Reflections
ASCA EDUCATIONAL MAGAZINE

Better Together
Utilizing Strategic Partnerships to Cultivate Student Responsibility

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ASCA

Association for Student Conduct Administration

Knowledge & Skills

ASCA is pleased to present its newest resource to the field of student conduct administration. From 2019-2021, an ASCA Task Force comprised of Christina Parle, Alan Acosta, Reyna Anaya, Patience Bryant, Kateeka Harris, and Pam Malyk immersed themselves in getting to the core of the Knowledge Areas and Skills present within our profession. The resulting product, the ASCA Knowledge & Skills, is designed to inform the work of student conduct professionals and student conduct organizations specifically and are not intended to replace or supplant any other professional competency list, including, but not limited to, the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies or the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

The Task Force developed eight Knowledge Areas: Administration; Assessment; Education; Equity and Intentional Inclusion; Internal and External Partnerships; Investigation; Law & Policy; and Resolution Management. The Areas are further outlined in three phases: Foundational, Intermediate, and Advanced. Due to the uniqueness with which student conduct is addressed on respective campuses, these Areas are designed to be transferable regardless of if an individual's job responsibilities are in student conduct directly, an area closely related, or oversight of the student conduct functional area is one aspect of several within their scope of responsibility. These Areas are situated within the context of the student conduct profession, and each individual constantly working towards equity and inclusion within individual institutional processes, the structures of the higher education profession broadly, and the global society as a whole.

ASCA Knowledge Area Definitions

Administration

The Administration Knowledge Area encompasses the day-to-day management of a student conduct operation. This includes the oversight and application of duties related to the mission of the functional area including employees and operations management.

Assessment

The Assessment Knowledge Area involves the process of making data informed decisions through the use of research, assessment, and strategic planning. The ability to design, conduct, evaluate, and apply appropriate methodologies and findings within student conduct are vital. This information is used to inform the effectiveness of operations and quality of services.

Case Resolution Management

The Case Resolution Management Knowledge Area engages student conduct professionals through the conduct process. It includes the execution and management of the resolution process from beginning to end.

Education

The Education Knowledge Area encompasses the multiple levels of communication needed to convey the student conduct process both within and outside of the organization. It includes the development, facilitation, and presentation of content related to the functional area for internal and external stakeholders. Education is for the purpose of serving students and advancing the field.

Equity & Intentional Inclusion

The Knowledge Area of Equity and Intentional Inclusion is the practice of promoting access and fair opportunities through the acknowledgement of privilege, awareness of power imbalance, and dismantlement of colonization and systemic oppression. It encompasses the work to address equity and intentional inclusion as an individual, as part of an organization, and the structural oppressive practices that exist.

Internal & External Partnership

The Internal and External Partnerships Knowledge Area is an essential component of student conduct administration in its relationship building through Internal and External Partnerships. It includes identifying, cultivating, and maintaining partnerships that allow for enhancement of student conduct program capacity and developmental opportunities.

Investigations

The Investigation Knowledge Area involves the specific skills needed to conduct prompt, fair, and equitable investigations. It includes the coordinated process of gathering, evaluating, and disseminating information pertaining to a report.

Law & Policy

The Law & Policy Knowledge Area focuses on basic understanding of the laws that govern and intersect with student conduct including historical foundations, compliance, and the application of future legislation. It includes the awareness, interpretation, and application of local, state, and federal laws and mandates, as well as organizational and system policies and procedures.

Learn more on our website at TheASCA.org.

Note to Our Readers

We all need partners to help us be successful whether it's a life partner, a best friend, or a work colleague that processes the various events that happen in our lives. As professionals on our campuses, it is more important than ever to recognize and seek out the strategic partnerships that can benefit our organizations. I would argue that student conduct is more connected to the campus community than almost any other department on campus. This issue of Reflections exemplifies the meaning of strategic partnerships. I encourage you to dig in and be inspired by the examples provided by your colleagues.

I want to give a shout out to Jeff Bates, who served as the editor this issue of Reflections, all while changing jobs, moving and partnering a newborn. I also want to sincerely thank all the authors who took the time to submit an article. ASCA could not do this work without your knowledge, expertise, and willingness to share with members.

Jennifer Waller
ASCA Executive Director

Introduction

During a recent move, I attempted to load a large wooden dresser into our moving truck all by myself. I may have gotten the job done, but the negative consequences were both immediate and long-lasting; the back pain was still noticeable several weeks later. When unloading that same dresser days later, I was helped by a few colleagues who each grabbed a corner and something magical happened – we lifted the dresser with ease! Simple moments like these remind me of one of the great truths of life: carrying something heavy is best done in community with others. The important work we do in higher education is no different.

Recognizing that student conduct administration does not exist in a vacuum, the purpose of this edition of ASCA Reflections will be to highlight examples of student conduct offices who have established effective partnerships with other offices/departments/divisions in the development of a program/process/etc. to cultivate student responsibility and accountability. My hope is that each reader will be able to find at least one example of a collaboration in this edition that they can lift off the page and apply to their specific institution.

In recognizing the value of collaboration, I want to thank Dr. Alexandra Hughes and the ASCA Central Office staff. The invaluable work you do behind the scenes to make this magazine come together does not go unnoticed. I also want to thank each of the authors who contributed their experience and expertise to this magazine. The work of an editor is made easy when the submitted content is of such high quality, and that was absolutely the case for this endeavor.

A music professor of mine in undergrad used to say that "many hands make light work", and as long as all of those hands are working as a team toward the same goals, I have personally seen this ring true time and time again. I hope that this edition of ASCA Reflections will help your office to identify strategic partners as you continue to support the growth and success of all students.

It's not always easy, but most things worth doing aren't.

Jeff A. Bates
Florida State University
Editor

Contents

Working Together While Remote: Academic Integrity Discussions Prior to and During COVID-19

Josh Cutchens, M.Ed. | Associate Director, Office of Student Conduct | Appalachian State University

As Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." Establishing effective learning opportunities to cultivate responsibility and accountability within our student populations is paramount for aiding their overall success. While conduct offices have the ability to engage with our students to promote this growth, they cannot go about this work alone. Partnerships with campus colleagues not only have the ability to showcase available resources for students, but they also establish new connections between departments that may have previously not been considered.

At Appalachian State University, this partnership originated with one faculty member's request to help her students understand the importance of upholding one's academic integrity. Over the course of the past two years, this partnership between the faculty member and the author has grown and evolved, even more so due to added responsibilities in the faculty member's role at the institution as well as the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic. This article will provide a brief overview of the evolving work with this faculty member and discuss steps one can take to help cultivate effective partnerships to aid student accountability.

"Coming together is a beginning…"

"The gap between academic and student affairs professional cultures on most campuses is significant. The two groups have different understandings about the purposes of their work, the types of outcomes their work should produce and their accountability for measurable and immeasurable results" (Fried, 1999, p. 12). Although Fried wrote about this in 1999, the gap, which can sometimes seem to be a chasm, tends to still be present. In order to try to narrow this gap, within a student conduct lens, we have to establish an open dialogue as to how we can best work together to promote and uphold student accountability. It may be challenging to get the proverbial "foot in the door;" however, once there, the opportunities to promote student growth are bountiful and endless.

Prior to COVID-19, staff in the Office of Student Conduct at Appalachian State University would be invited to individual classrooms to facilitate brief conversations regarding what academic misconduct is and the University's process for addressing these issues when they arise. Following the first of these presentations in the Fall 2019 semester, one specific faculty member asked if the Office would be willing to continue giving these presentations with her numerous classroom sections. While a majority of student conduct work tends to be reactive, when the ability to participate in a proactive endeavor occurs, the benefits can be worthwhile. While we continued to provide an overview of what the Academic Integrity Code is, we modified the presentation to incorporate short scenarios to challenge the students' understanding of the Code and facilitated conversations about their answers to the aforementioned scenarios to aid in everyone's learning and development. With these revisions, we conducted these presentations in the beginning of the spring 2020 semester.

"…Staying together is progress…"

No one could have foreseen the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic could have had on not only higher education, but the entire world. In the blink of an eye, higher education, as well as other forms of educational instruction, had to transition to remote platforms and/or virtual instruction as we all attempted to navigate the unknown. Traditional in-person educational endeavors were largely confined to the scope of a camera and a computer screen. So how did we manage to stay together through this time of everything being in flux?

The initial aforementioned occasions of speaking with students in a classroom were deemed beneficial and impactful, not only from our perspective, but from the students' conversations and feedback gleaned during those conversations as well. In the midst of navigating the transition to the online educational environment, the faculty member and the author discussed how to continue the work they had been able to accomplish over the previous semesters. In addition to the faculty member's course load, she began overseeing the student tutors in the Tutoring Center. We determined that we would be able to foster an environment of student accountability; however, through a different lens. We discussed how academic integrity concerns can arise during student tutoring sessions and how important it would be to equip our tutors with the tools to not only recognize them when they occurred, but how to address them in the moment and afterwards. The presentations for the student tutors included foundational information about the Academic Integrity Code similar in scope to the classroom presentations; however, these presentations included in depth mock scenarios. The faculty member and the author believed that if the student tutors were provided opportunities to practice how to interact with students during situations that may violate the Academic Integrity Code, then it would strengthen their confidence to address those situations in the moment with their peers and help them understand the importance of personal accountability and upholding the integrity of one's work.

"…Working together is success."

"…when staff and students are here we then need to actually work together to develop a shared understanding about how do we enact our understandings of integrity…it's around how they sell academic integrity as a concept. We can create a culture of integrity by the way we sell the concept through visual impact marketing programs, posters, digital campaigns…and how we talk to students about integrity" (Epigeum, 2019, 0:58). Every initiative begins with an initial conversation and program. Cultures of integrity will take time and will need the active involvement of all parts of an institution of higher education from the faculty, to the staff, and ultimately students as well.

While the student tutors expressed concerns with how to address and navigate through situations if they were to arise during their sessions, the mock scenarios provided them the ability to help them talk their concerns through. In that dialogue, they discussed different ways to not only identify issues, but better ways to address them. During each scenario, the student tutors became more and more involved in the conversation to provide their viewpoints and tips to aid in each other's growth in a safe learning environment. It is one thing for a staff member to go and speak with students about an important topic such as this; it is another to provide students the space to live in the moment and try to understand how one would navigate these situations if they were to arise. At the end of our time together, the tutors expressed they felt confident in their ability to identify and address issues if they were to arise.

> "Everyone is responsible... for establishing and maintaining a culture of academic integrity."

As we all begin the transition back to a more in-person, on-campus experience, the faculty member and the author have already been in conversation about opportunities for not only the academic classroom, but other environments as well.

In 2017, Universities Australia published seven best practice principles regarding academic integrity. In thinking of how to initiate and/or continue conversations to address academic integrity on our campuses, we should think of the following:

▸**Principle 2**: **Everyone is Responsible**
All faculty, staff, and students are responsible for establishing and maintaining a culture of academic integrity.

▸**Principle 4**: **Consistent and Effective Institutional Policies and Practices**
Expand beyond just focusing on the penalties of academic misconduct when discussing this topic. One should strive to provide education as to what academic integrity is and why that matters through one's academic and ultimately professional career. Education drives prevention. Additionally, fair and equitable processes are paramount for all parties involved.

▸**Principle 5**: **Engage with and Empower Students**
Provide educational opportunities that are active and incorporate student participation. Evolve beyond just resuscitation of institutional policies when interacting with students.

▸**Principle 7**: **Work Together**
Work together not only on your respective campus but with other institutions as well.

Final Thoughts

Think about and collaborate with your faculty on how to establish new relationships. Is there a way to interact with other members of academic affairs to bridge the gap, as mentioned by Fried? Is there a way to consult with Department Chairs to speak with their faculty about collaborative educational endeavors? Further, is there a way to speak at a faculty senate meeting to promote ways to collaborate through this lens?

Actively discuss options for interacting with students. When is the opportunity? Is it during an 8am class or is it after the traditional hours of the office? For the interactions with our student tutors, the author's times with them were at 5pm and 7pm in the middle of the week. While those times fell outside the traditional office hours, they were well worth it to engage with a new student population, one that will hopefully aid us in upholding the importance of academic integrity at Appalachian State University.

When the pandemic began, higher education staff had to transition immediately to new ways of conducting work in an extremely short period of time. While we may never return to how things were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have the opportunity to establish new means of collaboration with our campus colleagues as well as reestablish previous ones. This coming together as a new beginning can be an exciting time; however, there will be a lot to navigate as we begin to transition back to having more of our work being in person. Establishing relationships and collaborations now will aid in the ability to stay together during the impending busy times and will result in the successful growth and accountability of our campus community as a whole.

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Breaking Down the Barriers of Collaboration: Student Conduct and Fraternity & Sorority Life

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Complicated -- that may be the best term to describe the intricate relationship between campus conduct offices, fraternity and sorority life offices, and Greek-letter organizations. Student organization misconduct administration is complex, nuanced, and at most times, overwhelming. It can be quite difficult to manage allegations of serious misconduct and multiple levels of investigation for evidence of individual and/or group responsibility while engaging with varied stakeholders who may have different outcomes in mind.

Student conduct offices rely on strong partnerships with fraternity and sorority life offices, headquarters, and alumni boards to properly manage student accountability measures. This becomes virtually impossible when there is little to no trust between the entities. To make these relationships productive and consistent in working towards achieving the best possible outcomes for students and their respective organizations requires continuous effort to maintain the trust needed to avoid these relationships devolving into opposing adversaries.

While the authors cannot resolve trust issues in an article, nor speak to every single circumstance that has caused the breakdown in the possibility of a strong partnership, we can supply you with knowledge and skills from our own experiences to ease the process. Through storytelling and key reminders, the authors aim to arm you with the tools necessary to move beyond contentious relationships and build productive partnerships on and off-campus.

Relationship Building (And Sometimes Rebuilding)

The organizational misconduct process can be incredibly challenging and frustrating. Building relationships is probably one of the most important strategies that can be done to weather challenges that arise as the process moves forward. This often starts with answering the simple question "How can I help?" Every stakeholder -- the conduct office, fraternity and sorority life office, inter/national/local/alumni organizations, alumni boards, advisors, etc. -- involved with the organizational conduct process has something they are trying to accomplish in

supporting students. Regularly checking in to see how we can support each other where and when help is needed, goes a long way toward having a partnership that can navigate challenging conduct cases. Often, alignment exists within our goals -- while we might not be on the same page, we are likely reading out of the same book.

Knowing that the student experience does not occur in a vacuum, it is critical that departments find ways to build successful partnerships and collaborations in our connected work. For the partnership between fraternity and sorority life and student conduct, there are a variety of ways in which this partnership can be developed.

> "how well are we working together?"

- ▸Fraternity and sorority communities can engage conduct officers in the prevention education work they are doing - building both positive connections and resource knowledge for students. This also shows our students and other stakeholders that we are on the same page regarding risk management.
- ▸Engage both student conduct and fraternity and sorority life -- along with other campus constituents -- in hazing prevention for the broader campus community.
- ▸Invite student conduct staff to participate in annual events and traditions (e.g., judge a contest during Greek Week) to help students get to know them outside of the conduct process.
- ▸Fraternity and sorority professionals could participate in the conduct process as hearing board members or process advisors.
- ▸When the conduct process is necessary, collaborate on how that process occurs from start to finish, including meetings with partners or meeting with executive boards to process conduct outcomes.
- ▸Develop and distribute a start of year/semester contact sheet for relevant partners.

Unless you are reading this on your first day in a brand-new job, you probably are already engaged in relationships both on and off-campus. Taking stock of these relationships to evaluate where they are and how they can be improved or strengthened is also important. Write down a list of the people on campus or with outside partners you need to work with regularly and ask yourself the question "how well are we working together?" From there, determine how this relationship can be improved or strengthened. Perhaps a fraternity had gone through the conduct process a few months ago and you want to connect with the fraternity and sorority life staff/volunteers about the organization's progress with sanctions. Maybe a sorority just had a huge campus accomplishment -- making a great opportunity to reach out to their headquarters to discuss and celebrate this (fraternity/sorority headquarters do not hear from campuses nearly as often about good things as they do when something is wrong). It may also be helpful for organizations to reciprocate and make campus staff aware when chapters have achieved awards from the organization. Finally, recognize that it is unlikely you will be "best friends" with everyone, but that you still have an obligation to work together when it is in the best interest of the campus community.

Communication

Let us be honest, communication during fraternity and sorority life misconduct investigations can be stressful and sometimes tense. Not only are there several individuals to inform, but some are grappling with what information we can trust with which entity and if the spirit of collaboration truly exists. This alone can overwhelm anyone leading an organization misconduct case. Through our collective experiences, we have learned the importance and power of communication. For campus-based professionals, it is important to maintain strong and collaborative communication between the conduct office and the fraternity/sorority affairs office. Paterson (2013) supports this idea; he purports that the basis of collaboration is timely communication between inter/national organizations and campus-based professionals. While the final decision of the adjudication process typically lives with the conduct office, collaborating along the way will be key to successful outcomes of the accountability process. Working closely together can fill in gaps regarding organization history and assist one another with communicating with local and national leadership. Keeping the lines of communication open also opens the door to a collaborative approach on sanctioning and provides a great balance between challenge and support.

