

Learning Outcome Narrative

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Introduction

The values that guide my approach to student affairs are connection, excellence, creativity, care, solidarity, integrity, authenticity, diversity, empowerment and global ownership. My development in each learning outcome has guided the establishment of my professional identity and guiding values by causing me to discover my areas for growth and therefore seek opportunities to strengthen myself. As I professional, I am committed to empowering the next generation of world changers through engaging in mentorship and promoting equity within our higher education system.

This narrative provides an overview of my personal journey with the ten learning outcomes and explains both my strengths and areas of growth within each. I will utilize evidence from my academic and professional experience, as well as artifacts from my portfolio, to strengthen my claims. Upon reading this narrative, the reader will have a firm understanding of my development in each of the Student Development Administration learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

LO #1 - Understanding the foundations and emerging nature of the Student Affairs profession and higher education

My personal definition for LO #1 is to have a working knowledge of the past, present, and future of the field of student affairs and higher education. This manifests in my professional practice through my intentional focus on engaging in conversation with professionals at varying levels in the field by conducting informational interview. My strength within LO #1 is my ability to identify how historical foundations of higher education influence current practices. This is demonstrated through my academic course work in History of Higher Education (SDAD 5810), specifically in my analysis paper of a historical document relating to American higher education.

Through this analysis I learned key information about the foundation of higher education, the impact this history has on current practice, and future implications/considerations. Furthermore, within my internship with the International Student Center (ISC) I engaged in a deep conversation with the Director about the creation of the governmental database SEVIS and the evolution of the functional area over time. Artifact C (Best Academic Work) also demonstrates my strength in this LO in that my critical issues paper explores the current day impact of residue from history on college campuses. My area of growth for LO #1 is utilizing foundational theories to inform practice. Through engaging in conversations in Student Development Theory (SDAD 5400), working in Student-Athlete Development, and writing Artifact B (Mission Statement) I realized I do not consciously utilize the foundational theories of the field within my daily work. As I move forward into my career, it is important for me to critically reflect upon the theoretical framework that aligns with my work and practically examine how I can incorporate it into my work. I will do so by engaging in conversations with my peers and supervisors about the theories that guide their work, and look to professional organizations for resources in finding other theoretical frameworks than the ones I currently know.

LO #2- Understanding students and student issues

How I define LO #2 in my own terms is forming a deep level of understanding of the larger student population you are serving and the individuals with whom you directly interact. This means spending the time to converse with students about their daily life struggles, victories, and unique experiences. My strength within this LO is that I deeply value the student voice and take the time to talk with students about the issues they face and care about. In American Community Colleges (SDAD 5590), I learned the importance of hearing student voice because the best way to understand unique student needs is to hear first-hand experiences. Within my

practice as a student-athlete development assistant, I continually sit down with professionals who have more direct interaction with student-athletes to gain knowledge about the experiences of this specific student population. Artifact G (Distinctive Contribution) also demonstrates this strength because rather than assuming the issues international students face, I created a survey in which I asked current international students about their struggles transitioning to Seattle University. My area of growth for this LO is taking the time to look at current body of research pertaining to specific student populations. Prior to entering my role working with student-athletes, I did not look up any journal articles about the issues student-athletes face. However, in creating Artifact G (Distinctive Contribution) and when developing my project for Student Development Theory (SDAD 5400), I did research the current body of knowledge surrounding the relevant student population. This contrast made me realize that unless otherwise prompted, I do not take it upon myself to engage in a scholarly investigation. Moving forward, each time I step into a new role or institution, one of the first things I should do is spend the time understanding the office, institution, student body, and investigate scholarly articles that can aid my understanding of the population I am supporting.

LO #3- Exhibiting professional integrity and ethical leadership in professional practice

I personally define LO #3 as approaching each day with integrity and maintaining an ethical mindset in which you live out the commitment of your work. This manifests in everyday practice when it comes to making decisions as a supervisor, interacting with peers, and prioritizing tasks. My strengths within LO #3 include taking ownership of my work, fulfilling my commitments, and treating students equitably. Artifact D (Best Demonstration of Professional Practice) is an example of how I took ownership of my work by holistically owning and completing a project I created. In my internship, I worked fairly independently so I had to keep

myself accountable to complete my project in the timeline I said I would. As a supervisor within my Graduate Assistantship, I faced situations in which I held students to the same standards while recognizing the individual factors that impacted the situation. My area of growth for LO #3 is needing to define what values drive my ethical compass. In both Capstone (SDAD 5900) and Transformational Leadership (STML 5610), I realized I have yet to define a set of values for myself; this really showed up when writing Artifact B (Mission Statement). In my professional practice, specifically in my Graduate Assistantship, I continually looked to my supervisor to tell me the right things to do rather than trusting my instincts. From this LO I have learned the importance of staying true to your values throughout your career. I will intentionally examine my actions to ensure I am not allowing other people or pressures from other external forces (i.e. institutions, government, office culture) to make me waver in my ethical compass and I will use my values to guide my every step.

