

# HIGHER EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STAFF

## Functional Areas

**Academic Advising.** Work with individual students to plan academic schedules to meet college requirements. Refer students to various academic support centers and career development centers as needed. Must understand and be able to navigate with students the resources and policies of the institution. National Academic Advising Association.

**Academic Support Services.** Work in learning skills centers, tutoring centers, writing labs and other special programs. Might conduct individual or group sessions on time management, study skills, note taking and learning skills. Also coordinate undergraduate peer tutors. Special programs exist for student athletes, minority students, returning students, international students, first generation college students, and academically underprepared students.

**Admissions.** Identify, recruit, screen, and interview students for admission. Requires reviewing transcripts and applications, visiting high schools, working with guidance counselors, and giving information sessions to large numbers of people. Also involved with special programs such as admit weekends or recruiting events for special populations. Often combined with Registration and Records on smaller campuses. National Association for College Admission Counseling. National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals.

**Alumni Relations.** An institution's alumni can be a valuable resource in many respects. Alumni affairs staff often work in close contact with development officers to increase alumni giving. Other staff coordinate special events such as reunion weekends, alumni travel, alumni volunteer service or alumni continuing education. Some colleges and universities also publish alumni magazines, maintain local alumni clubs, and compile alumni directories. Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

**Athletics and Recreation.** Includes men's and women's major and minor intercollegiate teams. In addition, can include intramural programs such as club sports and recreation programs. Athletic directors schedule facilities, recruit and train athletic staff and students, and make sure that student athletes are maintaining proper grades. Staff of fitness programs might run club sports, outdoor adventures, or intramural teams. National Collegiate Athletic Association. National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association. National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

**Campus Safety.** Campus police and security officers aim to protect life and property in the campus community through law enforcement and crime prevention activities which include patrol activities, criminal investigations, parking and traffic enforcement, crime prevention education, internal training, and coordination with external agencies and community organizations. Chief safety officers coordinate with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, coordinate public relations issues, and assume direct command in crisis situations. International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

**Career Services.** Duties include counseling students about major/career choice, resumes, cover letters, and interviews; conducting assessments; building resource libraries; organizing alumni and mentoring career networks; providing life planning assistance; running on-campus recruiting programs; maintaining credential files; coordinating internship and cooperative education opportunities; hosting job and career fairs. National Association of Colleges and Employers.  
National Career Development Association.

**Community Service and/or Leadership Development.** While many colleges do not have separate offices devoted to these activities, many other student affairs offices are building such programs. Staff in this area need to be able to network and cooperate with community organizations in order to find appropriate service learning activities. National Campus Compact. National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. Campus Outreach Opportunity League. .

**Commuter Affairs.** Advocate on campus for those students who live off-campus and commute. Offer services such as off-campus housing referrals, roommate connections, shuttle bus service, and carpool clearinghouses. National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs.

**Counseling.** Work with individuals and/or groups on issues such as relationships, academic stress, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, sexual issues, and suicide. Often provide outreach to students through residence hall programming and by aiding in crisis situations. On some campuses, counseling offices are also responsible for assessment and testing of students. Often requires a doctoral degree and state licensure. American Counseling Association American Psychological Association. Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors.

**Development.** Development staff are primarily in charge of fundraising efforts which can include running alumni. outreach campaigns, researching potential corporate sponsors, and handling other large gifts. They also collect and analyze data on trends in giving and work on various strategies to improve these patterns. Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Women in Development.

**Disabled Student Services.** Provide services and counsel to students with various physical and learning disabilities. Work to coordinate such services as note-takers, interpreters, special testing, and accessibility. Advocate for disabled students so that residence life, academic affairs, facilities, and parking are aware of the needs of disabled students. Association on Higher Education and Disability.

**Events/Conference Planning.** Staff in this area are responsible for designing, marketing, coordinating and planning conferences and special events on the campuses of colleges and universities. This could include running conference centers, finding housing for conference guests, marketing the campus as a potential meeting site, and scheduling events such as commencement, homecoming, and parents' weekend. Many schools with large residential facilities rent out their residence halls to various conferences and camps during the summer months. Association of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors-International.

**Experiential Education.** Responsible for coordinating practical experiences for students outside of the classroom. These can include internships, practica, co-op experiences, and service learning experiences. Staff need to be able to conduct outreach to employers and organizations and to match students up with the proper experiences. National Commission for Cooperative Education. National Society for Experiential Education.

**Facilities Management.** Facilities officers and physical plant managers work with various campus constituents to ensure excellence in administration, care, operations, planning, and construction of educational facilities. This field encompasses a wide range of positions such as director of physical plant operations, energy engineer, director of maintenance and service operations, or environmental health and safety officer. Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers.