One area where communication struggle can be the most apparent is between the campus and leaders within the organizations beyond the undergraduates. We believe that campus-based professionals should be alerting the undergraduate, local, regional, and inter/national leaders when there is an allegation of misconduct. Understanding the type of organization you are working with will assist you in knowing who to consistently engage. This is a great opportunity to lean on the relationship you built with your fraternity and sorority life office. But what do you share? Ahh, the pesky question of how transparent can or should I be. Ultimately, we recommend sharing all information across organizational lines unless it violates FERPA, but if there are trust issues it is important to provide enough information to keep the organization informed without compromising your investigation. In more ideal situations, the two entities will be able to co-investigate a matter, saving student time and sharing resources. Multiple pairs of eyes on a case are always better than one.

Knowing What You Don't Know

Depending on your specific functional area or expertise level, you may feel varying levels of comfort when working with fraternities and sororities. Before her most recent position in the Office of Student Conduct, one author had tangential knowledge of fraternity and sorority life. As she is not affiliated, her knowledge base and experience were limited. Worse, most of what she knew about Greek life was obtained through popular media or friend's experiences; neither of which is a solid, comprehensive representation of fraternities or sororities. However, the author acknowledged that she did not know what she did not know when it came to Greek Life; she needed to get engaged and take responsibility for closing this knowledge gap.

Our recommendation is to dive deep into what you don't know. What follows are some recommendations to get started in this endeavor.

1. Start with staff and resources that your campus already has; speak with the staff in the Greek life area to learn more about your institution's history and culture regarding fraternities and sororities.
2. Spend time getting to know the students and the staff/volunteers in those groups.
3. Look at organization websites, publications, or join professional organizations that work with fraternities and sororities like the ASCA Fraternity and Sorority Community of Practice or the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA).
4. Attend events, meetings, or other programs where your fraternity and sorority members engage (and other supporters like campus advisors, alumni, etc.) and participate in your institution's Greek life community.

Understanding Stakeholder Perspectives

One strategy that is important to maintaining trust with organizations throughout the conduct process is to understand the varying perspectives that different stakeholders might have. Let's look at just a few examples. For a headquarters partner, they may not be supportive of a sanction that impacts an organization's ability to intake new members as it has tremendous implications for an organization's future success. Alumni may be struggling to process or accept an investigation's findings because it

challenges a lived experience they cherish and remember fondly. Ultimately, it is not necessary to agree -- or to compromise your own position -- but to be mindful of other partners' perspectives.

In a recent conduct investigation from this past term, a chapter advisor was struggling significantly to process the outcome. They eventually accepted the finding of facts but were struggling to process this information because it directly contradicted their own lived experience with the chapter. The resulting sense of being "lost" presented a challenge for navigating ways they could help the chapter move forward. Together, professional staff and the chapter advisor were able to process this, make meaning out of the changes in the chapter dynamic, and develop some additional action steps for the advisor team that complimented the headquarters and university action steps.

Understanding your role within the conduct process is also incredibly important in assessing the varying perspectives for different stakeholders. If the student conduct office is responsible for the investigative process, the fraternity and sorority life office can advise and counsel but should likely not intervene. Shupenko and Tuttle (2020) recommend that the university's fraternity and sorority life staff act as a liaison between the inter/national organization and the student organization as they "understand the expectations and priorities of both entities" (p. 228). While a university may be able to make recommendations to an organization on potential sanctions, it is not within a university's jurisdiction to mandate a sanction without prior approval, as the university cannot speak for another entity. All partners in this endeavor should strive to create an environment where each partner is "[willing] to hear and honor all voices and address the issues they raise" (Shupenko and Tuttle, 2020, p. 228). Ultimately, when you seek to understand these varying perspectives, it can help cultivate partnership despite disagreement. Seeking to understand perspectives increases the likelihood that collaborative outcomes can be developed -- more often than not, our students are better served when this is the outcome we can reach.

Accountability

Working in student conduct is not an easy task. To engage in this work means to be in a near-constant state of discomfort and sometimes disbelief. Conversations with students about lapses in judgement and guiding them back on the right path can be both exhilarating and draining. Outside of holding our students accountable, we must also hold ourselves and our peers accountable. And let's face it, accountability is uncomfortable. We are obligated to ensure fair and equitable practices to all students/student organizations and partner with them as they develop. We are required to maintain consistency in our practices and communication when dealing with stakeholders even when the relationship has been contentious.

When one author continued to hear complaints from student organizations about the policy governing organizations, she invited them to the table to engage in the policy revisions. By opening the door to partnership in policy development, the author also opened the door to robust communication. She was able to learn from the students and the students gained a better perspective on the purpose of the policies and practices. The meetings created an environment of transparency and broke down the tension between the fraternity and sorority life community, fraternity and sorority life office, and student conduct. This collaboration also provided the students with insight into the role of the fraternity and sorority office in the accountability process, which reduced tensions between the community and its advising office.

Incorporating Restorative Practices

We recognize that most organization misconduct events and the subsequent investigations and resolutions can be harmful to everyone involved, including the broader campus community. When possible and applicable, the authors recommend utilizing restorative justice practices to help restore and rebuild the communities most impacted.

Summarized by Goldblum (2020), restorative justice (RJ) “promotes individual responsibility and victim and community restoration….RJ helps to promote and model pro-social behavior for the offender, while repairing the harm that the offender’s behavior caused to the victim and impacted community members’’ (p. 210). Goldblum (2020) also supports Zehr’s (2002) three question model that helps guide RJ practices: “1. What is the harm that has been done? 2. How can that harm be repaired? 3. Who is responsible for the repair?” (p. 214).

While not every situation is appropriate for RJ practices, we recommend that professionals learn more about RJ and its application and consider where these principles can be leveraged in organization misconduct adjudication. It is critical to note that attempting RJ practices without extensive training is not recommended and could result in creating more harm to the parties (Goldblum, 2020).

In an organization misconduct adjudication, RJ principles can be adapted when considering sanctions or outcomes of investigation. Reflecting on the three questions listed above (Zehr, 2002), conduct officers and inter/national/local/alumni staff can work with organizations to define and understand the harm caused, collaborate on ideas of how to repair that harm (which could involve traditional RJ practices of conferences, accountability boards, or victim-offender dialogues), and suggest ways for the organization to take ownership in repairing that harm.

In a unique implementation of RJ principles, two of the authors met with an organization’s executive leadership board after a particularly long and adversarial investigation and adjudication. Using RJ principles, all parties involved acknowledged the harm that was caused to the organization (time spent away from regular organization operations, harm to the organization’s reputation), the university (time spent on the investigation, the organization’s unwillingness to cooperate with the university investigators), and discussed ways to repair this harm so a restored relationship could be fostered. This conversation, executed with RJ principles in mind, helped bring closure to the incident and increased trust and transparency between the university and the organization.

Conclusion

We have stated in numerous ways that student organization misconduct administration is complicated, but it is worth every complicated aspect. Once you take the time to reflect on how your openness and willingness to partner with students leads to being more than just “the fun police,” but an advocate and support system, it makes all the effort worth it. As you actively work to build relationships with one another, keep the collective support and development of students at the center of your work.

We hope that you can take the knowledge and skills outlined in this article and apply them to your daily work lives. The tools will only work if you take the time to analyze your role in the breakdown or solidification of partnerships and actively work to course correct or maintain. We recognize that some things are easier than others to implement due to limited resources, organizational structure, or fear of continuing to engage in dialogue with individuals that may have inflicted emotional harm in the past. What we are asking you to do is:

- ►Do what you can. But commit to doing the work.
- ►Take your time and be strategic in building relationships.
- ►Be open to trusting again.
- ►Do not be afraid to hold others accountable.
- ►Always analyze the role you are playing in the partnership. Are you moving the partnership forward or making it stagnate?
- ►Own where you have been fallible and make amends.

As cliche as it sounds, the truth is, we accomplish so much more together than at odds; so let’s begin to restore our relationships.

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Meet ASCA Viewpoints Podcast Host

Alexandra Hughes

Ms. Alexandra Hughes, M. Ed., is the current Assistant Director for Student Rights and Responsibilities, at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. As a member of the university's administration, in this role she works to manage student conduct and ensure the safety and security of all students, staff, and faculty at the institution. Ms. Hughes also serves UTRGV's campus as a part time faculty adjunct for master's students, teaching classes on cultural humility and competencies.

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ASCA CHATS

WE'VE BEEN CHATTING!

Supporting Shared Standards for Student-Athletes through Conduct-Coach Communication

Léna Crain, Ph.D. | Associate Dean of Students for Health. Wellness, and Conduct | Bucknell University
Gregory Lott, Ph.D. | Associate Director of Athletics and Assistant Professor of Health, Exercise, and Sport Studies | Denison University

Developmental catalysts of and hindrances to moral development are of significant interest to educators, particularly in the area of student conduct and conflict resolution. Beyond direct opportunities to influence students' learning and development through conduct education, there exists potential for conduct educators to support moral development through intentional partnerships, especially where partners have demonstrated commitment to and provided structure for character education in their work. One such partnership is presented in this case, which shares our experience at one highly selective institution with a competitive NCAA Division III athletic program. There, the Department of Athletics and Office of Community Values and Conflict Resolution developed a partnership designed to improve information sharing, collaborative decision making, and understanding of the educational roles both areas play in student-athletes' development.

As the Department of Athletics deepened an internal framework with strategies for leadership and character development for individual student-athletes, teams, coaches, and with campus partners, a symbiotic relationship between staff in athletics and student conduct reinforced congruent expectations for student-athletes within and beyond their teams. Our experience provides evidence for the benefits of a strong positive partnership for the partnering departments. Further, through the departments' shared investment in students' accountability, learning, and character development, case trends involving student-athletes dramatically improved. This case additionally suggests that studies on moral development in the context of sport can inform opportunities in student conduct practice.

Athletics as a strong positive partner of student conduct may seem an unlikely partnership among those highlighted in this volume, given the literature connecting colleges' role in addressing (mis)conduct among student-athletes as most connected to institutional liability, media fervor, and pressure to balance "big business" (Moye & Harrison, 2002, p. 3) with students' privacy and development (Moye & Harrison, 2002). Opportunities to address character development among student-athletes have been well documented, with studies referencing cheating, drugs, violence, and other behaviors in intercollegiate athletics (Doty, 2006; Sperber, 2000; Stancill, 2014). This delicate juxtaposition sometimes depicts staff in student conduct and athletics as adversaries with dramatically different aims. However, intercollegiate athletics provides a rich context steeped with potential to develop participants' leadership, character, and decision-making skills (Vella, Crowe, &

Oades, 2013). This case further demonstrates that student conduct and athletics are worthy partners with shared support for student-athletes' learning and development, and that positive outcomes result from purposeful partnership, especially in conjunction with a robust framework for leadership development through sport.

Influences on Moral Development

Influences on students' moral development have been well studied, including in the contexts of students' first-year experience (Mayhew, Seifert, & Pascarella, 2012), participation in diversity coursework (Parker, Barnhardt, Pascarella, & McCowin, 2016), and adherence to identity-based stereotypes (Killen, Marcie, & Sinno, 2006). These studies have indicated that reinforced developmental messages and exposure to differing viewpoints are among the contributors to moral development. Peer influence, especially in affinity participation groups, has also been demonstrated to influence moral development. Clapp and McDonnell (2000) and Larimer, Irvine, Kilmer, and Marlatt (1997) are among those who found positive relationships between peer norms and students' decision-making related to alcohol. Larimer et al. (1997) found that social norms in peer groups such as fraternal organizations influenced students' high-risk behavior. As another affinity group, athletic teams may exhibit similar peer culture transmission. Finally, moral development has also been studied through the lens of individual students' characteristics, including by Cooper and Schwartz (2007), who examined the moral judgment of college students who violated campus codes by type of violation and students' demographics of age, class year, gender, grade point average, and fraternity or sorority membership. They found that students who violated policy demonstrated a lower level of moral judgment than students who did not violate the code, but found no significance among students' demographics of identity and membership. The study did not include whether students participated in intercollegiate athletics. Cooper and Schwartz indicated that individual and environmental considerations including motivation and socialization may also influence moral development, further identifying the complex context in which character development occurs.

Studies of learning and development in the context of intercollegiate athletics provide insights into the limitations and transformations facilitated by sport participation, and support the student development literature. Lott (2016) found that student-athletes demonstrated higher emotional intelligence than non-athletes but that a full year of intercollegiate sport participation did not develop those competencies any differently than what non-athletes experienced. In one study of the relationship between intercollegiate athletic participation and leadership development among student-athletes in diverse athletics program settings, Huntrods, An, & Pascarella (2017) found that intentional design of developmental catalysts was necessary to support students' learning to facilitate leadership development among student-athletes that was not cultivated by participation in sport alone. Similarly, Grandzol, Perlis, and Draina (2010) found that merely participating in athletics did not yield differences in leadership development, and that developmental benefits were significant for team captains. Added occasions for reflection in the individual and team settings, promotion of constructive communication, peer motivation and recognition, and mentorship seemed to make the difference in leadership development for team captains (Grandzol et al., 2010). Collectively, the literature in college student development and intercollegiate athletics is unified in suggesting that programs which emphasize consistent educational messaging, the use of social motivation, and experiential opportunities that include explicit engagement with moral reasoning enhance student development.

Case Context

In 2017, transitions in student conduct and athletics staff meant that new personnel in both areas arrived with parallel timelines, fresh perspectives, and shared interest in identifying opportunities for growth. In an early review of student conduct data, case trends from the preceding years identified one demographic that was disproportionately high: in a student population where approximately 29% were student-athletes, student-athletes made up nearly half – 46.8% – of all findings of responsibility for violations of the Code of Student Conduct, a trend that had held steady for at least two years. Whether as a result of their increased visibility and expectations for student-athletes, or truly a disparate incongruence of accountability, the metric provided a reference point for staff in student conduct and athletics to consider. In athletics, a concurrent growing emphasis on character and leadership development through sport provided a framework through which both departments could support student-athletes' moral decision making, character education, and emphasis on holistic excellence and well-being.

Student conduct and athletics personnel discussed shared values in our work and comparable perceived barriers to optimizing the partnership, and the similarities were striking.

Independently of the opportunity realized in the data, staff in both departments were gaging opportunities to strengthen understanding and communication between the areas. Student conduct and athletics personnel discussed shared values in our work and comparable perceived barriers to optimizing the partnership, and the similarities were striking. Staff in both areas identified a common interest in reducing student-athletes' involvement in misconduct, providing coordinated response and support following incidents, and to enhancing communication between the departments. As obstacles, staff in both areas identified perceived limitations in each department's understanding of the other's work, gaps in information sharing after incidents, and worries that each department might pressure the other's decision making to achieve their goals. Individuals in both areas had concern as to whether staff in the other department were aware of their structures and functions. Information sharing between the departments was described as inconsistent and opaque. Coaches wondered if student conduct would pressure them to derive sport-related sanctions, and student conduct staff wondered if coaches would pressure them to minimize responses to reports involving student-athletes. Understanding these early perceptions helped us to identify a need for role cross-training, rapport and trust building, and consistent communication.

Investment on the Part of Athletics

The holistic developmental framework for student-athletes in the Department of Athletics was crucial context for this

case, and provides perspective for student conduct educators to see the role of character development in a culture of academic and athletic excellence. Proponents of sport have long heralded the maturation and development of student-athletes that occurs through participation (Emmert, 2018). Still, many in the field claim that this development does not happen implicitly - that is, simply through the act of participating in sport (Pim, 2016). There is no doubt that the experience of sport is rather unique: Athletes must work both individually and collaboratively in a time-sensitive and very visible environment with clear competitive outcomes. They have incredible passion for their endeavors. They have a built-in support network that exerts substantial social influence on their behaviors as well as designated mentors in their coaches. These unique and intense conditions create an experience that is ripe for those that are involved to develop character, leadership, and decision-making skills through learning about themselves on a visceral level while navigating their experiences collectively.

While the experience of sport participation might be primed for student-athlete learning, empirical research has not demonstrated the aforementioned student-athlete development occurring on a consistent basis (e.g., Lott & Turner, 2018). For some time, the institution in this case study had experienced high level on-field performance and consistent scholastic recognition of their student-athletes. To further the culture of athletic and academic excellence, there was a desire to be more intentional and systematic in using the experience of sport as an integral curricular component of the student-athlete's holistic education. Specifically, the institution instituted a framework that utilized experiential learning pedagogy to intentionally develop the emotional and social competencies of their student-athletes through the sport experience. A focus on the development of these competencies aligned with the mission of the institution, the liberal arts in general, and the philosophy of NCAA Division III. Additionally, a plethora of research has indicated that such a focus could lead to improved physical, mental and psychosomatic health, higher scholastic achievement, better on-field performance, and fewer incidents of deviant behavior (violations of university policy and referral to student conduct). Therefore, many metrics were important to the institution and have since been used in continued assessment. Discussing all such metrics is outside the purview of this article; we instead focus here on the relationship between the intentional investment from the Department of Athletics and its relationship to student-athlete (mis)conduct.

