Redirecting the Role of Student Affairs to Focus on Student Learning

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The student development movement may have represented a digression from the central educational mission of higher education. The Student Learning Imperative *is the latest attempt to redirect student affairs into a realignment with student learning. Practical suggestions are offered for conceptualizing the content, methodology, and application of out-of-class learning.*

The history of higher education and, to a lesser extent, that of student affairs is replete with innovative models that were essentially variations on old themes, paradigm shifts that did not shift, solutions that had unanticipated consequences or created new problems, and "new" approaches that failed or disappeared without a trace. But through all of these ill-fated prescriptions, the core values and beliefs, and even the goals, of higher education remained essentially unchanged. This steadfast centering may mean either that our educational institutions are impermeable to change, whether positive or negative, or it may mean that the core ideas themselves remain solid, relatively immune to faddish tinkering.

As we see it, it is the latter notion—that the core is solid—that powers the idea of once more viewing learning and education as the central mission of the field of student affairs. It is our purpose, first, to trace briefly the historical evolution of the basic student affairs theme, that education is indivisible and that learning is a holistic experience combining the cognitive and affective domains. We then argue that the student development movement, the most recent student affairs reform, represented a divergence from the core mission and values of higher education. Finally, we contend that the new student learning emphasis, as exemplified by *The Student Learning Imperative* (*SLI*) (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], 1994), is an attempt to redirect student affairs into a needed realignment with the central and traditional mission of colleges and universities, but without sacrificing the many contributions made to thought and practice by student development theory.

However, we need first to establish some basic definitions. We differentiate student development as a reform movement in higher education from student development theory, which embodies a set of propositions that purport to explain how college students may grow in a number of personal dimensions. For our purposes, the definition of *learning* favored by Merriam-Webster (1993) appears to best convey our meaning: "to gain knowledge or understanding of or skill in by study, instruction, or experience." This definition implies that learning is intentional, not adventitious, and grants the value of experience, not just in the acquisition of knowledge but also in the gaining of understanding.

THE REINTEGRATION THEME IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Depending upon how one reads history, the origins of the *SLI* go back at least to the early colonial colleges where it was the faculty that was concerned with the whole student, with his (at that time the faculty and students were males) morals, character development, and learning. There was a unity of curriculum and extracurriculum. By the end of the 19th century, however, the faculty had became increasingly

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involved with teaching and research, which led to the rise of nonfaculty specialists, the forerunners of the modern student affairs staff, who took over the paternalistic/nurturing functions that were previously the responsibility of the faculty.

Between the Civil War and World War I, the advent of Germanic impersonalism gave rise to a split between student life and the classroom, which led to the dominance of the extracurriculum and the emergence of the "bifurcated college" (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976, p. 330), referring to an almost complete split between student activities and the classroom. Understandably concerned about this so-called bifurcation, educational leaders began to see the need for the "reintegration of the curriculum and extracurriculum" (p. 330). Although the student personnel movement made tremendous strides after World War I, the Great Depression of the 1930s saw a severe reduction of student services consistent with a new emphasis on an old theme—that the task of the university was the development of the intellect, à la President Robert Maynard Hutchins at the University of Chicago, rather than character or personality development, as advocated by the emerging student personnel profession.

Since that time and up to the present, the student personnel movement, following the philosophical leadership of the 1937 and 1949 *Student Personnel Point of View* (American Council on Education [ACE]), could be characterized as continuing to seek the still ephemeral goal of reintegrating the curriculum and extracurriculum—of academe and student affairs—into a unified approach to education. The approach was called "educating the whole student."

The 1960s saw much unrest and dissatisfaction in the field of student affairs stemming in large part from problems associated with the social and sexual revolution, which challenged the traditional authority and control functions of collegiate institutions and the oversight responsibilities for on- and off-campus behavior that student affairs staff had assumed over the years. Other factors contributing to what many believed to be a compelling need for a reconceptualization of the student personnel movement were a perceived need to change some of the field's traditional functions, calls made for a redefinition of college student personnel work (Berdie, 1966), a rapidly expanding secular humanism movement, and a growing body of theory and research regarding student growth and development that appeared to lend itself to undergirding the essential educational and service work of the field. It was in this context that the student development reform movement was born.

