

2. Literature Review

At a large, public, research one, state, land-granting institution, the Residential Life staff was tasked with developing a workshop that addressed student decision-making around low-level violations of the student Code of Conduct. Low-level violations include noise violations, roommate conflicts, residence hall policy violations and level 1 drug and alcohol violations.

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After a half-hazard and chaotic creation of the workshop and after conducting the workshop for a year, students reported negative qualitative feedback about the workshop. This feedback included comments such as:

- 1) "The activities were childish;"
- 2) "The activities had no ethical choices, basically it set us up for failure;"
- 3) "the workshop did not really flow together smoothly or cohesively;"
- 4) "the workshop did not really connect to or highlight the reasons why I was assigned to attend the workshop in the first place;" and
- 5) "Haven't you ever made a decision that you regretted later? What makes you an expert on decision making and qualified to tell me what I should or should not do."

This negative feedback led to the Problem of Practice for this Dissertation in Practice, "Students assigned to attend a workshop on decision-making provided negative qualitative feedback while questioning the validity of the facilitators to serve as an expert to discuss decision-making." With that, the purpose of this Dissertation in Practice is to utilize Collaborative Action Research (CAR) to redesign the workshop while using a curricular approach. There are three major areas of focus needed to redesign this workshop, and the literature for each of these areas also needs to be reviewed and evaluated. The three areas tie into the three research questions:

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- 1) Can a new workshop be created through the lens of a curricular approach?
- 2) Are there best practices to teach decision-making with college students?

3) Can Residence Life remove facilitator bias to better partner with students to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment?

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In order to answer these questions, a deep dive into these three fundamental areas is necessary. The best place to start is by looking at the theoretical framework of the curricular approach. Before an examination of “what is a curricular approach” can occur, a brief history of Student Affairs and Higher Education must be reviewed since the Curricular Approach came from and was developed by the world of Student Affairs.

A Brief History of Student Affairs and Higher Education

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A University, in any worthy sense of the term, must grow from seed. It cannot be transplanted from England or Germany” – Charles W. Eliot

Luckily, a review of the history of Higher Education and the development of the field of Student Affairs also allows the reader to view this development through a conduct lens, which helps enrich the historical perspective of student conduct on college campuses from the 1600’s to today’s Standard American University. If you read Dr. Roger Geiger’s *The History of American Higher Education: Learning and Culture from The Founding to World War II*, a long history of higher education is outlined through various stages from the founding of America’s first institution of Higher Education, Harvard College, on September 8th, 1636 in Massachusetts to the emergence of “colonial colleges” (1740-1780), the introduction of women to higher education (1880-1915), the introduction of POC into the higher education sector (1915-1940), and the concept of the Standard American University today (Geiger, 2015). Through an analysis of Geiger’s work, three things about Higher Education stand out:

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- 1) Though education has changed through various periods throughout time such as the Renaissance (1500-1800s), the Reformation (1500s), the Awakening (1730-1740’s), the Revolution (1765-1791), the Industrial Revolution (1760-1820), Antebellum period (1791-1861), the Civil War (1861-1865), etc. the concept of “curriculum” and

what pedagogies should be incorporated into the curriculum have been at flux for over 421 years;

- 2) Student behavior and discipline has been at the forefront of leading to college collapse since the 1600s;
- 3) The college experience has been lacking in diversity, leading the way for a system predominantly executed by and attended by white cis-gendered upper-middle class men seeking to be trained as pastors and gentleman (Geiger, 2015).

Throughout much of the history of American Higher Education (which Harvard and Yale, the first two schools of Higher Education in the United States) were modeled based upon traditional German and Oxbridge institutions, discipline was left largely to the tutors of the institutions who lived with and taught the students (Geiger, [date](#), [p.27](#)). Per Geiger, “Residential colleges seemed necessary to anchor the schools as permanent institutions...these structures were meant to copy the Oxbridge colleges, but they quickly acquired a distinct character” ([p.27](#)). The “tutors who also dwelled there were young recent graduates...each tutor assumed instruction for a single class” (28).