Framing the Role of Sport Participation

Parallel to the realization of shared interest in enhancing communication and addressing student-athletes overrepresentation in policy violations, the Department of Athletics was deepening a framework with strategies for leadership and character development at the individual level, within team peer groups, among coaching staff, and through intentional partnerships, including with student conduct. This approach framed students' development as within and beyond sport, with consistent expectations and messaging for positive performance on the field, in the classroom, and in residential space.

Individual-Level Strategy

According to Despres, Brady, and McGowan (2008), the athletic role of a student often exerts dominance over other aspects of their identity. In this culture of prioritizing athletics, a student-athlete becomes focused on following the norms and rules required to achieve playing-time, group acceptance, and high on-field performance. This culture is exacerbated by the tendency of many colleges to isolate their student-athletes (Shulman & Bowen, 2001). In this culture, one can assume that to the student, university policy occurs outside of the team environment- the environment that is often most crucial to their identity. Student-athletes are then encouraged - sometimes overtly and other times more subtly through the observation of their peers - to follow university policy only to the extent that it impacts their role and identity with their team. This is the type of culture that can lead to a disproportionate number of university policy violations and incidents of risky behavior by student-athletes (Jacoby, 2019; Taylor, Ward, and Hardin, 2017).

A crucial first step in the strategy of the institution in this case was to reframe the role of athletics for all incoming first year students. A specific curriculum was implemented in this aim. The university worked with each team's class of first years on two occasions and then reinforced the content in multiple larger group settings that included all first-year student-athletes. Components of sessions included the following:

- ►Student-athletes reviewed the mission of the university as it relates to intrapersonal and interpersonal competency development.
- ►Student-athletes learned about an integrated approach to learning outcomes where they could develop competencies in three spheres: 1) The traditional academic classroom; 2) The co-curricular - specifically their sport, and also other endeavors; and 3) The residential space.
- ►Rather than didactic instruction, the student-athletes engaged through experiential learning, by which knowledge is built through transformed experiences (Kolb, 1984).
- ►Student-athletes completed a reflection and synthesis in which they articulated in writing the specific types of learning and growth that were important to them and how that could occur through the three spheres mentioned above.

In short, the individual-level strategy of the university as it related to student-athlete conduct was to address the athletic culture that can sometimes function as a barrier to integrating the multiple spheres of education present at a residential liberal arts institution. Rather than trying to disassemble the culture entirely, the Department utilized the student's identity as an athlete and their identity as a member of a particular team. The experience of sport participation was simply reframed so that student-athletes conceptualized the experience as a collaborative piece of their overall educational experience. This reframing set the groundwork for working directly and indirectly with student conduct staff. By the 2019-20 academic year, each team's roster was populated with three classes of students that had participated in the first-year program aimed at reframing the athletic experience.

Team-Level Strategy

Adherence to group norms, defined as a set of behaviors expected and followed by members of a particular social group, has been well studied (e.g., Carron & Eys, 2012). It is known that there are age differences in peer influence based on psychosocial functioning, with peer influence peaking in young adolescents (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007). However, according to Gardner and Steinberg (2005), peer influence is still incredibly strong among college-aged students. The Gardner and Steinberg (2005) study demonstrated that when college students were exposed to peers, their risky behavior increased by roughly 50%. When athletic team identity is strong, as is often the case with student-athletes, individuals are more likely to conform to the behaviors of their teammates (Graupensperger, Benson, and Evans, 2018). Because of the propensity of student-athletes to mentor their younger teammates, the team structure has been deemed a very influential socializing agent (Sauer, Desmond, and Heintzelman, 2013).

Recognizing the role of team in individual student-athletes' development, concerted efforts have been made by the institution in this case study to work directly with athletic teams. Faculty, administrators, and even external facilitators helped student-athletes connect their personal values and goals to those of their team and to those of the Department of Athletics (which reflected the values of the institution at large). Efforts were designed specifically to fit the context of particular teams. Additional points of communication and connection were fostered between athletic teams and student conduct staff. This relationship is detailed further below.

The Place of Coaches

The central figures in the college sport environment are athletic coaches - those who are responsible for the overall experience of the student-athlete (Potrac, Brewer, Jones, Armour, and Hoff, 2000). The role of coaches includes much more than simply fielding competitive teams. Coaches are deemed accountable for the social and psychological wellbeing of athletes under their direction (Borrie, 1998). As mental health concerns have increased across campuses (American Psychological Association, 2013), coaches have also been turned to as a first line of support. For some, the primary role of an effective coach is centered on maximizing an athlete's learning outcomes (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Athletic coaches often spend multiple years getting to know a student-athlete through the recruiting process and then spend hours with the student most days of the year for four or more years; the substantial time spent together in the athletic environment allows coaches to meaningfully influence the athletes that populate their rosters (Heller, 2016). An athletic coach therefore has the ability to be an ideal partner with other faculty and staff in the pursuit of learning of student-athletes, yet these partnerships do not always exist (Stancill, 2014). In order to help prepare this partnership and promote the development

of student-athletes within and beyond sport, the Department of Athletics in this case engaged in the following:

- ►When filling any new coaching vacancy, only those coaches that expressed a sincere desire to teach and develop athletes holistically were considered.
- ►Considerable effort was spent to establish a working set of departmental values and ethos that included working collaboratively across campus for the betterment of student-athletes.
- ►An Early Career Coach Mentorship program was instituted to help coaches further develop their capacities to build successful cultures of academic, leadership, and athletic excellence.
- ►As coaches were reviewed for contract renewal, a large focus of the review was on their ability to teach through the sport experience and be a collaborative partner in student-athletes' education.

Redefining Partnership

Reciprocal Teaching and Learning

While the primary and recurring communication flow between departments would be facilitated by the Director of Student Conduct and Assistant Director of Athletics, it was important to also develop connection and familiarity among staff members from both departments. First, athletics staff hosted conduct staff to meet with coaches, present an overview of student conduct and conflict resolution resources, and answer questions about policies and processes. This meeting highlighted several areas for clarification. One such opportunity related to the university's "medical amnesty" policy, which grants students with substance education in lieu of disciplinary action when students seek help for substance-related impairment. Coaches learned they had wide variance in their approaches to student-athletes who were granted amnesty, and further discussion of the intent behind the amnesty policy and the ways in which student-athletes experienced follow-up by their coaches provided thoughtful dialogue. Student conduct staff developed resources in follow-up to the conversation, including a "frequently asked questions" guide specifically for coaches. In addition to questions of policy and process, the guide included information about sport participation, case chronology and the timing of outcomes and notification to coaches, and student-athlete representation on conduct boards.

Investment in Relationships

As the relationships developed beyond the initial training and greeting sessions, there was steady and intentional investment from staff in both areas. Student conduct staff made regular efforts to attend athletic contests, and coaches and student-athletes received their support with enthusiasm. Coaches supported campaigns led by student conduct on topics ranging from freedom of expression to hazing prevention. Collaboration for team workshops and classroom presentations provided additional points of convergence, and the mutual effort bolstered a shared recognition and trust.

Interdepartmental Information Sharing

Coaches expressed interest in not only the incidents involving members of their teams, but the subsequent steps and education. With consideration of information sharing and students' privacy, coaches have a unique developmental rapport with student-athletes, and certainly a legitimate educational interest in understanding the conduct involvement of members of their teams, making sharing case information with athletics staff possible. Reciprocally, athletics staff also offer unique insights about student-athletes, providing deep context from students' motivations to risks. To provide for coaches' interest in receiving information while facilitating a consistent information source, timing, and transparency, student conduct and athletics staff determined that a weekly report and follow-up meeting would serve as the foundation of information sharing. The clear, consistent communication between staff in student conduct and athletics was essential for success and further developed a mutual sense of trust. Providing a regular channel for sharing specific information between departments created a foundation from which other outlets

of communication between and within each unit grew. As-needed communication outside of the weekly meetings became commonplace.

As we considered what information could and should be shared, we considered our broader institutional communication practices and determination of legitimate educational interest consistent with FERPA. Under FERPA, information within students' educational records can be shared with personnel acting to fulfill their professional responsibility (United States Department of Education, 2011). The social and psychological wellbeing and development of student-athletes is part of coaches' educational role, making a case for sharing students' reported disciplinary violations and subsequent process with coaches. We also recognized that in most cases, student-athletes routinely informed their coaches about incidents well before a report was communicated from student conduct to athletics, further demonstrating the culturally-embedded connection between student-athletes' character, decision-making, and participation in sport. We determined that sharing an incident summary, next procedural or educational (e.g., outcome) steps, and implications for sport eligibility were within coaches' educational interest, and that sharing additional context about a student-athlete from athletics to student conduct helped conduct educators to determine developmentally appropriate outcomes.

Weekly Reporting

Each week, student conduct staff generated a report using a custom report in case management software. (Students' membership on athletic teams is indicated in their student information system profile through regular roster updates by athletics staff, and that data feeds into the case management software.) The base report generated a list of all student-athletes names as a responding party in an incident report, and included each student's name, athletic team, incident date, incident summary, next step in the review or resolution process, and notes about remaining questions, unique circumstances, and effects on sport eligibility. After adding each week's new incidents to the base report, student conduct staff updated each entry with notes, including when education was in progress or overdue, when cases might affect eligibility (e.g., for competition), and when cases were considered completed and closed and moved to a corresponding tab on the report.

Student conduct staff sent the weekly report to the Assistant Director of Athletics and followed up with a consistent weekly meeting. The conversation helped to provide additional context for incidents that might be comparatively minor or severe, and provided a connection point for when one department had additional insights that might otherwise be unconsidered by student conduct or coaches' responses. Additionally, there were times when a particularly egregious violation presented itself and expediency of communication was necessary. There was an open line of communication from both offices so that a transparent flow of information was possible. Perhaps most importantly, the reports and meetings provided a clear, consistent, regular flow of communication between the departments, creating a foundation for true teamwork and developmentally consistent messaging to student-athletes.

Information Sharing with Coaches

Internal communication in the Department of Athletics was greatly enhanced because of the interdepartmental communication that provided contextual understanding of incidents involving student-athletes. After weekly meetings between the Director of Student Conduct and the Assistant Director of Athletics, coaches were informed of all incidents in which student-athletes from their respective teams were involved. In some instances, simply sending information from the report via email was all that was necessary. In more complex cases, a direct conversation between a coach and the Assistant Director of Athletics ensued to discuss nuances of the case with care. In that forum, coaches were often able to provide further information that was beneficial to student conduct staff. Because of the candor and transparency between Student Conduct and Athletics, the Assistant Director of Athletics was also able to discuss likely forms of conduct resolution with the coaches. This was mutually beneficial, as it allowed the coaching staff to think of how team repercussions could combine with university outcomes for total impact on the student - both for education and accountability. Coaches then possessed the discretion to respond to a student-athlete in a more stringent or supportive manner, and were able to maintain a sense of control of their program and the autonomy to develop character standards at the team level. An option for reciprocal communication throughout the lifecycle of any case was always available, to the benefit of both departments and the student-athletes involved.

> ...it allowed the coaching staff to think of how team repercussions could combine with university outcomes for total impact on the student

In some cases, a coach was not in complete agreement with outcomes assessed for a student-athlete, yet the outcomes were accepted because of their perception of procedural justice. That perceived fairness in the decision-making process was present because of:

1) the agreed-upon framework of working together in the development of student-athletes;
2) the consistency of the process and communication; and
3) the transparency of thought, intent, and information.

According to Baldwin (2006), if an employee feels that they have the forum to voice concerns and provide information prior to the execution of a decision, their perception of procedural justice is enhanced. In this case study, coaches expressed an awareness that information they provided and their thoughts were considered when applicable, and this deepened trust between coaches and student conduct staff.

With the flow of information, coaches were also consistently aware of a student-athlete's progress in completing educational outcomes assigned through student conduct. When needed, they provided reminders to student-athletes about education in progress and at times implemented team restrictions if sanctions were not completed as required. When a coach demonstrated attention to such matters, it generated further trust with student conduct. Many coaches integrated student conduct incidents that affected their team into larger developmental conversations, expectation setting, and opportunities for student-athletes to exercise leadership among their peers, furthering the partnership and positive outcomes for students.

Measuring Success

Both departments noted an improved communication flow, shared sense of trust and teamwork, and observed holistic development of student-athletes, leading to confidence in the overall partnership. Student conduct metrics also indicated a transformation related to character among student-athletes. Over the course of the first three years, the percentage of student-athletes among those found responsible for policy violations steadily declined from 46.8% to 22.3%, lower than the 29% of student-athletes among the university's student population. Further, more than half of all athletic teams had no students found responsible for policy violations, the severity of incidents (e.g., number of students on probation or suspension) involving student-athletes decreased, and the number of student-athletes accessing the university's medical amnesty policy increased. Encouraged by coaches' understanding of resolution processes and their reminders to student-athletes, overdue sanctions among student-athletes were far fewer than for non-student-athletes. These metrics provided evidence of student-athletes' synthesis of citizenship, leadership, and character standards within and beyond their sports, supported consistently by educators in athletics and student conduct.

The fourth year of the partnership further highlighted the importance of trust, rapport, and communication, and affirmed the connection between these pillar practices and student-athletes' development, though with a change in trend. In that year, the proportion of student-athletes among students found responsible for policy violations experienced a slight regrowth (though still proportionate to the approximately 29% of students participating in athletics) to 28.3%. The 2020-2021 academic year presented extenuating influences too numerous to count. As a result, team schedules and participation in sport were highly varied and many differed in the season length, strength of competitive opportunities, team structure (e.g., early departure of senior student-athletes), and structured opportunities to gather within and outside of athletic activities. These adaptations forced a temporary restructuring of the delivery of student-athletics' experiences, though the internal effort and framing of student-athletes' experience still served as a strong and grounding influence. While the year's conditions necessitated a certain flexibility in expectations, changing circumstances in our own work also contributed to the trend. A key staff member in student conduct was on a leave of absence for a portion of the year, necessitating other staff to facilitate connection at a time already fraught with uncertainty, and new leadership at the college outlined different expectations about extra-divisional communication. The partnership between student conduct and athletics quickly changed when its relational foundation was altered, demonstrating that healthy partnerships require continuous investment, especially throughout personnel and environmental changes. We observe this connection with interest, as it seems to underscore the connection between healthy partnerships and facilitating consistent developmental messaging for students' success.

Recommendations for Practice

This successful case demonstrates that communication, trust, and mutual investment contribute to improved outcomes for educators and students. In addition to these actionable options for educators in student conduct and athletics, the lessons observed here may transfer to other partners (e.g., fraternity and sorority life, where similar demographic opportunities, training, and information sharing might have mutual benefit). From this case, we make the following recommendations for practice:

- ►Provide mutual opportunities for teaching and learning, from priorities and language to the values and work of each area. Do student conduct staff understand how coaches connect integrity to team membership and culture? Do coaches understand how case decisions are made or how to advise student-athletes through resolution processes?
- ►Invest in relationships and build rapport proactively rather than in a storm. Interpersonal relationships are a foundation for interdepartmental partnerships. Where can we build trust by demonstrating boundaries, reliability, accountability, vault, integrity, non-judgment, and generosity? (Brown, 2018) In what settings can we be present for one another? Which events have opportunities to partner or participate?
- ►Identify shared opportunities and goals, recognizing the commonality of promoting students' learning and growth. Does data (from either area) indicate an area for attention – from case trends to students' understanding of a policy? What shared goals can best be met through a supportive partnership? Do position descriptions for staff in conduct and athletics include development of students' character, leadership, and ethical decision making?
- ►Determine a consistent communication flow between departments. Who will lead or liaise to guide the communication? What data points are most beneficial to each area, and what is the educational interest in sharing that data? What is the practice for urgent needs or extra insights?
- ►Measure progress over time. What are the patterns by population, behavior, or intervention? Where are the connections between student conduct data and prevention and intervention? What decisions can be informed by the data? Which departments might partner toward improvement (supported by the literature in this volume)?

In conflict resolution work, we are often reminded that fixation on "positions" can prevent progress toward "interests." This case demonstrates beautifully that even while approaching students' development through very different positions in our roles, staff in student conduct and athletics have meaningful shared interests in character education, ethical decision making, problem solving, and leadership development. Our work provides insights into successful communication between departments, with potential to influence training, outcome/sanction design, and assessment, and provides evidence to the mutual benefit of effective exchange and partnership between student conduct and athletics.