The leaders of this emerging reform movement believed that by redefining the purposes of student affairs work, as well as the central mission of higher education, and by successfully applying developmental theory to practice, student affairs professionals could effect desirable developmental changes in students. The thought was that as student affairs practitioners became experts on college student growth and development, the faculty would recognize and value the knowledge and methodologies provided by the student affairs division, seek out its practitioners' expertise, and welcome its members as equal and collaborating colleagues (Stamatakos & Rogers, 1984). Concomitantly the field would acquire the status of a profession, achieve coequal status with the faculty, and generate long-overdue respect for its campus practitioners (ACPA, 1975; Brown, 1972; Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education [COSPA], 1975; Miller & Prince, 1976).

Given the nature of the unrest and social upheaval in society and higher education during the 1960s and early 1970s, and the readiness of student affairs for change (Plato, 1978), the field was receptive to an alternative that promised escape from what was perceived by many to be an untenable role and status. Human development and, implicitly, the student development reform movement, were officially accepted in 1983 by the American College Personnel Association as the "commonly held core of the profession" (ACPA, 1983, p. 179).

Unfortunately, the student development model failed to address the university's central educational mission and its cardinal values, which embody intellectual and academic devel-

opment. The hoped-for rapprochement with the faculty never occurred as student affairs, following the student development model with its emphasis on individual development, became viewed by those few faculty and academic administrators who were even aware of the model, as more and more isolated and irrelevant to the central educational purposes and programs of higher education.

We have pursued this argument in greater detail elsewhere (Bloland, Stamatakos, & Rogers, 1994, pp. 7-14), but it is our contention that the student development movement, rather than contributing to the reintegration of higher education, dichotomized it all the more by inadvertently defining the developmental concerns of student affairs as being somehow separate and distinct from the educational goals of the rest of the university or college. It seems clear to us, on the one hand, that the movement has had little success in changing the primary mission and core values of American higher education to include student development principles and doctrine and equally clear, on the other hand, that the personal development of students represents only a part of the educational mission. A holistic view of institutional purpose must, perforce, bridge that gap.

STUDENT AFFAIRS AND INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

Despite manifold changes, American higher education continues to articulate and maintain its more traditional purpose, which can be said to be, at least in part, the development of students in a holistic and cohesive manner that leads them through a "sense of passage toward a more coherent view of knowledge and a more integrated life" (Boyer, 1987, p. 68). Within this purpose education is seen as a means of personal empowerment and as a commitment to the common good. From this perspective, coupled with the seminal documents of college student affairs, *The Student Personnel Point of View* (ACE, 1937, 1949), it can be maintained that the role of student affairs in the total (holistic) education of students has been and continues to be one in which student affairs practitioners identify with a broad definition of teaching and learning, while providing services and programs that support and enhance the accomplishment of the *educational purposes* of colleges and universities.

While respecting and acknowledging the primacy of the faculty's responsibility for the basic teaching and learning activities of the college, student affairs stands in a unique position to contribute to the achievement of student learning and personal development within a wider context than that of classrooms, laboratories, independent research, and libraries. To this list of teaching and learning environments, student affairs has the additional opportunity and educational responsibility for expanding, developing, and enriching the student learning environment to include student living, social, recreational, cultural, and spiritual settings—all of which can serve as natural and extended neo-classrooms, and all of which can help student affairs practitioners reach rapprochement with the faculty and contribute to the reintegration of the college.

Student affairs is particularly equipped to collaborate with academic affairs to enhance learning outcomes that may include effective citizenship, democratic ideals and democracy; cognitive, interpersonal, and organizational skills; the development of a community and its maintenance; self-discipline, self-understanding, and responsibility for self and community; and the necessity for and the value of deferred gratification and hard work, honesty, and integrity.

As daunting and unattainable as these suggested teaching-learning tasks may appear to be, student affairs professionals should acknowledge and understand several key points. First, historically, colleges have always attempted to teach toward such knowledge, understandings, values, and characteristics. Second, for the most part, the faculty, particularly in the general education/liberal arts programs, have evinced this responsibility through the nature and content of the curriculum. Third, for over 50 years student affairs has committed itself to the achievement of these learnings and outcomes by helping students use the knowledge and understandings

acquired in the classroom via real-life, day-to-day experiences in living units and the co-curriculum (ACE, 1937, 1949; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991).