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One thing that students complained about and rioted about throughout these early college experiments is the notion of submission and control, “the dominant role of the trustees was written into most college charters, but when they sought to control daily affairs, especially student discipline, the results were usually detrimental” (116). These early colleges struggled to find the right balance of discipline and “students from all social backgrounds brought a democratic spirit to the colleges that conflicted with the hierarchical authoritarianism of their eighteenth-century customs” (128). Geiger notes that “Pranks and misbehaviors were endemic to colonial colleges...students apparently behaved with increasing license after the Revolution” (128). These Colleges experienced “prolonged and sometimes violent student rebellions,” 36 in total over the next decade; Here are a few of these aforementioned situations:

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1798: "Student Strike" at Dickinson College
1799: Riot at the University of North Carolina
1802: "Destructive Rampage" at William and Mary burning Nassau Hall to the ground
1805: Great Secession in response to "student monitors" to inform on classmates
1807: Rotten Cabbage Rebellion at Harvard
1807: "The Most Damaging Disorder" at the College of New Jersey (128).
1836: Armed Riot at the University of Virginia
1840: Celebration of Armed Riot. Professor John Davis, shot to death by student (238)

These situations led to a lot of different experiments on discipline in Higher Education ranging from filling students schedules so they had no free time, moving all students to live on campus, limiting the amount of money students could bring to campus, working with local merchants to not sell or serve alcohol to students and tightening discipline. Shockingly, none of these reactive approaches worked in subduing students' behaviors (Geiger, 130). Only one thing seemed to quell student rebellions and that was the revival of "reasserting Christian piety" until the emergency of the "Collegiate Era" in the mid-1800s. (131). Geiger notes that "tough governance through submission and control" was one of the greatest causes of student rebellion (131). Yale experienced violent rebellions until 1830 and Harvard continued to have rebellions until about 1834.

Higher Education did not have its first real "student-centered" practitioner until 1795 when Timothy Dwight assumed the role of President of Yale College. As a [17-year-old](#) Yale College graduate in the class of 1769, Dwight taught continuously until his death in 1817. Geiger notes that, Dwight "felt a genuine pastoral concern for students as individuals, seeking to instill in them a true love of learning, moral behavior, and piety" (138). He was successful as President, educator and disciplinarian because he "rejected the prevailing approach of submission and control" (137) and developed "the parental system of discipline" (138). Instead of admonishing students for their disciplinary failures, Dwight "gave them private, fatherly

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counseling” (138). Dwight set up a system of discipline that after counseling if the student continued to stray down the wrong path, he would give them a stern warning, bring the student’s parents into the situation to rectify the problem and lastly send the student home (138). Dwight even went so far as to create a “student report card” that would be sent home to parents to engage parental influence into the educational approach of the student. “He was held in awe by Yale students and by faculty” and the student body did not riot during his Presidency (138). Dwight believed in “imposing less external control over students and instead according them greater responsibility for their own moral conduct” and viewed this as the alternative to “submission and control” (138). Unfortunately, after Dwight’s death, his replacement did not have the same view of discipline and student riots started up again (138).

1830 brought about the institution of President Jeremiah Day at Yale College. Day issued a new system of “marks” for discipline and “ended the old philosophy of submission and control...Yale now held students accountable for obeying the college regimen” (215). Students enjoying their greater freedoms started getting involved in extra-curricular activities such as sports, fraternities, literary and academic clubs, secular music groups and publications (216). Thinking on college discipline changed and President of Union College, Eliphalet Nott, “was among the first to conclude that the draconian approach to student discipline was counterproductive” and that a parental tone was far more welcomed and acceptable (216). This new “disciplinary approach” and ability to overcome submission and control worked well for northern institutions, however in the South, the “exaggerated sense of entitlement,” lead to many stories of “student mayhem, wonton vandalism, and defiance of college authority” (237).

The Emergent Need for Student Affairs

It is within this environment that the profession of student affairs has emerged.

Students only spend a relatively small amount of time in the classroom, yet the experiences they have in the classroom are impactful and powerful. However, there is a lot of life to live outside of the classroom, therefore it became a herculean task for professors and tutors to continue to monitor all aspects of the student's life. Because of the egregious behaviors of students during the colonial era, institutions adopted the doctrine of "in loco parentis" which literally means in place of the parent, "empowered colleges and universities to manage students closely, as students were viewed in those times as emotionally immature and requiring strict adult supervision" (Long, 2). Though American Higher Education had many rocky moments, higher education began to boom in America as students flocked to institutions to be trained on how to become a gentleman in society. With rising enrollment, and the continuous improvement and change of education and pedagogy, professors felt the need to continue to advance their careers and their learning. Professors "developed expertise in specific disciplines and maintained active agendas. They began training graduate students who shared the faculty's interests and who participated in the faculty's research pursuits better than undergraduate students" (Long, 3). Faculty no longer had the time, energy, or interest in living among students and focusing on their discipline.

The development of extracurricular activities such as literacy clubs, dining clubs, fraternities, athletics, musical clubs, theater, etc. started to emerge as an important way to holistically develop the student out-of-the-classroom (Long, 3). If professors and tutors were no longer going to monitor student behavior, it became pertinent to find administrators who

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would. In the 1920's, with the educational boom and the emergence of Land Granting Institutions, the first student affairs administrators were hired to handle personnel matters, establishing these "Dean of Men" later "Dean of Students" as the enforcers of college policy, conduct and discipline (Long, 3).