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Filling the Void Collaborative Innovation in Developing a Restorative Response to Sexual Misconduct

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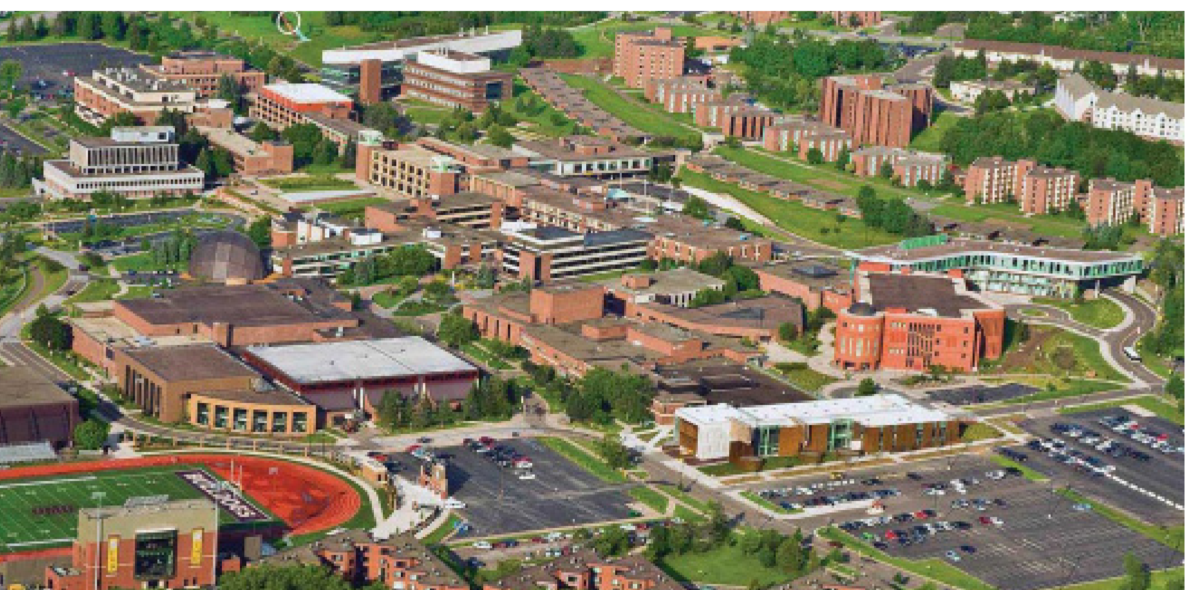
The Void Defined

Sexual assault is a pervasive issue affecting college students of all identities (Fedina, Holmes & Backes, 2016; Krebs et. al, 2007; Balsam, Beauchaine, & Rothblum, 2005; Harrell, 2012). Over the past decade, colleges and universities worked diligently to create robust, fair, and transparent procedures to address sexual misconduct. And yet, in our experience, most of our students wanted absolutely nothing to do with them. While research on heterogenous populations is limited on this topic, a 2017 study of 834 undergraduate women at a Midwestern university found that 234 (34%) had experienced sexual assault during their time on campus (Holland & Cortina, 2017). Of those, only five (2%) filed a formal complaint to the University. While there are many reasons why students opt against utilizing campus procedures, among them are concerns about the acceptability of the existing procedures and the appropriateness of the procedures themselves (Holland & Cortina, 2017).

> Sexual assault is a pervasive issue affecting college students of all identities

As student conduct administrators, over the last decade, we often met students who were, at a minimum, willing to attend a meeting to learn more about their options for University response. We explained the available investigation and resolution procedures at those meetings, and then students often asked for more or different options. Having no other options to provide was both as dissatisfying as it was concerning.



Restorative Justice is not Mediation

The 2011 Dear Colleague Letter included a specific prohibition against mediation for resolving complaints of sexual misconduct. This prohibition fueled confusion and hesitancy amongst administrators in providing alternative options for students who experienced sexual harm. However, these concerns may have been rooted in a misunderstanding of the distinctness of mediation and restorative justice (RJ) practices. A 2016 Campus PRISM project brief described the main differences between the practices to address these concerns.

1. **Accountability.** RJ requires the individual who caused harm to take responsibility for repairing it. Mediation is different in that neither party carries any distinct responsibility for resolving a conflict that is shared.
2. **Nature of Facilitation**. Whereas mediation is the shepherding of chaotic and unpredictable discourse, RJ requires trauma-informed pre-conferencing so that any interactions are structured, predictable, and transparent.
3. **Different end products.** A mediation is ultimately complete when two parties form a mutually created agreement. Alternatively, RJ practices allow the parties to identify the harm one causes and develop a plan for the respondent to address it.
4. **Institution interests.** Institutions of higher education carry an obligation to stop, prevent, and remedy sexual misconduct. The neutrality of the mediation process is unlikely to address those interests successfully. Yet, the central tenets of RJ (acceptance of responsibility and accountability for repair) more specifically and directly address them all.

A Door Kicked Open

The most recent federal regulations, implemented on August 14, 2020, widened the opportunity for institutions to pursue alternative resolutions intended to serve students' needs for healing and accountability. Requirements for such processes include:

1. That the complainant files a formal complaint.
2. That the parties voluntarily consent to participation.
3. That the institution provides written notice of the allegations and the parameters of informal processes.
4. That the institution may not offer informal resolutions in cases of employee conduct directed at students.

Through consultation with colleagues from around the country, it became apparent that with the adoption of these new regulations, many institutions were considering and pursuing alternative resolution options more seriously. During the Spring of 2021, we participated in national training programs that focused on the development and facilitation of restorative response procedures. We weren't alone -- we found that our training cohorts included many student conduct and Title IX professionals who were embarking on a similar journey to build options available to students who have experienced sexual misconduct.

Our Context

Before we proceed, we must be clear about the following context for our pursuit of this work at our institution. First, our formal investigation and response procedures remain available to students who wish to pursue them, and as required by law. Second, we are not and will not promote one option over another, nor are we suggesting that restorative responses are appropriate in every case. Third, Title IX covers a broad range of behaviors, and our University policy prohibits even more beyond the law. No two cases are alike, and no two students present identical needs. As such, we are strong proponents of increasing options made available to students and administrators for appropriate and effective responses to concerns of sexual misconduct. Lastly, we are located in a community that has an appetite for and relevant resources available to support this specific collaboration. Our city is home to 'The Duluth Model' of reform for criminal justice response to domestic violence against women, creating national influence dating back to the 1980's (Shepard & Pence, 1999). Further, our campus hosts the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking, which has promoted heartfelt restorative victim-offender dialogue world-wide since 1994. We acknowledge our community's roots in innovation and do not take for granted the fact that parallel collaboration has been happening around us for the better part of four decades.

Possible Benefits

While we expect some students will continue to pursue formal investigations and hearing procedures, for those who desire something else, we predict the following benefits of offering alternative resolution options at our institution.

1. Bring more complaints forward in the first place. We know that sexual misconduct is under-reported at our institution, with campus climate data that describes the incidence of sexual misconduct far surpassing the actual reports received. Specifically, in 2018, our University received 19 reports of sexual assault. In contrast, our student health survey indicated 4.8% of students reported experiencing an issue with sexual assault in the past 12 months, which considering our campus size, is equivalent to well over 500 students.

2. Offering survivors meaningful and realistic alternatives to the formal process. As previously described, a vast majority of students opt against pursuing formal procedures. For this reason, offering alternative options that serve the unique needs of each individual fills the large gap between students choosing to do nothing and students choosing to do something through the formal process.

3. Help survivors in their search for accountability and healing. Based on conversations we've had on our campus along with colleagues from around the country, many campus administrators are critical of how the adversarial nature of investigation and resolution processes impact student well-being within the process itself. In a qualitative study of Title IX staff, one administrator reflected, "You know like it goes from, 'I just want this person to understand how they impacted me" to "F#ck that az$$hole, he should die . . .' This is not healing." (Williamson, 2017, p. 169). Conversely, survivors who participated in RJ processes report positive outcomes such as a) feeling safe, b) feeling heard, c) feeling like they are not blamed, d) that they were treated with respect, e) that they are satisfied with the redress plan, and f) that their conference was a success. Likewise, responsible parties who participated in RJ also felt satisfied with the redress plan and that their conference was a success (Koss, 2013).

4. Outcomes address root causes. According to early adopters of adaptable resolution options, the number one request of survivors is education for the respondent on sexual consent and healthy relationships. Alcohol education is also commonly requested (Carrie Landrum, personal communication, October 27, 2020). The processes that address misconduct need to undo the miseducation of simply living in an oppressive society that perpetuates problematic paradigms around gender, sex, and romantic relationships. Complainants regain some of the power lost in an experience of sexual misconduct through their participation. As one administrator put it:

the number one request of survivors is education for the respondent on sexual consent and healthy relationships

> "So this process, putting people together, mutual understanding... and victims, maybe [can think] 'I don't have as much to fear as I thought. This guy is not a monster. It's not going to happen all the time. He just doesn't get it. He doesn't understand, and maybe I influence that in this meeting.' You've got to talk about empowering." (Williamson, 2017, p. 176).

Learning from Others' Experiences

We are not the first to undertake the process of creating an alternative resolution option for sexual misconduct, and we knew that the experiences of others who had done it would be invaluable. With this in mind, we sought out as much information as possible from those who had been through this process before us. We viewed webinars, read articles, and contacted folks who are leaders in implementing alternative resolution processes for sexual misconduct.

We have found that one of the most outstanding qualities of Higher Education practitioners is their willingness to share their experiences with others. These conversations gave us a significant sense of direction as we were beginning to design the process. We had a better idea of what documents we would need to create, how the process might flow and what to expect for typical outcomes, and most importantly, who we might need to connect with for consultation. Early adopters specifically discussed the importance of bringing partners in from two perspectives - those who will champion the program and those who can provide critique. Additionally, they shared suggestions of common educational opportunities requested by participants and what training might be helpful for facilitating the process. We were continually grateful for their generosity and willingness to spend time with us sharing their wealth of knowledge.

We asked two of the early adopters we met with to share why they choose to invest time into sharing knowledge with others in the field:

> "Given that colleges and universities are just beginning to venture into the promising (and potentially precarious) work of offering and facilitating restorative practices to address and prevent sexual misconduct in our campus communities, it's particularly important to share our lessons learned, our challenges, and choices, and our successes and shortcomings with others, so that professionals, institutions, and students may collectively benefit from the sharing of our journeys. In higher education we are in the business of learning and sharing knowledge, and this applies to us as colleagues and professionals as well." - Carrie Landrum, Assistant Director, Adaptable Resolution, Training & Strategic Partnerships, Office of Student Conflict Resolution, University of Michigan

> "Establishing and cultivating partnerships is absolutely essential within our field in general, but I'd argue it's even more important when navigating new territory like implementing informal and restorative resolution options. The purpose of offering these types of resolution options is to try to address the alleged behavior and ultimately repair harm, so it goes without saying that there is a lot of pressure on us as practitioners to make sure that what we end up incorporating into our policies and procedures is done well. One way to figure out if we're implementing best practices is to lean on our colleagues both on our own campuses and beyond. By reaching out to those at other institutions, you not only have the opportunity to broaden and deepen your connections with others in the field, but you also get the chance to learn about what they've achieved, as well as the challenges they've faced. I've genuinely been so humbled by the collegiality I continue to observe in these spaces, and I think it's because we all seem to be striving for the same thing, and that common goal has made it so folks are that much more willing to share whatever they can, whether it be their experiences, knowledge, and/or resources to help others, and it's something that we should absolutely maximize." - Dr. Chelsea Jacoby, Director of Title IX Compliance & Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Coordinator, The College of New Jersey

Internal Partnerships

Complaints of sexual misconduct elicit a strong response from both individuals and groups. That is to say, few people are neutral about sexual assault or how institutions should handle it. Sexual misconduct impacts students in every way, from body, mind, heart, and soul, sometimes in diverse and unexpected ways. Furthermore, regardless of institutional size or structure, sexual misconduct response work should be collaborative in nature. For this reason, we began our procedural development in partnership with a faculty member at our Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking on campus. The first decision we made about our work together was that we wanted our procedures informed by prior research, of course, but even more importantly, that we wanted our procedures designed with our institution's unique needs and desires in mind. We wanted students in particular to provide thoughts about what could serve our campus well.

Our survivor support services were a valuable point of consultation. Our previous collaboration with this office on formal investigations and hearings afforded us an excellent foundation for considering a new approach together. We also got helpful feedback from Counseling and Health Education. Further, we expanded our consultation to include survivor and respondent support services from our System's five campuses.

Lastly, key senior leaders provided us the time and space to pursue this work. This included our Senior Student Affairs Officer on our campus. Next, our local Title IX Coordinator, our Office of General Counsel, and our System Title IX Coordinator all offered support for creating more options for students. Their expert review of our proposal provided us with the confidence and feedback necessary to ensure a procedure that aligns with both federal regulations and our unique University policy.

External Partnerships

The University does not exist in a vacuum, and just as internal partners were essential to consider, external community partners were also vital. We knew that consultation with key community organizations would provide additional guidance to our work and assist with crucial process needs.

We began by consulting with a local victim/survivor advocate program that works closely with the survivor support services on our campus. In addition to providing training for on-campus advocates, they also offer ongoing support to students seeking additional resources. We knew that their consultation was as vital as that of our on-campus partners. Largely, they supported providing another option for those survivors looking for one and raised concerns for us to consider, particularly in making sure the process centers on survivors' needs.

> Part of the reason consultation is so important is that it allows your partners to illuminate issues you may not have previously considered.

One of the biggest hurdles we came across was identifying an option for consent and sexual harm education. We knew that this would be one of the most commonly requested outcomes in agreements from our meetings with early adopters. We knew that we needed something informative and engaging and based on sound theory and experience. However, as is common in Higher Education, we also needed to identify a budget-neutral strategy to sustain it. Our partner from the Center for Restorative Justice & Peacemaking had a previous relationship with Men as Peacemakers, a community organization that provides primary prevention and restorative strategies to address harms caused by men. We saw the potential for collaboration in creating and providing an educational curriculum based on their expertise and alignment with the program goals. So through the help of our colleague, we met with leaders in the organization to begin discussing our process, what we hope to achieve, and how we might be able to partner. The result was more than we could have hoped for. They agreed to develop a curriculum to address harm caused by students using grant funding they already had available to cover the work and, moving ahead, to conduct the meetings with students. Our Office of General Counsel also assisted in developing a Memorandum of Understanding for our partnership with this organization. What began as a consultation resulted in an important collaborative partnership within our community.

Have You Considered...?

Part of the reason consultation is so important is that it allows your partners to illuminate issues you may not have previously considered. So as we went through meetings with internal and external partners, we started gathering the questions and concerns that kept coming up to address them in future consultations. These concerns fell under six major themes, which are commonly heard among restorative justice practitioners (Campus PRISM, 2021):

1. **Restorative justice is not formal or severe enough to send a strong message.** For many people, their primary mental model for justice is punitive. In the college context, this means students should go through a formal hearing and are handed down sanctions and marked with a record. The idea of a process that does not result in a record requires a complete paradigm shift in how one views responsibility. Often in criminal proceedings, offenders can distance themselves from the harm they caused and those impacted by that harm. They may take on a more passive role and accept the punishment, regardless of whether it addresses the root issues or not (Karp, 2019). Conversely, using an RJ approach encourages the responsible party to take a more active role by acknowledging the harm they have caused and determining steps they can take to repair that harm. So while the conduct records may differ, the emotional effort required of respondents in a restorative process is not easy and often results in deeper learning and growth.
2. **Restorative justice increases the risk of re-victimization.** In situations of sexual harm, survivors

experience a loss of control. The Alternative Resolution process offers an option or choice for survivors that, according to Oudshoorn et al. can, move “them towards healing and regaining control of their lives” (2015, p. 27). Alternative Resolution is voluntary, and the survivor has control throughout the process, compared to a formal investigation where authorities make the decisions. They decide if they want to pursue this process, what types of activities they are most comfortable with, and what outcomes they want the respondent to complete. Furthermore, they may discontinue the process at any time, up until the completion of time-based outcomes, and may choose to return to a formal investigation. In this way, we hope to offer more choices and control to a survivor who has had a sense of control taken away in the situation. However, we know that going through the process will likely still bring about painful memories and emotions for survivors. Throughout the process, including at the conclusion, facilitators will offer resources to survivors and responsible parties so that they may continue to seek support in processing the incident as needed.

3. **Restorative justice will pressure survivors into participation.** A core tenet of RJ is that it is voluntary. Students at our institution have repeatedly asked for another option other than the formal investigation process; adding the Alternative Resolution process provides that option. Although during the initial response to a report of sexual misconduct the institution presents complainants with all of their options, including Alternative Resolution, the institution will not promote any one option over another. Title IX staff taking reports and discussing possibilities will exclude cases from Alternative Resolution as described in our University policy. Once again, this is giving a choice back to a survivor who has had choices taken away.

4. **Restorative justice is susceptible to power imbalances, particularly in intimate partner violence cases.** Power imbalances are often at the root of sexual harm situations. Harm could indeed occur if facilitators are inadequately prepared to facilitate a restorative process. It is imperative for facilitators to remain multi-partial, pay attention to social inequities, and manage power imbalances (Karp, 2019). Dialogue may not be appropriate in certain situations or at least must proceed cautiously. But when done correctly, participating in a restorative process may allow survivors to feel empowered by sharing their story and having a voice in how they want to seek justice (Oudshoorn et al., 2015). Our process allows for survivors to make an informed decision about what level of dialogue they are comfortable with - anything from shuttle dialogue with no direct interaction to a facilitated dialogue or circle with both parties and/or community members. Preparation is vital, and the facilitator will hold multiple meetings with each party individually before any potential dialogue occurs, giving them ample opportunity to watch for signs that a case may be inappropriate for a restorative approach.