It is in this context that student affairs now has an opportunity to span traditional organizational boundaries and to recommit itself to a teaching-learning partnership with faculty and students through cooperative and collaborative relationships. Such partnerships could result in the development of campuswide learning environments and activities communities that nurture, enrich, and manifest the best of the total collegiate experience, including the use of the curriculum and extracurriculum for maximizing learning.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE *SLI* TO THE STUDENT AFFAIRS MISSION

The 1994 Indianapolis convention of the American College Personnel Association saw the introduction of a new model, the *SLI*, which, whether intended or not, may counterbalance the student development movement's apparent inability to create the true collaborative partnership with the faculty that had been envisioned by its advocates. The *SLI* should be read as simply the most recent chapter in student affairs' long quest for the philosophical unification of the collegiate experience into a learning paradigm that sees both the curriculum and the extracurriculum as providing tenable learning experiences. The model acknowledges the dual goals of personal development and learning as being at the heart of higher education's mission.

The historical role of student affairs in higher education has not only been one not only of providing services to students via the out-of-class domain but also of seeking to validate itself as a profession that contributes more than routine services. Student affairs has sought to be recognized as a partner in the educational enterprise as well. Its justification has been a philosophy that views collegiate education in a wider framework than the classroom, one that has pushed for unifying the curriculum and the extracurriculum into an educational paradigm that sees students as learning from experiences, both cognitive and affective, both within and outside of the formal classroom, that result in holistic development.

In our monograph, *Reform in Student Affairs: A Critique of Student Development* (Bloland et al., 1994), after having brought the student development movement of the past 20 years into serious question, we asked, "If the reform that the student development movement promised is seriously flawed as a core rationale for the field, where next does the field turn?" (p. 94). Our conclusion, after examining the mission of higher education and the idea of educating the "whole student," was that "the student affairs profession again take its cue from the central educational mission of higher education and view the learning process as integral to the implementation of that mission" (p. 103). During that same period, Charles Schroeder, then the president of the American College Personnel Association, was preparing his presidential address for the Kansas City Convention of the ACPA. His reading of the issues that faced higher education led him to essentially the same conclusion, that "student learning is the central focus of higher education and it provides the common ground on which academic affairs and student affairs can speak with a unified voice" (Schroeder, 1993, p. 11).

If this reorientation is accepted by the student affairs field—and it is by no means assured that it will be—the next step will be to define in clear and simple terms what is meant by student learning and the *institutional educational mission* in the context of the role of student affairs. Having defined these terms, the field will then need to extend the definitions in instrumental terms—that is, What do educators, administrators, and practitioners need to do to create learning opportunities and bring about learning that is consistent with the institutional educational mission?

THE MEANING OF STUDENT LEARNING

Certainly a recommitment to a teaching-learning partnership with faculty and students is a worthy goal, as is the development of a campuswide learning community designed to enhance the

collegiate experience for students. Few would deny that such a focus is what the profession must adopt if it is to develop the learning-oriented student affairs divisions suggested in the *SLI* while avoiding the obvious contradiction of a part of the institution (student affairs) attempting or claiming responsibility for the whole outcome (the "whole student"). However, the ability to develop learning partnerships and learning communities presupposes that student affairs professionals understand both what learning is and how learning happens on college campuses.

In the *SLI*, the terms learning, personal development, and student development are used interchangeably and are visualized as being conceptually intertwined and inseparable. Learning and development are viewed as occurring via transactions between students and their environments—environments that include other people, cultural milieus, and physical spaces. In this context, these terms appear to have a process focus. On the other hand, however, the *SLI* also seems to regard learning and development as outcomes or the endpoints of a college education. Thus, a college-educated person (i.e., a learned or developed person) possesses complex cognitive skills, the ability to acquire knowledge both deductively and inductively and apply it to a variety of life problems, an appreciation of human differences, a repertoire of practical skills, and an integrated sense of self.

Using the terms *learning* and *development* as synonyms and at the same time defining *learning* as both a process and an outcome make it difficult to clearly define what learning is and how it happens. Instead, it seems less confusing to view learning and development as distinct, yet related, concepts. Learning, we believe, is primarily a process of gaining knowledge and/or understanding by study, instruction, or experience—that is, the process of increasing the complexity of one's capacity to process information (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982). Development, in contrast, is an outcome of learning the result of gaining knowledge and understanding. Within this definition, the hallmarks of a college-educated person as delineated in the *SLI* are regarded as the result of the learning that occurs during the college years.

