

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE



FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AT CATHOLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

THIRD EDITION WITH DIAGNOSTIC QUERIES

A BRIEF HISTORY

Developing the *Principles*

The *Principles* emerge from highly collaborative efforts over many years. The following is a timeline of the steps taken in the document's creation, implementation, and development.

- 2005** Conversation with the Congregation for Catholic Education during the ACCU Rome Seminar sparks the idea for the *Principles* initiative.
- 2006** Sponsorship for the project secured from the leadership of ACCU, ASACCU, and JASPA.
- November 2006** Writers meet for weekend retreat at Wye River, MD, to develop first draft.
- 2007** Draft document shared for feedback at national meetings of ACCU, ASACCU, and JASPA.
- December 2007** Final document sent to presidents and senior student affairs officers of all Catholic colleges and universities in North America.
- 2009** *Principles* assessment project authorized by ACCU, ASACCU, and JASPA.
- November 2009** *Principles* assessment retreat at Wye River.
- 2010** Vetting the diagnostic queries and preparing the second edition.
- December 2010** Second edition sent to presidents and senior student affairs officers of all Catholic colleges and universities in North America.
- 2012** Publication of *Building the Capacity for Mission through Use of the Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities, Catholic Education*
- 2016** Publication of *Student Life in Catholic Higher Education: Advancing Good Practice*

Re-Imagining the *Principles*

- 2019** ASACCU Board includes refreshing the *Principles* in its strategic plan igniting a new process.
- October 2019** ACCU, ASACCU, and JASPA leaders meet to discuss refreshing the *Principles*.
- November 2019** ASACCU Senior Student Affairs Officers roundtable discussion provides feedback.
- February 2020** Planning group meets during ACCU meeting in Washington, DC.
- March 2020** Survey seeking feedback from ASACCU and JASPA members sent and analyzed.
- March 2020** COVID-19 shutdown delays the process until 2021.
- February 2021** Over 100 participate in online listening session to add to the 2020 survey results.
- September 2021** Writers meet at the Inn at Villanova, PA.
- February 2022** The final draft is presented to the presidents at the ACCU 2022 Annual Meeting.
- Spring 2022** The *Principles* are available for broad distribution.

Re-Imagining the *Principles* Writers' Retreat Participants

- Dr. Esmilda Abreu-Hornbostel**, Associate Vice President and Dean of Students, Manhattan College
- Tshombé Brown**, Moreau Center, Program Manager, Service & Community Partnerships, University of Portland
- Kathy Byrnes, J.D.**, Vice President for Student Affairs, Villanova University
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- Dr. Craig Ford, Jr.**, Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies, St. Norbert's College
- Dr. Chris Haug**, Vice President for Student Affairs, Neumann University
- Joe Henry**, Dean of Students, King's University College (Canada)
- Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, CM**, President, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
- Dr. Michael James**, Lecturer; Director, Institute for Administrators in Catholic Higher Education, Boston College
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- Dr. Todd Olson**, President, Mount Mercy University
- Dr. Elizabeth Ortiz**, Vice President, Diversity and Equity, DePaul University
- Dr. Rebecca Sawyer**, Vice President, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
- Bennie D. Williams**, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of the Multicultural Student Center, Canisius College

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these principles is to provide a framework for student affairs professionals at Catholic colleges and universities in their reflection and conversation, staff development, and planning and assessment. These principles are born out of our Catholic tradition and shared across our many and diverse institutions. This guide is a tool to support and assist the transformative work of student affairs practice and can be used to catalyze discussion with a broad array of leaders across Catholic higher education.

Preamble

Our work, grounded within the context of the mission of the institution as Catholic colleges and universities, is as urgent as ever and has never been more complex. Our students and our institutions are simultaneously facing a global pandemic, a national reckoning with racism, deep political and social divisions, a growing mental health crisis, the ever-increasing costs of an education, and public speculation about the value of a college degree.

In this context, it is more important than ever that we educate the whole student. We must walk with students in new and innovative ways as they pursue purpose, develop their faith lives, and build relationships – across difference – in pursuit of the common good.

