

Tessa McLain, Ed.D.

Education

Ed.D. Vanderbilt University
Peabody College of Education and Human Development
Leadership and Learning in Organizations
Capstone: Enabling Manager Success through Leadership & Learning

M.Ed. University of South Carolina
College of Education
Higher Education Administration & Student Affairs

B.A. Vanderbilt University
College of Arts and Sciences
Majors: Research Psychology and French
Graduated with distinction, Honors in Research Psychology

Higher Education Experience

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Division of Student Life (DSL)

Internal Consultant & Advisor
Division of Student Life

Feb. 2025 – Sept. 2025

- Support the Division of Student Life (DSL) and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (OSCCS) employees during the transition without a senior associate dean.
- Provide expertise on student conduct matters, national trends, historical knowledge. Conduct policy consultation, review documents, and assist with reports and special projects.
- Engage in creative problem-solving and serve as an advisor for special matters.
- If needed, available to serve as a day-of hearing facilitator or external co-chair for hearings/deliberations.

Senior Associate Dean
Division of Student Life

July 2024 – February 2025

- Reporting to the Vice Chancellor for Student Life, represent the DSL in concerns related to MIT's community standards and provide direction at a strategic and policy planning level for the OSCCS.
- Serve on the Chancellor's advisory senior leadership cabinet, and participate in setting the mission, strategy, and objectives for the DSL.
- Advise and offer consultation with senior leaders, including the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor for Student Life, Vice President for General Counsel, and Provost. Prepare reports, offer policy and process interpretations, and make recommendations that inform senior leader decision making.
- Coordinate budget management and departmental growth, and resolution of issues at a senior management level.
- Guide and build consensus around policy, risk management, and student conduct and community standards.
- Provide leadership to direct reports on departmental strategy, including budgets, human resource management, educational programming, and priorities.
- Advise and offer consultation to faculty department heads and academic deans to manage complex student behavioral issues within the laboratory or academic setting.
- Advise, guide and support residential house teams and the Fraternity, Sorority, and Independent Living Group (FSILG) Office on student conduct matters.
- Serve as Executive Officer to the Committee on Discipline (COD), a standing committee of the faculty, and all other student conduct processes and systems that the Division of Student Life deems appropriate.
- Coordinate interim action to be issued by the Vice Chancellor and Dean for Student Life in response to student behavior incidents, including consultation with campus partners to determine appropriate action to be taken.
- Partner with Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response (IDHR) to address IDHR reports involving complaints of student sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence, harassment based on protected class, and Title IX.
- Oversight of 3 Associate Deans, 2 Assistant Deans, Program Administrator, and 2 Student Conduct case managers.

Interim Senior Associate Dean for Residential and Community Life

February 2023 – Oct. 2023

Division of Student Life

- Responsible for strategic oversight of the following reporting areas: Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (OSCCS), Undergraduate Residential Life, Graduate Residential Life, Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living Groups (FSILGs), and the on-call incident response program.
- Tasked with ensuring the workflow success of the Department of Residential and Community Life during an upcoming period of transitional leadership.
- Directly supervise the following professional staff: Associate Dean for Undergraduate Residential Life; Associate Dean for Graduate Residential Life; Associate Dean for FSILGs; Assistant Dean for OSCCS; and two senior administrative assistants.
- Respond to significant student crises as a part of a university-wide Dean on Call oversight. Represent the Vice Chancellor for Student Life when taking interim action.
- Continue work and responsibilities as the Associate Dean, Student Conduct and Community Standards (below).

Associate Dean for Student Conduct and Community Standards

August 2017 – July 2024

Division of Student Life

- Oversee all student conduct, academic integrity, and student organization misconduct case adjudication and resolution for MIT, including the resolution of Title IX, sexual misconduct, stalking, harassment, and intimate partner violence cases. Lead coordination for reporting, grievance procedures, and sanctioning.
- Establish direction at a strategic and policy planning level to MIT's student conduct process by developing systems and procedures for adjudication processes.
- Serve as lead collaborator with MIT's IDHR Office, which conducts Title IX investigations for the OSCCS adjudication process. Collaborate on investigation strategy, case management, and supportive measures.
- Work collaboratively with the Office of General Counsel, Student Life, Human Resources, MIT Police Department, and academic departments.
- Coordinate and design a comprehensive training curriculum to ensure panelists are appropriately trained in compliance with legal regulations. Oversee annual training for OSCCS investigators, advisors, decision-makers, and appellate officers.
- Manage the review and revision of Institute policies, procedures, and governing documents related to students. Chair MIT's Student Policy Review Committee to coordinate policy updates and publication of student code of conduct. Serve as divisional policy expert to consult on Institute-wide policies that affect students.
- Develop strategic plan for OSCCS; coordinate assessment efforts; oversee departmental budget; determine programmatic objectives and priorities that are of significant scope.
- Provide direction to OSCCS staff to support academic departments, house teams, and campus partners on educating students, living communities, and classrooms about MIT community standards.
- Supervise full-time professionals, including: Assistant Dean for Student Conduct, Assistant Director for Student Conduct, Program Assistant, two temporary Program Coordinators (as needed), and an Area Director in their secondary assignment. Responsible for coaching, staff development, evaluation, and on-going performance management. Mentor two graduate assistants a year.
- Compose formal communication on behalf of the Committee on Discipline in such a manner that can withstand potential legal scrutiny.