**Financial Aid.** Officers advise students and their families about work study programs, campus employment, loan programs, scholarships, and state aid programs. Staff are responsible for reviewing aid packages and helping students with their financial and budgeting concerns. Must be familiar with the many complex regulations and policies surrounding federal, state and institutional aid. National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

**Financial Management/Business Affairs.** Staff in this area are responsible for areas that include: financial statements and reporting; university-wide accounting policies and procedures; the centralized collection of tuition and fee revenue; the receipt and disbursement of cash; short-term and long-term investments; financial aid disbursements, accounting, and reconciliation; the University's fixed asset inventory and plant fund. Typical job titles include accountant, bursar, vice president for financial affairs, budget director, and university controller. Financial Management Association. National Association of College and University Business Officers.

**First Year Experience.** Assist new students with adjusting to college life, locating needed resources, and developing social contacts. Staff in first year experience work closely with faculty advisors to ensure that a student's academic experience is on track. They also might teach freshmen skills classes, run topical programs, and work with parents on finding the appropriate balance between support and independence for their children. National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

**Food Services.** College food services vary greatly from schools that provide snack bars and vending machines to schools that serve thousands of student meals daily. Many institutions also operate extensive catering services for on-campus events. Issues about outsourcing and privatization as well as concerns about student nutrition will be on the minds of individuals in this field. National Association of College and University Food Services.

**Greek Affairs.** Many campuses have very large Greek fraternity and sorority systems that may or may not include housed chapters. In addition, some campuses have historically Black fraternities and sororities. Advisors assist councils in planning events, devising and implementing chapter policy, and working to publicize the organizations. Professional staff also ensure that chapters are following campus guidelines surrounding rush, pledging, and alcohol use. Association of Fraternity Advisors.

**Health Services.** Provide medical treatment and advice to students who are sick or injured and encourage preventative care and healthy lifestyle. Most recently, a wellness trend has swept college campuses resulting in more joint efforts between health services and recreation/fitness centers. Student health services may be provided on campus either through clinics or an on-site medical school or may be contracted out to a local health provider. American College Health Association.

**Human Resources.** Staff responsibilities often include the planning, administration, and review of employment policies and procedures, wage and salary programs, employee benefit programs, payroll, workers compensation, non-faculty recruitment, employee relations and grievance programs, training programs, regulatory compliance, affirmative action programs, and organizational development. College and University Personnel Association.

**Institutional Research.** Many higher education divisions attempt to assess their programs and understand student demand for certain campus services. Staff in institutional research offices conduct assessments, analyze data, and suggest changes for, programs, services, policies, and procedures. American Educational Research Association. Association for Institutional Research.

**International Student Affairs.** Counsel international students on immigration regulations and visa concerns. Works with international students to help them to adjust to cultural and social differences. Organizes programs and activities to support these students and their families in their acculturation. Might also be in charge of coordinating visits of international scholars. National Association of Foreign Student Advisers.

**Judicial Affairs.** Meet with students accused of campus policy infractions such as vandalism, alcohol abuse, cheating, and sexual misconduct. Staff are responsible for gathering all pertinent information for hearings, maintaining the due process of accused, maintaining records of hearings, and training judicial board members. Association for Student Judicial Affairs.

**LGBT Affairs.** Staff advise individual students, plan programs, educate campus constituents about pertinent issues, and advocate for the needs of LGBT students. Staff might also be a part of the formation of gay-straight alliance organizations. Many campuses have separate LGBT centers. National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education.

**Multicultural Affairs.** Staff advise individual students, plan programs, educate campus constituents about pertinent issues, and advocate for the needs of minority students. Many larger campuses have separate student centers devoted to African-American, Asian-American, Native American, and Hispanic populations. National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education.

**Orientation.** Work primarily with new freshmen and transfer students to aid in the transition process. Orientation staff plan and coordinate orientation sessions for new students, organize testing for course placement, conduct family/parent programs, and teach courses during the academic year to orient new students to campus resources. Also in charge of supervising undergraduate student staff working as orientation leaders/assistants. National Orientation Directors Association.

**Registration and Records.** Monitors students' academic progress toward degrees. Handles such tasks as course schedule publication, course registration for students, issuing transcripts and diplomas, scheduling classrooms, and maintaining statistical data on student enrollment. Often combined with admissions on smaller campuses. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

**Religious Life.** The level of involvement campus staff have in religious life will be dictated by whether the school is public or private. Public schools may have a liaison who works with off campus religious centers. Private schools might have a full-time staff that plans programs and services that cater to the different religious needs of students.

**Residence Life.** Housing staff wear many hats. They are involved with programming, community building, roommate conflict resolution, discipline, and crisis management. Staff might work in residences that are classified as single sex, coed, living-learning centers, graduate student housing, married student/family housing, or special interest housing for certain academic majors or athletes. Live-in staff work with students in a round-the-clock situation and also supervise undergraduate resident assistants. Assistant directors will be involved as well with staff selection and training and disciplinary policy making. Residence life is typically the largest employer of student affairs staff on many campuses. Association of College and University Housing Officers-International.

