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Christopher Mychajluk  
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West Chester University

Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs

THESIS



Identity Development As A Pathway To Self-  
Authorship: A Restructure Of Neoliberal  
Programming Practices

Christopher J Mychajluk

May 2020

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AS A PATHWAY TO SELF-AUTHORSHIP: A  
RESTRUCTURE OF NEOLIBERAL PROGRAMMING PRACTICES

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the  
Department of Educational Foundations & Policy Studies  
West Chester University  
West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of  
Master of Science

By

Christopher J. Mychajluk

May 2020

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## Dedication

I'm dedicating this work to my "good company." To all of my mentors, role models, and peers who helped me discover who I was and walked me down my own path of self-authorship. Thank you.

## Acknowledgements

I'd like to first thank Dr. Mohajeri my thesis advisor and Dr. Hodes for helping me to complete this thesis with their feedback, words of encouragement, and amazing dedication to always go above and beyond to help in whatever way possible. Thank you to all my family and friends for all the laughs, check ins, and advice you've given me over this process. I'd like to thank my amazing supervisor Takeyda Williams for helping me to find my voice to speak my mind in the face of adversity, be authentic in all that I do, and not get to hung up on the little things. Thank you to everyone in Cohort 2 of the HEPSA programming, going through this process with you all has been an honor and a joy. Most of all, I'd like to acknowledge my wonderful spouse, Em Mychajluk, who supported me over these past two years not only financially and emotionally, but as my number one cheerleader. Through all the summer residence life trainings, late nights working, random thesis idea sessions, and most recently, finishing this thesis during a pandemic, you were always in my corner supporting me. Thank you for the support and I know this work will go on to change the field of student affairs as we know it today.

## Abstract

The original purpose of student affairs was to help develop the whole student outside of just academics. I argue that to develop the whole student, student affairs professionals must aid in students' exploration of self-authorship. Student affairs professionals do this work by putting on programs that allow students to explore their identities. I explore how this work is compromised by neoliberalism and as a result silos students' ability to explore their whole self. To mitigate this issue, I propose a two-part intervention that restructures student affairs programming budgets as one shared budget in order to facilitate the formation of large-scale collaborative programming, which I call "Pathway" programs.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, Self-Authorship, Programming, Experientialism

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## **Chapter 1**

In this chapter, I will be introducing my thesis topic, how I came to this topic, and the importance of my topic. To do this I will first discuss my journey through higher education and my own development through my time as a student leader in various roles. As I describe my journey, I will highlight some of the key lived experiences that have shaped me as an individual and my views of my thesis topic. Finally, I will close this chapter with a brief overview of what you can expect from Chapter 3 of my thesis.

### **My Beginning**

When I first started college, I was determined to do the best I possibly could. I came from a low-income inner-city school in Allentown, PA. I worked hard in high school to make it into college, and when I did get accepted into multiple universities, I decided to go to a medium sized public institution in rural PA. I received the Board of Governors Scholarship which covered my tuition since money was a factor in whether I could attend college or not. I'm a first-generation college student as well and the first child my mother raised from birth to attend college, which made me want to do my best to make her and all those who supported me through high school proud.

I started my undergraduate experience declared as a Psychology major and later I added a second major of Criminal Justice. I went to my undergrad with the plan to get my degree, join the FBI as a behavioral analyst, and then I wanted to have the FBI pay for me to continue my education, so I could eventually get my PhD in Psychology. The goal was to one day have my own counseling practice. My institution's psychology program was one of the best in the state school system, and this was part of the reason I chose to go there. The other reason I chose my institution was because of the GEAR UP program that my high school

