

College Student Services Administration Program (CSSA)

College of Liberal Arts, Oregon State University

CSSA Program Core Values and Principles, Program Competencies

CSSA Competencies

The College Student Services Administration (CSSA) program at Oregon State University comprises a community of scholars and practitioners who strive to advance the field of student affairs through the preparation and continuing education of professional colleagues at the Master's level. Through ongoing research; faculty, staff, and students have developed a set of core CSSA Competencies that represent the breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, and perspectives essential for the student affairs professional to be competent, capable, and compassionate, and successful in their professional work with students and colleagues.

All students who complete a Master's degree in the College Student Services Administration program must demonstrate evidence of their competency in each of the five areas detailed below. ("Competency" is defined as being adequately or well qualified, and demonstrating proficient skills to successfully function, lead, and affect change in the student affairs field and higher education). Evidence of these competencies will be demonstrated through a wide range of experiences and in a rich variety of ways –through coursework, internships, assistantship/work experience, and other professional development activities and involvement. While the Competencies are each and collectively, designed to be comprehensive in scope, there are four core values and principles that implicitly run through each and serve as foundations of the program.

CSSA Core Values and Principles

- Cultural and linguistic diversity
- Verbal, written and virtual communication
- Interpretation and use of research, information, data
- Adaptation to and use of evolving technology

The CSSA graduate student experience culminates in the presentation and defense of a comprehensive capstone project, e.g. a portfolio; or a thesis with an accompanying Demonstration of Competencies document. The process of developing and demonstrating competencies is grounded in the expectation that CSSA students seek

out a comprehensive and well-rounded graduate and professional experience. A key learning experience for CSSA students throughout their program involves intentionally reflecting on their graduate, professional, and personal development experiences. Through these reflections (which are integrated into their capstone project), the student develops an appreciation for how learning experiences contribute to greater self-understanding, as well as to the ability to lead and make a difference in their chosen career path.

Program Competencies

1. Knowledge and Understanding of Higher Education and Student Affairs

- a) Articulate knowledge of historical and philosophical underpinnings of past and current issues shaping the field of student affairs and the student experience
- b) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the range, scope, and roles of different functional areas within higher education
- c) Understand the primary challenges and opportunities being presented to student affairs professionals
- d) Understand systems of privilege and oppression and the impact of these on institutional systems or organizations
- e) Identify goals, trends, and key issues related to the future of the student affairs profession
- f) Identify legal issues that impact higher education, field of student affairs, institutional policy and the student experience, AND *Graduates should be able to Integrate the CSSA Core Values and Principles into their Demonstration of Competencies/Portfolio*

2. Professional Skills and Organizational Management

- a. Comprehend organizational structure, dynamics, and systems
- b. Identify and evaluate leadership styles, including one's own, in various settings
- c. Demonstrate the ability to take initiative and lead in meetings and on projects or other tasks
- d. Communicate and collaborate effectively and appropriately with constituents both internal and external to the institution, considerate of cultural and linguistic diversity
- e. Synthesize fiscal information, including budget constraints and resources allocation

- f. Recognize best practices and challenges in human resources/personnel management
- g. Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in changing circumstances, employing decision-making and problem-solving skills, *AND Graduates should be able to Integrate the CSSA Core Values and Principles into their Demonstration of Competencies/Portfolio*

3. Knowledge and Understanding of Student Populations and Student Development

- a) Understand the impact of student identity, cultural heritage, and institutional and societal systems (including power and privilege), on identity development, personal growth, individual perspectives, and students' experiences
- b) Recognize various dimensions of identity and the intersectionality of those dimensions in the lives and learning experiences of students
- c) Analyze and apply concepts and theories of student and human development to enhance work with students
- d) Identify and articulate issues students face when transitioning into and out of institutions of higher education
- e) Assess the impact of varied higher educational settings and institutional types on the student experience
- f) Apply varying approaches and relevant technology to communicating with different students and student populations, *AND Graduates should be able to Integrate the CSSA Core Values and Principles into their Demonstration of Competencies/Portfolio*

4. Delivery of Student Services

- a) Utilize research and assessment data to identify needs and establish learning outcomes for the development of programs and services
- b) Design and implement assessment tools and interpret data to inform future programs
- c) Apply knowledge of diverse audiences in the development, communication, delivery, and assessment of programs, curricula, and services
- d) Identify target populations and use appropriate marketing strategies to maximize program effectiveness
- e) Implement accessible and engaging programs incorporating innovative techniques and technology to meet the needs of a diverse audience, *AND Graduates should be able to Integrate the CSSA Core Values and Principles into their Demonstration of Competencies/Portfolio*

5. The Developing Professional

- a) Define professional development needs and interests for continued growth including opportunities for future contributions to the body of knowledge
- b) Identify one's professional values and ethics
- c) Describe how one's own world view impacts values and assumptions when working with others
- d) Establish a commitment to engage in ongoing inquiry throughout one's career or articulate the value/appreciation of ongoing inquiry and engagement,
AND Graduates should be able to Integrate the CSSA Core Values and Principles into their Demonstration of Competencies/Portfolio.