For institutions and for student affairs professionals, this urgent and complex work can and should be inspired and guided by an ongoing dialogue between our Catholic tradition, the distinctive charisms of founding religious congregations, and the unique gifts and needs of our students and colleagues. These principles aim to immerse student affairs professionals in the center of this dialogue, so that they can be

contributors to the work, provide leadership, inform practice, and be enriched and inspired by the process.

The academic communities we call home are richly diverse. We can expect, therefore, that our many institutions and the many individuals within our schools will embody these principles in unique ways. While our expression of these principles may be unique, we are bound together by a compelling and transcendent shared mission, and we hope the principles can inspire and guide our work as we purposely, collectively, and distinctively pursue our shared Catholic mission.



PRINCIPLES & DIAGNOSTIC QUERIES

Utilizing the Diagnostic Queries for Formative Assessment & Strategic Planning

Each principle is accompanied by five diagnostic queries that may be used for the purpose of formative self-assessment and strategic planning.

They are:

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

The principles have a normative dimension, describing good practices at all Catholic colleges and universities. It is expected, however, that the principles will be implemented differently depending on the institutional culture that reflects a specific history animated by a distinct charism.

Engaging the first query, “What does this mean to us?,” is thus a foundational step in the assessment and analysis process. It is always a temptation to jump immediately to the “what we do” questions, but what we are doing should proceed from how we understand and interpret the principle.

The second query, “How do we animate the principle?,” includes a subset of questions specific to each of the individual principles.

The third query, “What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?,” facilitates knowing whether or not what we are doing is coherent with what we understand should be done to effectively animate the principle. Some methods that may be employed to answer this query include needs assessment, satisfaction surveys, usage over time, outcomes assessment, change of campus culture, and cost effectiveness, among others.

The fourth and fifth queries, “What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?” and “What will we do with the information?,” are critical questions for successful strategic planning that include steps to utilize the results of our assessment efforts.

PRINCIPLE ONE

Embraces all students as valued members of an inclusive and diverse community that embodies God's love for all.

Student affairs professionals at Catholic colleges and universities create policies, practices, and programs that result in developing a student's sense of belonging. They design equity-minded initiatives that reflect the manifestation of God's love. They support campus cultures that reflect social justice and an inclusive campus that holds sacred the dignity of each person.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. To what extent are we prepared to embrace all students?
 - b. Do our policies, practices, and programs result in a student's sense of belonging?
 - c. Have we incorporated an equity mindset in the design of our initiatives and programs?
 - d. Do our actions reflect the manifestation of God's love for all?
 - e. Do our initiatives reflect the manifestation of God's love for all?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?



PRINCIPLE TWO

Equips student affairs professionals with knowledge and perspectives to contribute to the Catholic mission of the institution. Grounds practice in the living tradition of the Church, as the people of God on a journey to the truth.

Student affairs professionals engage in regular review and discernment of how the university's policies, practices, and decisions draw on the Catholic mission and tradition. Components of the tradition include, but are not limited to, reflections on scripture, Church teaching, theology, spiritual writings, and ethics. Many institutions also benefit from charisms, spiritualities, and the personal witness of their founding religious congregation. Student affairs staff development focuses on deepening this understanding and awareness.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we use professional development to deepen our understanding and awareness of the Catholic mission of the institution?
 - b. How do we regularly review and discern how the university's policies, practices, and decisions reflect the wisdom tradition of the Church?
 - c. How do we engage components of the tradition of the Church, including reflections on Scripture, Church teaching, theology, spiritual writings, and ethics?
 - d. How do we benefit from the charism, spirituality, and personal witness of our founding religious congregation?
 - e. How do we see ourselves as the people of God on a journey to truth?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

PRINCIPLE THREE

Accompanies students on their search for truth, meaning, and integration through curricular and co-curricular learning.

Catholic colleges and universities foster the development of the whole person. In addition to supporting students' intellectual and social development, there is a particular emphasis on students' faith and spiritual development.

Student affairs professionals in this context support learning throughout the student experience and provide learning opportunities for the search for meaning, for conscience formation, and for contributing to the human family by

- cultivating vibrant learning communities on campus;
- linking personal accountability to self-reflection and its impact on community;
- creating student engagement opportunities where students learn empathy and a sense of their place in the world and how their actions can lead to a more equitable society; and,
- connecting personal interest with the common good.