5. **Only certain people will receive restorative justice options, exacerbating disparities.** This concern is well-founded, and we appreciated that our consulters voiced it. Koss (2013) found that racial/ethnic disparities indeed existed amongst both responsible parties and survivors who ultimately participated in RESTORE programs, where Caucasian individuals were largely overrepresented compared to African American or Hispanic individuals. This is not a concern that we take lightly, and we must keep it in mind as we implement the Alternative Resolution process. EOAA/Title IX staff will take care not to influence referrals based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, or any other identity. Early adopters also emphasized the importance of promoting the Alternative Resolution option widely across campus along with sexual harm prevention efforts, especially in spaces with a diverse population of students. We will be tracking cases in our student conduct record system so we will be able to utilize demographic data to assess areas of overrepresentation.

6. **Things said in a restorative justice process will be used against accused students in criminal prosecution.** Restorative processes can and do take place in tandem with criminal proceedings. Additionally, complainants can return to a formal investigation if an

alternative resolution is unsuccessful. So we recognize that this may be a genuine concern for parties. We make it clear in our process that, to the extent allowable by law, the information obtained and utilized during the alternative resolution process will not be used in any other University process or legal proceeding. Still, the information documented and/or shared during alternative resolution is subject to search and/or subpoena. The facilitator will not retain handwritten or typed notes or record their conversations throughout the process. We want to provide parties with reasonable assurance that they can be candid while also being honest about the realities of the educational records created in the process.

It is important to show partners that you are not just meeting with them for lip service but also taking their advice and concerns into consideration. By preemptively addressing the six major concerns we were hearing, we showed partners we were listening and would use their feedback to make the process better.

Key Decisions made Collaboratively

Having been in the field long enough, given the drastic swings in federal regulations and guidance that govern Title IX, re-creating and striving to improve procedures was nothing we had not done before. If you're interested in this work, use your existing procedures to inform what you need. Before you begin creating deliverables that you'll utilize within the process, it's useful to find consensus on key decisions about how the procedure works and its applications. The following items were ones that we most carefully considered with each one of our key collaborators:

- ►The alternative resolution procedure is voluntary for all parties.
- ►To participate, the responsible party must acknowledge that harm occurred and that they have a role/responsibility in repairing it.
- ►The alternative resolution procedure doesn't carry a student conduct charge or record.
- ►Some cases are not eligible for alternative resolution, per University policy.
- ►Records of alternative resolutions are subject to search and subpoena, although the process itself doesn't lend itself to creating many records about what happened.
- ►Complainants may opt to return to a formal procedure up until completion of the time-bound items in the agreement.
- ►If the respondent is non-compliant with the terms of an agreement, the institution may place a hold on their account until they resume compliance.

Training

Accessing appropriate training is another key component of preparing to launch an alternative resolution process. Because of the novelty of alternative resolution procedures, training options are more limited than they are for formal investigation and hearing procedures. That said, the following organizations provide training options specific to Restorative Justice knowledge, philosophies, practices, and skills:

- ►The Campus PRISM Project at University of San Diego (sandiego.edu/soles/restorative-justice/campus-prism.php) is "an international team of researchers and practitioners who are deeply invested in reducing sexual and gender-based violence by exploring how a restorative approach may provide more healing and better accountability" (Campus PRISM, 2021). They offer discussion boards, webinars, and trainings.
- ►The Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking at the University of Minnesota Duluth (rjp.d.umn.edu/) "provides research, consultation guidance, and training for restorative practitioners and programs worldwide" (The Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking, 2021).
- ►Title IX Consult LLC (titleixconsult.com) "provides technical and practical guidance to educational institutions to enforce Title IX law and regulations" (Title IX Consult LLC, n.d.).
- ►"Restorative practitioners at the University of Michigan are known to offer occasional trainings for other colleges and universities when asked" (Carrie Landrum, personal communication, June 21, 2021).

Moreover, other types of alternative dispute resolution training, such as mediator training, can strengthen skills relating to non-directive facilitation, multi-partiality (e.g. showing up in support of all participants) and building a resolution agreement.

Key Process Items

Launching a new alternative procedure requires developing a number of key process items that reflect the key decisions made about how your procedure will work. Here are a few items to consider:

- ►**Procedural flow charts** - This document demonstrates how a case makes its way over to and through an alternative resolution procedure. Additionally, it shows the multiple paths a case can take, depending on the parties' level of interest in participating in alternative resolution.
- ►**Agreement to Pursue Alternative Resolution** - This document describes the nature of alternative resolution for the parties, including participation requirements, privacy, and records retention as is required by federal law.
- ►**Alternative Resolution Agreement** - While each agreement is unique to fit the needs of the students, some language about the terms of the agreement applies to every case.
- ►**Respondent Education** - Given the popularity of a desire for the respondent to engage in education as an outcome of alternative resolution, we invested a fair amount of time in this outcome. As previously described, we opted to partner with a local non-profit who developed a curriculum especially for respondents who participated in the alternative resolution process. Other options we considered included the STARRSA curriculum and the curriculum grounding Title IX Consult LLC's respondent education skill-building workshops.

We needed to have these documents reviewed by the partners we consulted to get tangible feedback prior to implementation.

Conclusion

We offer our story as an example of a collaborative effort to develop a procedure in response to long-standing student demand for more options to address sexual misconduct at our institution. We acknowledge that this journey will be unique for every institution. Readers who are pursuing their own collaborative procedural development and would like more information about the content of this article can reach out to the authors via email.

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Collaborative and Inclusive Accountability: Infusing Disability Services and CARE into Student Conduct Practice

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Institutions of Higher Education across the country are experiencing an increased need for collaborative case management-based approaches to supporting students through the conduct process.

At Cleveland State University (CSU), the offices of Community Standards, Community Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE) Management, and Disability Services (ODS) have developed an innovative, cross-campus collaborative model to support students who reportedly violate the student code of conduct and demonstrate they are in crisis. This model creates unique opportunities for enhanced, holistic student support to address complex needs by capitalizing on the highly collaborative partnership of the CSU Student Conduct, CARE management, and Disability Services offices. The diverse educational, professional, and personal backgrounds of the staff, paired with the comprehensive, wrap-around curricular and co-curricular models address the multifaceted needs of the student while they engage with the student conduct process. The intent of this collaboration is to respond to the student's unique needs and offer options for developing enhanced problem solving, emotional regulation, and general executive functioning skills, while identifying any short- or long-term disability related needs. These approaches seek to address the behaviors and reduce or remove the likelihood of a reoccurrence, through education and skill building with the goal of students making a different decision in the future.

In the article, we will review the diverse personal, educational, and professional backgrounds of the Community Standards, CARE/Clinical CARE Management, and Disability Services staff, highlight opportunities for enhanced communication and case management through cross-campus collaboration, and provide an overview of curricular and co-curricular methods for student engagement and support.

Overview of CSU

Cleveland State University (CSU) is a large state-assisted institution located in Northeast Ohio. Established in 1964, CSU traces its origins to the Cleveland YMCA as early as the 1880s. The YMCA offered courses to students who did not otherwise have access to education. That

program evolved into the Association Institute in 1906 to Fenn College in 1929, and finally to CSU in 1964. From the beginning, CSU has dedicated itself to supporting and encouraging students who faced challenges pursuing education and has intentionally connected to the broader Cleveland community with the goal of carving pathways to higher education.

Overview of Common Conduct/CARE Barriers Experienced by Students

Like many institutions of higher education, CSU students experience a wide range of concerns and barriers to their academic focus, most notably around mental / emotional wellness, access to basic needs, and knowledge of resources.

In addition to CARE Management, CSU has several initiatives in place to support students through these concerns including TRiO, Graduation Success Coaching, the Pratt Center, and the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship which provides an opportunity for youth aging out of foster care to pursue an undergraduate degree.

Additionally, CSU offers direct supports related to basic needs via an on-campus food pantry, an emergency tuition adjustment petition program to address full term withdraws due to personal or health crises, emergency grants that provide funding for utilities, rent, car repair, and other acute emergent needs, and the H.O.M.E program which provides un-occupied residence hall rooms and meal plans at a reduced cost to students experiencing homelessness or home insecurity.

Overview of Conduct

Student conduct and community standards is an ever-changing functional area within the varied landscape of higher education. Accountability for student misconduct has existed as long as higher education itself. Thankfully, the practice has evolved a great deal, otherwise public ridicule and floggings might still be considered appropriate sanctions (Paterson & Kibler, 1998). Influencing the evolution of the field is the recognition that learning happens inside and outside of the classroom, the creation of professional higher education associations, and research espousing student conduct as a profession (Glick & Haug, 2020). From these foundations, practitioners better recognize the role of conduct administrators not simply as rule enforcers, but as uniquely qualified, highly trained educators charged to make decisions about campus safety and students' behaviors. Practitioners have also learned the value of treating students as individuals (Clifford, 2021). When this occurs, it results in, "generat[ing] beneficial work in which the campus is safe, cultural needs are met to ensure an equitable process, and the standardization of education for the student is subject only to the individual student" (Glick & Haug, 2020).

Influencing the evolution of the field is the recognition that learning happens inside and outside of the classroom

With the goal of addressing individual needs of all students referred to Community Standards, CSU created a new position in September 2019 – the Associate Dean of Students, Community Standards and Advocacy. The Associate Dean oversees Community Standards, CARE Management, Student Wellness, and the campus food pantry; Lift Up Vikes (LUV!). The intentional linking of these departments enabled the initial conversations about approaching conduct concerns using an individualized

CARE lens.

Another factor in establishing a collaborative approach is the single administrator status for Community Standards. While the position's title and scope changed, the work responsibilities remained tasked to one individual. Like other offices with one full-time staff member, single administrator conduct offices can be challenging without a well-established network of partners. Due in part to this structure, cultivating partnerships and building collaborations across campus became an even bigger priority.

Taking a CARE Approach – Seeing Conduct as Potential Crises

The collaboration between Community Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE), the Office of Disability Services (ODS), and Community Standards at CSU developed from a desire to treat students going through the conduct process as unique individuals and from recognizing that the most seamless way to accomplish this was through intentional and on-going partnerships. This became most evident when reports referred to Community Standards increasingly involved students with connections to CARE and/or to Disability Services.

Thus, a key factor of the collaboration emerged: a weekly meeting involving the three areas. CSU facilitates this collaborative meeting on Mondays ahead of the weekly CARE Team meetings. Community Standards, CARE, and ODS meet to discuss students who are connected between the three areas; review observed risk factors; evaluate existing supports; determine who has the best connection to, and appropriate rapport with, the student(s); outline appropriate next steps; and decide whether or not to refer the report to the larger CARE Team. This meeting has been critical to cultivating collaboration and informing the CARE Team agenda for the next day.

An early report discussed in this collaborative meeting involved a student who used inappropriate language in email communications to a faculty member. The faculty member reported feeling threatened and was seeking a response through Community Standards. Through conversation in the collaborative meeting, staff learned the student was connected to CARE and Disability Services and that this type of aggressive language had, in the past, signaled that the student was in crisis and in need of support. Staff were then able to design an inclusive action plan where the student's behavior could be addressed while offering resources to the student who was struggling with medication changes, the loss of a trusted therapist who was retiring, aging off their parent's insurance, as well as other significant life changes. As the offices discussed the best way to support this student, a great deal of valuable context was discovered which staff would not have become aware of without collaboration. Additionally, the group recognized the benefit of the diverse backgrounds and experiences which enabled the team to view such reports from multiple perspectives.

Diverse Personal, Educational, and Professional Backgrounds within Student Conduct, CARE/Clinical CARE and Disability Services

A benefit to the collaboration between the Office of Disability Services (ODS), CARE, and Community Standards is the unique and diverse backgrounds of the personnel. Within each department, there are staff experiences that enhance the support provided to students. These unique profiles allow the team to pull from a wide array of backgrounds to meet students' layered needs.

When considering the staffing structures at various institutions, it may be beneficial to consider not only the direct functional experience candidates have, but also their past transferable skills which can complement the existing service offerings. For example, all staff members currently working in CARE at CSU are new to Higher Education case management. They bring substantial experiences in other areas but did not have firsthand experience with post-secondary case management previously. Yet, their backgrounds, especially combined with other collaborative offices, offer an excellent balance of support and innovative thinking.

Methods of Enhanced Communication and Case Management

During the conduct review process, it is not unusual for students to disclose a variety of life stressors that contributed to the conduct violation. In these situations, a CARE manager is assigned to support the student in managing any stress associated with the Community Standards process while connecting to other vital campus and external resources. As it is not unusual for students to have a variety of complex, layered needs, CSU has developed several methods for enhanced communication between offices to streamline support for students. These include:

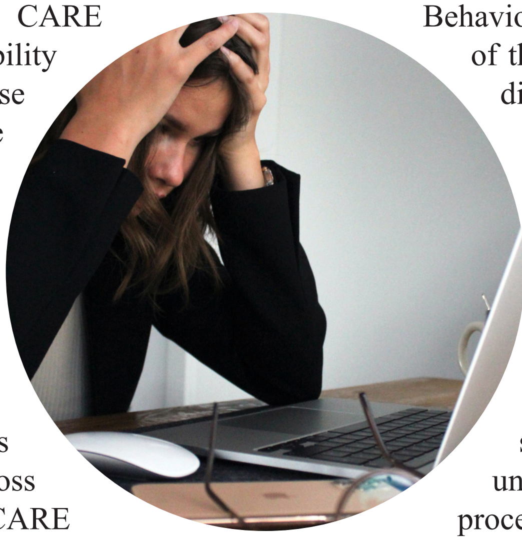
1. **Regular check-in meetings:** As discussed earlier, Community Standards, CARE/Clinical CARE, and ODS meet weekly to review shared cases, provide updates on connections, triage and troubleshoot complex cases, and determine the CARE Team agenda for the following day.
2. **Joint case management assignments:** To separate and remove any potential conflicts of interest, students going through the conduct process that are also found to be in crisis are assigned a separate CARE or Clinical CARE manager. When CARE managers determine

Chart: Composition of ODS, CARE, and Community Standards Staff Profiles

Degrees	Professional Backgrounds	Personal Backgrounds
Athletic Administration Education, Higher Education, Urban Education, and Adult Learning & Development, History, Human Rights & Social Justice, Information Systems, International Relations, Mental Health Counseling, Psychology, Public Relations, Social Work , Theology, Occupational Therapy Instructional Design	Advising Alternative Media Assistive Technology Athletics Case Management Crisis and Needs Based Support Direct Care Disability Services Education and Instruction Group Facilitator Mental Health Treatment Public and Private Education experiences Residence Life Student Affairs Therapy Title IX Volunteer Programs / Service Learning School based occupational therapy Secondary education college access programs	BIPOC Disability First generation college student Geographically and regionally diverse LGBTQIA+ Parenting Under-resourced Varied religious backgrounds

that any unmet need(s) are in part due to a currently unaccommodated disability or exacerbation in disability symptoms, a member of the Disability Services team is assigned as a joint case manager for the student.

3. Cross departmental positions: As CARE management, Clinical CARE management, and Disability Services all utilize different case management systems, it can be difficult to ensure all systems and appropriate individuals have the most up to date information. Additionally, the increased need for crisis management and disability services over the last 5 years can result in wait times for intake meetings and delayed access to resources. To avoid this, cross departmental positions between CARE management and Disability Services were created (Disability Access and CARE Specialists). These individuals are trained to assess and triage student needs while providing academic and executive functioning coaching.



4. Provisional Accommodations: It is not unusual for students going through the conduct process to report a suspected or not currently managed disability. In many of these cases, the students are not currently connected to Disability or Clinical Services. This can occur for a variety of reasons, the most common being a fear of the expense associated with seeking support, especially if they do not currently have insurance (Clifford, 2021). In these situations, a member of Disability Services will meet with the student to complete an informational interview related to the barriers the student has been experiencing. When it is apparent the barrier(s) are the result of an undiagnosed or currently undocumented disability, the office will provide accommodations on a provisional basis for the remainder of the term (generally 2-3 months). This ensures the student is provided reasonable accommodation(s) while CARE assists the student in identifying options for connecting with a clinical provider. This approach also allows students time to connect and develop a rapport with a provider, as many clinicians wish to meet with a client 3-4 times before providing the required documentation.

5. Disability and CARE Management representation in High-Risk Group Meetings for risk assessment and intervention: When a student's reported behavior rises to a level of concern exceeding the scope of the CARE Team, a High-Risk Group (HRG) is called. Other institutions may refer to this group as a Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) or a Threat Assessment Behavior Intervention Team (TABIT). Because of the observed overlap of students between different caseloads, CSU has found it invaluable to include CARE Managers and Disability Services representatives in the HRG meetings. CARE Managers serve multiple purposes in these meetings; they share whether or not there is a known CARE history for the student, offer insight into stressors the student(s) may be experiencing, and serve as the primary note-takers for the university through the case management process. Similarly, Disability Services staff serve in a number of ways including notifying if the student is already registered with their office and may be experiencing a known adverse event, giving insight to what a student may be experiencing based on prudent observation even if they are not registered with ODS, and offering perspective around equitable practices while dismantling any implicit bias against persons with disabilities. Involving CARE Management and ODS in HRG meetings has created a more holistic, inclusive, and purposeful meeting that generates equitable action plans.

