

SAA - Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education Graduate Program

Department of Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education
Department Chair: Tori Svoboda

Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education M.S.Ed. Program
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SAA Department: www.uwlax.edu/academics/department/student-affairs-administration (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/department/student-affairs-administration/>)

M.S.Ed. Program: www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/student-affairs-administration (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/student-affairs-administration/>)

The Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.) in Student Affairs Administration (SAA) in Higher Education is a graduate program that educates and trains professionals to work in student or academic affairs positions at post-secondary institutions. The program promotes the integration of theory to practice with an emphasis on student learning and development, and inclusive and equitable practice. The program is designed to facilitate entry or advancement in a variety of student affairs administration positions. The combination of tenure-track faculty and instructors who are full-time practicing student affairs professionals provides a current and competency-based curriculum. Some of the areas students may choose to specialize in include: admissions, academic or career advising, financial aid, first-year experience, international education, multicultural student services, residence life, social justice centers, student success, student life, university centers or other student services areas.

Two cohort types are typically available:

- Online asynchronous (offered annually, new cohorts start each May)
- Campus-based blended (offered only in years where we have enough interest; we do not expect to start a new cohort in Fall 2024)

Admission to programs is competitive. The program follows the CAS Standards for master's level graduate preparation programs in student affairs. The program also requires at least half-time employment in academic or student affairs while enrolled to meet the standards for supervised field experience.

Note: Enrollment in SAA courses is restricted to graduate students admitted to the program, unless given special permission by the SAA Department Chair.

SAA practicum credit by portfolio review policy

The Department of Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education offers the opportunity for master's program students to earn one credit of SAA 775 Student Affairs Practicum based on a portfolio review. Per the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) guidelines, "credit or competencies are awarded only for evidence of learning, not for experience or time spent." The portfolio review option is intended

for students who enter the master's program with at least two years of full-time experience, in at least two distinctly different areas of higher education/student affairs. More detailed information about the process is available on the department's portfolio review assessment website (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/student-affairs-administration/practical-experience/portfolio-review-assessment/>).

Program length

The Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.) in Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education Program is typically a two-year program. The program length is based on how long the required UWL coursework would take to complete for a full-time student who does not need to complete any prerequisite coursework. Program length may be extended if students attend part-time (if approved by program) or due to the requirements of an individual student's plan of coursework, research or capstone project.

2024-25 Faculty/Staff

The following is the graduate faculty and staff as of the publication date of this catalog. This list will not be updated again until the next catalog is published in July.

Professor

Tori Svoboda, Ed.D. (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/tsvoboda/>)

Jörg Vianden, Ed.D. (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/jvianden/>)

Associate Professor

Becki Elkins, Ph.D. (<https://www.uwlax.edu/profile/belkins/>)

Adele Lozano, Ph.D. (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/alozano/>) (until late August 2024)

Assistant Professor

Gabriel Pulido, Ph. D. (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/gpulido/>)

Clinical and Adjunct Faculty

The SAA Department works with several additional adjunct faculty located at various institutions across the country. Visit the SAA Department website (<https://www.uwlax.edu/student-affairs-admin/our-people/>) for the most current list of instructors.

Additional Staff

Hanna Dovalina (<https://www.uwlax.edu/profile/hdovalina/>), Graduate Writing Consultant & Program Manager

Sharon Tellier (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/stellier/>), Academic Department Associate

Graduate degrees

- Student affairs administration in higher education - MSED: online (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/studentaffairs/student-affairs-administration-higher-education-online-ms/>)
- Student affairs administration in higher education - MSED: blended (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/>)

studentaffairs/student-affairs-administration-higher-education-blended-ms/) (no new cohorts expected in 2024)

Courses

SAA 700 Cr.3

Professional and Ethical Foundations in Student Affairs

This course provides an overview of the professional standards, ethics, and competencies used throughout the student affairs administration profession. The course explores a wide range of student affairs functional areas and related professional organizations. Scholarly writing expectations and APA Style guidelines are a focus of the course to further develop students' written communication skills. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall, Summer.

SAA 702 Cr.3

Student Development Theory

This course provides a foundation for current college student developmental theories which provides insight into the processes of student learning, growth, and development during the college years. Emphasis is placed on the application of developmental theories to diverse college populations and environments, as well as understanding the implications of these models for the policies and practices of higher education. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall, Summer.

SAA 704 Cr.3

Leadership and Organizational Theories

This course provides an overview of a variety of leadership and organizational theories, emphasizing those with practical application for meeting the challenges confronting student affairs professionals in higher education. Several theories will be reviewed, including (but not limited to) trait leadership, political leadership, systems leadership, transformative leadership, and servant leadership. Course participants will explore the ways in which gender, race/ethnicity, and other identities shape how leadership is expressed and received. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Spring, Summer.

