Current and Former Foster Youth: Removing Barriers to Higher Education through Purposeful Programming

In addition to research on higher education access and persistence based on college students’ social class, first-generation status and ethnicity, there is a growing body of literature about foster youth and barriers they face as they transition out of care. The purpose of this paper is to summarize this literature by first outlining the transitional processes of youth in foster care within the framework of five ecological systems (education, employment, family, housing, and physical and mental health). Second, analyzing existing data on barriers foster youth face as they move through the educational pipeline. Third, examining state and college programs that have been implemented to create support systems specifically for foster youth. Finally, discussing the implications for student affairs practitioners who wish to work with youth transitioning out of foster care and implement programs on their campuses.

Social Diversity Education Activities: Implications for Historically Underrepresented Students

Research implies that students who engage with diverse individuals in a diverse college environment will become more effective global leaders in today’s multicultural world. However, when reflecting on the college experiences of historically underrepresented students many of these students feel isolated and disconnected from campus. These students are impacted by prejudice, racism, microaggressions and more. While it is important to educate students to accept the differences in others, this paper addresses students of color in higher education, focusing on the experiences of African American and Latino/a students. This paper explores the impact of social diversity education activities on underrepresented students and addresses diversity activity inclusion. Student Affairs practitioners are asked to look at the goals of diversity programming and evaluate if current programs and actions of facilitators are meeting these goals. This paper not only addresses the need for more research on this topic, but it suggests a need for the creation of more safe spaces and intentional peer interactions.

International Students and Transition Shock: Identifying Acculturation Stressors in Higher Education and Implications for Student Affairs Practitioners

As the United States becomes more diverse, it is clear that we must learn to live with people who think, believe, and behave differently than we do. In 2011, the number of international students studying in the U.S. increased to a record high of 723,277 students, a 32% increase since 2001 (Open Doors, 2011). This increase in international students brings a vibrant multicultural influence to college campuses around the U.S. and specifically to the living environments of on-campus housing. On-campus housing provides opportunities to interact with students of diverse backgrounds, but these interactions are often met with resistance by residents. The goals of this paper are to better understand cultural tensions to develop ways of addressing issues early on, to promote harmonious living and to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by close exposure to vastly different cultures. In mediating conflicts there is a tendency for practitioners to focus on the conflict management process itself or the techniques for negotiation and tension reduction, rather than the deeper issue of conflict. Getting to the root of the issue focuses mediation conversations on why is this issue going on, rather than what is the issue going on (Fisher, 1998). Preventative measures to reduce conflict occurrences and severity include increasing opportunities for informal interactions among residents, encouraging unifying communities that recognizes and appreciates each individual for their uniqueness and providing thorough Resident Advisor trainings on cultural norms of the on-campus population, conflict mediation strategies and guidance on how to confront micro-aggressions.

Deconstructing the Model Minority Myth: Diverse Needs of Asian American College Students

The model minority myth is an assumption that disregards the heterogeneity of the Asian American population. To better contextualize the educational experiences of Asian American college students, current demographic data and higher education statistics are provided. This paper offers an overview of the model minority myth and the effects it has on Asian American college students’ experiences. Specifically, an interdisciplinary review of literature
analyzes the multiplicities of Asian American students’ ethnic identity development, influence of cultural family values, impact on college transition, and a look at the underachieving population. Upon closer examination, the diversity of the population revealed the impact of the model minority myth on Asian American students is influenced by a myriad of several different factors. Asian American students’ interests and issues vary widely, an understanding of the complexity of this population is important in developing policies, programs, and services to be more responsive to the diverse needs of Asian American college students.

Remediation: An issue of Access and Standards for Institutions, a Key Component for Underprepared Students

Allowing underprepared students access to higher education has been an issue for many years. These students are often required to take remedial or developmental education coursework in order to be at the same academic level as other students. Remedial coursework is defined as, “courses in reading, writing, or mathematics for college students lacking those skills necessary to perform college-level work at the level required by the institution” (Young, 2002, p. 4). It was reported that 58% of freshmen entering community colleges, and 31% of freshmen enrolled in public four-year colleges required remediation (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006). The objectives of remedial courses are to provide individuals with basic skills that will further assist them in academic success, and to eliminate access barriers by reducing educational deficiencies.