It is certainly true that every High Risk Group meeting held does not involve a student already connected to CARE or ODS. However, both of these offices contribute necessary empathy to the conversation in a process often focused on assessing risk and following procedure. Infusing empathy into a conduct process does not indicate agreement with the choices students made. Instead, applying empathy means, "each of us feels seen, heard, and valued" (Brummer, p. 44). Whether the HRG is discussing a student who is fully connected to multiple service-providing offices on campus or none, having CARE and ODS representatives offers meaningful insight and dialogue with a focus on equity. When a student being discussed in an HRG is connected to either CARE or ODS, their involvement provides invaluable context as well.

Co-curricular Student Supports

The collaboration between these offices has also made it easier to provide co-curricular wrap-around services to students referred to Community Standards. Through a structured collaborative approach, students are connected to other supports sooner and without having to continuously share their narrative across departments. Examples of these services include:

►Student check-in meetings with CARE, Community Standards, and Disability Services: When students are connected to multiple offices, we often offer to hold joint meetings so the student connects to all areas and shares information at one time. This is voluntary and is always done with student permission. In these meetings, students can share to their comfort level what is going on in their life, what led to the behavior or actions referred to Community Standards, and if they are in need of support resources.

An example of when this check-in meeting was helpful involved a student (A) found by campus police to be sleeping in another student's (B) car. Student B reported not knowing student A and not giving them permission to be in their car. At first glance, this presented as a Student who potentially broke into a car with intent to vandalize or steal. Through collaboration, we discovered that student A found the car unlocked and had nowhere else to sleep. The policy-violating behavior needed to be addressed while we also sought to ensure A had safe housing options. Meetings involving the students, Community Standards, and CARE were pivotal in working towards supportive and restorative outcomes.

►Lift Up Vikes (LUV!) Food Pantry and Resource Center: CSU has a donor-funded pantry and resource center that offers invaluable support to our student body. LUV! has a reporting line up through the Associate Dean of Students and thus a close relationship with Community Standards and CARE Management. LUV! Is able to cross-program, promote, and share resources between all areas, offering food security resources, financial wellness workshops, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) college eligibility programs, and nutrition resources. Additionally, LUV! offers emergency grant funding via the CSU Fowler Fund intended to support students facing housing insecurity, food insecurity, transportation limitations, technology barriers, and emergency childcare support.

►Medical Withdraws and Leave of Absence: Disability Services can complete full or partial term withdrawals for medical reasons. Similarly, they are able to assist students in declaring and navigating medical leaves of absence (LOA). Before the student elects a LOA, Disability Services explores all potential accommodations that may permit the student to remain enrolled at the institution with support (Clifford, 2021). When this is not in the best interest of the student, the office guides the students through the process to enact the LOA, stays in touch with the student while they are away to offer support and connections to resources, and then assists students in completing the necessary steps to return to the university.

►Emergency Tuition Adjustment: In the event a student experiences an extreme and acute life event that impacts their ability to engage with their courses, they are able to request an exception to the standard refund policy. This process is used most commonly for unexpected medical events or loss of loved ones and allows the tuition dollars for the term in question to be returned to the source to reduce the student's indebtedness.

Curricular Student Supports

As CSU witnessed an increase in student conduct cases, CARE management referrals, and registration with Disability Services over a one year span, the staff sought out a more sustainable and proactive mechanism that would provide executive functioning coaching, encourage disability management and emotional regulation skills, and build self-awareness and resilience within students. Disability Services worked with the institution's Occupational Therapy department to launch a graded skill building, variable credit course developed by Dr. Karen Keptner.

The course was designed to be variable credit as a method for addressing potential financial barriers related to disability and life management. Students paying out of pocket or already taking the maximum number of credit hours can elect the 1-credit hour version to minimize any additional cost. Whereas students wishing to take a smaller course load so they can learn to manage the disability or acute life stressors while still being enrolled at the institution can take the 3-credit version in order to meet financial aid and scholarship eligibility requirements.

The course is graded according to the number of experience points accumulated by the end of term. Students are assigned a plethora of activities to engage in that reinforce the psychoeducational topics covered throughout the semester. Students in the 1-credit hour version of the course have less required activities than those enrolled in the 3-credit hour version. Mandatory activities include attending the weekly class session (worth 500 pts each), presenting their desired future occupation (250 pts), completing a goals activity (250 pts), and assigned weekly activities or assignments (250 to 1,000 pts).

The selective activities vary by weekly topic, but examples include attending a music therapy session, provided by the on-campus music therapy program, that it is aimed at improving executive functioning; meeting with their course navigator,which are master's in occupational therapy students; or attending tutoring sessions in the on-campus Tutoring and Academic Success Center.

The goal of the course is to teach the students how to balance and manage the many "occupations" (academics, social, financial, and healthy lifestyle) of being a college student. Each students' goals are developed across the course of the term with the help of the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) which is administered on the first day of class. This tool identifies the student's barriers and strengths which are then developed into a sustainable and incremental life management plan (Keptner, et al., 2016).

Course Objectives

- ►Explore aspects of a successful, healthy, and happy life
- ►Perform a self-analysis and identify potential lifestyle changes
- ►Prioritize what is important in life (short and long term)
- ►Identify positive and negative habits in their life
- ►Establish reasonable and attainable goals to be successful
- ►Understand healthy behaviors and how to incorporate them into everyday life
- ►Understand sensory needs and the impact to learning/life
- ►Apply new study skills to current course load
- ►Reflect on course activities and develop a reasonable and sustainable plan to maintain disability/life management

This course has been utilized to address a variety of student needs. One example was a Disability Service student on the autism spectrum who struggled to develop appropriate boundaries. Each term, faculty would outreach to express concern over the student's frequent and unprofessional communications. Likewise, the student would frequently go out for student organization positions. In part, due to their lack of boundaries and professionalism they would not secure the positions and become incredibly sad – outreaching to perceived friends in the group via email, text, and phone calls at all hours of the day and night. As students from the organizations brought this matter to Conduct's attention, it was processed through CARE, Conduct, and Disability Services. Disability Services met with the student to address the boundary concerns and recommended the course which became a safe space for the student to receive real time feedback while practicing emotional regulation and their acceptance and understanding of social cues and boundaries.

Building Buy-In Across Campus

The successful partnership between Community Standards, CARE, and Disability Services would not be possible without creating buy-in across campus. Beyond the established partnership, these departments have the support and trust of colleagues including faculty, the registrar, treasury services, academic advising, athletics, and the writing center. As the units have worked to establish a culture of care across campus, they recognize how important it is to have a process which promotes collaboration and brings people together. CSU offers the lens of viewing students as "ours" and ask how "we" can support them in meeting their goals or getting back on track. Having buy-in across campus lightens the load of the few to disperse among the many as student cases are triaged and responsibilities divided. Staff are also able to note common questions and barriers experienced and proactively bring them to the forefront; moving away from reactive response and towards proactive, prevention-based efforts.

Challenges to Creating Buy-In

As noted above, strong and positive relations within the larger campus community are key to providing the necessary support to students going through the conduct process. Outlined below is an examination of potential barriers to building campus buy-in and proposed methods for developing rapport and encouraging collaborations.

Barriers to Creating Buy-In

- ►Staffing changes and turnover
- ►Short staffing
- ►Remote functioning
- ►Physical distance between departments
- ►Difficult past interactions between departments and CARE/Conduct/Disability Services
- ►Institutional culture
- ►Myths/stereotypes related to specific groups of students
- ►Misunderstandings regarding departmental functions or processes
- ►High case/work loads

Methods for Building Rapport and Encouraging Collaborations

- ►Proactive outreach requesting individual or departmental meet and greets
- ►Requests to review departmental needs and objectives to determine partnership and support opportunities
- ►Offer assistance for complex, cross over student cases
- ►Inclusion on the campus CARE team
- ►Identifying opportunities for joint resource/grant applications
- ►Nominating departments or individuals for internal and external recognition
- ►Practicing an "attitude of gratitude" and making time to thank departments and individuals for their work with students
- ►Involving partners in policy and protocol review and revision

An example of building buy-in involves a report of academic misconduct. In one specific course, several international graduate students were documented for plagiarism and failing to cite properly. In discussing this report, it became evident the students were unclear about citations. The standard process dictates that these students be charged with academic misconduct and go through the procedure including levels of appeals. Using a CARE lens however, allowed for an alternative. In collaboration with CARE, ODS, and Community Standards, the Department Chair and grading faculty member offered a multi-week citation and anti-plagiarism workshops, enrolling all students who had been documented for plagiarism. The students had to complete the workshop and resubmit their original assignment with appropriate citations. This option to circumvent the typical academic misconduct process would not have been possible without collaborative conversations about the unique needs of international graduate students completing coursework remotely during a pandemic.

Areas for Development/Future Research

The collaboration described between Community Standards, CARE Management, and ODS is still relatively new. Continued development will involve documenting processes and designing more proactive means of supporting students across multiple departments.

Another area of required continued development is in researching the impact this collaboration has on persistence. As the collaboration is new, data is necessary to find what correlation, if any, there is between students connected to these offices and their ability to be successful at CSU. While there is some data on the partnership, it is with the added variable of COVID-19 which has affected all offices in unique and unanticipated ways.

Conclusion

CSU addresses student behavior concerns and promotes safety on campus through a collaborative case management-based approach partnering Community Standards with CARE and Disability Services. This collaboration is supported through curricular and co-curricular initiatives and benefits from diverse personnel committed to holistically offering wrap-around services to students going through the conduct process who may also be in crisis. This approach not only seeks to meet conduct goals but also to ensure students' unique emotional needs are supported through active and informed referral and case management.

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Utilizing Relationships to Revamp Medical Amnesty Policies & Education

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Many institutions of higher education have campus policies intended to "remove barriers for students who need to seek medical attention for impaired friends or for themselves in alcohol or drug related emergencies" (The Gordie Center, 2021). These policies are often known as "Medical Amnesty" or "Good Samaritan" policies. Medical amnesty policies on college campuses often exempt students from going through the formal student conduct process or receive alternative outcomes if they seek medical assistance; "which can help save lives by eliminating anxiety about potential penalties for consuming" alcohol and/or drugs (2021). The Gordie Center conducted a Medical Amnesty Policy Survey in 2007, which found that 27.9% of participating institutions had medical amnesty or similar policies on their campuses. Additionally, the survey found that 81.8% of those that did not have an existing policy were interested in developing a policy (Puckett, 2007). Over the past 14 years, it is reasonable to assume that number of institutions with medical amnesty policies has grown given higher education's continued and increased focus on substance use prevention. It is also important to note that many of the states within the United States of America also have Medical Amnesty legislation, also known as a "911 Good Samaritan Law" or "911 Lifeline" (The Medical Amnesty Initiative, 2016).

Given medical amnesty policies exist on campuses and within the local communities, we need to examine the relationships necessary for these policies to become a part of the campus culture. Often these policies live with or are the responsibility of one campus office or department, which may or may not be the student conduct office. Although many student conduct professionals find their role in medical amnesty policies to be reactionary (meeting with students for a reflective conversation focusing on resource referrals after a situation involving alcohol and/or drug use has occurred), when relationships are formed and collaboration occurs with campus and community partners, the role and impact that student conduct has related to medical amnesty policies becomes one that is proactive. This article will walk through how the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) has revamped their medical amnesty policy and student education using a collaborative approach.

Historical Context

UNC Charlotte developed its original medical amnesty policy in 2013, known as the Help Seeking Protocol. The original policy only provided student conduct protections in incidents involving the possession, consumption, or use of alcohol. However, the scope of the policy was expanded in the spring of 2016 to encompass possession, consumption, or use of drugs, in addition to the existing alcohol language. The addition of drugs to the policy came after an incident in which two students were using

heroin; one of the students overdosed and the other student called for medical assistance. In debriefing the incident, it became apparent that the student who contacted emergency services responded in a way that the University encourages, even though the used substance was not alcohol. The first lines of the Help Seeking Protocol (2019) read, "A priority of UNC Charlotte is students' health, safety, and welfare. Students are expected to demonstrate compassion by seeking help in potentially dangerous or life-threatening situations. The University does not want the fear of student conduct repercussions to be a barrier for seeking help." This incident led to conversations about the intent of the policy, the way students are encouraged to respond when medical assistance is needed regardless of the substance used, and the campus culture that existed around being compassionate and proactive bystanders.

> *"Overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S. as of 2017"*

Like UNC Charlotte, many institutions are expanding the scope of their medical amnesty policies to include both alcohol and drug overdose. "Overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S. as of 2017, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention" (as cited in Anderson, 2019). As discussed above, the Gordie Center (2021) also recommends this expanded scope, stating that medical amnesty policies are "designed to remove barriers for students who need to seek medical attention for impaired friends or for themselves in alcohol or drug related emergencies". Additionally, the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that while specific laws vary, "48 jurisdictions (47 states and D.C.) have enacted both Good Samaritan and Naloxone Access laws. Kansas, Texas and Wyoming do not have a Good Samaritan law for drug overdoses but have a Naloxone Access law. The five U.S. territories do not have either type of law" (2021).

Creating Buy-In

The Gordie Center is a good starting point for campuses that do not have a medical amnesty policy and are interested in creating one. The Gordie Center's website has sample medical amnesty policies, data, and a list of questions and answers. After gathering preliminary information about medical amnesty policies, it may be helpful to create a list of who on your campus and in your community can help you champion this endeavor. Those people may be identified based on their role and/or their individual passion for student health and wellness. Once individuals have been identified, meet with them individually to discuss what it might look like for your institution to have a medical amnesty policy and gauge if they would be a beneficial partner in championing this policy. After you have a core group of informal or formal stakeholders, the formality will depend on your campus culture and how campus leadership views new ideas, begin holding meetings. During these meetings, identify who is missing from the conversation and invite them to join, discuss the goals and reasons your campus needs a policy, outline the process for creating policies on your campus, and identify hurdles that you foresee. Also, think through what offices would be impacted by a new policy. Are they involved in the conversation, and if not, at what point do they need to join the conversation? To ground the groups focus, "a well-considered medical amnesty policy forms an important part of a comprehensive campus plan for providing nimble emergency response in crisis situations, a plan of action for handling high-risk situations and promotion of interventions aimed at the prevention of devastating consequences from drug/alcohol use" (The Jed Foundation, 2016).

Determining what partners should be included in developing and/or managing a medical amnesty policy, marketing, and associated education will be unique for each campus. When creating buy-in with campus and community partners, it helps if there is an existing positive relationship. Knowing this is not always the case, a few strategies to approach building or repairing relationships and creating partnership around medical amnesty are to:

- Focus on why the initiative is important (e.g.,student safety, bystander intervention, and community of care)

- ▸ Consider how it will impact the student experience (e.g., removes long term implications on their reportable conduct record, increase student safety)
- ▸ Discuss why specifically you need their partnership (e.g.,specific to UNC Charlotte and partnering with our Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, our data showed that 25% of the students documented in high-risk substance incidents were identified as part of a Greek letter organization)
- ▸ Identify potential benefits of their partnership (e.g.,if student wellness is responsible for reporting data for Drug-Free Schools and Community Act (DFSCA), they could include information about the initiative in their report).

Below are two lists; the first contains the main partners in our policy management and the second is our expanded group that focuses on marketing and education. Beside each office's name, you will see an explanation about why each was strategically included in collaborating with our medical amnesty related initiatives.

Policy Group

- ▸ **Student Conduct & Academic Integrity**- This office is the main point of contact for the Help Seeking Protocol and is responsible for management and implementation. Additionally, these staff members have an expertise in reviewing, interpreting, and implementing policy.
- ▸ **Center for Wellness Promotion**- This office is responsible for the education around substance use. Students need to know what signs to look for in order to know when to call for help. Students who utilize the Help Seeking Protocol also receive alcohol and other drug education from this office as a part of the resource referral.
- ▸ **Housing & Residence Life**- Many of our Help Seeking cases originate within our residence halls. The most common scenario is students return home to their hall after a night of drinking or substance use, and their roommates or friends who plan to watch over them realize medical attention is needed. It is also important to note that our Housing & Residence Life office has partnerships with multiple well-known local apartment complexes and brings an off-campus living lens to the working group.
- ▸ **Student Representative**- When drafting or creating language that is for students, it is always a good idea to include a student or multiple students to get their perspective and feedback. A student representative can help ensure that the language used is coming across in the intended way and that it is understandable for the population. Additionally, a student voice can go a long way when creating buy-in with your student population.

Marketing & Education Group

In addition to the above representatives, representatives from each of the below offices are involved in various marketing and educational efforts. The level of involvement is dependent on the specific marketing campaign or program, but they are each key partners.

