

## August 2021 Newsletter





## ***Fostering Wellness on Your Campus***

The pandemic that swept through our world over the past year and a half presented colleges and universities with unique challenges such as they've never experienced before. The restrictions and adjustments required as a result created significant social and mental health issues for a number of students. While some sought help to address and deal with their concerns, others did not.

Based on a 2018 report from the American College Health Association, over 40% of U.S. college students had "felt so depressed they had difficulty functioning." With more students returning to campus in the fall and reports showing further increases in mental health needs due to the impact of COVID-19, colleges are searching for solutions.

Several studies found that the most common changes in how students feel now compared to before the pandemic were increased lack of motivation, anxiety, stress, depression, suicidal thoughts and increased social isolation. For those students who feel overwhelmed from the continued impact of COVID-19, higher education must support them with the mental health and emotional support resources they require. As we prepare for the return of our students, here are a couple of things schools can do to plan ahead to support campus well-being.

### 1. Engage your students.

There's one simple step to take to help eliminate uncertainty about what to do and how to support and empower students: talk to students, staff and faculty to identify what it is your students need. Academic performance and healthier campus communities are the result when students feel as though the services and programs being offered are specifically geared towards and affect them. Programs and services that do not meet or address the needs of the students are programs not worth having.

2. Equip staff and faculty with the right resources to help students.

Staff and faculty members can integrate practices and expectations that promote academic success and well-being. These include but are not limited to knowing what resources are available to help students and normalizing the use of mental health services. When staff and faculty are informed, they are able to point students in the right direction. Additionally, it is not a bad idea to also provide them with guidance or tips on how to identify and assist students in need, whether they are in an active crisis or struggling and in need of referral to the appropriate professionals.

While it may seem that this is an insurmountable problem, higher education leaders can take a strategic approach to overcome barriers, help students understand what care is available, and provide quality resources that will make an impact. If we all work together to meet the needs of our students, we will be able to provide them with a college experience that is rich with all that they envisioned it to be.

Deirdre Jackson, Ph.D.

(Director of Counseling and Psychological Services at Methodist University)

**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
MATTERS**

***NASPA NC Member Spotlight - [Leah Frierson, Ed.D.](#)***



**Associate Director, Robertson Scholars Leadership Program at Duke University**

**NASPA NC Board Member**

**Where are you from?**

Belleville, IL, Currently living in Durham, NC

**Why did you decide to pursue a career in higher education?**

I think I kind of just fell into it, like a lot of people. I was asked to start coaching and thought it would be a fun job and I loved sports so I went for it. I really enjoyed working with my athletes, the environment, my colleagues and watching the growth of our students through the mentorship and coaching. I transitioned to academic advising and student support full time several years ago, and I have enjoyed being able to support a broad range of students and their interests along the way.



**Why did you join NASPA? How long have you been a member?**

I have been in NASPA for a few years. I love that there is a focus on the personal development and identity side. It gives me a good balance of academic support and student development, and allows me to merge them nicely into my professional practice because we know that they are not independent of each other.

**What are you most looking forward to in NASPA NC?**

Connecting with colleagues in the state. There are people doing some really good work as practitioners and as researchers, and I am excited to connect with people at the different institutions to learn how they are serving students and growing their own professional development.

**What advice would you give to professionals aspiring for a career in higher education or newer to the field?**

Great question...Know what you value and how you want to have impact in the field and be willing to try different functional areas to see where you find that fit. Also, surround yourself with people that tell you the truth about how you show up as a professional, but also support you in getting better. Know that your gifts will make room for you so commit to showing up, working hard, being person of integrity and high character and bringing good energy to your department, role and for your students everyday! Use your sick time and take wellness days, you are not good if you are pouring from an empty cup!

**What has been your proudest moment as a higher education professional?**

I think when I receive an email from a student long after I have worked with them and they tell me how much they appreciate the support I provided. Those emails always come at just the right moment and re-affirm why I chose higher education!

**What is the last book you read?**

Way of the Shepherd (short read, but it's good)

**Favorite Netflix Show?**

Criminal Minds, all things Zombie/Vampire

**What is one thing that not many people know about you?**

Contrary to popular belief I am a first-class introvert ☐

**How can our NASPA Colleagues reach you?**

I can be found on linkedin, let's connect!