class was a part of. This was a state funded program that gave inner city schools in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Allentown funding to prepare the class of 2014 for college. The other part of this program included full tuition scholarships to the top 10% of students in these inner-city schools to any of PA's 14 state institutions. It was because of this program that I met Shannon Musgrove, my admission's counselor at my high school from my undergraduate institution. Shannon met with me many times and was a big part of how I earned the Board of Governors scholarship. When I got to campus, Shannon created a Hispanic Meet and Greet for the Hispanic students on campus because we were a very small percentage of students on campus. My roommate and I continued to spend time with the individuals we met at this event and we danced and sang Spanish music for much of the night. It was with this group of people that I felt my first sense of community on campus, but also felt a sense of belonging I had not felt before. With this group I realized I didn't know much about my Puerto Rican heritage and that I also didn't know as much about myself as I thought I did. I had grown up in a very predominantly Hispanic area all my life but, I grew up with my mother who is Ukrainian and my stepfather who is white. Since I did not grow up with my Hispanic family there were many traditions and customs I was not exposed to growing up in an essentially white home. This meet and greet had been the first realization that I needed to explore who I was more.

### **The Endgame**

Shortly after the Hispanic Meet and Greet, I auditioned and joined an educational musical improv group that discussed college life in a fun theatrical way. When I auditioned for this group, I had auditioned with my roommate who I knew from high school. We both wanted to have a continued creative outlet since we both did theatre in high school and loved

to sing. We both were hesitant about the improvisation piece because neither of us had ever performed without a script. We were a bit uncomfortable but, after joining I ended up continuing with this group through all four years of my undergraduate experience. This group gave me not just another community to be a part, or a creative outlet, but it also improved my ability to play many roles at once and respond to situations as they arose. I had many good experiences and opportunities that came from this group, one of which I shall discuss a bit later.

It was in this improv group where I met my spouse. Coming from high school, there were many things I was ignorant about in the language I used, the impact that they had, but also in the way I interacted with people. My spouse always has challenged me to do better and to be my best self, and I did the same for them. In the beginning of our undergraduate experience my spouse doing their own exploration started to attend meetings with our institution's equality alliance and eventually came out to me as queer. As they continued to grow their understanding of the community and various other opportunities, they eventually came out to me as gender non-binary. Each time they learned about another one of their identities, I also learned and grew with them as well. As a result, I also became involved with our equality alliance and LGBTQIA Resource Center advocating for not only my spouse but this community that we both were now a part of.

When my spouse and I first met they also brought me to another club that provided students information and resources surrounding mental health. I became very involved with that group as well. I learned a lot from my peers about the mental struggles they underwent and had to do a lot of my own self-reflection. I recognized much of the privilege I had when it came to my mental health compared to my peers. I had to even rethink again the language I

used that could be very stigmatizing to those who had those struggles. Eventually, that organization would disband, and I would help a friend from the old organization and my spouse bring a different mental health organization on campus. However, had I not had my spouse in my life at the time many of these experiences I may not have gone through or they may not have had a great impact on me without having that connection. My spouse helped me to challenge the way I viewed the world as a result of the environment that I grew up in. To this day they continue to do this as we both grow with one another.

### **A Change of Fate**

During my second year of college, I became a community assistant. I wanted to do something that I could really help to impact other people and, being a community assistant, I was given free housing, so I no longer had to take loans out to attend college. As a community assistant, I found a creative, analytical, and fun person in myself that I had never seen before. I found a family and community that I had longed for all through my grade school experiences. I loved to help the residents, and as bad as it may sound, I liked the pressure of working with students in crisis situations. One day I was in a staff meeting and my supervisor had mentioned that there was a conference coming up that we could attend about student affairs as a career. I didn't think about it until the next day when I was in my psychology methods class. While I was there, I thought about my life in 10 years and what I could envision myself doing. It was at that moment I realized that I didn't see myself in a suit and tie everyday profiling criminals behind a desk. I realized that I saw myself on a college campus like my supervisors, with an office that students felt comfortable in, helping students to reach their goals in life. I talked to my supervisors about their careers, how they came to student affairs, and what the benefits were of working in residence life. I decided that I

wanted to go to graduate school for my master's in student affairs so that I would be able to be the person I needed when I was younger for someone else.

### **My Student Affairs Renaissance**

The realization of my dream of becoming a student affairs professional led me to seek out a variety of experiences in the field of student affairs. Throughout the rest of my undergrad experience I interned with our women's resource center, center of leadership and engagement, and dean of students' office. I would also go on to sit on two executive club boards as secretary of our equality alliance and various roles in the mental health organization we started on campus which ended with me as president. Each of these taught me many lessons and realities of student affairs but there are three specific experiences that I want to highlight in this section.