LO #4- Understanding and fostering diversity, justice, and a sustainable world formed by a global perspective and Jesuit Catholic tradition

My personal definition for LO #4 is to maintain diversity, justice, and sustainability as core values that are embedded in the foundation of your work and intentionally seek exposure to different perspectives while approaching these situations with the mindset of “I’m simply here to learn.” The strengths I have within LO #4 are valuing diverse perspectives, checking my personal biases and assumptions, and maintaining and enhancing a global perspective. This strength is evidenced through my course work in Leadership and Governance (SDAD 5760), specifically in my reflection paper on a TED Talk I chose to watch titled *Why It’s Worth Listening to People You Disagree with* by Zachary R. Wood (2018). During my internship in the

ISC, I continually displayed a commitment to enhancing my global perspective through learning about the cultural influences that impact the transition experience for international students.

Furthermore, Artifact B (Mission Statement) demonstrates that valuing diverse perspectives is a foundation to my work. My two areas of growth for LO #4 are, understanding and placing more value and sustainability and becoming a more vocal advocate. Social Justice (EDUC 2000) opened my eyes to the fact that both these were my areas of growth. Within this class, the way I expressed how I show up as a social justice educator highlighted the lack of importance I place on being a vocal advocate. In an assignment for Social Justice, the analogy I used to explain my identity as a social justice educator was a song writer. Although I deeply invest in the work and my contribution is important, I chose to do so in a less vocal and behind the scenes way than some, never choosing to take center stage. Furthermore, prior to this class I never contemplated how environmental justice impacts social justice. Artifact B (Mission Statement), as an expression of the core of my work, never mentions sustainability nor did it ever cross my mind when creating this piece. Lastly, as a practitioner at Seattle U, I placed very little attention on the campus-wide issue of contaminated recycling no longer being accepted by the city. Based on my strengths and areas of growth, I will work to become a stronger advocate and ally, remind myself to take a critical lens to my work by asking myself, is there any implicit bias here, who am I excluding, who is not at the table, and continue to place importance on hearing different perspectives when creating a program or initiative.

LO #5- Adapting student services to specific cultures and environments

In my own terms I define LO #5 as changing the work you do, and/or how you do it in order to meet the needs of the specific student population you serve within the specific context. An important piece of this is not prescribing students to a “one size fits all” approach. Within LO

#5, my strengths are critically examining program/activity to identify areas needed to change in order to best serve specific student population and taking a cultural relativism approach to my work. In Foundations (SDAD 5300), I spent time engaging in conversation about how, as practitioners, we are best serving a diverse student population. In my role working with student-athletes, I identify the unique role being a part of an athletic department has on the programs and initiatives we create. When creating New International Student Online Orientation, I took a cultural relativism approach by intentionally understanding the norms of the different cultures students come from and applying my learning to curate an effective orientation. An area of growth I have for this LO is understanding how to adapt student services for students with disabilities. Through Artifact A (Resume), I realized this is a student population I have yet to work with and I must seek out professional development opportunities in my future practice to grow in my understanding, such as webinars, presentations, and/or collaborations with campus partners who directly support this student population.

LO #6- Developing and demonstrating skills in leadership and collaboration

I define LO #6 as working with various stakeholders in an effective and harmonious way, while also taking an active role in your professional development by demonstrating initiative and investment in work, while continually developing a stronger sense of self as a transformational leader. My strengths within this LO include being proactive in my own professional development and understanding my personal leadership style. Throughout my professional practice, I have sought out opportunities to grow my professional identities through engagement in professional organizations. In Transformational Leadership (STML 5610), I was able to articulate my leadership theory of practice and continue reflecting on my definition of leadership. Artifact E (Professional Letter of Promise) also demonstrates my strengths in LO #6. My areas for growth

in this LO are, being a more active listener and allowing space for others. In my Graduate Assistantship, I realized I had to remind myself to be a stronger active listener with my students. In Student Development Theory (SDAD 5400), I was challenged by the professor to think about how much air time I take. Leadership development is a continual process and I must engage in constant self-reflection throughout my career to become a better leader as well as collaborator.

LO #7- Utilizing assessment, evaluation, technology, and research to improve practice

How I define LO #7 in my own terms is taking the time to debrief programs, events, initiatives, and projects, outlining what went well and what can be improved. This should include feedback from all relevant stakeholders and the feedback should then be used to make changes where appropriate. Incorporating best practices and assessment findings into practice are my two strengths within this learning outcome. For my Course Design (AEDT 5100) project, I investigated best practices for adjunct professor mentor programs and integrated the key themes into my final course proposal. These strengths are also demonstrated through my ISC internship, in which I created and conducted assessment the effectiveness of the orientation program. The assessment consisted of two surveys distributed to orientation participants via Qualtrics, one focused on the online course experience and the other on the in-person workshops. From the assessment findings, changes were made to the overall in-person workshop schedule, content was edited for clarity within the online course, and the new style of orientation program was shown to be effective and therefore will continue to be utilized. Furthermore, in developing Artifact G (Distinctive Contribution) I first examined best practices for international student online orientations then applied my learning to the online modules I developed. An area of growth I have for LO #7 is interweaving assessment into the daily decisions of my work. During my graduate assistantship, assessment was never a consideration in my daily practice. Also, in

Artifact A (Resume) I never discuss incorporating assessment into the foundation of my work in the majority of my roles. The key implication for my future practice is that I must always look to conduct and incorporate assessment on both a small and large scale, focusing on student experiences and program effectiveness.

