

Northwestern | STUDENT AFFAIRS

12TH

ANNUAL STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 | Norris University Center

WEDNESDAY 06.25.25

LEARNING LOCATION



NORTHWESTERN ROOM | 202

TRACK 1: CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

Dr. Kelly Schaefer, *Strategic Initiatives*
Ashley Sanchez, *Student Enrichment Services*

Eric Budzynski and Maddie Kerr,
Religious and Spiritual Life and CARE/HPaW



ARCH ROOM | 206

TRACK 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT
AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Liz Akinboboye, *CARE/HPaW*
Colleen McMahon, *AccessibleNU*
Kristen Beck, *Residential Experience*



LAKE ROOM | 203

TRACK 3: ASSESSING
STUDENT LEARNING

Abby Ross, *Fraternity & Sorority Life*

Ben Perry, *Residential Services Operations & Services*

Jeff Jenkins, *Northwestern Career Advancement*



LOUIS | ROOM 205

Dr. Robert Aaron, *Executive Director, Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

Amy Huntington, *Associate Director, Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

Qile Chen, *Data Analyst, Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Introduction



CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

WELCOME

Dr. Robert Aaron, *Executive Director, Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Jose Santos, *Associate Director, Northwestern Career Advancement*

OPENING REMARKS

Susan Davis, *Vice President for Student Affairs*

9:20 - 9:55 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 1



MAPPING THE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNEY: MEASURING LOWER-INCOME STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Dr. Kelly Schaefer, *Strategic Initiatives*



BACK TO THE BASICS: MEASURING THE AMNESTY PROCESSES IMPACT ON DILLO DAY

Liz Akinboboye, *CARE/HPaW*



THE LEADERSHIP DISCONNECT: UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING UPPER-LEVEL STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT IN FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES

Abby Ross, *Fraternity and Sorority Life*

10:00 - 10:35 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 2



FROM CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY: ENHANCING SES OUTREACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Ashley Sanchez, *Student Enrichment Services*



STOP TAPPING YOUR PEN: ASSESSING ACCOMMODATED TEST-TAKING EXPERIENCES

Colleen McMahon, *Accessible NU*



**ENHANCING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS THROUGH ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT:
FOSTERING COMMUNITY AND ADVANCING THE MAIL & PACKAGE CENTER
ASSISTANTS' SUCCESS**

Ben Perry, *Residential Services Operations & Services*

10:35 - 10:50 a.m. Break

BREAK

10:50 - 11:25 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 3



**FROM CURIOSITY TO CONNECTION: SUPPORTING SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF
NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS**

Eric Budzynski & Maddie Kerr, *Religious & Spiritual Life and CARE/HPaW*



**BUILDING SELF-AUTHORSHIP: ASSESSING STUDENT COMMITMENT TO GOALS AND
IDENTITY**

Kristen Beck, *Residential Experience*



DISCLOSING A DISABILITY DURING THE INTERNSHIP AND JOB SEARCH PROCESS

Jeff Jenkins, *Northwestern Career Advancement*

11:30 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. Assessment of Tomorrow



ASSESSMENT OF TOMORROW

Dr. Robert Aaron, *Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*
Amy Huntington, *Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*
Qile Chen, *Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

12:05 - 12:15 p.m. Wrap-Up & Gratitude



WRAP-UP & GRATITUDE

Dr. Robert Aaron, *Student Affairs Assessment & Planning*

MAPPING THE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNEY: MEASURING LOWER-INCOME STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Dr. Kelly Schaefer

Strategic Initiatives for Student Affairs

This study aims to leverage literature with Northwestern's student data to map lower-income students' experiences in Student Affairs throughout their undergraduate experience. Jose Santos' previous findings (2023) showed that while outcomes for BIPOC and FGLI students are like those of their peers, BIPOC and FGLI students have higher rates of involvement across events, student employment, and internships.

The purpose of mapping these Student Affairs experiences for low-income students is to research and assess how specific points throughout the undergraduate experience may differ from their higher-income peers. Northwestern data shows that students have high outcomes in terms of graduation and placement rates, but the journey to the outcomes can be fraught with added steps and layers to achieve these outcomes.

Strategic Theme: Pursue Community and Belonging

BACK TO BASICS: MEASURING THE AMNESTY PROCESSES IMPACT ON DILLO DAY

Liz Akinboboye

CARE/HPaW

In AY24-25, the amnesty process was shifted into HPaW from Community Standards. Learning outcomes and teaching strategies were developed to ensure that wellness was centered as part of the learning experience. Through one-on-one meetings and BASICS training, students should be able to articulate what factors lead to ACOD incident, recognize at least 3 signs and symptoms of a substance overdose, articulate the importance of creating a community of care and how the Amnesty process is a part of it, and describe the importance of intervening earlier rather than later in a substance emergency.