The first experience I need to highlight is my internship and time with the center of leadership and engagement office. My internship was set up with my director from the improv group I was a part of who also was the director of the center of leadership and engagement. One of the primary functions of the office was to provide leadership opportunities to students that attended the institution. One of the biggest pieces of this was the leadership certification program which had 3 levels: a base set of workshops and engagement, a second level which you picked specific tracks of leadership to specialize in, and finally a capstone experience. My internship was used as my capstone experience for this program and was tailored as a leadership in marketing and organizing experience. Part of this experience required me to be a part of the planning team for the annual leadership conference the center put on each year. There was the large committee and then sub committees that we each sat on, mine was the marketing committee. The experience was good. I had the

opportunity to do some presenting and tabling to get people signed up for the conference. I also participated in the conference as an attendant. The week after the conference we had a debrief meeting to discuss what went well and what did not. This meeting was very long, and I believe many people needed a break in this meeting, however, it was here where I had an experience and reality of student affairs presented to me. In the space I was one of two student voices in the space, the rest of the folk's present were representatives of various offices that collaborated on this event. We went through every aspect of the conference, when we arrived at the feedback for the mock interview section which was put on in collaboration of our career center and the alumni association, I had some feedback. The representatives of these groups had brought up two issues, the first being the lack of pre-registration for the event on their student portal system and the attire of the students who attended. I provided feedback as a student that I felt some of the issues with pre-registration may have stemmed from having to sign up on two portals. The first being the student engagement portal and then the career centers portal which in the email they sent out stated as 4 easy steps, but I had to go through 11 different steps to complete the registration. I received push back that the reason this occurred was because it was my first time signing on it and as a third-year student I should have logged on and set that up long ago. However, as a student who was a liberal art major, I had no previous reason to sign to do so and it was very apparent like much of the feedback students gave the conference was geared towards business. This was also apparent when students attire when coming to the mock interviews was questioned because not everyone came in the typical "business casual". This then sparked a large debate because I had pushed back that depending on the field acceptable attire to work is different than dress shirt and tie. I also brought up not everyone can afford



those items. The debate around this went on for a long time and much of the tension from the career center was directed in my direction. This experience made two things very clear. First, the business mindset was a very dominant culture in that room and student affairs. The second, is the importance of planning for populations that are not the ones you typically serve and the accessibility of those services.

The other two experiences I would like to highlight together as they both showed me the political atmosphere that is in higher education. The first was my time as secretary of our equality alliance. During this time our student group worked very closely with the LGBTQIA resource center on many of its initiatives to advocate for the students we served. One of the big pushes that we worked on was the space the center was in. The office used for the center was very small and no more than six or seven folks could be present at one time. This was an issue because it was the space that was supposed to be THE space on campus for those within this community. What we had in place aside from tracking our attendance in our events we had to tally each time someone came into the office to prove the volume of traffic daily. This data was then used when the University got a new president to advocate for a larger space. At the time there were many offices doing the same which made it very apparent how limited resources on campus were to me. The other experience I had as president of the mental health organization my friends and I tried to establish was one that taught me about the stake's offices are willing to take. I took over the organization from my friend who did much of the leg work to bring our chapter to campus. However, my friend had burned some bridges and there was a period where there were many hoops, I needed to jump through to get us fully operational including finding us an advisor on multiple occasions. The main partner I tried to secure was the mental health institute on campus with academic affairs

since our goals aligned. I set up a meeting with them and we were basically informed that they would want to partner with us but before they would we needed to get more established on campus for them to back us. This was a result of those bridges my friend had burned originally but, it became apparent that we had no benefit to them until we had a large group of students for them to partner with. We eventually temporarily partnered with the office of wellness promotion in student affairs until we could partner with the office in academic affairs which eventually happened after I graduated from the institution.