In all this, faith is integrated with the intellectual life, bringing faith and reason into dialogue as students integrate these core aspects of their lives and development.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we cultivate vibrant learning communities on campus?
 - b. How do we link personal accountability to self reflection and its impact on community?
 - c. How do we create student engagement opportunities where students learn empathy and a sense of their place in the world?
 - d. How do we promote student actions that can lead to a more equitable society?
 - e. How do we connect students' personal interests with the common good?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

PRINCIPLE FOUR

Inspires and equips students to *live solidarity* and commit to the dignity of all people, embracing the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in a community of love.

Catholic social teaching calls upon all people of good will to care for one another and to live in solidarity and compassion, especially with those whom the world undervalues. This calls us to commit to the sacredness and dignity of each human person, including the various intersections that make up each individual, so that all might flourish. Work for racial justice, respect for life, human rights, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, sheltering refugees, eradicating poverty, climate sustainability, and other matters of human concern are ways of realizing this call in the present day. In a university context, we assist students in their attempts to better understand and promote awareness of such injustice at the local and global levels and to promote transformational change.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we reflect lives of compassion and care?
 - b. How do we reflect the sacredness and dignity of each human person?
 - c. How do we facilitate a deepening awareness of injustice at the local and global levels?
 - d. How do we promote transformational change?
 - e. How are we informed by principles of Catholic social teaching?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?



PRINCIPLE FIVE

Calls and challenges students to personal integrity, reverence, and care for self, one another, and the community.

Student affairs professionals have a responsibility to teach students about the inherent dignity of the human person and to model “care for the other” in our day-to-day professional practice. Staff should partner with religious leaders; mental health professionals; diversity, equity, and inclusion professionals; and others to call and equip students to act in ethical and loving ways. Staff also foster environments where students can learn and grow as whole persons and build capacity to treat themselves and others with care, respect, and integrity. Students learn about their own agency and gain perspectives on how to make choices in coherent and integral ways.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we teach students about the inherent dignity of the human person?
 - b. How do we model care for holistic well-being and education?
 - c. How do we partner with religious leaders; mental health professionals; diversity, equity, and inclusion professionals; and others?
 - d. How do we foster environments where students can learn and grow as whole persons and build capacity to treat themselves and others with care, respect, and integrity?
 - e. How do we accompany students to learn about their own agency and gain perspectives on how to make choices in coherent and integral ways?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?



PRINCIPLE SIX

Invites and accompanies all students to develop an active and meaningful relationship with God.

Student affairs professionals share responsibility with campus ministers to support students' spiritual growth. We offer inclusive, developmentally appropriate activities such as liturgy, sacraments and other prayer opportunities, faith sharing groups, retreats, spiritual direction, and instruction in the faith.

Students enter our campuses today with both religious and nonreligious identities. As student affairs professionals in Catholic contexts, we believe it is our responsibility to support all students in their search for meaning and for the Transcendent by providing varying resources and community connections for this purpose. We further invite students into conversations with all people of good will to foster understanding, respect, and shared action for the common good in a religiously pluralistic world.

We recognize that equally integral to this work of spiritual growth is the celebration of the religious diversity on our campuses, which cannot tolerate any form of religious discrimination.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we share responsibility with campus ministers to support students' spiritual growth?
 - b. How do we fulfill our responsibility to support all students in their search for meaning and the Transcendent by providing varying resources and community connections for this purpose?
 - c. How do we celebrate religious diversity on our campuses?
 - d. How do we combat all forms of religious discrimination?
 - e. How do we invite students into conversations with all people of good will to foster understanding, respect, and shared action for the common good in a religiously pluralistic world?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

PRINCIPLE SEVEN

Facilitates relationship building, dialogue, and the pursuit of common ground among individuals and communities with differing world view, contributing in the work for a more just world.

It is the role of Catholic colleges and universities to engage the great questions facing humanity. We do this work humbly and always with love, and from our Catholic belief that all human persons are created in the image of God. Student affairs professionals work to create space for those who disagree with one another to hear and consider another's thoughts and lived experiences. We recognize that it is never enough for a university community to critique the present order; we must become part of the solution.