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1982), learning can be either deliberate or accidental. Certainly much of the learning that occurs in classroom settings is both deliberate (or at least is intended to be) and presumably championed by an instructor who readily presses a primarily *deductive* process, from worthy ideas and concepts to student understanding and action. In contrast, however, the learning that occurs in the out-of-class setting is most often unintentional, occurring as a natural result of individuals interacting with their environments and reflecting on previous experiences to gain new insights (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982).

The key to learning in the out-of-class setting is for student affairs professionals, first, to identify as many as possible of the "unintentional" opportunities for learning that occur. Then, they need to structure or facilitate these opportunities in such a way that students not only become "intentional" regarding their personal involvement and subsequent reflection but also are capable of even more complex involvement and reflection in the future. Thus, the out-of-class arena is championed by an instructor—in this instance, a student affairs professional—who readily presses a primarily *inductive* process, from student action and experience to worthy ideas or insights. Here, too, learning in such settings is consciously and voluntarily pursued.

Together, the classroom and the out-of-class arena are joined to become an integrated environment that incorporates people, physical spaces, ideas, activities, and the cultural milieu. In such an environment students learn how to bridge the artificial gulf between ideas (whether derived deductively or derived inductively) and actions and learn ideas that can then be acted upon. An integrated learning environment that values the strategic significance of learning derived from both knowledge and experience mandates and enables student affairs professionals, faculty members, and students to collaborate in achieving educational outcomes.

STUDENT LEARNING AND THE PRACTICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Given the premise that higher education exists

to promote learning and that learning takes place both in the classroom, as championed by the faculty, and outside of it, as championed by the student affairs professional, three key areas relevant to both arenas need to be addressed to maximize learning in the college environment: the what of learning (content), the why of learning (rationale), and the how of learning (methodology).

In general, when a faculty member enters the deliberate learning arena of the classroom, these three areas are addressed in considerable depth at two levels. First, when the course is originally approved by a faculty curriculum committee, its content, rationale, and methodology are typically fleshed out with a measure of thoroughly and rigorously to withstand the scrutiny of colleagues. The proposed content has a knowledge base; the proposed outcome of learning has a value base; and the intended instructional method has been examined for both its viability to deliver the intended learning and its ecology with respect to the incidental learning it may also deliver (Freire, 1972). Second, each time the course is offered, its content, rationale, and methodology will be revisited and reexplained in the form of a hopefully revised and updated syllabus. In this way, classroom learning is, of necessity, deliberate in both intent and documentation.

When one considers a model for the deliberate learning that takes place in the out-of-class arena, the key issues of content, rationale, and methodology become even more challenging. Certainly, differences exist in the manner in which these issues are actualized in classroom versus nonclassroom settings (see Figure 1 for details). Nevertheless, the three areas offer student affairs professionals a helpful rubric for reasoning through the dilemmas that invariably arise as they seek to facilitate deliberate learning within the out-of-class arena.

Careful attention to issues of content, rationale, and methodology is essential if student affairs divisions are to be successful in their goal of becoming learning-oriented and in securing the cooperation of faculty colleagues. Some initial suggestions for addressing content, rationale, and methodology pertinent to student affairs are as follows.

Content and Rationale: The What and Why of Learning

Whereas faculty members have wrestled to defend their course content within the context of competition from other courses, curriculum committee reviews, and the limitations imposed by students taking a set number of credit hours, the content of out-of-class learning has not had to withstand an equivalent form of focused scrutiny. Typically, there is no formal review process for the "content base" of the learning provided by student affairs professionals, nor do many campuses have a conceptual framework for student development that directs cocurricular learning experiences. As a result, content is often determined based on the perceived critical and immediate needs of a given institution without specific reference to the commonly taught student development theories or, more importantly, to a larger learning agenda. A 4-year review (1992-1995) of the "On the Campus" sections of the *Journal of College Student Development* demonstrates this point. The sections were replete with programs to enhance retention; educate students regarding alcohol, AIDS, and date rape; increase multicultural awareness and sensitivity; and facilitate the success and/or support of specific subpopulations such as African Americans, athletes, women, men, traditional students, and gay male students.

Certainly these are important and timely topics for the 1990s. The question, however, is whether such topic-specific programming is enough to achieve the broader learning agenda suggested by the *SLI* (ACPA, 1994). In other words, do such programs also result in the development of complex cognitive skills; practical competence skills; the ability to solve personal or societal problems; or a coherent and integrated sense of identity, self-esteem, integrity, and civic responsibility? If not, a content based primarily on current and pressing problems, although certainly worthy, unfortunately will fall short unless it is also designed to contribute to institutional learning goals.