Learning was assessed via a survey immediately following the amnesty process. An additional assessment was developed through the Winter quarter which pulled from results of the initial assessment. This second survey was sent immediately following Dillo Day, in order to measure the efficacy and impact of the amnesty process in real-world situations like Dillo. Results of both surveys will be shared. Future impacts of programming and assessment of the amnesty process will be discussed.

Learning Outcomes: Personal Development, Cognitive and Practical Skills

THE LEADERSHIP DISCONNECT: UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING UPPER-LEVEL STUDENT DIS-ENGAGEMENT IN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES

Abby Ross

Fraternity & Sorority Life

As many fraternity and sorority chapters increasingly rely on first- and second-year students to fill key leadership roles, often before they've had a full year of membership, questions arise around readiness, support, and sustainability. This project explores the growing leadership disconnect in fraternity and sorority communities, where underclassmen are often thrust into high-responsibility positions while upperclassmen disengage from chapter involvement altogether.

Using event attendance data, existing research, and focus groups across all four governing councils (IFC, MGC, NPHC, PHA), this study examines the leadership lifecycle and factors driving disengagement. It identifies barriers to effective leadership, including the unpreparedness of underclassmen, and uncovers key reasons behind upperclassmen disengagement.

Findings from this research provide actionable strategies for student affairs professionals, specifically fraternity and sorority advisors, to better prepare young leaders while also reengaging upper-class students in meaningful ways.

Strategic Themes: Foster Meaningful Student Engagement, Invest in Organizational Development

FROM CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY: ENHANCING SES OUTREACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Ashley Sanchez

Student Enrichment Services

Student Enrichment Services supports first-generation, lower-income (FGLI), and/or DACA/Undocumented students through individualized support, connecting to resources, and cohort-based programs. Students from cohort-based programs are more comfortable using SES resources and interacting with our office, while students not involved in our cohort programs tend to be less knowledgeable about resources and less engaged with our office. As our mission is to support all FGLI and/or DACA/Undocumented students, we want to explore different methods to increase outreach efforts to engage non-cohort students.

This project uses qualitative and quantitative survey data, Instagram analytics, and partner office observations to understand the SES Instagram's impact on FGLI and/or DACA/Undocumented undergraduate students' engagement with SES resources and our office/staff.

Findings from this project inform future Instagram content planning and capacity building toward SES having a greater social media across platforms to more effectively connect FGLI and/or DACA/Undocumented undergraduate students to SES resources and support. Effectively using social media as a tool for learning and engagement will foster a greater FGLI and DACA/Undocumented community on campus and help ensure that SES is supporting all students regardless of cohort involvement.

Strategic Themes: *Foster Meaningful Student Engagement, Pursue Community and Belonging*

STOP TAPPING YOUR PEN: ASSESSING ACCOMMODATED TEST-TAKING EXPERIENCES

Colleen McMahon

AccessibleNU Testing Services

Testing Services is the functional area within AccessibleNU that oversees accommodated exam coordination and proctoring. Starting in Fall 2024, Testing Services increased the number of students with test accommodations it proctored in each course section, and as a result, Testing Services proctored 2,134 exams in the Fall 2024 quarter. This change resulted in a 52% increase from the Fall 2023 quarter and six times more exams proctored by Testing Services than in the Fall 2022 quarter. While being compliant with disability accommodations and Northwestern's academic integrity policies are critical to the work of Testing Services, an additional goal of the office is to remain student-centered in practice. To that end, Testing Services wanted to assess the current test-taking experiences of students utilizing their test accommodations.

A survey was created in the Winter of 2025 to measure the degree to which Testing Services and faculty who proctor for students with test accommodations are meeting compliance requirements and the student-centered mission. Undergraduate students who utilized their test accommodations in the Fall 2024 quarter were

sent the survey in the Spring of 2025, asking them to reflect on their test-taking experiences during the fall. Students were asked to provide feedback on their experiences when they were proctored by their instructor and/or Testing Services to evaluate quality of testing experiences. Survey results will be covered. Implications resulting from the programmatic evaluation and needs assessment will be discussed.

