

CSP 605: Capstone Seminar
College Student Personnel Program
Bowling Green State University
Spring 2008

Mondays 9:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. in 202 Education Building

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Syllabus: <http://personal.bgsu.edu/~mewilso/605syll.pdf>

Course Description:

This professional seminar is designed to promote the integration of the core curriculum and practitioner experiences of the Master's degree program in College Student Personnel, and to prepare for your transition to a professional student affairs position following completion of the degree.

In this course, you will have the opportunity to:

1. Construct and articulate your personal mission statement
2. Synthesize, demonstrate, and apply your knowledge base as an emerging student affairs professional
3. Describe and communicate your professional qualities and skills
4. Create an electronic portfolio to present what you believe, know, and can do

In summary, this course is designed for you to answer three questions:

1. What do I *believe*?
2. What do I *know*?
3. What can I *do*?

Texts:

Blimling, G. S., Whitt, E. J., & Associates. (1999). *Good practice in student affairs: Principles to foster student learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Magolda, P. M., & Carnaghi, J. E. (Eds.) (2004). *Job one: Experiences of new professionals in student affairs*. Dallas: University Press of America.

Course Expectations and Assignments:

The objectives of this course will be pursued through required readings, in-class discussions, and written assignments. You are in your final semester of the CSP program and on the verge of becoming a full-time professional in student affairs. The formulation and presentation of ideas, both oral and written, should reflect the highest quality of skills associated with a new professional.

Assignments are due at the *beginning* of class on the dates indicated on the schedule. Late assignments may receive little or no written feedback and will receive a lower grade unless we have made other arrangements prior to class. Please staple papers for submission (no paper clips, folders, etc.). Papers and citations should be submitted in APA style.

You are strongly encouraged to work with a classmate to critique and proofread one another's assignments. Each of you is likely to submit better papers and projects as a result of that process. Excessive typographical and grammatical errors detract from your work and will be reflected in your grade.

If you wish to propose an alternate assignment in place of any below, please develop a short proposal for discussion.

1. Class Participation

It is important that you participate by sharing your thoughts and reactions to course materials and discussions. The input of each student is valued and valuable. Your attendance for the full class period is expected and you are responsible for everything that is covered, distributed, or announced during

class. If an absence is unavoidable, you should arrange with a classmate to receive handouts and announcements. Students with two or more absences are unlikely to earn a grade higher than B.

2. **Personal Statement of Mission Paper**

The purpose of this assignment is to identify and describe the core values, beliefs, and commitments that shape who you are as a person and a professional in this field. What should others expect of you as an emerging professional in student affairs? Your description should be clear and coherent and reflect your complex understanding of our field.

To develop and write a personal statement of mission, consider the following questions related to each section. Be succinct but substantive as you address each section, refer to appropriate materials and examples to illustrate your major points, and provide a clear rationale for your response.

Goals and Objectives:

- In this section comment briefly on how you arrived at this juncture in your life where you elected to prepare for a career in higher education and student affairs.
- Where you wish to go with this preparation in the next 2-3 years? Next 10 years?

Personal Values and Commitments:

- In this section define and describe at least **four personal** values, beliefs, or commitments you are ready to make at this juncture in your life. These values might be identified with individual words, assumptions, or statements of belief.
- Why and how have you chosen these personal values?
- How are these personal values enacted in your life? What choices have you made in order to remain faithful to these commitments? Provide examples.

Professional Values and Commitments:

- In this section define and describe at least **four professional** values, beliefs, or commitments you are ready to make at this juncture in your life. What do you believe is important about education in general? Higher education? Student affairs work specifically? These might be identified with individual words, assumptions, or statements of belief.
- Why and how have you chosen these professional values?
- How are these professional values enacted in your work? What choices have you made in order to remain faithful to these commitments? Provide examples.
- Discuss how your personal and professional values come together to form a coherent whole philosophy and approach to your work in higher education and student affairs.

Whole Person and Whole Profession (Conclusion):

The graduate school experience is essentially an act of dreaming about one's purpose in life, one's calling, and one's vocation. Parks (2000) speaks of this as "a relational sensibility in which I recognize that what I do with my time, talents, and treasure is most meaningfully conceived not as a matter of personal passion and preference but in relationship to the whole of life [It] is the place where the heart's deep gladness meets the world's deep hunger" (p. 148).

- As an emerging professional, to what extent do you fulfill this sense of purpose and calling in this field? What are the sources of compatibility and conflict for you?
- In light of your personal and professional values, how would you characterize the fit between you and the student affairs profession?
- Discuss the degree of synergy you can expect to realize in pursuing your above-stated goals and objectives.