Assistant Dean and Director of Student Conduct

January 2017 – August 2017

Office of Student Conduct

- Oversee student conduct case resolution for all personal, academic, and student organization misconduct.
- Provide direction for the review and revision of Institute policies, procedures, and governing documents.
- Advise and staff the Committee on Discipline. Advise, train, and lead the work of the sexual misconduct subcommittee.
- Lead all training and outreach efforts to the campus community on issues related to ethics, academic integrity, alcohol, drugs, sexual misconduct, and MIT's expectations for student behavior.
- Maintain operational responsibility for the daily functions of the Office of Student Conduct.
- Facilitate professional development plans for staff, provide performance evaluations.
- Lead departmental staff meetings and professional development sessions for Residential Education.
- Supervise full-time professionals, including: the Assistant Director for Student Conduct, OSC Program Assistant, and an Area Director in their secondary assignment.
- Responsible for publishing MIT's student handbook annually.
- Oversee reporting compliance and annual security report compliance with the Clery Act, VAWA, and other legal recommendations.

Assistant Director for Student Conduct

July 2015 – January 2017

Office of Student Citizenship

- *Case management*: Responsible for working with assigned complainants and respondents to resolve cases of alleged personal and academic misconduct. Investigated allegations, implemented educational interventions, and managed cases in a supportive manner. Ensured procedural and process organization for hearings and sanction panel resolutions. Managed all cases involving fraternities and served as procedural hearing officer for Interfraternity Council Judicial Committee hearings.
- *Trainings & Educational Programs*: Coordinated continual, high-quality training for the faculty Committee on Discipline, ensuring all training meets best-practice standards for the field and legal compliance. Facilitated trainings for the sexual misconduct subcommittee of the COD. Led training and outreach efforts to the campus community on issues related to ethics, academic integrity, alcohol, drugs, sexual misconduct, and MIT's expectations for student behavior.
- *Investigations*: Facilitated hazing investigations through coordination of the Hazing Investigation Team, strategic implementation of investigative interviews, and production of high-quality investigative reports.
- *Supervision*: Supervised two graduate assistants, coordinate all graduate assistant training, and manage staff development for office personnel.
- *Achievement*: Coordinated the implementation of Maxient case management system into case procedures.

Roger Williams University

Division of Student Life

Coordinator of Residence Education & Women's Center Advisor

May 2014 – July 2015

Department of Residence Life & Housing

Oversaw a residential living community of 500+ undergraduates as the primary live-in staff member for the community. Supervised 14 Resident Assistant student staff members and 1 Head Resident Assistant. Facilitated staff training sessions on: conduct protocol, report writing, leadership, conflict management, and social media outreach. Advised the Residence Hall Association in building community and residential programming. Provided support to students through personal advising, counseling and crisis intervention. Responded to on-call crises, including sexual assaults, mental health concerns, medical emergencies, and other high-level situations.

University of South Carolina

Division of Student Life

Academic Success Coach

2012 – 2013

Student Success Center

Graduate Assistant of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

2013 – 2014

Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

Graduate Assistant, Supplemental Instruction (SI)

2012 – 2013

Student Success Center

Brown University

Division of Student Life

Residence Director, Brown University Leadership Institute

2013

Office of Residential Life and Office of Continuing Education

Volunteer Experience

Little Amigos Early Learning Center Board of Directors

2024-2025

Let's Talk Love Program Facilitator

2016-2024

Alpha Chi Omega, Inc.

Chapter Relations and Standards Specialist, Alpha Chi Omega

2012-2018

Alpha Chi Omega, Inc.

Survivor's Advocate

2012-2014

Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands, Columbia, SC

Professional Affiliations, Certifications, & Service

Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA)

Student Conduct 201 Faculty, 2025
Pre-conference half-day presenter, 2020
National Conference Committee, 2019-20
Presenter at national conference, 2018, 2019, 2020
Public Policy Legislative Issues Committee Member, 2016-2020, 2023
Gehring Director's and Senior Conduct Office Academy Graduate, 2019
Regional Graduate Student Support Committee Member, 2016
National Conference Program Reviewer, 2015-18
Donald D. Gehring Academy for Student Conduct Administration Graduate, 2015
Regional Conduct Office Institute, 2014, 2015

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)

Annual conference presenter, 2023
Region I presenter, 2019
Region I New Professional Mentoring Institute, 2014-15
Regional I Conference Program Reviewer, 2015
Annual Conference Program Reviewer, 2016