Administrators started adding more and more services to their line up (career development, health services, student activities and organizations, residence life, counseling and psychological services) and before you knew it, a village was needed to serve the needs of these ever-growing student populations. Professional administrators started developing "best practices" to meet student needs, and benchmarking with other institutions until professional organizations started to form that would collectively serve as "powerhouses" of information and ideas. Out of this organization and the need to establish itself as important to the work on college campuses, The American Council on Education, in 1937 published their seminal work entitled "The Student Personnel Point of View," which after several revisions listed 37-functional areas for student affairs and laid the foundational views and philosophies that govern the student affairs profession to this day (Long, 4).

As the student affairs profession started coming into its own stride and figuring out its role in the everyday college student's life, the court system challenged the notion of "In Loco Parentis" in Dixon vs. Alabama State Board of Education (1961), thus defining the college student as a person over the age of 18 and therefore a legal adult (Long, 4). The focus of student affairs changed to "educating the students on making appropriate choices and decisions...student affairs professionals were tasked with greater roles in conflict resolution, communication and social justice" (Long, 4). One such professional organization that developed

was ACPA, the American College Personnel Association. ACPA published a report in 1972 entitled, "Student Development in Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy." In the report, ACPA "argued that student affairs professionals could not have a significant impact on students intellectual, psychosocial, or emotional growth without first understanding the motivations, abilities, and environments which drive, create, and define students (Long, 5). This led to professionals in student affairs to start conducting research, creating theories, and developing ideas that addressed all facets of student engagement creating an entire work, now referred to as Student Development Theory. Student Development Theory is grounded in the fields of human development, education, psychology, sociology, and cognitive development theories (Long, 5).

Such theorists as Tinto, Astin, Kuh, Terenzini, Pascarella, Sanford, Chickering, Kohlberg, Marcia Baxter-Magolda, Reason, Boyer, Harro, Crenshaw, and Kolb, propose theories to truly understand the college student and what leads to their engagement, their satisfaction on campus, their motivation to succeed to degree completion, prior learning, and ultimately an assessment of learning in college. One particular area that has a lot of irons in the fire and a lot at stake is Residence Life. Residence Life offers a comprehensive living and learning experience that seeks to utilize the time spent out-of-the-classroom to engage students in learning. Residence Life programs are not cheap to start nor are they cheap to maintain as they seek to run multi-million dollar operating budgets, address maintenance needs, hire professional and student staff members, build state-of-the-art housing opportunities for students, collaboratively work with multiple departments on campus to ensure the overall safety, well-being, and satisfaction of students.

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The Curricular Approach: A Theoretical Framework

Student affairs practitioners did just what they were instructed to do. They interacted with faculty and built collaborations across campus, they created data, assessed data, developed surveys, developed theories, tested theories and really dug into the needs, desires, and motivations of students. The experience afforded student affairs the opportunity to start making major changes to the status quo. As resources are becoming more and more restrained, as the cost of education is on the rise, and as more and more constituents feel the need to interfere with education, accountability has become tantamount to the college experience. In the early 2000's, many entry-level residence life positions only required a Bachelor's degree, now, most require a Master's degree. In order to prove that the work that Student Affairs does is important, and to account for the costs and resources that are needed to run Student Affairs programs, the field had to come up with a plan to prove what they are doing is working.

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Since students spend so few hours inside the classroom vs. outside-the-classroom, it is important that they are making the most of these experiences. "Student affairs educators have an obligation to each of these constituencies and to their institutions to make the most of the entire college experience for students, including opportunities for learning beyond the classroom" (Kerr et al, 1). Kerr and her colleagues (date) in their book, The Curricular Approach to Student Affairs, outline the many challenges that higher education is currently facing, "increase in mental health needs, evolving alcohol and substance abuse issues, increasing reports of sexual misconduct...state and federal funding to higher education has decreased" (Kerr et al, 2) and their solution to improving the value of education is by making every second

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count. Replacing traditional programming models that were once popular in Higher Education that focus on the “wellness wheel,” and the “first six weeks,” the curricular approach “is a systemic way to be more purposeful and strategic about how educators who work with students beyond the classroom can best facilitate student learning as an outcome of the student experience” (Kerr et al, 2-3).

The curricular approach is born out of the changing needs of the student affairs program and to better align with the current needs of today’s students:

“In describing the earliest student affairs practitioners, Hevel (2016) states, “These positions originated as college presidents and faculty members less interested in monitoring students at the same time that coeducation spread, generating public concern that such monitoring was never more important” (p. 847). Initially, student affairs professionals were support staff providing services to students (American Council on Education, 1937). Expansive research on the development of students morally, psychosocially, and in other ways led to our commitment to becoming student development experts (R.D. Brown, 1972). This student development approach itself has advanced with a better awareness of identity development and the importance of intersectionality (Abes, 2016; Patton et al., 2016; Renn & Reason, 2013)” (Kerr et al, 5).