SAA 705 Cr.3

Higher Education Values, Philosophy, and History

This course introduces students to the history, philosophy, and values of higher education in the United States from the Colonial era to the early 21st Century. The study of the history of higher education serves as a way to develop critical thinking skills in the academic discipline and profession of student affairs. Understanding how values, beliefs, assumptions, ideas, and other forces (such as people, culture, society, politics or economics) have shaped US higher education is a core component of the course. Of critical importance is an examination of the history of marginalized groups in higher education and an examination of the impact of federal higher education policy on the development of higher education in the US. The course provides a conceptual understanding of the dynamics of higher education rather than the memorization of "facts" and names. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall.

SAA 706 Cr.3

Advising and Supporting

This course introduces students to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals and groups through direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance. Students will apply theoretical knowledge to practice by developing advising and supporting strategies that take into account self-knowledge and the needs of others to advance the holistic wellness of self, students, and colleagues. Course content will also focus on appropriate crisis management response and applicable policies and ethical guidelines related to advising and student support. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall, Spring.

SAA 708 Cr.3

Social Justice and Inclusion

This course provides a critical understanding of diversity issues in American higher education and student affairs. The course will review the diversity of institutions, student experiences, and student identities, with a focus on how that diversity enriches and adds value to the learning environment. The course introduces the concept of social justice work in student affairs, which involves both responding to students in a culturally competent manner as well as shaping institutional environments, policies, and practices to achieve more equitable outcomes. By the end of this course, students should deepen their equity, diversity, and inclusion competencies; and understand their own agency and social responsibility inclusive of others, their community, and the larger global context. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall, Spring.

SAA 720 Cr.1-3

Special Topics in Student Affairs Administration

This course covers special topics in student affairs administration. The particular topic(s) selected will be determined by the SAA faculty according to current need and interest. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program or student affairs administration and leadership EDD program. Offered Annually.

SAA 730 Cr.3

Law, Policy, and Governance in Student Affairs

This course will include an overview of law, policy, and governance in higher education and student affairs. This includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to policy development processes used in various contexts, the application of legal constructs, compliance/policy issues, and the understanding of governance structures and their impact on one's professional practice. The application of educational law, legal risks and the responsibilities of student affairs professionals in higher education will be addressed. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Spring, Summer.

SAA 760 Cr.3

Administration of Human and Organizational Resources

This course focuses on the administration of institutional human capital, financial, and physical resources. Student affairs professionals bring personal strengths and grow as managers through challenging themselves to build new skills in the selection, supervision, motivation, and formal evaluation of staff; resolution of conflict; management of the politics of organizational discourse; and the effective application of strategies and techniques associated with financial resources, facilities management, fundraising, technology, crisis management, risk management and sustainable resources. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Spring.

SAA 765 Cr.3

Assessment and Evaluation in Student Affairs

This course introduces students to the critical issues and practice of assessment and program evaluation in student affairs. The course reinforces the need to make data-driven decisions about how to best work with students at both two and four-year institutions. Course content will focus on assessment goals, methods to assess student learning and program outcomes, systematic program evaluation, identifying questions associated with assessment and evaluation, and conducting critical reviews of existing research related to issues in student affairs. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Spring.

SAA 775 Cr.1-3

Student Affairs Practicum

Practical experience in student or academic affairs, under professional supervision. Students will complete projects that increase their skills, knowledge, or abilities in the competency areas outlined by ACPA/NASPA. The student will spend a minimum of 70 hours per credit at the site. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SAA 780 Cr.3

Capstone Research and Proposal

Content includes an overview of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessments, and research in higher education. This course will involve students in the development of a research, assessment or evaluation project that has practical application for student affairs in a higher education setting. Students will be expected to apply the knowledge gained in the coursework to a specific issue in student affairs. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Fall.

SAA 790 Cr.3

Capstone Seminar in Student Affairs Administration

This course provides an avenue for culminating and integrating the graduate program experience through the exploration and analysis of contemporary concerns in higher education and student affairs. To be taken during the student's final semester. Prerequisite: SAA 780; admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Offered Spring.

SAA 795 Cr.1-3

Independent Study in Student Affairs Administration

Independent study and completion of a paper on a topic approved and directed by a SAA faculty member. Repeatable for credit - maximum three. Prerequisite: admission to student affairs administration in higher education MSED program. Consent of instructor. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SAA 800 Cr.3

21st Century Learners

This course provides advanced graduate students with a comprehensive understanding of theories and research related to student development in higher education, with attention paid to the ways in which college student enrollment patterns are shifting, and thus, college student identity development is more diverse and ever evolving. Student development theories and enrollment trends in higher education will help students better understand the complexities and differences among and between traditional and emerging college students. Course readings and activities focus on the experiences of students of diverse backgrounds, including working students, veterans, part-time students, and online students. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Summer.