### **The Rundown**

Now I am in graduate school at a moderate sized public institution in a suburban area working as a Graduate Assistant with Residence Life and Housing Services in the division of student affairs. During this experience the narratives of the business mindset and competition for resources has become ever apparent. Looking back on my experience and the current state of student affairs offices I see the competition for resources that results in a battle for student attention through an overabundance of programming. This in turn results in students being overloaded with programming and having to be very intentional about what programs they do attend. While it can be a good thing that students are thinking about the programs they go to, often it results in students attaching to one or two offices or organizations that match one or two pieces of who they are siloing their identity development to just those areas. This is the issue I will be exploring during throughout my thesis. As student affairs professionals our goal should be to help our students down a path of self-authorship (finding themselves and defining their story), to do this we hold programs to help facilitate student exploration of self in relation to the world. Currently, this mission is compromised by the

neoliberal business mindset of the institution that results in a competition culture for student's attention and resources to keep offices running, siloing student growth.

In Chapter 3 we will be exploring my philosophy of higher education, a brief overview of the history of higher education, some student development theories related to my concern, how neoliberalism has affected student development efforts in higher education, and some related experiences that have brought me to my concern. With this chapter I will provide a better understanding of my approach to this concern, where higher education and student affairs has come from, and how my thematic concern has affected the purpose of student affairs. This chapter will allow for a better understanding of my problematic intervention in Chapter 4. In the next chapter we will be discussing the framework that I will be using when structuring my intervention, some definitions of important terms to be aware of, and some of the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies that apply to my thematic concern.

## Chapter 2

In this chapter I will first discuss the conceptual framework through which I will consider my thematic concern. I then give you some of the key words that I use throughout this thesis and their definitions. I will further elaborate on each throughout my thesis on how I am using them, but this will give you an introduction to these words before moving on to Chapter 3. Finally, I will wrap this chapter up with a discussion of some of the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies for student affairs professionals that apply to this topic as those are some of the guiding principles for our profession.

### **The Structure**

Throughout my thesis I will be incorporating Critical Action Research (CAR) as a framework. CAR combines critical theory and action research to produce knowledge that is transformative (Carson, 1990). Under the structures of critical theory considers dominative powers as a problem and allows us to identify those powers in order to work towards a dominative-free society (Fuchs, 2015). When defining action research Brydon-Miller, et al. states “Action research rejects the notion of an objective, value-free approach to knowledge generation in favor of an explicitly political, socially engaged, and democratic practice.” (Brydon-Miller, et al., 2003, p. 13). This means that action research calls in those who have had their voices historically oppressed and calls out those structures, individuals, and systems that have caused that oppression.

Action research calls for action, as its name implies. To call those voices in that have been oppressed, action research requires the investigator to involve those within the community wherein the research is being done completed in. The research that is conducted must be transformative, thus creating change within the community to transform the systems

in power that affect in. Therefore, it is important to include the communities being affected by the work when developing action research plans. Laura Pulido (2008) discusses about two ideas of accountability and reciprocity when discussing how to approach community work. Accountability is the idea that the work that is that you do effects those within the community you're working in, so you must answer to those people. If it you do not, then the work will not be transformative to them. The other idea reciprocity is the concept that the work you do within the community should be beneficial not only to you but, also to those you are doing the work with (Pulido, 2008). Therefore, I will be using critical action research to address the issue I see within higher education because it takes the theory and knowledge produced within your community, to enact change within that community.

This framework will become very important when I discuss my proposal for intervention later in Chapter 4. It is here where I will take these key ideas of CAR incorporate them to address how to negate the powers that not only oppress our students but us as professionals, how collaboration is imperative to the work we do, how with this intervention we hold ourselves accountable and ensure there is reciprocity in the work we do being a benefit to all those involved.

### **Terminology**

Below is a list of definitions with definitions of some key terms I will be using throughout my thesis. After these terms we will address some of the ACPA/NASPA competencies that relate to my thematic concern and intervention. These competencies are the standards for student affairs practitioners and help to guide our work and development as practitioners.