## ***NASPA NC Professional Connections***

The Professional Connections committee held their virtual Summer Mentoring event on July 18th. The event was facilitated by three members of the Professional Connections Committee: Dr. Brett Carter (UNCG), Dr. Christine Davis (UNCC) and Dr. Michael Reynolds (Wingate University). The mentoring session revolved heavily around career planning and how to take the “next step” in your career journey, with the facilitators offering insights and asking thoughtful questions.



Look for more mentoring opportunities this fall from the Professional Connections Committee. Missed this event and want to make the next one? Looking for ways to get more involved and want to join the Professional Connections Committee? Leadership opportunities are available. Email Michael Reynolds at [m.reynolds@wingate.edu](mailto:m.reynolds@wingate.edu) for more information.



# Professional Development

## *Updates From NASPA NC PD Committee*

### **Summer Recap**

Over the course of July, NASPA-NC members engaged in a series of virtual professional development workshops facilitated by colleagues from across the state. Participants received resources to help support sophomores and transfer students through and beyond Covid, learned about various re-entry plans NC institutions are implementing, discussed how to navigate this new work/life balance as most employees return to campus, and talked about the mental health of students, faculty, and staff.

We received very positive feedback. Thank you to everyone who presented or attended the sessions!





### **The Future of Student Affairs - Fall Virtual Drive-In**

**Wednesday, October 27, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

The NC NASPA Conference Committee invites you to virtually join us on Wednesday, October 27, 2021, to discuss the future of student affairs. This virtual drive-in will provide space for colleagues to come together and share knowledge on current trends and issues, successful practices being implemented on their campus and the opportunity to network with NASPA colleagues from around the state of North Carolina.

To register, click here: <https://bit.ly/NCNASPAVirtualDriveIn21>

The call for proposals for the Fall 2021 NC NASPA Virtual Drive-In is now open. For more information on session topics and guidelines, please click the link below. The deadline for program submissions is Wednesday, September 1, 2021 by 5:00 pm. Accepted proposals will be notified by Friday, September 17, 2021.

<https://bit.ly/NCVirtualDriveIn21>

If you are interested in serving as a program moderator for the virtual drive-in, please submit your interest here: <https://bit.ly/ProgramModerator>



## ***Higher Education and Student Affairs News You Can Use***

*Click on the article links below to learn more about current trends, issues and best practices in higher education and student affairs.*

[Supporting Women Academics During Covid \(webinar\)](#)

[The Challenges of Student Caregivers](#)

[The Culture War Has Come for Higher Ed](#)

[Admin 101: How to Interpret Reference Letters](#)



## ***Inclusive Excellence: An Institutional Approach to Realizing Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (R.I.D.E)***

Wake Forest University, like many institutions of higher education, is leaning further into the understanding that inclusion remains an unfulfilled experience for some of its constituents. With a university motto of “Pro Humanitate”, the institution has challenged itself to lessen the dissonance between who it aspires to be and how it may be experienced across race and ethnicity, religion, gender expression, socioeconomic status, and ability among other aspects of identity.

With a deep institutional history of supporting individual identity development and inclusive behaviors, the university sought to acknowledge and define the broader systems level factors that are necessary for a comprehensive and institutional approach to Inclusive Excellence. Inclusive Excellence, embraces individual level factors such as knowledge and awareness, but only as they exist within broader contexts that influence how institutions are inclusively excellent. In recognition of the multi-level contributors to the presence of diversity, the experience of inclusion, and the justice of equity, an Inclusive Excellence framework provides a map for institutions to intentionally and coherently focus resources, practices and policies to maximize full engagement for everyone.

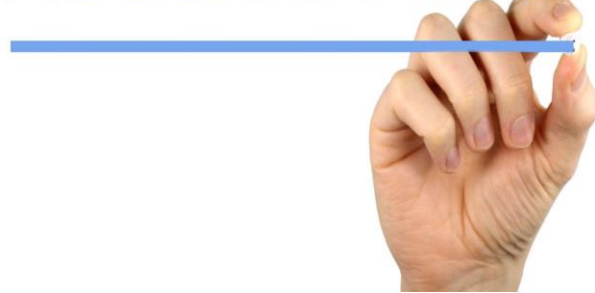
In June, 2020, Wake Forest University adopted an institutional framework for [Realizing Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity \(R.I.D.E.\)](#). The R.I.D.E. Framework offers the specificity of 21 actionable, multi-level targets, with the flexibility for individuals, divisions, departments, and leadership teams to evaluate their impact on the landscape of inclusion, diversity, and equity at Wake Forest University. Feel free to review the publicly accessible site for the framework, guiding questions, tools, and resources.

