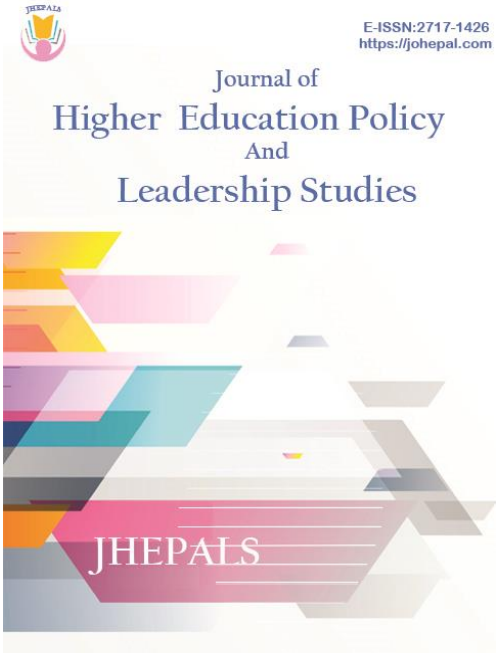
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# Basic Principles, Values, and Beliefs that Support an Effective Student Affairs and Services Programme in Higher Education

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# Basic Principles, Values, and Beliefs that Support an Effective Student Affairs and Services Programme in Higher Education

## Highlights

- Higher learning is enhanced by diversity and creative conflict; in particular, as people of varying backgrounds encounter different histories, experiences and points of view in one another.
- It is necessary to first identify and understand the needs and concerns of the students. Student services and support must be available to all students to enhance their integration into HE and to support their academic success.
- Higher education must address the personal and developmental needs of students as whole human beings, and prioritize academic and career counselling programmes to assist students in preparing for their life work, employment, and subsequent careers beyond tertiary education. Worthy citizenship and service to the community and global responsibility are important values to promote during the postsecondary experience.
- SAS practitioners, professionals, and scholars, along with the teaching faculty, bring to the academy a particular expertise on students, their development and the impact of the teaching and learning environments.

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**Keywords:** Student Affairs and Services; Principles/ Values/ Beliefs; Student Centred; Student Needs; Student Learning

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In order for any sector of the higher education (HE) enterprise to be applied consistently and to be of top quality, it must be grounded in a set of principles and values that takes into consideration the expressed needs of the students being served (Ludeman et al., 2009). More recent developments in the field also focus on student affairs programmes and services that nurture the success of students as learners in the academy (Ludeman & Schreiber, 2020).

The enrolment of students in HE remains a matter of interest and of great importance for all countries. Education is the pillar of all societies and transforms lives by enhancing the quality of life, building peace, eradicating poverty and driving sustainable development (Mission of UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). Students in HE all over the world enroll in different programmes of study and access various services, informed and guided by basic principles and values of student affairs and services (SAS). The author proposes a platform of universal SAS principles, values and beliefs that ought to exist in every institution.

Principles, values and beliefs will more than likely vary, depending on the region or country of origin. While that may be the case, the tenets outlined here have nearly universal appeal and allow readers to understand how they might apply to the creation and ongoing assessment of student affairs programmes and services in HE anywhere on the globe. The key principles, values and beliefs that underpin SAS globally are reflected below:

## Purposes and Partnerships

HE and student affairs professionals and practitioners, as integral partners in providing services and programmes, must be student-centred and acknowledge students as active partners and responsible stakeholders in their education. Along with parents, institutional decision-makers, government officials, and UNESCO representatives, students must also be included in their educational process. While students generally have the right and responsibility to organize, to participate in governance and to pursue their personal and social interests, institutions must offer and encourage students to take advantage of such opportunities for enhanced integration and engagement.

Partnerships with all constituents, both within and beyond the academy, must be established to promote in-classroom and out-of-class learning as well as lifelong learning. Such partnerships should include students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, employers, social service agencies and non-governmental organizations, primary and secondary school systems, government agencies and representatives of the local, national, regional and global communities.

Student affairs programmes and services must be delivered in a manner that is seamless, meaningful and integrated with the academic mission of the institution. These practices and resulting policies must be built upon sound principles and research and carried out through collaboration and partnerships with others throughout the campus.

SAS practitioners, professionals and scholars are key players in the advancement of the talents of all nations. Partnerships at the national and international levels, through cooperative exchanges, conferences, training and seminars, mobility programmes, and shared research are necessary for sustained growth and development.

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## Access, Equality and Diversity

Higher learning is enhanced by diversity and creative conflict; in particular, as students, faculty, and student services practitioners and professionals of varying backgrounds encounter different histories, experiences and points of view in one another. Thus, every effort should be made to attract and retain a diverse student body and staff. This includes diversity of race, ethnicity, faith, gender and disabilities, as well as of ideas.

The student affairs programmes and services mission must be consistent with the institutional mission, its educational purposes, the locale in which it is operating, along with its student characteristics. Programmes must be established and resources allocated for the purposes of meeting their ultimate goal, this being the enhancement of student learning and personal/social development.

## Assessment of Student Needs

It is necessary to first identify and understand the needs and concerns of the students. Student issues and concerns are best informed by their stage of development as young adults, as well as the stage of their study period. Higher education institutions (HEIs) should provide the best suitable services along the student lifecycle by assessing their needs upon acceptance to their institutions and throughout the tertiary education experience until graduation.

Relevant, responsive and meaningful student services and support must be available to all students to enhance their integration into HE and to support their academic success.