Remediation creates a tension for institutions that value open admission policies, but do not wish to lower their academic standards. There are two major implications for remedial and developmental education: integration of learning communities with developmental education, and increasing high school preparation. Institutions must consider the needs of underprepared students, and responding to these specific needs is not a simple task. However, developmental education, the alternative for remediation, does appear to be more effective in enhancing student learning and involvement on campus.

Student Leaders as Learners: Development and Diversity through Leadership

Student success is central to the work of every student affairs professional. College student development theories help practitioners guide students toward growth. Leadership provides opportunities for students to become involved on campus. The inclusion of diverse people and perspectives at institutions is necessary in our ever-changing world. Each of these principles, college student development theory, leadership, and diversity, are vital to the success of students as learners and are key principles in institutional mission statements, including the missions of the University of Utah and Westminster College. Research on these subjects, especially where they converge, can inform institutions of higher education on best practices for institutionalizing college student development theory, leadership, and diversity. An examination of the overlap also demonstrates how leadership can be an impactful venue for student development and openness to diversity.

My Role as a Privileged Student Affairs Professional towards Racism

Unfortunately, many students of color still face racial discrimination and racism today on our college campuses. Many white students grow up with advantages and opportunities that make higher educational attainment a high probability. Many students of color do not have these same opportunities and advantages. For those students of color who do find admittance to higher education, many find discrimination and racism within the campus environment. This paper looks at some of the challenges students of color face from the view point of a white student affairs professional. The paper examines my personal feelings as a white woman when looking at issues of racism. I am still a work in progress trying to sort out my own white identity. I have realized a few things however, that hopefully put me in a better position to help students of color find greater access to higher education and to have positive experiences while seeking college degrees. My goal is to be the kind of student affairs professional who creates programs that benefit students of color in their quest for degree attainment.
**Formal Mentorship in Higher Education**

This paper includes an extensive literature review discussing mentorship in higher education. Several sources and perspectives come from business and other disciplines, but all tie to higher education and the implementation and effects of mentoring for undergraduate students in higher education. Additionally, implications for executing a formal mentoring program are discussed. The lens through which mentorship is viewed in this paper is as a means to increase retention and student success within higher education.

**Accountability through Performance Funding: United States, England, and China**

The global economic crisis motivates institutions of higher education to consider to whom and for what they are accountable. As funding decreases and public expectations increase, American universities experiment with performance-based funding. Globalization and internationalization have prompted worldwide interest in linking resources to results. Despite differing governance structures, England and China offer appealing comparisons. This paper describes pressures that influence accountability, the role of performance funding, and assessment to measure outcomes. International comparisons are discussed, along with suggestions to implement performance funding in the US while considering the uniqueness of national governance.

**Improving Pacific Islander Students’ College Success by Implementing a Culturally-Responsive Learning Environment**

Pacific Islanders are among the fastest growing minorities in the nation; yet, this community continues to have a great disadvantage in higher education. The enrollment of Pacific Islander students has increased in colleges and universities; however, their high dropout rates and low graduation rates continue to rise. This study is threefold: First, it will provide a history of Pacific Islanders in higher education with literature review. Second, it will examine the positive impact of a culturally-responsive learning environment with respect to student experience and graduation achievement. Finally, it will present implications on how to develop a culturally-responsive learning environment to promote Pacific Islanders and their educational success. This study hopes to influence educational leaders, practitioners, policy makers and researchers to see Pacific Islanders through their cultural lens and begin doing things differently to permit a positive college experience and graduation achievement.