- ▸ **Counseling & Psychological Services**- Students who have utilized the Help Seeking Protocol for themselves or for a friend have likely experienced a stressful or traumatic experience, depending on the situation. Resource referrals are often given to students encouraging them to connect with this office. For campuses that do not have their own counseling staff, look to local community mental health providers. Form partnerships so that you are able to refer students to a local resource.
- ▸ **Fraternity and Sorority Life**- Our Help Seeking Protocol includes protections for organizations (not including substance use that occurs as a part of hazing), so this office is a key partner in gaining access to this student population.
  Additionally, as stated in an example above, a substantial portion of the students utilizing the Help Seeking Protocol were identified as members of a Greek letter organization. It is important to note that this statistic alone does not indicate that our fraternity/sorority members are using substances more frequently or in excess as compared to non-affiliated students. It simply means they are using the Help Seeking Protocol. This population also receives dedicated education, which will be discussed below.
- ▸ **Police and Public Safety**- Our campus has a fully sworn police department. These officers are the ones who respond to calls related to medical amnesty that originate from our campus. It is important that students know when they call for medical assistance, our campus police officers will be responding to provide aid. The responding officer is also the one who is responsible for determining if the state's medical amnesty policy applies to the situation in which they are responding. Our police department also has a memorandum of understanding

(MOU) with the local police department. The MOU states our officers will be notified and will respond to any incidents involving UNC Charlotte students that occur within a three-mile radius of campus. This radius includes most of our common off-campus student apartments. For campuses that do not have their own police or security department, meet with your local police department to have a conversation about how they respond to medical amnesty calls.

▸ **Local Emergency Services (e.g., Fire and Medic)**- Our local emergency personnel are included in our programming. Much like how police respond to calls for medical aid, our local fire department and emergency medical services (EMS) are also responding. Having these partners at programmatic events allow for students to become more comfortable interacting with their staff members, lets students know not to panic when they call for medical assistance and lights and sirens respond, and gives students an opportunity to directly ask questions about what happens after the call for medical assistance is made.

▸ **Title IX Office**- Our Help Seeking Protocol does not protect students who engage in behaviors other than substance use, including sexual misconduct. Because we include language in the Protocol about sexual misconduct not being included, it is important that we include our staff members most directly responsible for educating students on the campus' definition of consent and incapacitation. The role of this campus partner is often limited to programmatic events where they are offering education about how alcohol or drug use may factor into consent.

Policy Review

Whether your institution is creating a policy or has an existing policy that you revise periodically, it is imperative to think through who is included in the drafting or revising, what perspectives they are representing, and what perspectives and voices are missing. Above is the list of campus partner representatives who assist with reviewing and revising the Help Seeking Protocol. Additional factors to consider include where the authority for the policy comes from and if there are other ways to implement a medical amnesty initiative on your campus apart from a formal policy. At UNC Charlotte, we utilized a protocol which is less formal than an official University policy in terms of being adopted and revised by the University. When drafting or revising policy language, it is often beneficial to remain focused on the goals of the policy, while considering how you want nuances to be included or vague language to be utilized to allow for flexibility. Specific considerations may be given to what substance use is protected, how organizations fit into your policy, what behaviors do or do not get included in the policy, and any parameters students would need to fall within to be covered. While it can be easy to be trapped in the nuances and develop a long or complicated policy, keep in mind your language needs to be understandable to students and simple enough that they can remember what they are supposed to do in an instance of high stress.

Training

Having a well-written medical amnesty policy is a great start, but if students do not know it exists and/or if staff are unsure when the policy applies, the policy becomes irrelevant. This section will focus on training for staff members, as educating students will be discussed below as a part of outreach. Conduct staff members are likely the ones responsible for determining if an incident falls within the medical amnesty policy or if student conduct charges should be applied. However, these staff members are generally not involved in the real-time incident response, so it becomes important that conduct staff members have a way to determine if an incident falls within the purview of medical amnesty. A simple way to do this is to train the staff members who are most likely going to be responsible for responding to medical emergencies for substance use and documenting the situation. This training includes general information about the policy itself as well as how incidents involving substances need to be documented so that a determination can be made regarding the application of the medical amnesty policy.

At UNC Charlotte, the staff members most commonly included in these trainings are Police and Public Safety officers and Housing and Residence Life staff members, both professional staff and residential assistants. These staff members are responsible for responding to a variety of incidents, documenting the incidents in writing via an online incident report, and then having their reports reviewed by various offices for next steps and case management. Since staff are used to documenting situations as a part of their positions, training is provided on what specific information is needed if a case involves substances. Because these staff members are often not the ones determining if the medical amnesty policy applies, it is imperative that all necessary information to make that determination be relayed to the staff members who are responsible for the determination. Staff are trained to detail information in their reports such as how they became aware of the situation, who made the call for medical assistance, and how cooperative the calling party was with details like their real name, substances used, and quantity (if known).

The student conduct staff who are responsible for making the determination about medical amnesty facilitate this training from the context of incident report writing. Training with Police and Public Safety generally occurs in July, when fewer students are present on campus, and as a part of the officer's annual training days. Training sessions may need to be held at two separate times to include day and night shift officers. While we have the officers for this training, we also include other training aspects about general student conduct related topics.

For Housing and Residence Life staff, training occurs as a part of Resident Advisor (RA) training in two parts. The first is specific to medical amnesty from an educational standpoint, similar to how we would educate the general student population. This part has been done in a traditional synchronous training session format in person and via Zoom, as well as a pre-recorded presentation that is viewed as a part of asynchronous training. The second part of the RA training focuses on incident report writing. This session includes specifics for documenting substance use incidents, but also overall report writing for general behaviors such as code of conduct violations, sexual misconduct related incidents, and care and concern reports.

Marketing, Outreach, and Programmatic Efforts

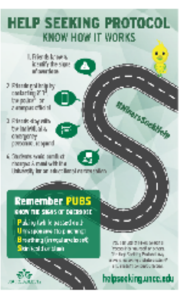
Marketing. Marketing your medical amnesty policy is one of the easiest ways to inform your student population about your medical amnesty policy or initiatives. While budget can be a real factor in determining how far-reaching your marketing efforts extend, it is a perfect example of how to utilize relationships with campus and community partners to pool resources. Different offices on campus and community partners often have different funding sources. For example, student fees or state funds may not be able to be used to purchase promotional items, but grant funding obtained by the wellness department specific to alcohol and other drug prevention may be able to cover the cost. This is also a time to utilize any potential end-of-year budget. Many marketing materials specific to your medical amnesty policy will not expire or be time sensitive, so you may be able to place an order of posters in the summer and hold them until they need to go up in the fall or pre-pay for bus advertising in the summer with the actual advertising happening in next fiscal year.

> "Marketing your medical amnesty policy is one of the easiest ways to inform your student population"

Aside from budget, other factors to consider when creating a marketing plan include logistical and content specific considerations. From a logistic perspective, think through where students are spending time both in person (e.g., classrooms, dining halls, buses, residence halls) and online (e.g., social media, academic platforms). Identify what types of messaging is resonating with students; to do this you may want to partner with students as they are the expert on what is trending with their peers. If you have access to marketing staff, having them involved can help create a consistent image for your medical amnesty marketing. Lastly, consider how to utilize free or cost effective marketing to reach the greatest amount of students (e.g., digital signage, website presence, newspaper ad, bus stop ads, banners, posters). If you have the budget to market using promotional items, take an inventory of what other offices are using as their giveaway to reduce duplication, ask students what they want and would actually use, and keep in mind how much space you have to store the items. If you can theme your promotional item to coordinate with a program, you may open up new funding sources, as the items become a part of the program (e.g., drink koozie printed with the signs of alcohol overdoses).

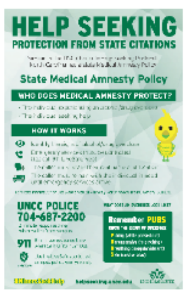
While the marketing itself is important, the content that is being communicated is most important. If you are communicating an ineffective message or irrelevant information, your marketing loses its value. At UNC Charlotte, we chose to build our marketing campaign around four aspects of the Help Seeking Protocol, listed below. One of these four aspects is a part of all of our marketing efforts to create a cohesive brand around the Help Seeking Protocol.

1. Steps to Use the Help Seeking Protocol
2. Signs of Overdose
3. State Process for Medical Amnesty
4. Active Bystander



Poster 1

Poster 2



Poster 3

Poster 4

Click here to enlarge poster.

Members of the marketing and education group, discussed above, developed a marketing plan for the academic year that is implemented annually. The cost of the marketing initiatives outlined in the plan are paid for collaboratively from multiple offices, including student conduct, wellness, and housing. The monthly plan is included in this article, as well as images of posters used for the October poster campaign. October was specifically chosen for a poster campaign because it follows quickly behind the first six-weeks of campus based on our fall semester start date. On our campus, the first six-weeks of the semester is a high impact time with lots of programming and student resources being showcased. Additionally, it follows National Hazing Prevention Week (end of September) and the month ends with Halloween. At UNC Charlotte, we only see a slight increase in alcohol and other drugs around Halloween. However, when speaking with our students, we found they associate Halloween with substance use. This association is likely due to movies and TV shows depicting college Halloween parties that include the use of excessive alcohol and the reputations of other institutions that are known for their students having large Halloween gatherings/parties.

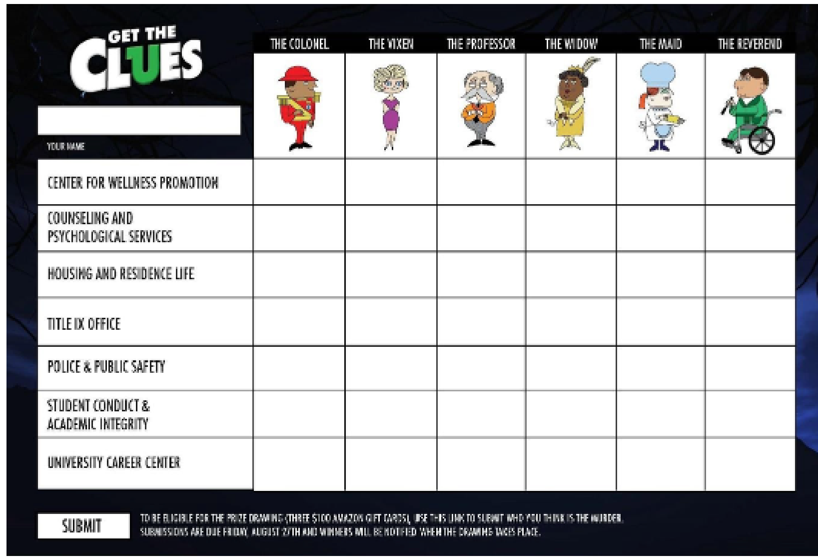
Outreach. In addition to marketing the medical amnesty policy, it is beneficial to be able to do more proactive outreach directly to the student population. This outreach can be done in a number of ways,some of the most common include tabling events and presentations. At UNC Charlotte, the student conduct office has a form of standard presentations that can be requested. Included in this list is a brief 15-minute presentation on the Help Seeking Protocol. This presentation can be requested by anyone (including students, faculty/TAs, staff, and community members) for in-person events or for a pre-recorded version of the presentation. In addition to presentation requests, information about the Help Seeking Protocol is given annually to the following student populations: Resident Advisors (as discussed above), Fraternity and Sorority Life (during the Harm Reduction Symposium held by the

Month	Marketing	Theme
August	Elevator Cling/1 Poster	Event Promotion
September	1 Poster/Bus Ad	Tailgate Theme: Poster 1
October	4 Poster Series	All 4 Posters
November/December	Newspaper Ad	Finals Theme: Poster 2
January	Social Media	Social Media of Posters
February	Elevator Cling/1 Poster	Spring Break Theme: Poster 3
March	Newspaper Ad	Poster 4
April/May	1 Poster	Finals Theme: Poster 2
June/July	Banner in the Student Union	Poster 1

Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life), and to all student athletes enrolled in the athletic first year seminar course. An abbreviated version of the Help Seeking Protocol information is also shared with new students and family members during their orientation sessions.

Programmatic Examples. In 2018, UNC Charlotte started hosting what has become a large-scale event during the first week of classes focused on the Help Seeking Protocol. The event is board game themed, based on The Game of Life. The event features a 20x40-foot board game that students play. Campus partners ask questions, written from a motivational interviewing lens, related to the Help Seeking Protocol at various spots on the game board. Around the board game, a resource fair is set up for students to visit with campus and community partners that have a relationship with the Help Seeking Protocol. Each of the campus partners listed in the marketing & education section above participate in the resource fair. This event is funded collaboratively among the participating campus partners.

In 2020, The Game of Life event was reimagined for a virtual format due to COVID-19. Sticking with the board game theme, the event transitioned into a Clue themed event, utilizing the Zoom platform. The event started with a brief informational presentation (less than 10 minutes) about the Help Seeking Protocol. Then, breakout rooms were utilized to create a virtual resource fair in which students visit with campus partners to learn about their office and how the different offices interact with the Help Seeking Protocol. Before students leave each of the breakout rooms, they are given a clue. Students compile the clues that they have collected and submit who they think the suspect is in a Google form. The Google form doubles as the way for students to enter a prize drawing and as an assessment tool. The prizes for the event are three $100 amazon gift cards that are sent electronically via their University email address. This event did reach fewer students, but required much less preparation, staff time, and was much less costly than The Game of Life version.



Conclusion

Regardless of where your institution may be on the journey of implementing or revising a medical amnesty policy and initiatives, the hope is that this article provided recommendations and examples that are of assistance. For additional information, questions, or to obtain the specific documents used for marketing/programs, contact the author.

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Brought on by Crisis, Built to Last:

Meaningful Partnerships

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We recognize many are understandably struggling with COVID-19 fatigue, however, it is essential to reflect on our shared experiences while they are fresh in our collective memories. In this article, we will discuss what we have learned about strategically managing collaborative relationships during a crisis and establishing restorative opportunities for our campus community.

Before we discuss our collaborative experiences, we want to acknowledge our reflections in this article are based solely on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on our campus operations. However, we know multiple issues manifested over the past 18 months including but not limited to the murder of George Floyd, acts of injustice toward marginalized communities, international student restrictions, heightened political rhetoric during the 2020 national election, and the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. These overlaying societal issues caused more strain on our communities while we were battling the peaks of COVID-19 - especially so for those with marginalized identities. The following article does not dive into these significant impacts as they were not part of this focused reflection, but they certainly warrant further study and reflection.

In addition to these challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic influenced our work, forcing many of us to juggle and struggle with balancing the safety and needs of the campus community. As Keith Edwards (2021) said on the Student Affairs Now podcast during the pandemic, “we pivoted. It does not mean we pivoted well.” In the student conduct realm, crisis will always exist. In order to effectively pivot, we know ensuring due process for students regardless of crisis is critical for maintaining a civil and supportive environment. Due process may appear clunky when we are juggling pressures because our work is part of a larger ecosystem known as the University campus. Like all ecosystems, the campus environment is fluid and constantly changing. This flexible framework provided our office with the opportunity to adapt to the crisis as needed while adhering to our values and responsibilities.

> In the student conduct realm, crisis will always exist.

Background

Institutions of higher education are notorious for developing stratified and siloed ecosystems (Mintz, 2019). However, it has been long purported that student learning is increased by powerful learning partnerships (AAHE et al., 1998; Kezar & Gehrke, 2009; Schroder, 1999; Streit et al., 2009). Much research has been conducted on the effectiveness and strength of partnerships between academic and student affairs to increase student learning (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Kezar, 2001, 2003; Kolins, 2000; Whitt, et al., 2008). The campus community is there to support the ecosystem of the university (Renn & Patton, 2016). These partnerships and others proved critical amid the recent crises (pandemic, social unrest, acts of racism and hate) facing higher education.

Overview and Context

Michigan State University (MSU) is a large, public, residential, land grant, very high research, doctoral institution located in East Lansing, Michigan, adjacent to Michigan’s capitol. MSU enrolls approximately 50,000 students (highly undergraduate) in 17 degree-granting colleges including two medical colleges and veterinary medicine (CCIHE, 2021; MSU Facts, 2021).

Michigan State University pivoted to remote learning in March of 2020, and students were encouraged to return home (Stanley, 2020). Throughout the summer, Michigan COVID-19 cases were rising (Shamus, 2020) and the University president asked students to remain home. However, due to a myriad of reasons such as unbreakable leases, unsafe home environments, and a natural desire to return to their social circles, students returned to the East Lansing community. As a result, a local directive (Ingham 2020-18) was implemented by the Ingham County Health Department limiting outdoor gatherings to 25 (and later ten) or fewer individuals (Vail, 2020). The directive was specific to high density living areas frequented by Michigan State University students.

In response to the pandemic, and in attempts to keep the community safe, Michigan State University implemented the MSU Community Compact which applied to all faculty, staff, and students. The requirements of the Compact included: health screening, use of face coverings, physical distancing, hygiene, adherence to instructions, self-monitoring, mandatory testing, adherence to public health guidance, and cooperation with public health authorities (COVID directives, 2020). Additionally, it included a section on compliance, which referenced the Dean of Students Office (DOSO). The compact became a university directive, and the DOSO spent much of the 2020-2021 academic year adjudicating cases related to reported violations of the MSU Community Compact.