Malika Roman Isler, Ph.D.

(Assistant Vice President, Inclusive Practice, Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Affiliate Faculty, Health and Exercise Science Department at Wake Forest University)



# ASSESSMENT



## ***Assessment 101 for Higher Ed Professionals***

Whether you are new to assessment in student affairs or just need a brief refresher here are some things to know.

### **What is assessment?**

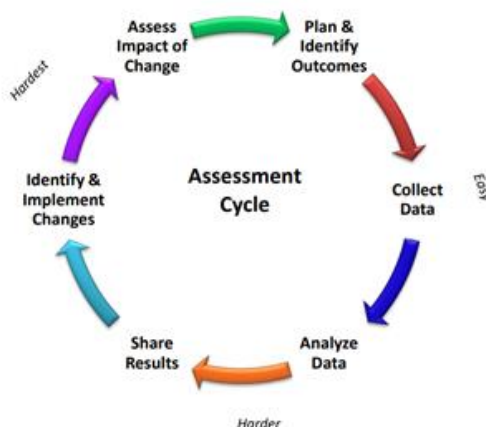
The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. The word 'assess' comes from the Latin verb 'assidere' meaning 'to sit with' (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

### **Why do we practice assessment?**

Assessment is the act of understanding and gathering evidence.

- What were we trying to accomplish with a program or service?
- Why were we trying to accomplish it?
- How will we know when we achieved the purpose?
- How well did we achieve it?
- What changes do we need to implement to improve?

## Assessment Cycle



Always draw from the foundational documents of the department, division, or university when creating an assessment plan and implementing an assessment cycle. Examples of foundational documents are mission, vision, and strategic plans.

Keep in mind that an assessment cycle is completed annually and is not a one-shot process. Here is an example of a typical assessment cycle (Kuh et al, 2015).

Kuh, G. D., Ikenberry, S.O., Jankowski, N.A., Reese Cain, T., Ewell, P.T., Hutchings, P., & Kinzie, J. (2015). Using evidence of student learning to improve higher education. Jossey-Bass.

(Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education*. Jossey-Bass.

Erin M. Bentrim, Ph.D

(Divisional Director, Student Affairs Research & Assessment at UNC Charlotte)

## ***Graduate Program Highlight***



**NC STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

### ***NC State's Master's and Doctoral Programs in Higher Education***

The Higher Education program at NC State University, which is situated in the *US News & World Report* ranked College of Education, prepares leaders who are well versed in theory and research in the field and equipped to serve as scholar-practitioners in a variety of roles (e.g., student affairs professionals, faculty, researchers, policy-makers, administrators) and higher education contexts.

Distinctive characteristics of our program include, diverse students and faculty representing a variety of backgrounds, research interests, and professional experiences, a commitment to developing leaders who advocate for social justice in education and society, access to multiple institutional types in the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area that provide an array of contexts for learning and professional development through graduate assistantships and internships. We offer three programs with an exemplary faculty: a Masters of Higher Education Administration and two doctoral program areas of study.

For more information, please visit our website <https://ced.ncsu.edu/elphd/higher-education-program/>.

## *Featured Job Postings*



- [Assistant Director for Inclusive Education - UNC Pembroke](#)
- [Assistant Director for Community Engagement - UNC Pembroke](#)
- [Director of Student Conduct - University of Mount Olive](#)
- [Office Manager, Chaplain's Office - Wake Forest University](#)
- [Community Director, Department of Residence Life and Housing - Wake Forest University](#)
- [Registrar and Curriculum Manager, School of Pharmacy - UNC Chapel Hill](#)



Are you interested in becoming more involved with NASPA NC? Do you have content (job postings, articles, upcoming events on your campus, etc...) you would like shared in our newsletter? Would you like to connect with our board members to provide ideas and recommendations for the future? Email us at [ncnaspa@gmail.com](mailto:ncnaspa@gmail.com).