Learning Outcomes: *Personal Development, Cognitive and Practical Skills*

ENHANCING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS THROUGH ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT: FOSTER COMMUNITY AND ADVANCING MAIL & PACKAGE CENTER ASSISTANTS' SUCCESS

Ben Perry

Residential Services

Are you ready to discover how on-campus employment can transform the lives of our most vulnerable students? Join us for an insightful presentation that delves into improving the student employee experience at the Mail & Package Center (MPC) and how their roles foster a sense of belonging and community at Northwestern University.

In this session, we'll reveal key observations from the first year of overseeing MPC operations, highlighting the challenges and opportunities faced by student employees. A student employee survey was conducted to understand student motivations and challenges. We'll share compelling data and feedback that underscore the importance of fostering a supportive environment that promotes teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, and conflict resolution skills.

By attending this presentation, you'll gain valuable insights into how focusing on student employees can drive success for both the department and the student employees. Don't miss this opportunity to learn how we can build a stronger, more inclusive community and advance the success of our student employees.

Learning Outcome: *Cognitive and Practical Skills*

FROM CURIOSITY TO CONNECTION: SUPPORTING SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHWESTERN STUDENTS

Eric Budzynski & Maddie Kerr

Religious & Spiritual Life and CARE/HPaW

Religious & Spiritual Life is engaged in a five-year longitudinal study to discover what environmental, behavioral, and psychological factors influence the intersection of students who have selected their religious identity via institutional surveys as “spiritual but not religious (SBNR),” “atheist,” “agnostic,” or “none.” Previous years’ findings indicated that there was a significant increase from first year to fourth year in students who identify as SBNR, paired with an increasing expectation that Northwestern provide opportunities for exploring spirituality for those who identified as atheist, agnostic, or none. Focus groups and interviews conducted over the last two years found that 1st and 2nd year students had diverse developmental and evolving understandings of spirituality, spiritual identity, and engagement with practice and communities. Broad programmatic learning outcomes were developed from this research.

Currently in year four of this study, four novel programmatic initiatives based on previous years’ findings were created and run across the academic year. A cumulative Spiritual Wellness and Contemplative Practice impact survey was designed and administered in Spring Quarter to assess the degree to which spiritual development needs and programmatic learning outcomes were being met across these new programs. The results of this survey, supplemented with findings from program-specific assessments already in use, will be shared and future implications will be discussed.

Learning Outcomes: Cognitive and Practical Skills, Personal Development, Interpersonal Competence

BUILDING SELF-AUTHORSHIP: ASSESSING STUDENT COMMITMENT TO GOALS & IDENTITY

Kristen Beck

Residential Services

Baxter-Magolda defines self-authorship as the internal capacity to define one’s beliefs, identity, and social relations, and identifies three elements of self-authorship: trusting the internal voice, building an internal foundation, and securing internal commitments (1992). This project seeks to understand the impact of residential programming on student commitment to social identities and personal, professional, and academic goals as part of the process of building an internal foundation.

Residents in Elder, 584 Lincoln, 2347 Sheridan, and 2349 Sheridan were invited to complete a survey about their participation in residential programming, factors influencing attendance, and how the programs supported personal growth and goal-setting. The results of this survey offer information about students of different genders and academic years are impacted by programming. As a follow-up to this survey, a post-program assessment was created for the 2025-2026 academic year to better understand how students make meaning of programming and apply it to their lives.

Strategic Theme: Foster Meaningful Student Engagement

DISCLOSING A DISABILITY DURING THE INTERNSHIP AND JOB SEARCH PROCESS

Jeff Jenkins

Northwestern Career Advancement

Disclosing a disability during the internship or job search can be a difficult decision for students. Often, they are not sure if they should disclose their disability to an employer or the timing of when it may be right to disclose their disability during the application process.

The Disclosing a Disability (DaD) workshop was developed after a student needs assessment was administered in the winter quarter of 2024, in collaboration with AccessibleNU. An initial workshop was piloted in the spring quarter, 2024 after initial findings were interpreted. Students provided feedback after attending the pilot workshop, and that feedback was used to develop learning outcomes for the current series of DaD workshops.

A full academic year of DaD workshops have been available to the AccessibleNU population, and pre/post workshop assessments were administered to attendees. Additionally, a competencies assessment was integrated into the workshop content allowing participants to identify top skills to translate to strengths. Pre/post assessment data measured students’ learning outcomes about the timing of disability disclosure and how to disclose a disability to an employer during a job search. Results of the first year of the workshop will be shared, and implications for future work will be discussed.

Learning Outcomes: Personal Development, Cognitive and Practical Skills



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