Where then is student affairs to find substantive content that is thought-provoking and contributes to an effective learning agenda? Perhaps the best place to start is to focus on the

sought outcomes or endpoints of learning—that is, What is to be accomplished as a result of the learning experience? In the environment of higher education, the intended outcomes of learning can be identified by examining the mission of an individual college or university, the general characteristics of a college-educated individual as found in the literature of general education, and student development theory. Such an approach is congruent with the assumptions of the *SLI* (ACPA, 1994), as well as the key historic documents of the field of student affairs.

Using the sought outcomes of the college experience to inform the development of a content base for the out-of-class arena means that programming (intentional interventions) must be planned to develop in students self-esteem, aesthetic sensitivity, civic responsibility, an appreciation of human diversity, and skills in critical thinking, practical problem solving, and decision making (ACPA, 1994). Content of this sort is aimed at providing students with opportunities to grasp "the interconnectedness of human experience" (Miller & Prince, 1976, p. 73) and to integrate and apply concepts from the general curriculum to daily life experiences. The intent of all such content is to assist the host institution in developing well-rounded, productive, responsible graduates. Such content complements and enhances the in-class learning agenda and results in a true wedding of classroom and out-of-class experiences to achieve the "seamless coat of learning" proposed by Whitehead (1929).

FIGURE 1.
Deliberate Learning in Higher Education

	Learning in the Classroom Arena	**Learning in the Out-of-Class Arena**
Content and Rationale	Grounded in the knowledge base of the disciplines and professions—both as ends in themselves and as parts of an institution's mission and general curriculum	Grounded in the knowledge base of student development as well as elements of the institution's mission and general curriculum
Methodology	Drawn from learning and developmental theories, and incorporating the manipulation of class sessions, textbooks, assignments, exercises, field trips, etc.	Drawn from learning and developmental theories, and incorporating the manipulation of policies, physical space, social groups, services, role models, programs, etc.
Orientation Regarding Learning	Originates in content and finds application in student experience; primarily deductive	Originates in student experience and finds context in content; primarily inductive

Methodology (The How of Learning)

Whereas faculty members can use designated classroom periods, textbooks, assignments, lectures, exercises, and field trips to assist them in meeting learning objectives, educators in the out-of-class arena are not so fortunate. With few exceptions (e.g., freshman seminars, leadership classes) student affairs professionals lack such systematic methods for delivering learning content. As a result, they are left with two basic possibilities: (a) intervening with students as experiences unfold on campus (i.e., looking for the "teachable moment" and responding accordingly), and (b) designing and providing experiences and environments in which the sought learning content is available, supported, and reinforced.

Of necessity, much of the methodology used by student affairs educators falls into the first category just mentioned, a legitimate and important source of student learning on campus. To use this method effectively, educators in the out-of-class arena must observe experiences on their campuses in order to recognize inductive moments appropriate for learning outcomes and, where possible, instigate reflection among students so that they will, in fact, learn from their experiences. Of course, the educational challenge of this arena is that the experiences are not typically required, nor can the intended learning be scheduled as one might schedule a topic on a syllabus. The educator must be exceptionally diligent in anticipating and watching experience as it goes by and be ready to take advantage of it as a vehicle for learning the valued content identified earlier.

In addition to employing the methods of acute observation and instigated reflection regarding incidental experiences, the educator-in the out-of-class arena may also use various methods to create deliberate learning experiences. Here, the content and its rationale form the foundation on which the student affairs professional designs (and subsequently instigates reflection regarding) the out-of-class learning environment through manipulating some or all of the following six variables:

1. *Physical Space*: What should the campus look like? How should it be physically arranged? What are the educational or aesthetic implications of lighting, color, temperature, interior design and decoration, space arrangement, furniture, objects, art, sound, and so on, both in residence halls and in other campus buildings?
2. *Social Arrangements*: Who should be admitted? What are the limits of diversity? Should all freshmen be housed together? Is conflict valued or eliminated? What type of social system is appropriate to nurture?
3. *Policies*: What rules are appropriate? How will violations be handled? Is discipline to be viewed as punitive or corrective?
4. *Services*: Which student services should be provided and how? What is the difference between operating a housing unit as a hotel or as a learning community? Is orientation offered as a campus map or a campus explanation? Can financial aid be more than a simple financial transaction? Do campus jobs provide real opportunities for students to develop leadership or career skills, or are they merely low- paid help?
5. *Role Models*: Who should be hired in various staff positions? What should be their qualifications? What should be their diversity specifications (age, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, philosophical orientation, etc.)?
6. *Programs:* What workshops, retreats, student activities, classes, meetings, presentations, and so on, are already available or should be designed and implemented to deliver educational content? What collaborative partnerships can be forged with faculty members who are already involved in teaching the intended content through the formal curriculum?