Case Study

Like other institutions, the Dean of Students Office at Michigan State is focused on adjudicating student behavior to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for student success. To maintain such an environment, we provide equitable due process while educating accused students about their rights and responsibilities. During the adjudication process we follow holistic and restorative concepts for the student. Our conduct process is complainant driven. This complainant-driven approach does not allow the institution to serve as the convener on behalf of impacted parties; rather, the process requires a university-affiliated complainant to participate in the adjudication process. This type of model necessitated connections and partnerships with our on-campus and off-campus stakeholders to manage equitable procedures for all students.

As our institutions and student conduct offices have learned, crises do not occur in a vacuum. Being prepared for a storm means having procedures and relationships in place. When the pandemic hit, the local ordinances were implemented to limit social gatherings because the virus was rampant in our community. Specific high occupancy communal living houses, many of which were student housing, were required by the health department to mandatory quarantine (Vail, 2020). In response, we utilized our existing partner networks to identify where and how our existing policies and processes could address the new emergency orders. We found ourselves in a new, but familiar situation balancing the university's response to concerning behaviors of our students while maintaining our fair processes.

As we engaged in the work of addressing reported student violations of our community compact, it was clear we needed a full campus community response. A stand-alone student conduct approach would have less impact on changing the behaviors of the students living in adjacent off-campus communities. This approach was mostly punitive at first from citations and fines from the community, and then more

educational and restorative as the students engaged with the conduct process. Reflecting on this expanded "community of impact," four primary categories of partners emerged: academic partners on campus, non-academic partners on campus, local community partners, and our network of peers across higher education. These partners provided critical opportunities and some challenges throughout our crisis management.

Academic Partners

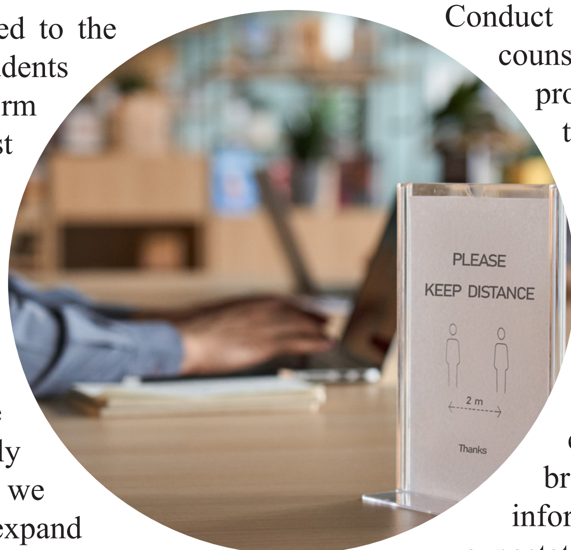
At the time of inception, the Dean of Students Office reported directly to the provost. As such, existing partnerships with our undergraduate degree granting colleges already existed. These relationships proved extremely valuable in holding students accountable for behaviors, primarily through our interim suspension process.

Our institution functions with a highly decentralized multi-college structure. Our college contacts include assistant deans and directors of undergraduate student success. These student affairs professionals supported the DOSO decisions. These partners provided another valuable university response to identify behaviors outside our community standards and reinforce interim actions. The provost designated the associate provost for undergraduate education as designee to hear appeals or reinstatement requests from interim suspension. Both relationships proved extremely valuable in supporting the due process of the students while also reinforcing the serious nature of the reported violations of the community compact. Beyond the pandemic, this partnership established the academic relationship of the Dean of Students Office for upholding community expectations, addressing violations of community standards, and the fundamental academic goals for student success. More specifically, it connected off-campus student behavior with academic and degree pursuits which is a fundamental shared goal of undergraduate education – persistence and degree attainment. We have a similar relationship with the associate provost for graduate education, but at the time did not see the same level or types of cases from graduate students.

Another example came from some academic partners responsible for positioning classroom and research laboratory safety to maintain their functions. These colleagues reached out to our office to help develop a protocol for students engaging on-campus. Initially these units were looking for compliance and enforcement of anticipated worst-case scenario behaviors. This call for compliance initiated an important series of conversations permitting us to first form a relationship with these essential partners. Then, we helped educate the community on the conduct process and how it could help their goals for a safe learning and campus research environment. At the end we were able to be contributing partners to a key protocol for on-campus activities. This has now positioned our office to be an important collaborator as we plan for future student success scenarios.

Non-Academic Partners

As a new office that reported to the provost, the Dean of Students Office positioned itself to form new relationships. Our most natural partners were the residence education student conduct unit as their cadre of community directors and professional staff also addressed alleged violations of policy. With the large residential population, early in the formation of DOSO we entered into an agreement to expand the impact of the student conduct system by training and affiliating the Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) staff as adjunct administrative meeting officers in the DOSO. In previous administrations, a student could have been reported for a behavior that allegedly violated both the housing code of conduct and the university student codes for the same behavior. We saw an immediate opportunity to merge aspects of adjudication within the two systems and enhance the experience for the students going through the systems. Now, when REHS staff meet with a student, they do so on behalf of both REHS and DOSO. One way we worked with the residence education team is to create a stratified response to alleged violations of COVID-related policies (both housing polices and the MSU Community Compact). Working together, we attempted to create equity in response to on-campus versus off-campus violations.



Just prior to the pandemic, the institution had expanded the jurisdiction for a component of student behavior to include off-campus conduct. The MSU Community Compact and pandemic provided the gateway to expanded jurisdiction for the filing of complaints from university members. Two staff members from government relations and student affairs were appointed to serve as complainants for off-campus incidents to be submitted as complaints through the conduct system. The fraternity and sorority life office and student affairs took greater ownership of student organization conduct. Additionally, these offices partnered with the DOSO on positive messaging of expected behavior and consequences for violations of the compact. This approach was a new endeavor for MSU as we previously had a much more hands-off approach to off-campus behavior.

Conduct offices regularly interact with their general counsel in support of any potential policies, procedures, or actions that may address some type of risk. In this pandemic environment, we expanded our collaborators to include our office for risk management and internal audit to support better processes. We embraced our government relations office to expand communication and build understanding for community concerns. Additionally, our university communications office was exceptionally helpful and collaborative in bringing together presidential statements, informing the campus community of these new expectations, and assisting in positioning our office for adjudication of behaviors that violated our expectations.

Our campus partners in student affairs developed a MSU Ambassador program in response to the pandemic. The MSU Ambassador program trained students to travel across campus reminding community members of campus safety measures such as wearing a mask and keeping six feet apart. These students were educated on how to successfully deescalate situations and provide peer education. Our office collaborated with the program to utilize the training and opportunity as community service for students who were held accountable for COVID-19 violations. This provided a restorative opportunity for the students to give back to the community.

As we emerged into the spring semester and students had either not completed or delayed their sanctions with the MSU Ambassadors, we considered either implementing suspensions or providing the students with an opportunity to talk with us about their unfulfilled sanction. We discussed it as a team and chose the latter. In these half-dozen cases, we provided grace and engaged the students about their sanction commitment, but we were left with a void as the program had completed its run and volunteer opportunities were scant. At around this same time, our local health department and the university had been collaborating on a drive-through vaccination clinic using our large livestock pavilion. The university recently established a student walk-in clinic in a portion of the facility that was not actively being used. Several staff and administration volunteered to support the clinic where we met community and campus leaders of this effort. This led to a discussion with the county health department volunteer coordinator and an opportunity to create a volunteer service sanction serving the greater community as a volunteer at the clinic to fulfill their missing service hours. This was a prime example of how our daily work on campus intersects with the community, builds upon current partnerships, and creates new ones. We have enjoyed reading the student reflections on this important opportunity to give back to the community in a meaningful way as they reflect on their behaviors that brought them into the student conduct system.

Community Partners

The city of East Lansing provides licensing restrictions and approvals for off-campus residences. Their primary means of addressing student behavior was through code enforcement and the city police. The inclusion of off-campus behavior into the jurisdiction of the code of conduct (especially during the pandemic and community compact) provided our community partners with an opportunity to submit reports through university partners. During the period where the state and local governments set temporary policies on protective and preventative behaviors for COVID-19 safety, the expanded group of community partners rapidly emerged.

The East Lansing city police often interacted with campus police for felony-level incidents and behavioral threats, but rarely did our student conduct team have direct channels of communication. Typically, our government relations office and community liaison staff were the primary points for regular town-gown interactions. This expanded to include more of the city and county leadership including the elected city council and their elected mayor, the city manager, attorneys, chief of police, and the housing authority. Additionally, the downtown development authority and business district sent regular members to these weekly meetings. County and occasional state level officers were also included for key topics of concern. It was an opportunity to hear the community concerns and educate each other on policies and processes. At the end of these meetings, we were better informed. We recognized we had many shared concerns for our students living and acting in the local community. The physical boundaries and relationships started to blend around the concerns for safety and shared community expectations.

Beyond the immediacy of efforts to curb student behavior that violated local health department orders, the city leadership wanted to help our students better understand the community impacts of their behaviors and learn of their neighbors in the community. One promising project that came out of this relationship was the East Lansing Ambassadors Program. Students, as part of a sanction, were assigned to work with a member of the city government in an ambassador role to share information on the temporary orders for health and safety, provide visitors and residents with masks, and promote positive messaging about the downtown district in support of community health and wellness. While the pandemic and the high density of students living in the city helped prompt the relationship, the door is now wide open for ongoing collaboration and opportunities for restorative efforts within our shared community. Another promising relationship emerged with the previously mentioned county health department as they supported volunteer options for students needing community service as part of their sanctions.

Collegial Partners

Our final category of partners was often the most important in keeping us in tune with a range of approaches to the concerns of the pandemic, and as a stabilizing force in support of the work we do in support of student success. We relied heavily on our partners in the Big Ten Conference and colleagues across the state and region. Our ASCA membership also proved helpful in providing ongoing support from conduct professionals throughout our community.

Leadership would often request peer efforts as they considered a range of options for addressing behaviors as well as outcomes from such actions. One example that crossed many campuses was how campuses were responding to the calls for immediate suspension. Were colleagues seeing behavior as an imminent threat to initiate emergency suspensions? Multiple campuses were fielding calls and e-mails about "what did you do?" Did you suspend students? How many? For how long? What was the outcome? Being able to learn from our colleagues while we functioned within our current framework over creating a new approach was essential in supporting the health and wellness of our students and community while maintaining an elevated level of communication through the integrity of the process.

One key partnership that endured during this period was our Big Ten conduct summer conference that we hosted virtually. We were able to expand the number and range of participants by having an on-line component and no direct costs for participation, facilities, snacks, or travel. During this conference, institutions benefited from the collective wisdom of each other. We discussed policy creation, interpretation, and enforcement. Additionally, we considered timely best practices for live video format hearings and meetings. As an organization, we drew great strength and empowerment from learning how our partners shared their own struggles wrestling with similar challenges.

> "When institutions run more efficiently, students have the information and resources they need to succeed."

Lessons Learned

Regardless of current pandemics or storms, we learned valuable lessons about developing key partnerships. First, partners and relationships are essential to the success of our work. A crisis should not be the only impetus to forge new or expand existing relationships. Additionally, relationships should be symbiotic. Our partners should get as much from us as we get from them. We found these collaborations are essential not merely because we needed their help, but because the collaboration is much more efficient when relationships exist prior to a crisis. When institutions run more efficiently, students have the information and resources they need to succeed.

We were also forced to expand our frame of reference and consider options that did not previously exist in our organizational structure. We recognized we could engage a new sector into our work realm. For example, during the pandemic in the context of public safety, the city government and law enforcement received numerous reports of potential violations of policy. When our office was brought to the forefront for addressing student behavior, we quickly recognized that our city manager, mayor, council members, housing coordinators, and city police shared our goals for community safety and the ongoing success of our students. It was insightful hearing from the local community. They shared how they cherished living and working in a college town, and they wanted to be included as a part of the student success mission.

We learned community members wanted to help. Many of our newer campus partners were eager to engage with the conduct process to support students. An example would be how there were specific expectations for our office to act on reported off-campus student behaviors and even immediately suspend students based on a reported behavior without engaging in the conduct process. This helped remind the team that we are living in a "see something, say something" environment and there is a key focus on reporting and then someone else will address the issue. We spent countless hours educating and communicating with our stakeholders. This supported a temporary assignment of a campus colleague to serve as a complainant for these off-campus or community reports. It was a delicate balancing act to manage due process and community safety.

The embodiment of our office values held strong throughout the crisis and was essential in our daily work. We were clear on our values for education, equity, and due process, but needed to expand how we shared these values with campus and the community. We especially had to shout out to the public that we were indeed addressing these reports and were doing so within our core values respecting policy, law, students, and our shared community. Communication was essential, particularly with the nature of remote work. There were times multiple people were communicating with a single partner. This became confusing quickly, as not every team member had the most updated information. While everyone was well-intentioned, messages were lost, and staff became confused. We instituted a liaison-type system, which seemed to help streamline and clarify communication. This liaison relationship happened organically; however, it could have been more helpful if it were delineated prior.

And finally, we learned that at the heart of everything, we are educators and college student success professionals. While we have our specific roles, there is always the greater goal of student success within the boundaries of acceptable community behaviors. It is up to our offices to think beyond compliance and focus on restoration. How can we help students understand the gravity of the situation, hold them accountable, and still provide a sense of belonging? We found incorporating restorative practices such as reintegration meetings and restorative justice circles were powerful. These opportunities gave students the opportunity to engage with others outside their circle and hear from impacted parties (including our newest partners in the local community).

Strategies

Reflecting upon these important learned lessons, we offer the following strategies for colleagues to enhance, develop, and think creatively about partnerships within their own institution and local community.

Strategies for Partnerships
1. Create partnerships now
2. Identify and espouse your office values
3. Think and act creatively
4. Establish intentional liaisons
5. Define mutual goals for partnerships

1. **Create and expand partnerships now.** It is not too early, nor is it too late to enhance partnerships. As conduct professionals with strong and wide partnerships, we will be better prepared for the next crisis.

2. **Know your office values.** Have conversations about what is important to you in your work. This can strengthen your office and help welcome partners who share those values. Take the opportunity to "tell your story." In that next moment of crisis your colleagues will be advocates well-positioned to support you and reinforce the message.

3. **Be creative.** Think beyond your typical partnerships. There is an entire community both internal and external to the university that is poised to aid in the success of our students. Consider working with academic partners, local community members, community organizations, and students.

4. **Establish a primary liaison for each partnership.** While many team members may interact with partners, the liaison (particularly in times of crisis) will be the sole communication mechanism. This enhances clarity, accuracy of information, and decreases confusion. Additionally, a relationship can be fostered through this opportunity. However, do not forget to communicate internally to continue a singular message for the office.

5. **Define mutual goals for partnership.** This can be done formally or informally. Understanding the big picture will help to accomplish your goals. For example, what are you trying to achieve in each partnership? Are you wanting to stop the behavior, educate students, engage in restorative practices, and/or ensure due process for students? Having clear goals will help advance mutual understanding and support.

Conclusion

While our institutions continue to define and expand our missions and vision, refine our values, and cultivate our institutional identities, we recognize we are part of a larger community in higher education and society. Culture cannot be cut and pasted, but we can share ideas, experiences, outcomes, and efforts to support campus safety and wellbeing in the context of the success goals for our students. Essential partnerships continue to be explored and expanded through emerging technologies as sparked by a global crisis. Above everything we have learned to be more inclusive, to listen, to be more empathetic, to allow grace, to teach, to hold ourselves and others accountable, and to maintain our goals of student success in the context of our communities as we prepare for the next crisis or our new state of being. We cannot imagine venturing forward without our essential partners.

The Sanction Workshop

Utilizing these lessons, we developed a 9-week synchronous online course for students on deferred suspension for violating the local health ordinances. These students went through the interim suspension process and many of them also went through the local city court process. The class curriculum was developed by DOSO team members and addressed several key areas: responsibility, ethical decision making, and change of behavior. This was facilitated through education on: reflection, values development, fault versus responsibility, social identity, vaccines, decision making, difficult conversations, health education, leadership, mistake reflection, and a restorative impact circle with multiple members of the community.

Some key takeaways:

- ▸All students reported feeling heard, respected, and learned about themselves in the workshop.
- ▸As a result of the workshop, 94% of the participants agreed they could articulate their personal values.
- ▸Prior to the workshop, 64% of the participants said they knew how to confront other students who might be engaging in similar behaviors to their incident. After the workshop, 94% of participants said they were able to do so.
- ▸Prior to the workshop, 41% of participants said they agree or strongly agree to the statement, "I believe I am more responsible for the incident than other members of my community," afterwards, 94% agreed or strongly agreed to the statement.
- ▸Quotes from students
    - ■"As a student, I play a huge role in upholding my community's values and keeping the MSU and East Lansing community a safe place for all that reside there."
    - ■"I learned a lot about myself and how to best uphold my personal values and beliefs. I learned how to deal with mistakes...[and] I learned about COVID and the impact that it has had on my community and a lot about what my role is within my community."
    - ■"My view on my role has changed as I now understand how important it is not to be a bystander and instead speak up when there are bad decisions... I understand what it means to be a leader and how I can lead my fellow classmates."
    - ■"After hearing the stories of community members who were directly affected by my actions, I realized how large of a role I play in my community.... I have a responsibility to keep the community, and those in it, safe. I love East Lansing and my university, and the circle showed me that I need to start treating it like such."

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