LO #8- Communicating effectively in speech and writing

I define LO #8 as the ability to articulate intended message via email, text, in-person, or phone and adapt communication to individual communication styles. This manifest in both my academic achievements and professional practice in a variety of ways, including effective and well-written academic papers, daily email communications with coworkers and stakeholders, and effective presentations. My strengths within LO #8 are my ability to write in a clear and approachable way and to evaluate individual communication styles. This is demonstrated through Artifact D (Demonstration of Best Professional Practice) in which I created a guide to be used by students with little to no experience in facilitation. In my ISC internship, the student feedback revealed that I successfully developed content that could easily be understood by students whose first language was not English. Writing concisely and articulating my professional needs and goals are areas in which I need to grow in this learning outcome.

Throughout my graduate studies, one of my largest struggles has been writing concisely, which was greatly revealed to me in Student Development Theory (SDAD 5400) and Capstone (SDAD 5900). In the creation of Artifact B (Mission Statement), it was revealed to me that articulating who I am as a professional and my goals is a challenge for me. In my assistantship, I struggled to communicate my professional needs, which impacted my overall experience. The impact of these challenges for my future practice in light of my strengths and areas of growth are to practice

being open with my supervisors in order to communicate my needs and goals, and to be conscious of the intended audience so that the proper form of communication can be utilized.

LO #9- Understanding issues surrounding law, policy, finance, and governance

My personal definition for LO #9 is to maintain a foundational understanding of the relevant laws, policies, finances, and governance issues pertaining to the functional area in which I work and how they impact daily professional practice. My strength in this LO is that I actively seek out ways to be informed about relevant laws, policies, and governance. Within Higher Education Law (SDAD 5800), I went beyond assignment requirements to inform myself about laws and policies relating to hazing, an important issue within a functional area I am passionate about. In my role at the University of Washington (UW), I continually ask my supervisor about NCAA rules and read a number of intercollegiate athletics newsletters. Artifact G (Distinctive Contribution) demonstrates my strength in LO #9 because I actively sought out this project due to its incorporation of law and policy. My area of growth within this LO is my understanding of finance. In Leadership and Governance (SDAD 5760) we had a past CFO speak in our class and I realized there were so many layers to the financial structure of an institution that I do not understand. While talking with my supervisor at the UW, she asked me if I had any budgeting experience and I had to say no, which is also reflected in Artifact A (Resume). As I progress in my career, it will be important for me to seek out opportunities to develop my competence in finance, such as budgeting.

LO #10- Establishing and enhancing professional identity

How I personally define LO #10 is engaging in constant self-reflection to identify foundational values and professional areas of passion, while working to answer who you are as a professional and why you are committed to your work. Within this LO, my strengths are a

willing to try new things and continually strive to enhance my professional identity. In my professional practice, I took a leap of faith in seeking a new opportunity when I felt the position at the time was not enhancing my professional identity. Artifacts F (Professional Development and Action Plan) and A (Resume) demonstrate my commitment to advancing my professional identity by pursuing leadership and development opportunities in various professional organizations. In Transformational Leadership (STML 5610), I participated in deep self-reflection to examine my leadership style and establish my professional values, which are integral to establishing my professional identity. Articulating my professional identity, who I am and what I care about, is an area for growth I have within LO #10. In Social Justice (EDUC 5200), I found it hard to determine my social justice action project when asked what issues I care about. In writing Artifact B (Mission Statement), I had an existential crisis while attempting to concisely articulate who I am as a professional. As I interviewed for my current position, I had a hard time expressing my professional goals as they pertain to my interest in the position. The implication for future practice based on what I gathered from my strengths and areas for growth is that knowing and understanding my ever-growing professional identity is vital to my work. Because of this, it is important to continually engage in self-reflection.

Conclusion

Upon reflection across each of the 10 LOs, I have learned that my personal capacity and resilience to cultivate and sustain positive and equitable social change through higher education is rooted in my personal values. Prior to this program, I knew that I was passionate about fostering social change through higher education but never defined what that truly meant for me or examined the true reason why. Now, I have engaged in tough, but needed, self-reflection to understand my 'why', named the values that drive my work and developed the tools necessary to

truly live out my mission. I also recognize that this is an ever-evolving process and therefore I must continue this internal work throughout my future professional practice.

References

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