With works like the American College Personnel Association’s (ACPA) “The Student Learning Imperative” and Keeling’s “Learning Reconsidered” and “Learning Reconsidered 2,” Kerr and Tweedy’s “Beyond Seat time and Student Satisfaction,” Whitt’s “Are All Your Educators Educating?,” there is a renewed focus on 1) What is student learning? 2) How do we measure student learning? 3) How can we create a curriculum that fosters specific student learning, 4) How do we create “intentional” learning opportunities for students that meet students where they are at, 5) How can we assess that learning to better advocate for the work that we do and why it is important in the realm of academia?

As Kerr et al. (date), state, “Learning Reconsidered (Keeling, 2004) argues for the need to

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think of student learning (academic) and student development (personal growth) as not two but a singular learning experience...students do not experience class and out-of-class separately; students experience college” (Kerr et al, 6).

Moving to a curricular approach moves the paradigm from a teacher-centric approach to a learner-focused approach, one where college and universities are not just transferring knowledge but allowing learners to create the knowledge for themselves (Kerr et al, 11). The curricular approach is a melding of current curriculum ideologies and pedagogies, focusing on the form of Tyler’s Rationale and social efficiency ideology asking 1) What do we want students to learn, 2) How do we help facilitate experiences that will foster learning? 3) How do we organize these experiences (sequenced/scaffolded learning) and 4) How do we assess whether or not the learning was successful (as cited in Schiro, 2013) vs. the learner ideology that “educational aims that have been developed based on research, literature, data and institution specifics, how can these student experiences be tailored, modified, or changed based on good pedagogy to facilitate learning” (Kerr et al, 13).

The Curricular Approach, supported by ACPA, started out in Residence Life. Residence Life educators implemented a “residential curriculum” that would create intentional learning opportunities for students living in the residence halls to engage with specific objectives through learning strategies designed to facilitate learning. Assessment strategies were built into the program to measure whether or not students were actually learning the objectives the department wanted. The movement grew and expanded outside the walls of the residence halls and departments across all of campus are now adopting the curricular approach. The curricular approach is an intentional learning curriculum, “a curriculum is an articulation of

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broad learning goals refined and further articulated by student learning outcomes and a comprehensive, intentional, and developmentally sequenced student engagement and delivery plan. This plan provides focus, clarity, and a process for continuously improving design and implementation through assessment, (Kerr et al, 19).

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Traditional programming models were chaotic, often spontaneous, disjointed, focused on students as the educators of complex information and measured the benefit of the programming based upon the number of students who attended vs. the quality of the content that was presented. Kerr et al outline the differences between the two approaches:

Table 1: Traditional Approaches Versus Curricular Approach to Learning Beyond the Classroom

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Traditional	Curricular
Identifies list of general topics or categories to which students could be exposed Often based on reaction to recent needs displayed by students	Clearly defined and more narrowly focused learning aims are tied to institutional mission Based on scholarly literature, national trends, campus data, and assessment of student educational needs
Student leaders or student staff determine the content within the categories and the pedagogy	Clearly defined learning goals and delivery strategies are written by those with educational expertise
Determining effective pedagogy is often the responsibility of student leaders or student staff members	Lesson plans or facilitation guides developed by educators with necessary expertise provide structure to guide facilitation of educational strategies
Focuses on who will show up to publicized programs	Utilizes a variety of strategies to reach each student
Evaluated based on how many students attend	Assesses student learning outcomes and effectiveness of delivery strategies
Sessions stand alone, disconnected from what has come before or what will come after, and vary by each student leader or staff member Often in competition with other campus units for students' time and attention	Content and pedagogy are developmentally sequenced to best serve learners Campus and community partners are integrated into the strategies; content and pedagogy are subject to review (internal and external)

The curricular approach is a systematic, intentional, and organized approach that offers a transformational learner-centered approach to time out-of-the-classroom. Having explored the literature on the development of higher education and the emergence of student affairs which

ultimately led to the curricular approach, it is time to now examine the literature on decision-making in the conduct process in higher education.

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Lit Review on Decision Making

Lit Review on Social Justice → How to incorporate SJ into workshops/the need to do so?

- Focus on Culture → Do different cultures have different ethical standards-
- What about invisible disabilities (Adhd, Anxiety, Asbergers/Autism, etc) → How do these students engage in a “high-touch” workshop
- Universal Design/Modalities/

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