Association of Title IX Administrators, *member and training attendee*

Gavin deBecker and Associates Advanced Threat Assessment Academy, 2023 attendee

Grand River Solutions Training Programs, Title IX Decision Maker & Boston Consortium Title IX Coordinators Trainings

Chi Sigma Alpha Student Affairs Honor Society, Former National President 2013-2014

Institutional Committees & Service

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Executive Officer, Committee on Discipline
Chair, Student Policy Committee
Chair, Staff Engagement Advisory Board Steering Committee to the Vice President
Chair, Behavioral Assessment and Response Team
Chair, Professional Development Advisory Board Subcommittee
Chair, 2023 Event Security Working Group
Co-Chair, Covid-19 Policy Working Group
Lead, Hazing Investigation Team
Member, Hazing Prevention and Education Committee
Member, Sexual Assault Response Strategy Team
Member, Bias Response Team
Member, DSL IT Coordinating Council
Member, 2020 Working Group on Whistleblower/Non-retaliation Policy
Member, Title IX Regulation Working Group

Roger Williams University

Title IX/VAWA Committee Task Force
Green Dot Implementation Team

University of South Carolina

Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (PACWI)
Provost's Women's Leadership Institute Subcommittee
Carolina BeYOUtiful Campaign Steering Committee

Honors and Awards

MIT Excellence Award, Sustaining MIT	2022
ASCA National Innovation Award	2020
MIT Fraternity, Sorority, & Independent Living Groups Advocate Award	2017
Unsung Hero Award, MIT Division of Student Life Infinite Mile Awards	2016
Dr. Patterson Wardlaw Memorial Fellowship, University of South Carolina	2013
Robert G. Thurber Award, University of South Carolina	2013
Vanderbilt Young Alumni Trustee Nominee	2012
Vanderbilt Summer Research Program	2011
Alpha Chi Omega Foundation Scholarship	2011
Jane L. Druschal Memorial Scholarship	2010

Conference Presentations and Speaking Engagements

- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2023, March). *Suspension with Compassion: More than Just a Break*. Presented at the NASPA National Conference, Boston, MA.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2023, March). *So You Want to Get Your Doctorate while Working Full-Time?*. Presented at the NASPA National Conference, Boston, MA.
- Invited speaker:* McLain, T. (2020, July). *Brown University Leadership Development Program*. Panelist at Brown University, virtual.
- Half-day conference session:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2020, February). *Suspension with Compassion: More than Just a Break*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Washington, DC.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2019, November). *Suspension with Compassion: More than Just a Break*. Presented at the NASPA Region 1 Conference, Providence, RI.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2019, February). *Navigating Assessment Using Rubrics: Evaluating Student Learning in the Conduct Process*. Presented at the NASPA Region 1 Conference, Providence, RI.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2019, February). *Suspension with Compassion: More than Just a Break*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Reed, J. (2019, February). *Navigating Assessment Using Rubrics: Evaluating Student Learning in the Conduct Process*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Metcalfe, C. (2019, February). *You're at a 10 and I'm going to need you at a 10: Stakeholder management and leadership*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T., Metcalfe, C., & Johnson, E. (2018, February). *Taking Steps on the Path to a Student Centered Practice*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. (2018, February). *Lighting Your Own Path Forward: Careers in Higher Education*. Presented at the Association for Student Conduct National Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Invited speaker:* McLain, T. (2016, November). *Research ethics in synthetic biology*. Presented at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, MA.
- Invited speaker:* McLain, T. (2015, October). *Research ethics in synthetic biology*. Presented at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, MA.
- Requested presenter:* McLain, T. & Remigio, D. (2015, January). *Piecing together the Autism Spectrum: Where do you fit in?* Presented at the RWU & JWU Joint RA In-Service. Providence, RI.
- Requested presenter:* McLain, T. & Robsham, K. (2015, January). *Social media 2.0: Engaging your community*. Presented at the RWU & JWU Joint RA In-Service. Providence, RI.
- Conference presentation:* Aurich, D. & McLain, T. (2014, March) *Sanction therapy: Building educational sanctions grounded in learning and counseling theory*. Presented at International Center for Academic Integrity Annual Conference, Jacksonville, FL.
- Conference presentation:* Maher, M., McLain, T., & Newton, D. (2013, October). *Using Holistic, Authentic Programmatic Assessment: Promises and Pitfalls*. Presented at the Student Affairs Assessment Conference, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.
- Conference presentation:* Maher, M., McLain, T., & Benjamin, S. (2013, October). *Walking the Tightrope in Academia: A Consideration of Facilitation Strategies*. Presented at the Center for Teaching Excellence Oktoberfest 2013: A Symposium on Teaching, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.
- Conference presentation:* McLain, T. & Kelly, A. (2012, October 18). *Advising the Holistic Student*. Presentation at SCCPA Conference, Greenville, SC.