Framing your Mission:

- Finally, on a single sheet of paper, construct a summary synthesis of your goals and values to function as a mission statement suitable for framing and hanging on your office wall. Attach this statement to your paper.
- *Please bring one additional copy of this mission statement to class, but delete your name from it.*

This is a working document that is likely to be shaped further as you make choices and experience their consequences. Consider this a beginning framework of an emerging professional, wherever that may take you.

[Parks, S. D. (2000). *Big questions, worthy dreams: Mentoring young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.]

Assignment alternative: Prepare a manuscript for submission. Please talk with me if you intend to do this.

WHAT MATTERS TO ME: WHAT I BELIEVE ABOUT WHAT I DO

The *Journal of College and Character* <<http://www.collegevalues.org/journal.cfm>> invites essays from readers that explore how personal values, beliefs, and commitments influence the work they do in higher education. Readers are asked to share how their "inner" lives intersect with their "outer" lives especially in their educational efforts with college students. We welcome stories, experiences, and reflections that reveal what readers care deeply about. This new feature will begin with our April 2008 issue. Send your reflection to jcc@naspa.org and identify your submission as "What Matters to Me." <<http://www.collegevalues.org/>>

3. Professional Knowledge Assessment and Development Plan Paper

What do you know? The purpose of this paper is to assess your professional knowledge base and create a professional development plan to enhance it. A hallmark of professionals is their ability to identify the areas of knowledge they need to develop, enhance, or complement in order to continue effectively in their work or prepare for advancement. Focus on what you know, not what you can do.

Directions for Paper:

- In class we will do some activities to help you begin to identify your knowledge areas – things you know well and things you want or need to know better. Using as a foundation the sheet you completed titled *Student Affairs Knowledge Summary* (Parts 1 & 2), consider areas in which you claim some expertise and describe at least *three* of those areas. What do you know, how did you learn it, and in what ways will this knowledge contribute to your professional success?
- Next, identify at least five knowledge areas you wish to develop. These can be areas that you know a bit about but want to expand or things you know little or nothing about and want to learn. Describe each area as clearly and specifically as you can and justify your choices. Why have you identified these areas? How will this knowledge contribute to your professional development and success?
- Create a professional development plan to address each knowledge area you have identified in part b. What will you do over the next three years to address these areas? Be specific. For example:
 - What books or articles might you read?
 - What websites might you explore?
 - What videos might you watch?
 - What seminars or conferences might you attend?
 - What classes might you take?

You might find it helpful to consult with your colleagues and/or other professionals who have expertise in the knowledge area.

4. Professional Skills Evaluation Paper and Website

A professional is an individual who:

- possesses the unique skills, knowledge, and experience required to perform a generally acknowledged important social function
- can make independent judgments concerning the effective utilization of skills, knowledge and experience
- is committed to a program of continuous self-development as a professional
- is governed by a set of ethics prescribed by the profession

[Rodgers, R. F. (1983). Using theory in practice. In T. K. Miller, R. B. Winston, Jr., & W. R. Mendenhall (Eds.), *Administration and leadership in student affairs: Actualizing student development in higher education*. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development Inc.]

This assignment is designed to help you document the skills, knowledge and experiences that are the foundation of your professionalism. It provides the opportunity for you to write a comprehensive evaluation of your professional skills based on your accumulated record of experiences.

a. Review:

- the professional skill areas listed in the CSP Program Guide (pages 34-46)
- your professional skills self-assessments that you have completed since beginning the CSP program
- your reflective practice journals from CSP 689

b. Based on your review above, assess your professional skills and select at least five on which to focus for this assignment.

c. For each professional skill on which you focus:

- Identify your self-assessment rating when you began the program and where you are now. Briefly summarize and describe experiences you have had in previous employment, CSP internships, practicum settings, and/or academic course work to illustrate the representative skills noted under each professional skill area.
- Referring to the number system in the departmental *Program Guide*, use the representative skills listed for each skill area as examples. While you need not account for every representative skill listed and/or alternative representative skills you have identified, enough of them (*at least four*) should be addressed to substantiate your assessment. Integrate and anchor the behaviors to the professional skills in a thoughtful manner. You will find the specific incidents that are tied to these qualities very useful in the interview process, especially if your interviewer uses a behavioral interview process.

Please reference the representative skills in your paper. For instance, if you are discussing *Group Dynamics* you might write, "I worked with students to develop a new student organization for future circus performers (GD10)." GD10 refers to the representative skill "develop a new group."

- Support your assessment of each of your chosen professional skills with an artifact that you include in your portfolio (described below). For example, if you claim a good skill level in teaching, you might include a syllabus that you created for the college teaching course and/or a course you taught. Perhaps you conducted a workshop for students to better handle conflict so you include your presentation handout as an artifact. Be creative in your efforts to support your ratings.