The absence of such important services could result in students feeling isolated, alienated, stressed and performing poorly academically, depending on the amount and types of issues that arise during their time as students.

The student lifecycle stages can be comparable to the international student lifecycle (for students studying abroad for a period of time). These stages were developed by Kelo et al., (2010). The first one comprises the pre-arrival services, the second covers services provided upon arrival at the institution, and the third relates to services during their study period. Universities also provide different types of services for international students. Most of them are developed in relation to different stages of the international student lifecycle, although some of those services are implemented during different stages of the international mobility process.

## Learning and Career Development

HE must address the personal and developmental needs of students as whole human beings. SAS, by virtue of its core role and function, is best positioned to assume leadership in this regard, as well as in the appropriate advocacy of students in general.

Students encounter three major transitions related to their HE experience: they first move into higher education, second through their collegiate and university life, and third from HE into their careers and immediate workplace. Support must be available for students during these transitions in the form of timely and accurate information, a broad range of services, and activities and programmes that engage them in the learning process within

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and beyond the classroom. HE must prioritize academic and career counselling programmes to assist students in preparing for their life work, employment, and subsequent careers beyond tertiary education.

Learning is complex and multi-faceted. For society to benefit fully, the processes of learning must be lifelong in scope and varied in contexts both in and out of the classroom. When the connections between academic learning and out-of-classroom experiences are intentional and relevant, higher levels of intellectual and personal development will occur. Service learning, leadership education, internships, community service, and a safe space for engagement on diverse issues, etc., all are examples of this blend of didactic and experiential learning.

All HE stakeholders must promote independent and self-directed student behaviour within a community context. Worthy citizenship and service to the community and global responsibility are important values to promote during the postsecondary experience.

The delivery of student services and programmes is based on a number of critical values. These values include diversity, pluralism, inclusiveness, social cohesion, sense of community, high expectations, a global view, integrity, citizenship and leadership, ethical living, respect for the inherent worth of the individual and the idea that students can and must participate actively in their own growth and development.

Tools of information technology should serve as a means, rather than an end, in the student learning process. SAS practitioners, professionals, and scholars should explore innovative ways to enhance student learning through technology and to promote effective and efficient student access and usage through advising, counselling, development of appropriate systems and development and implementation of effective training programmes.

SAS practitioners, professionals, and scholars expect students to be engaged with their institution and the learning process. This engagement should be consistent with principles of academic and personal integrity, responsible behaviour in a community setting and the exercise of appropriate freedoms developed within a national as well as local and institutional contexts. Good practices in SAS build supportive and inclusive communities both locally and globally.

## Professional Ethics, Sustainability and Resource Management

Student affairs functions and services must subscribe to high standards of professional ethical practice and behaviour, including professional preparation, assessment of professional qualifications, continuing training and development, monitoring and evaluation of services, programmes and staff performances, assessment of student outcomes, adherence to codes of ethics, and use of effective management practices. All are necessary in order to deliver the best in services and programmes and to remain accountable to students and the other constituents.

SAS funding sources ideally should be diversified and include significant institutional support. Funding from outside sources, such as grants, foundations, philanthropies, cooperative relationships, and alumni donations, may be necessary in order to provide the array and level of services required.

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Resources must be allocated to those student services and programmes that are proven to enhance student learning and success in relation to demonstrated need and demand.

Information technology (IT) is essential for the efficient and effective management of SAS. Therefore, modern IT hardware and software must be made available to students and SAS workers in order to achieve up-to-date and future-oriented learning and success goals for students. Research, programme evaluation, planning and assessment SAS practitioners, professionals, and scholars, along with the teaching faculty, bring to the academy a particular expertise on students, their development and the impact of the teaching and learning environments. They gain that information through systematic inquiry, including both quantitative and qualitative research methods. They are closely aligned with the academic mission of the institution and serve as invaluable links between students and the institution. They also serve as role models with high expectations of students and their capacities for learning and personal development.

## Author's Note:

*This work is an adaptation of Section II of *Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education: Global Foundations, Issues, and Best Practices, 3rd ed, (Ludeman, R. B. & Schreiber, B. (Eds.). 2020) entitled,* "Basic principles, values, and beliefs that support an effective student affairs and services programme in higher education," authored by Roger B. Ludeman, Adriana Perez-Encinas, Saloschini Pillay, Jennifer A. Skaggs, and C. Carney Strange.

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**Dr. Roger Ludeman** has spent his entire career working with students at all levels of U.S. public education with the last 35 years being in higher education student affairs and services. He received his Ph.D. (1973) in counselor education and educational psychology from The University of Pittsburgh. Roger entered student affairs work in 1967 serving in senior level student affairs positions in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Minnesota and Wisconsin. His writing and research have focused on international education. **Dr. Roger** is founder and President Emeritus of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS). He is editor-in-chief of the IASAS - Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) 2020 book on higher education student affairs and services. Roger has served as a consultant/speaker for tertiary education institutions and organizations all over the world, the latest being in Turkey, Philippines, and South Africa. He was recipient of 3 Fulbright grants (Germany, Japan and South Africa). In addition to volunteering at homeless shelters in Eugene, Oregon, he also has been active in supporting LGBTQIA+ rights and serving on boards of several community organizations. He currently sings in both the Eugene Concert Choir and Symphony Chorus. He and his wife, Sandy, together have 6 children and 4 grandchildren. They reside in Eugene, Oregon, USA.

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