of others, we play critical roles in advancing the holistic wellness of ourselves, our students, and our colleagues. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Exhibit culturally inclusive active listening skills (e.g., appropriately establishing interpersonal contact, paraphrasing, perception checking, summarizing, questioning, encouraging, avoid interrupting, clarifying). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Establish rapport with students, groups, colleagues, and others that acknowledges differences in lived experiences. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Conscientiously use appropriate nonverbal communication. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Facilitate reflection to make meaning from experiences with students, groups, colleagues, and others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Recognize the strengths and limitations of one’s own worldview on communication with others (e.g., how terminology could either liberate or constrain others with different gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, cultural backgrounds, etc.). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Facilitate problem-solving. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Facilitate individual decision-making and goal-setting. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Appropriately challenge and support students and colleagues. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Know and use referral sources (e.g., other offices, outside agencies, knowledge sources), and exhibit referral skills in seeking expert assistance. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify when and with whom to implement appropriate crisis management and intervention responses. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Maintain an appropriate degree of confidentiality that follows applicable legal and licensing requirements, facilitates the development of trusting relationships, and recognizes when confidentiality should be broken to protect the student or others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Seek opportunities to expand one’s own knowledge and skills in helping students with specific concerns (e.g., relationship issues, navigating systems of oppression, suicidality) as well as interfacing with specific populations within the college student environment (e.g., student veterans, low-income students, etc.). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize virtual resources and technology to meet the advising and supporting needs of students. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Know and follow applicable laws, policies, and professional ethical guidelines relevant to advising and supporting students’ development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Advising and Supporting** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Interpersonal Skills * Professional Development * Group Dynamics * Partnering with Others | | | | | | |

**PERSONAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The Personal and Ethical Foundations competency area involves the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop and maintain integrity in one’s life and work; this includes thoughtful development, critique, and adherence to a holistic and comprehensive standard of ethics and commitment to one’s own wellness and growth. Personal and ethical foundations are aligned because integrity has an internal locus informed by a combination of external ethical guidelines, an internal 2 voice of care, and our own lived experiences. Our personal and ethical foundations grow through a process. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate key elements of one’s set of personal beliefs and commitments as well as the source of them. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate one’s personal code of ethics for student affairs practice, drawn from or by the ethical statements of professional student affairs associations and their ethical principles | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe the ethical statements and/or foundational principles of any professional associations directly relevant to one’s job. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify ethical issues in the course of one’s job. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain how one’s behavior reflects the ethical statements of the profession and address lapses in one’s own ethical behavior. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Appropriately question institutional actions which are not consistent with ethical standards. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize institutional and professional resources to assist with ethical issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate awareness and understanding of one’s attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and identity how they affect one’s integrity and work with others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Take responsibility to broaden perspectives by participating in activities that challenge one’s beliefs. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify the challenges associated with balancing personal and professional responsibilities, and recognize the intersection of one’s personal and professional life. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate an understanding that wellness is a broad concept comprised of emotional, physical, social, environmental, relational, spiritual, moral, and intellectual elements. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify one’s primary work responsibilities and, with appropriate, ongoing feedback, craft a realistic, summative self-appraisal of one’s strengths and limitations. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Recognize and articulate healthy habits for better living. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify positive and negative impacts on wellness and, as appropriate, seek assistance from available resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify and describe personal and professional responsibilities inherent to excellence in practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Recognize the importance of reflection in personal, professional, and ethical development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Personal and Ethical Foundations** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?  -Wellness and Healthy Living  - Self Assessment and Reflection | | | | | | |