Experience	“The fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation.” (Merriam Webster Open Dictionary)
Identity	The self-definition and recognition of individuals as part of a similar group. (Deaux, 1993) These groups can be groups surrounding race, gender, age, etc.
Intersectionality	“Focus attention on the vexed dynamics of difference and the solidarities of sameness in the context of antidiscrimination and social movement politics.” (Cho, 2013, p. 787) With regards to this thesis I use Crenshaw’s idea to consider the intersections of an individual’s experiences from previous situations they have been a part of.
Neoliberalism	“A theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.” (Harvey, 2007b, p. 27)
Self-authorship	“The process related to developing the ability to self-author – to write one’s own life – relate to prevailing philosophies of higher education, including the cultivation of critical thinking and intercultural understanding.” (Patton et al., 2016)

### **The Standards**

Two main ACPA/NASPA professional competencies apply to this thesis work, which are the areas of Social Justice and Inclusion (SJI) and Student Learning and Development (SLD). The reason that SJI applies to this thesis work is because a large focus of this problem is how the current system, we have in place impedes students’ abilities to explore their

identities and how their various identities interact to shape their experience at the institution. To work on this as professionals, we first need to be able to identify the privileges we hold, structures of oppression in which we participate, and identify the “inclusive” environments that we are creating and if they truly are inclusive of more than just a singular identity group. We must help create spaces in which we challenge thought around the whole student’s experience and what that means to them. I will address in Chapter 4 how we can do this through our programming and assessment of our programming. By creating these inclusive spaces for students to explore themselves and challenge their thoughts we also create spaces for them to challenge others thought enhancing their understanding of self-compared to their peers.

The second competency is SLD. This competency discusses how we need to put student development theory into our practice to improve student growth and development. This means staying up to date with current theories and trends in our field and using them to guide the work we are doing for the benefit of our students. A large part of this thesis we will be discussing self-authorship theory and how identity development plays a role in that. The goal of our intervention is to enhance self-authorship within our students by addressing some of the factors and powers that effect this development specifically as a result of neoliberal practices in higher education. The reason this competency is so important is because as student affairs professional’s student development should always be at the core of what we do. In the next chapter, I will break down my philosophical ideas about education, present a brief history of student affairs, discuss student development theories related to my thesis, explore the factors that contribute to this issue, and discuss a little about how I’ve seen this issue arise in my graduate work.

### **Chapter 3**

This chapter is broken down into six sections, consisting of my philosophy of higher education, a review of the history of higher education, a review of theories relevant to my thematic concern, a discussion of programming in a neoliberal institution, my testimony of experience related to the concern, and an overview of Chapter 4. In the philosophy section, I use the work of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Louis Althusser to discuss my philosophy towards education. In the history of higher education portion, I give an overview of where the field of student affairs originated and then dive deeper into what and how neoliberalism worked its way into the field. In the relevant theories section, I discuss three student development theories and discuss how they apply to programming and it's potential. In the discussion of programming in a neoliberal institution, I address the issues that neoliberalism brings into student affairs regarding facilitating programming that helps students reach their full potential. In the testimony section, I present two accounts that relate more closely to my thematic concern. The first is a lecture I attended that displayed many of the attributes that go against my philosophical stance on education. The second account is an example of a program in which the entire division of student affairs worked together to put on a large-scale program. Each of these sections, contributes a consideration for my problematic intervention, which is a two-part intervention restructuring programming budgets and the programming model in student affairs divisions to limit the effects of neoliberalism on student development.

#### **Philosophy of Higher Education**

My philosophical view of the purpose of education comes down to one-word: Communication. I use the work of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Louis Althusser to explore



what the meaning of communication is, what it does, and the power it has. I speak about each philosopher's work and then I bring all three philosophers work together to discuss my philosophy of education which frames my view of my thematic concern. I use this work to give background to what I believe programming in higher education should look like in order to develop the whole student.