**Increasing Access to Information in the System of Higher Education: Implications for the Student**

The 1962 *Consumer Bill of Rights* issued by President John F. Kennedy established that consumers are entitled to information required to safely and effectively use products and also to file grievances when quality standards are not met. This essay argues that students are consumers entitled to product information required to effectively use the educational infrastructure to achieve their academic goals. Currently, federal legislation only requires institutions to provide safety information and very limited information for effective use. There is no specific federal *right-to-know* legislation in place regulating information provision in higher education. Without this information students cannot compare institutions and programs and make educated choices. Consumer information is essential to students’ ability to a) develop free thought and autonomous decision-making, b) ensure fair and ethical treatment, c) ensure equal opportunities d) persist at the institution and e) make cost effective educational decisions. Though legislation is limited, institutions can be proactive by providing students with binding and storable information sources including contracts, information libraries, institutional chains of command and codes of rights and responsibilities which include product use and safety details and grievance filing processes.
Why Can't we be Friends? Mediating Cultural Conflicts in On-Campus Housing

As the United States becomes more diverse, it is clear that we must learn to live with people who think, believe, and behave differently than we do. In 2011, the number of international students studying in the U.S. increased to a record high of 723,277 students, a 32% increase since 2001 (Open Doors, 2011). This increase in international students brings a vibrant multicultural influence to college campuses around the U.S. and specifically to the living environments of on-campus housing. On-campus housing provides opportunities to interact with students of diverse backgrounds, but these interactions are often met with resistance by residents. The goals of this paper are to better understand cultural tensions to develop ways of addressing issues early on, to promote harmonious living and to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by close exposure to vastly different cultures. In mediating conflicts there is a tendency for practitioners to focus on the conflict management process itself or the techniques for negotiation and tension reduction, rather than the deeper issue of conflict. Getting to the root of the issue focuses mediation conversations on why is this issue going on, rather than what is the issue going on (Fisher, 1998). Preventative measures to reduce conflict occurrences and severity include increasing opportunities for informal interactions among residents, encouraging unifying communities that recognizes and appreciates each individual for their uniqueness and providing thorough Resident Advisor trainings on cultural norms of the on-campus population, conflict mediation strategies and guidance on how to confront micro-aggressions.

Working Adult Undergraduate Students and Extracurricular Involvement

As a result of uneven institutional support and research neglect, working adult undergraduate students are a marginalized population within higher education. Not only have working adult undergraduate students been institutionally labeled within a large bracket of nontraditional, many work over 35 hours per week and balance multiple roles and identities placing them at a high-risk of dropping out. The purpose of this paper is to find ways to better engage this population by discussing current literature, examining the effects of marginalization as well as the barriers they face and reviewing adult student development theories. Ultimately, this paper proposes changing labels used to identify this population and classroom involvement methods such as improving communication, utilizing community college best practices, applying student development theories, and increasing research to better engage and retain this population.

Becoming and Unbecoming White: Using Helm’s White Racial Identity Development Model as a Conceptual Framework

With racial diversity increasing nationally across college campuses, higher education professionals remain predominately white (about 70%). This reality suggests that most students of color are likely to rely on White higher education professionals to support their academic, career, and personal needs. This paper applies Helm’s White Racial Identity Development model as a framework to understand how student affairs practitioners can understand their own Whiteness as it relates to supporting all students on campus, developing institutional policies and programs, and taking social action on or off campus.

Deaf students: A linguistic minority in higher education

This paper combines research with my experiences at the University of Utah as a Deaf student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy master’s program, which places an emphasis on the profession of student affairs. My experience is voiced alongside research that highlights Deaf students as a linguistic minority group in higher education (Lane, 1992) and how student affairs professionals often forget about Deaf student’s academic and social engagement barriers of language, culture, knowledge, interaction, and experience (Nichols and Quaye, 2009). A historical overview, Deaf Identity Development (Glickman, 1993), Critical Race Theory (Yosso, 2005; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solórzano, 1997, 1998; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), retention (Tinto, 1993), and best practices are also discussed. The topic is crucial because it impacts Deaf students’ access to and success in higher education.