SAA 805 Cr.3

Organization and Governance

This course provides an overview of organizational and governance structures in higher education by examining how institutions are organized, governed and influenced by internal and external policy-makers and stakeholders. How these stakeholders drive change in the organization and governance of higher educational institutions will be explored. A variety of institutional types (community colleges, technical colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, research universities) and funding models (public, private non-profit, private for-profit) will be considered, along with theoretical principles of organizational theory. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Summer.

SAA 808 Cr.3

Enrollment Management

Student affairs administrators play a major role in ensuring the success and viability of their institutions through their work in enrollment management. Understanding factors that shape students' college choice are key components of successful enrollment management, as are institutional decisions regarding marketing, recruitment, and admission of students. Ways in which institutions use financial aid, grants, and tuition discounting to assist students in deciding which institution to attend are examined. Enrollment management is concerned with the student mix, ensuring the student class is diverse, talented, and able to contribute to the education of all students at the institution. Student success is an equally important aspect of enrollment management. An examination of ways in which institutions support student success is included in this course. In addition, the intersection of enrollment management and institutional finances is explored. Access, retention, and graduation are key measures used to evaluate the success of an institution's enrollment management policies. Identification of strategic institutional enrollment management plans based on enrollment management theory, frameworks, and orientations will be explored. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Fall.

SAA 810 Cr.3

Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations of Leadership in Education

This interdisciplinary course provides a foundation for the development of personal and professional leadership style grounded in the evolution of leadership theory and reflective of the influence of social locations and identities. Through exposure to recognized leaders in education and other fields, students will postulate what leadership principles resonate with their area of work and study. Students will engage in interdisciplinary analyses of leadership theories and philosophies, and will examine the complex ethical and professional responsibilities within professional and community relationships. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership or the Higher Education Leadership Graduate Certificate. Offered Fall.

SAA 820 Cr.3

Critical Analysis of Systemic Inequities: Challenges of Social Justice

From pre-kindergarten through college, institutions of education struggle with creating equitable outcomes for underrepresented and/or marginalized groups. This course will study the ways in which educational systems replicate inequitable outcomes, from degree completion gaps for groups of varying ethnic/racial or social class backgrounds, to patterns of gender discrimination in faculty advancement. The course will focus on multicultural organizational development, equity scorecards, multicultural change intervention matrices, and other theories and practices to prepare educators to cultivate more equitable educational systems in the U.S. The focus is less on individual forms of diversity and more on systemic or institutional efforts to achieve greater equity. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Spring.

SAA 825 Cr.3

Higher Education Finance and Budgeting

Solid fiscal management is a critical skill for effective leadership in student affairs units in higher education. This course prepares student affairs administrators for effective fiscal management by examining revenue sources and expenditures, the reasons for rising college prices, the challenges associated with accessibility and affordability, and the roles of states, the federal government, and institutions in financing higher education. The course also explores ways to increase cost effectiveness and institutional and departmental budgeting processes. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership or the Higher Education Leadership Graduate Certificate. Offered Spring, Summer.

SAA 830 Cr.3

Qualitative Research Methods

This course is designed to give students more applied knowledge and experience with developing and implementing an independent qualitative research study. This course aims to enhance student development in qualitative research design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The course will cover key theoretical concepts and methodological approaches to qualitative inquiry. Students will complete a sample qualitative research project from the initial stages of conceptualization of the study to the reporting of findings. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Spring.

SAA 835 Cr.3

Assessment and Program Evaluation

This course focuses on the art of assessment in student affairs, including setting assessment goals, designing an assessment project, selecting methods for data collection and analysis, interpreting and reporting findings, as well as evaluating program effectiveness with assessment results. In recent years, student affairs units across the U.S. have vastly increased their engagement and inquiries about the college student experience, including student preparation for college, their needs and satisfaction once on campus, their attitudes and behaviors, their membership in distinct student cultures, their usage of campus services, and their overall experience and success. The need to make data-driven decisions about how to best serve and develop college students has stemmed from political, societal, and fiscal pressures. As a result, doctoral students must develop their skills and knowledge to lead institutional or unit efforts in assessment on their own campuses. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Spring.

SAA 840 Cr.3

Supervision and Human Resource Management

Preparing and leading a diverse workforce for a changing higher education environment can be challenging. Leadership in student affairs requires effective management of our greatest resource - personnel. This course applies leadership theories learned earlier in the program through an applied approach to the management of people in complex organizations. Included is a review of various methods of recruitment, selection, and orientation of new personnel as well as performance management, compensation, supervision, training and development of existing personnel. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Fall.