We recognize the importance of self-examination, aware of our need for continued conversation, and attentive to the ways the culture of student affairs practices, policies, and structures might embody the justice and love we hope for the larger world.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we address the great questions facing humanity?
 - b. How do we reflect humility with love and the dignity of each person?
 - c. How do we create space for those who disagree to hear and consider the others' thoughts and lived experiences?
 - d. How do we promote our becoming part of the solution?
 - e. How do we encourage self-examination to be aware of our need for continued conversation?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

PRINCIPLE EIGHT

Assists students in discerning and developing their vocational directions and guides students in reflecting on how their gifts and talents connect with the world's needs.

Christians believe that their life work is accomplished in partnership with the God who gives life and purpose. Student affairs professionals guide students in their discernment process to integrate professional, personal, and relational commitments over the course of their lives. At Catholic colleges and universities, these conversations help students in their search for meaning and purpose by integrating their beliefs, gifts, ambitions, and hopes with the world's needs.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we guide students in their discernment of life choices?
 - b. How do we assist students to balance and integrate professional, personal, and relational commitments over the course of their lives?
 - c. How can we help students in their search for meaning and purpose?
 - d. How do we help students integrate their beliefs, gifts, ambitions, and hopes with the world's needs?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?



PRINCIPLE NINE

Intentionally develops the profession of student affairs at Catholic colleges and universities as a vital component of Catholic higher education.

Student affairs professionals at Catholic colleges and universities bear a responsibility for developing the vocation of our profession. We consider what is distinctively Catholic about this work and draw upon the myriad resources in this Catholic tradition to enrich the practice. We recruit, prepare, mentor, and support those who will impact and lead student affairs at Catholic universities in the future.

Student affairs professionals are also teacher practitioners and intellectuals who contribute to the scholarship of the field. We create and teach in graduate and other credentialing programs. We are knowledge creators, contributing through individual talents and experiences enriched by the Catholic mission to the larger profession of student affairs in higher education.

ASSESSING THE PRINCIPLE

1. What does this principle mean for me, my functional area, and my institution?
2. How do we animate this principle through programs, policies, and practices?
 - a. How do we consider what is distinctively Catholic about this work and draw upon the myriad resources in this Catholic tradition to enrich the practice?
 - b. How do we draw upon our founding charisms, in particular, to shape and direct our work?
 - c. How do we invest in professional development, including competencies, to do our important work in Catholic colleges and universities?
 - d. How do we recruit, prepare, mentor, and support those who will lead student affairs at Catholic colleges and universities in the future?
 - e. How do we leverage our own commitments and practice to inspire others to enter the field?
 - f. How do we contribute to the larger profession of student affairs in higher education?
3. What evidence do we have to judge the effectiveness of our efforts?
4. What does the evidence tell us about our effectiveness?
5. What will we do with the information we have gathered about our effectiveness?

STUDENT AFFAIRS AND CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION REFERENCE LIST 2011-2021

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU), founded in 1899, is the collective voice of Catholic higher education. Through seminars, conferences, publications, research, and consultation, ACCU helps campuses foster a vibrant Catholic identity.

Additional information at www.accunet.org.



The purpose of the Association for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities (ASACCU) is to promote an understanding of the rich Catholic intellectual tradition and its relevance for student affairs professionals who are working or will be working at Catholic colleges and universities. Through its activities and programs, the Association will encourage and facilitate the sharing of ideas and cooperative efforts among its members.

Additional information at www.asaccu.org.



The Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administration (JASPA) is a conference of the Association of Jesuit Colleges & Universities (AJCU). JASPA was founded in 1954 as the Conference of Jesuit Student Personnel Administrators (CJSPA). In fall 1981, JASPA became the official name of the organization and JASPA continues today, as the original members of CJSPA intended, to work to promote the mission of Jesuit higher education.

JASPA's efforts to educate student affairs practitioners include: an annual conference, a summer workshop every five years, summer institutes, newsletters, and various other publications and meetings.

Members of JASPA represent the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States and Belize and also include affiliate members from other institutions.

Additional information at www.jesuitstudentaffairs.org.

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