**Assessment, Evaluation, and Research**

The Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency area focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, and use various AER methodologies and the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Be able to differentiate between assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Use AER terminology consistently when participating with colleagues in assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify political and educational sensitivity of raw and partially processed data and AER results. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Handle data with appropriate confidentiality and deference to organizational hierarchies. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Contribute actively to the development of a culture of evidence at the department level by providing AER training, advocating for funding, and incorporating AER in practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Use culturally relevant and appropriate terms and methods to conduct and report AER findings. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Design program and learning outcomes that are clear, specific, and measurable; informed by theoretical frameworks and aligned with organizational outcomes, goals, and values. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize theoretical frameworks and organizational outcomes, goals, and values to design program and learning outcomes | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain to students and colleagues the relationship of AER processes to learning outcomes and goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Prioritize program and learning outcomes with organization’s goals and values. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize student learning and development theories and scholarly research to inform content and design of learning outcomes and assessment tools. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Educate stakeholders about the relationship of departmental AER processes to learning outcomes and goals at the student, department, division, and institutional level. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Discern appropriate design(s) based on critical questions, available data, and intended audience(s). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Assessment, Evaluation, and Research** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * AER Design * Methodology, Data Collection, and Data Analysis * Interpreting, Reporting Results * Values/ Ethics/ Politics | | | | | | |

**Leadership**

The Leadership competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without positional authority. Leadership involves both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad based constituencies and issues. This can include working with students, student affairs colleagues, faculty, and community members. This section is organized by the leadership learning concepts of education, construct knowledge and articulation; training, skill identification and enhancement; development, personal reflection and growth; and engagement, active participation and application. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate the vision and mission of the primary work unit, division and institution. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify one’s own strengths and challenges as a leader and seek opportunities to develop leadership skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify and understand individual- level constructs of “leader” and “leadership.” | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain values and processes that lead to organizational improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain the advantages and disadvantages of different types of decision-making processes. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify institutional traditions, mores, and organizational structures and how they influence others to act in the organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe how personal values, beliefs, histories, and views inform one’s perception as an effective leader with and without authority. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Build mutually supportive relationships with colleagues and students across similarities and differences. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify basic fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding in one’s work setting and communities of practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe and apply the basic principles of community building. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Think critically, creatively, and imagine possibilities for solutions. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Within the scope of one’s position and expertise, lead others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Advocate for change that would remove barriers to student and staff success. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Leadership** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Foundational and Theoretical Principles of Leadership * Self-Awareness and Continual Reflection * Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills * Change Management and Innovation | | | | | | |

**ORGANIZATIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Organizational and Human Resources competency area includes knowledge, skills, and dispositions used in the management of institutional human capital, financial, and physical resources. This competency area recognizes that student affairs professionals bring personal strengths and grow as managers through challenging themselves to build new skills in the selection, supervision, motivation, and formal evaluation of staff; resolution of conflict; management of the politics of organizational discourse; and the effective application of strategies and techniques associated with financial resources, facilities management, fundraising, technology, crisis management, risk management, and sustainable resources. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain the application of introductory motivational techniques with students, staff, and others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe the basic premises that underlie conflict in and the constructs utilized for facilitating conflict resolution. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Develop and utilize appropriate meeting materials (e.g., facilitation skills, agenda, notes/ minutes). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Recognize how networks in organizations play a role in how work gets accomplished. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain the basic tenets of personal or organizational risk and liability as they relate to one’s work. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Demonstrate an understanding of how physical space impacts the institution’s educational mission. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Provide constructive feedback in a timely manner. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe and follow campus protocols for responding to critical incidents and campus crises. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Use technological resources with respect to maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of one’s work. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Organization and Human Resources** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Assessment, Advocacy, and Networking * Skill Development * Hiring and Staffing * Supervision, Communication, and Conflict Resolution * Technology | | | | | | |

**SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION**

For the purpose of the Social Justice and Inclusion competency area, social justice is defined as both a process and a goal that includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups and seeks to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power. This competency involves student affairs educators who have a sense of their own agency and social responsibility that includes others, their community, and the larger global context. Student affairs educators may incorporate social justice and inclusion competencies into their practice through seeking to meet the needs of all groups, equitably distributing resources, raising social consciousness, and repairing past and current harms on campus communities. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify systems of socialization that influence one’s multiple identities and sociopolitical perspectives and how they impact one’s lived experiences. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Understand how one is affected by and participates in maintaining systems of oppression, privilege, and power. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Engage in critical reflection in order to identify one’s own prejudices and biases. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Integrate knowledge of social justice, inclusion, oppression, privilege, and power into one’s practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate theories and models that describe the development of college students and the conditions and practices that facilitate holistic development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain the basic tenets of personal or organizational risk and liability as they relate to one’s work. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Facilitate dialogue about issues of social justice, inclusion, power, privilege, and oppression in one’s practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Advocate for the development of a more inclusive and socially conscious department, institution, and profession. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe and follow campus protocols for responding to critical incidents and campus crises. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate a foundational understanding of social justice and inclusion within the context of higher education | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Social Justice and Inclusion** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Understanding of Self and Navigating Systems of Power * Critical Assessment and Self-Directed Learning * Engaging in Socially Just Practice | | | | | | |

**STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Student Learning and Development competency area addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs and teaching practice. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate theories and models that describe the development of college students and the conditions and practices that facilitate holistic development (e.g., learning, psychosocial and identity development, cognitive-structural, typological, environmental, moral). | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate how race, ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and religious belief can influence development during the college years. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify the strengths and limitations in applying existing theories and models to varying student demographic groups. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate one’s own developmental journey in relation to formal theories. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Articulate theories and models that describe the development of college students and the conditions and practices that facilitate holistic development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Design programs based on current research and theories of student learning and development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Assess teaching and learning, and incorporate results into future practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Assess learning outcomes from programs and services and use theory to guide and improve practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize theory-to-practice models to inform individual or unit practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify and take advantage of opportunities for curriculum and program development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Student Learning and Development** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Design and Application * Assessment and Integration | | | | | | |

**LAW, POLICY, AND GOVERNANCE**

The Law, Policy, and Governance competency area includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to policy development processes used in various contexts, the application of legal constructs, compliance/policy issues, and the understanding of governance structures On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe the systems used to govern public, private, and for-profit institutions of all types (two-year, four-year, graduate, professional, vocational, etc.) in one’s state and nation. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain the differences between public, private, and for-profit higher education with respect to the legal system and what they may mean for respective students, faculty, and student affairs professionals. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe how national and state constitutions and laws influence the rights of students, faculty, and staff on all types of college campuses. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe evolving laws, policies, and judicial rulings that influence the student-institutional relationship and how they affect professional practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Act in accordance with national, state/ provincial, and local laws and with institutional policies regarding nondiscrimination. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Identify major internal and external stakeholders, policymakers, and special interest groups who influence policy at the national, state/provincial, local, and institutional levels. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe the governance systems at one’s institution including the governance structures for faculty, student affairs professionals, staff, and students. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe how policy is developed and implemented in one’s department and institution, as well as the local, state/province, and national levels of government. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Know when and how to consult with one’s immediate supervisor and institutional legal counsel regarding matters that may have legal ramifications. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Explain concepts of risk management, reasonable accommodation, and enact liability reduction strategies | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Demonstrate awareness of inequitable and oppressive ways that laws and policies are enacted on vulnerable student populations at national, state/provincial, local, and institutional levels. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Describe the student conduct process at the institutional level and demonstrate concern for the legal, social, moral, educational, and ethical expectations of the community | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Encourage and advocate participation in national, state/provincial, local, and institutional electoral processes as applicable. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What **Law, Policy, and Governance** competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Ethical and Inclusive Application of Policy * Civic Engagement | | | | | | |

**TECHNOLOGY**

The Technology competency area focuses on the use of digital tools, resources, and technologies for the advancement of student learning, development, and success as well as the improved performance of student affairs professionals. Included within this area are knowledge, skills, and dispositions that lead to the generation of digital literacy and digital citizenship within communities of students, student affairs professionals, faculty members, and colleges and universities. On the left, please rate your skills, ability, and knowledge regarding the outcomes and on the right, please indicate how important each outcome is to your current work.