SAA 845 Cr.3

Quantitative Research Methods

This course will focus on understanding the concepts of design and analysis of quantitative research in student affairs. The course reviews methodological considerations for experimental, quasi-experimental, and co-relational research with a focus on understanding issues of causal inference, sampling, validity, measurement, hypothesis testing, analytic strategies and reporting. We will use readings of experimental and non-experimental research studies on a range of issues in the field of student affairs in order to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various research design and analytic choices. Through these readings students will learn to engage in scholarly critiques of quantitative research, conduct a methodological review of quantitative research in an area of interest, and form a foundation for understanding and developing methodologically sound quantitative research. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Summer.

SAA 865 Cr.3

Strategic Planning and Managing Change

In this course, students will explore strategic institutional and programmatic planning to enhance institutional effectiveness. A major goal of this course will be to ensure an understanding of and appreciation for the range of approaches that can be taken to strategic planning in tandem with change management theory and application. Course participants will become familiar with current best practices in strategic planning and change management that support the drive toward institutional effectiveness. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Fall.

SAA 870 Cr.3

Policy and Regulatory Compliance

Creating an institutional culture of compliance, centered on a strong compliance program that addresses and coordinates all requirements with which the institution must comply, is a key function of higher education administrators. This course will provide student affairs administrators with knowledge and resources about laws, regulations, and institutional policies that support best practices in institutional strategies for creating a safe environment for student learning. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Spring.

SAA 875 Cr.3

Organizational Communication

Administrative leaders are required to manage people and the flow of information in ways that keep the campus community informed while also respecting confidentiality and sensitivity to institutional risk. Understanding how people communicate, how good working relationships are formed and maintained, how to develop cohesive work groups, and how to communicate are essential characteristics of successful administrators. This course will focus on organizational structure and theory, as well as on group dynamics and interpersonal communication as applied to post-secondary institutions. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership or the Higher Education Leadership Graduate Certificate. Offered Spring, Summer.

SAA 890 Cr.3

College Teaching

This course provides advanced graduate students with an introduction to college teaching by examining the role of learning theory, pedagogy, and course preparation in developing effective teaching practices. Course readings and activities also consider the role of student diversity, technology, course evaluations in developing effective teaching practices. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Summer.

SAA 895 Cr.1

Independent Research

This research credit is available to doctoral students who have completed all other course work in the Student Affairs Administration and Leadership (SAAL) Ed.D. Program except SAA 990 and 995 and cannot enroll in those courses because they have not yet met the prerequisites. SAA 895 does not fulfill required or elective credits in the SAAL Ed.D. Program. It is an option for those who have completed all courses and wish to continue working with their dissertation chair. Students register for SAA 895 only when they are not registered for any other credits. Repeatable for credit - maximum four. Prerequisite: SAA 950. Consent of instructor. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SAA 898 Cr.3

Special Topics in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership

Special topics of interest to professionals in the field of student affairs are offered in this course. Topics change as needed. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Offered Occasionally.

SAA 899 Cr.1-3

Independent Study

This course provides an opportunity for advanced individualized independent study at the post-masters level or at the post-doctorate level. Students enrolled in the Ed.D. in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership program may also enroll. Prerequisite: admission to Ed.D. Program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Consent of instructor. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SAA 930 Cr.2

Dissertation Planning Workshop

This course serves as an introduction to the dissertation process. The workshop format will allow students to explore possible topics for their dissertations. Students will consider the broad array of dissertation formats and topics available to them. In the context of the workshop, students will develop and articulate a focused dissertation topic and will conduct an initial review of the relevant literature and existing research. Prerequisite: SAA 830 and SAA 845 (both may be taken concurrently). Offered Summer.

SAA 931 Cr.1

Doctoral Writers' Retreat

This course is an optional writing retreat for doctoral students beginning the dissertation journey. The retreat may be on-campus at UW-La Crosse over a long weekend and/or held virtually. Students will read about, present on, and discuss various writing strategies and reflect on their own writing processes. Repeatable for credit - maximum two. Prerequisite: SAA 930 or concurrent. Offered Summer.

SAA 950 Cr.3

Dissertation Seminar

The purpose of this seminar is to mentor and support students as they draft their dissertation proposals. The seminar format will allow students to discuss design decisions for their systematic inquiry, share work in progress, and receive feedback from peers and the instructor. This course will also introduce the student to processes such as how to structure a dissertation proposal, conduct a literature review, prepare for the ethics of fieldwork and submit a proposal to the Institutional Review Board, and clearly articulate a study's design. Prerequisite: SAA 830, SAA 845, SAA 930. Offered Fall.

SAA 990 Cr.3

Dissertation I

This course builds on the foundation established in SAA 950, Dissertation Seminar, and is designed to continue support of the Ed.D dissertation. Prerequisite: SAA 950 and successful defense of dissertation proposal. Consent of instructor. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SAA 995 Cr.3

Dissertation II

This course supports the completion of a dissertation as required for the Ed.D. in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. Prerequisite: SAA 990. Consent of instructor. Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.