Artifacts should be described in the paper and it should be clear in the portfolio which artifact is linked to which professional skill. Do this by submitting the paper electronically and including hyperlinks to the artifacts in your electronic portfolio (described below).

- When you have addressed at least five professional skill areas and are satisfied that you have produced a thoughtful and comprehensive account of your experiences, invite your internship supervisor to read your assessment. This will be a good opportunity for you and your

supervisor to discuss your development as a professional over the past two years, your accomplishments, and your future directions and aspirations.

5. Electronic Portfolio

A goal of this course is to create a personalized electronic portfolio (a website) wherein you post at minimum your:

- current resume
- personal statement of mission
- professional development plan resulting from your professional knowledge evaluation
- artifacts supporting your professional skills assessment (artifacts need to be described on your website)

Your electronic portfolio should be well organized, have a professional appearance, and show some creativity. You may password protect your website if you wish. Directions for obtaining a personal web server account through BGSU are at: <http://www.bgsu.edu/its/tsc/self-help/page9436.html>. You might also use a resource such as <http://www.googlepages.com> to create and host your site.

Evaluation and Grading:

- 30% Personal Statement of Mission
- 30% Professional Knowledge Evaluation
- 30% Professional Skills Assessment
- 10% Electronic Portfolio

Your final grade in the course is based on the weighted average of grades received on individual assignments and your contributions to in-class activities and discussions.

About grading: An “A” paper is excellent—very strong in every sense. It represents a very solid job in addressing all aspects of the assignment, shows complex thinking and insight, reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections), and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style). A “B” paper is good. It has some weaknesses in one of more of these areas but captures the essential elements of the assignment. Lower grades are assigned to papers with more significant weaknesses in the areas noted above and do not reflect the quality expected in graduate-level studies.

Incompletes are not given except for major emergencies (e.g., hospitalization) late in the term and only after consultation and mutual agreement upon a contract specifying when the work will be completed. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments or one wishes to complete the course during a subsequent semester.

Academic Integrity

From the *2007-2008 Graduate Catalog*: Academic honesty is the central value of an academic community. It is expected that graduate students will neither engage in nor facilitate cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids), fabrication (falsification or invention of any information or citation), or plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of others as one's own) in their academic work. Please note that you may not submit an assignment that has been or will be submitted for another course. See <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/page13640.html> for the full policy on academic honesty.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability, are registered with the Disability Services for Students Office (<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability/>), and are entitled to accommodations, please inform me as soon as possible so we can make appropriate arrangements.

Religious Observance

If you will miss class due to a religious observance, please notify me as soon as possible.

E-mail Account

Announcements will be distributed via e-mail. Please check your account regularly.

Cell Phones

If you bring a cell phone or other electronic device to class, please assure that it is either off or on silent mode. In the very unusual event that you must take a call during class, please leave the room quietly.

Schedule

DATE	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
Class #1 January 7	Introduction and Course Expectations: "Have I been here before?"	
Class #2 January 14	Personal Beliefs, Values, and Commitments: "What do I believe, value, and hold dear?"	▪ Bring a personal artifact
January 21	MLK Holiday – No Class	
Friday, January 25	NPIT	▪ Attend and participate
Class #3 January 28	Professional Beliefs, Values, and Commitments: "What inspires me?"	▪ Bring a professional artifact ▪ Read <i>Job One</i> Chapters 9-11
Class #4 February 4	Integration and Implications of Beliefs, Values, and Commitments	▪ Submit Personal Statement of Mission Paper ▪ Bring copy of mission statement without your name on it
February 11	CSP Interviews – No Class	
Class #5 February 18	Professional Qualities and Skills: "Help Wanted: Apply Within"	▪ Read <i>Job One</i> Chapters 1-4
February 25	CSP Interviews – No Class	▪ Read <i>Good Practice in Student Affairs</i>
March 3	Spring Break – No Class	
March 10	NASPA – No Class	
Class #6 March 17	Professional Knowledge I: "What do I know?!"	▪ Bring two copies of your Student Affairs Knowledge Summary ▪ Read <i>CAS Standards</i> [BB]
Class #7 March 24	Professional Knowledge II: "What do I know I <i>don't</i> know?!"	▪ Submit Professional Knowledge Assessment and Development Plan Paper
March 31	ACPA – No Class	
Class #8 April 7	Good Practice in Student Affairs	▪ Complete <i>Good Practice in Student Affairs</i>
Class #9 April 14	Case Studies and Catch-Up	▪ Read <i>First Year on the Job and Advice for a Rookie Staff member</i> [BB]
Class # 10 April 21	Putting it All Together and Looking Ahead to the Profession	▪ Submit Professional Skills Assessment and Electronic Portfolio

Syllabus and schedule are subject to change with notice. Revised January 3, 2008.

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