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| Needs Development | Adequate | Proficient |  | Not Important | Important | Essential |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Demonstrate adaptability in the face of fast-paced technological change. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Assess the accuracy and quality of information gathered via technology. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Accurately cite electronic sources of information respecting copyright law and fair use. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Demonstrate awareness of one’s digital identity and engage students in learning activities related to responsible digital communications and virtual community engagement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Engage in personal and professional digital learning communities and personal learning networks at the local, country, and/or global level. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize research, trend data, and environmental scanning to assess technological needs and readiness of students, colleagues and other stakeholders | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize social media and other digital communication and collaboration tools to engage students in programs and activities. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Demonstrate how one’s work with and service to students is inclusive of students participating in online and hybrid courses and programs. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize a variety of digital strategies for enhancing educational interventions with multimedia, interactive tools, and creativity—enhancing technologies. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize multiple strategies for accessing and assessing information. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Utilize universal design principles to model and promote compliance with accessibility laws and policies. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| What Technology competencies did you focus on developing or enhancing during your Practicum experience?   * Technical Tools and Software * Digital Identity and Citizenship * Online Learning Environments | | | | | | |

Self Assessment Questions:

1. In my Practicum experience, what interested me the most? How did my skills and experiences lend themselves to making a significant contribution at my Practicum site?

Contrary to expectations, the most interesting part of the Practicum experience was interacting with the Summer Academy mentors and not the actual EIP student attendees. When I think of my future career trajectory within the field of higher education, I often question the extent to which I will specifically engaging and interacting with undergraduate students. For example, as an admissions counselor, which is an entry-level position, I interact with prospective students and their parents on a regular basis. My director, on the other hand, primarily interacts with other upper-level administrators across the university including stakeholders within both the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs divisions of the university. Unexpectedly, I became invested in developing supervisory, but appropriate peer-mentor relationships with the other staff. This was done at a unique time due to the health and racism pandemics. Prior to my Practicum experience, I had been developing my communication and collaborative skills, but struggled with taking initiative in a full leadership capacity. However, my abilities to display empathy, remain approachable, and facilitate discussion, were extremely valuable during my time with EIP.

1. How did my professional and personal values align with the mission and goals of my Practicum site?

Both professionally and personally, I strive to stand by my commitment to contributing to increased access to higher education for what are considered to be “nontraditional” students. Historically, higher education was designed and limited to the white, elite, but today, student services has expanded to accommodate the needs of a compositionally more diverse population including low-income, first-generation, minority, adult-learner, differently abled, and/or more identities. I believe that it is important to recognize that students may have experiences that are the result of multiple identities. Regardless, students should have access to equitable solutions that address the oppressions that result from society’s systems. As a professional, I hope and look to develop in the field both academically and practically. Just as I hope for personal advancement, I believe students of multiple identities should have access to social mobility and maximized personal development however that may manifest. Admissions and enrollment management officials, in many ways, serve as gatekeepers to the field. I want to further my career in these specific functional areas. To align with my personal values, I want to be knowledgeable about resources that specifically serve “non-traditional” students and provide access to college-going resources and opportunities. I wanted to get a glimpse of the “other side of the desk” as it is often referred to see if the impact of these high school programs is significant. EIP’s mission is to adequately prepare first-generation high school students from the Northern Virginia area for admission to Mason and other institutions of higher education around the country. More than often, these students are academically successful, but EIP provides an additional support network and knowledge base that the students might otherwise not have access to due to their first-generation status. Throughout this summer, I was intrigued and appreciative of the opportunity to directly engage in both my professional and personal values with another part of the Mason community that I was previously unfamiliar with.

1. On what skills and experiences did I focus on developing over the course of my Practicum experience?

By managing the morning and afternoon daily meetings as well as staffing hours, records, and other assessments, I developed in the “Advising and Supporting,” “Student Learning and Development,” “Leadership,” and “Assessment, Evaluation, and Research” competency Areas. The one that surprised me the most was my new interest in assessment and data overall. I learned the importance of data-informed decision making and was able to create assessments that I found more interesting that usual. As previously mentioned, I am more drawn to the relationship management aspect of the field versus the business side. However, I recognize that in order to grow in the field, I must also develop in my qualitative research skills and theory-guided practice. During the later half of my Practicum experience, I also took the Management and Administration of Student Services course. From that class, I gained a new perspective about organizational theory and ways of measuring student success. I realized it is important for enrollment management and student affairs divisions, which are often housed separately, to have a positive, mutually beneficial relationship. Over the course of the Practicum experience, I was able to work more with the student affair side, but still in the early stages of the field in relation to the life cycle of a student. I was glad to be able to assess regularly, creatively engage with technology, and gain supervisory experience.