Opportunities for manipulating these six variables already exist within the domain of a campus environment, either in a state of benign neglect or in a form primarily intended to accomplish some noneducative, pragmatic administrative purpose. The point here is that

these are teaching methodologies that can be deliberately structured to accomplish institutionally valued learning outcomes.

Application

If student affairs divisions want to take seriously the challenge of becoming learning-oriented, how might they take the what (the content), the why (the rationale), and the how (the methodology) of learning and apply those daily on their campuses? Translating this process into specific steps might look something like this:

Step 1. Identify institutional learning outcomes. Student affairs professionals examine the mission of their individual institutions, general curricular offerings, and current theories and concepts pertinent to student development in order to gain an understanding of what the college or university regards as important learning outcomes for its students (not the outcomes of specific courses but the broader outcomes of higher education, often articulated in the goals of a general education program). For example, one such intended learning outcome might be for students to develop a recognition of, and appreciation for, the unique contribution of diverse cultures.

Step 2. Identify an out-of-class curriculum. Student affairs professionals then survey the out-of-class student experience and environment for opportunities that may already exist or that might be created to facilitate student learning relative to the institutionally derived learning outcomes identified in Step 1. For example, an analysis might indicate that effective programs on campus diversity already exist in the sociology department, the counseling center, and the campus lecture series but that there is a need to create similar learning experiences in the residence halls. This step is roughly analogous to creating a curriculum.

Step 3. Designing learning experiences and environments. Student affairs professionals, having identified a need or an opportunity for learning on a particular topic or theme, design a learning experience to meet that need by manipulating the variables of physical space, social arrangements, policies, student services, role models, and programs, as appropriate. For example, these six variables would be reviewed to determine which ones can be used to enhance and expand learning in the area of cultural diversity. Based on this review, programs can be planned, physical spaces and social arrangements altered, faculty and staff hired and trained, services provided, and policies written so as to create student experiences or campus environments that ought to result in the desired outcomes. The analogy might be to the design of a course.

Such an approach is straightforward, holistic, and intentional. It can integrate the intentional learning agenda of the in-class and out-of-class student experience toward the end of accomplishing institutionally aligned outcomes for students. Further, it is congruent with both the profession's historic documents and its current direction. Most importantly, this strategy supports the development of student affairs divisions that are learning oriented and that seek to complement and enhance the institution's educational mission—a focus that is clearly consistent with the *SLI* (ACPA, 1994).

SUMMARY

As we have suggested, a pervasive theme in the history of college student affairs is the drive to reunify the curriculum and the extracurriculum into an integrated learning experience for students. We have argued that, while the student development movement has contributed much to our understanding of how college students grow and develop, its increasing preoccupation with the personal development of the individual, with little reference to the educational context of that development, has gradually isolated student affairs from the central educational mission of higher education. The *SLI*, in its call for "affirming learning and personal development as primary goals of undergraduate education" (ACPA, 1994, p. 4), can serve as a useful vehicle for once more identifying student affairs as a contributing partner to the educational purposes of higher education without minimizing the undeniable contribution of student development theory.

One of the tasks facing the field today is to

translate the learning emphasis into meaningful approaches to program design and implementation. In the last chapter of *Reform in Student Affairs* (Bloland et al., 1994), we suggested a number of practical implications that a redirection of the field might hold for the professional field, for the campus program of student services, and for the personal development of practitioners as they reorient themselves to a more collaborative role with the central academic and learning thrust of their institutions. In this article, we have presented several schema—namely content and rationale, methodology, and application—that may be useful in conceptualizing the practitioner's role in educational programming. However, we have but scratched the surface of the possibilities inherent in transforming the focus and direction of student affairs. As the concept is further clarified, only inertia and lack of imagination can limit the ways in which student affairs can make its own contribution to the learning palette of the campus.

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