**Student Activities.** Activities staff advise student groups, oversee student governments, schedule campus space for nonacademic events, develop and enforce rules and regulations for campus groups, and conduct social, educational and cultural campus programming. National Association for Campus Activities.

**Student Employment.** Staff in this area are involved in all aspects of running a successful student employment office. Issues pertinent to the field are federal work-study regulations, off-campus employment coordination, international student work issues, training for student workers, and how to best interview students for campus jobs. National Student Employment Association.

**Student Unions.** A union's professional staff oversee what can be the central gathering place on campus. One might be in charge of scheduling space, planning film festivals and recreation tournaments or advising student programming boards. Student union administrators also oversee the many services associated with unions such as bank branches, bowling alleys, cafeterias, and student organization offices. Association of College Unions International.

**Study Abroad.** Study abroad is a good way for students to increase their awareness of others, to live in a challenging atmosphere, and to integrate the curriculum in a new way. Staff in this area work to plan, promote, and coordinate educational opportunities of different types outside of the United States. They work with students and their parents as well as faculty and staff at both the home institution and the abroad institutions to ensure safe, educational, and socially enriching opportunities. National Association of Foreign Student Advisers. Association of International Education Administrators. The Forum on Education Abroad.

**Technology Administration.** Involved with strategic planning for telecommunications and network services including computer networks, voice mail, cable, and telephone systems. In charge of network software and hardware upgrades. Work with students, faculty, and staff to address all issues related to campus computing such as online course management, bandwidth usage, and policy implementation. Association of College and University Telecommunications Administrators.

**Women's Centers.** Typically work to enhance the academic success and personal growth of women students but also support women and men working together to end gender inequity. Staff offer one-one-one counseling as well as group workshops and large events on issues such as relationships, parenting, employment issues for women, and campus safety. Most women's centers also offer sexual assault prevention and education programs and some offer special programs geared toward men. American Association of University Women. National Organization for Women.

Sources:

-Chapter 4, "Careers in Postsecondary Settings," in *Careers in Counseling and Human Development*, by Susan R. Komives

-Chapter 21, "Organization, Functions, and Standards of Practice" by Arthur Sandeen in *Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession*, Edited by Susan R. Komives and Dudley B. Woodward, Jr.

Boston College Career Center: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/careers/careers/careerfields/hioherareas/>

# Student Affairs - Professional Associations

- . [American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers \(AACRAO\)](#)
- . [Middle States Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers \(MSACRAO\)](#)
- . [Pacific Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers \(P ACRAO\)](#)
- . [Southern Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers \(SACRAO\)](#)
- . [Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers \(V ACRAO\)](#)
- . [American Association of Community Colleges \(AACC\)](#)
- . [American Association of Higher Education \(AAHE\)](#)
- . [American Association of University Women \(AAUW\)](#)
- . [American College Health Association \(ACHA\)](#)
- . [American College Personnel Association \(ACP A\)](#)
- . [American Counseling Association \(ACA\)](#)
- . [Association of College Administration Professionals \(ACAP\)](#)
- . [Association of College and University Housing Officers - International \(ACUHO-I\)](#)
- . [Association of College Unions International \(ACUI\)](#)
- . [Association of Conference and Events Directors - International \(ACED-I\)](#)
- . [Association of Fraternity Advisors \(AFA\)](#)
- . [Association of Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\) -- AHEAD is an international, multicultural organization of professionals committed to full participation in higher education for persons with disabilities.](#)
- . [Association of Student Judicial Affairs \(ASJA\)](#)
- . [Association for Tertiary Education Management Inc.](#)
- . [Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services](#)
- . [Australian, New Zealand Student Services Association \(ANZSSA\)](#)
- . [Canadian Association of College and University Student Services \(CACUSS\)](#)
  
- [Student Affairs and Services Association \(SASA\)](#)
  
- . [California College Personnel Association](#)
- . [California Colleges for International Education \(CCIE\)](#)
- . [Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education \(CAS\) - CAS provides standards and guidelines toward student learning and development self-assessment on over 30 functional areas in higher education. Go to the website to review the history of CAS, the online store, and links to the over 35 professional associations that belong to CAS.](#)
- . [Council of Higher Education Management Associations \(CHEMA\)](#)
- . [Council on International Educational Exchange \(CIEE\)](#)
- . [Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association \(CIVSA\)](#)
- . [Council on Law in Higher Education \(CLHE\)](#)
- . [Eastern Association of Colleges and Employers, Inc. \(EACE\)](#)
- . [Institute of International Education \(IIE\)](#)
- . [Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators \(JASP A\)](#)
- . [Massachusetts Association of Women in Education \(MA WE\)](#)
- . [National Academic Advising Association \(NACADA\)](#)
- . [National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions, Inc. \(NAAHP\)](#)

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