### *The Educative Experience*

John Dewey (1916) describes what communication is and what it does for us. Dewey said, "To be a recipient of a communication is to have an enlarged and changed experience" (p. 6). Each interaction that we have with another individual has some sort of effect on our overall experience and we learn from that interaction. For example, if I were to see someone fall, and I then helped them off the ground, after helping the person off the ground, I receive a thank you which then makes me feel good about myself. From that interaction and simple communication, I have now learned that helping others in our society gives me a good feeling. With every interaction having some sort of effect on an individuals' experience, every interaction is then an opportunity for an educative experience. In terms of the University, which is meant to be a place of education, every interaction a student may have at the institution has the potential to be an educational experience. Thinking about this critically, if every interaction a student has influences their experience and if the University serves the student, then the University has a responsibility to be very intentional with every interaction it has with the student.

While there is the potential for every experience to be educative, there is also the opposite possibility, which is an experience being mis-educative. Dewey (1916) describes a mis-educative experience as any experience that cuts short the possibility of further educative

experiences in the future. An example of this regarding the University is when new students get accepted to multiple universities. In the mail, they receive their letters of how much it will cost to attend those universities. However, what is not included in the letters is how much they could be awarded in financial aid or that financial aid is even an option. As a result, a percentage of these students may not end up going to any University. These students may believe they are not able to afford to go to the University and thus have had that experience cut off from them. In this situation, had an award letter arrived with the cost of attendance, these students may have understood that college was attainable for them and may have gone to one of the Universities. Therefore, institutions must be intentional with how and what they communicate with their students to ensure they are not being limited by an experience with the institution.

### ***The Ideal Institution***

This leads into the idea that the University can be agent of change (Dewey, 1916). Dewey explores the concept of the “ideal” society. He discusses how the University teaches us what the “ideal” society is. By “ideal,” Dewey means what is the “best life.” Dewey points out that the University reflects the ideals of the current society. This means the values of society are the values that are taught within the University.

Currently, in the United States, our society values individualism and is focused on a neoliberal mindset (Harvey, 2007a). As a society, we are focused more on ones’ skills and value to a business than to what we can contribute to society (Harvey, 2007a). In the media, you see constant advertisements and product placement within the shows that we watch to entertain us in order to get us to spend more money. In relationships, people are even making decisions on whether they want to date each other based on how high a person’s credit score

is or how much debt they are in (Cooper, 2017). One worries that this valuing of the dollar above all else has become what drives our country, and because the University reflects our society, the University is no different (Dewey, 1916). Many decisions made at the University-wide level are made with the intent to maximize the output and lower operational cost to draw in new prospective students. Cuts to funding, condensing/combining offices, construction, and many other decisions are made to appeal to the students who will be paying to attend the University and thus continue to fund it. Departments are forced to consistently prove their worth within the institution largely through what they produce (Harvey, 2007a), which in student affairs is the success of the programs we facilitate and services we provide. It is for this reason that I believe the current University does not serve the students, but instead serves the business that is the University.

However, Dewey (1916) points out that even though the University is a reflection on society, it does have an impact on society. As discussed previously, communication can be educative. The experience, values, and information that students obtain in the University is taken with them out into society. If each experience a person has with another is educative then the experience that the student has at the University can be replicated and reproduced in society as the student goes out into society. Thus, if the University was to change its values from valuing the dollar to valuing the students' as people first, then those students would take those values and spread them into society.

To move to the "ideal" society, Dewey says we must establish what the "ideal" society is first before we can teach those values in the University. For Dewey, the "ideal" society is one that is democratic where all voices are heard. For me, I believe in this democratic society, we should also value the development and growth of all people that live

within it. That means that the “ideal” University should prioritize including all voices in its decisions, with the idea that serving its students and facilitating the development of those students is its mission.

### ***The Banking System***

Paulo Freire (1972) discussed the importance of communication within the educative system. Freire believed that education should not be limited to just the teacher telling the students information and the students simply memorizing or storing that information in their minds, otherwise known as the banking system of education. In the banking system of education, when information is presented to students without room for question, Freire coined this as depositing. Freire believed that to truly learn you must communicate and have a free dialogue that allowed you to make the information your own. The teacher was also the student in Freire’s idea of true education. To learn in this way allowed people to reach their full potential or, as Freire put it, allowed people to be humanized. Freire saw the banking system of education as oppressive because it only allowed for the replication of previous information.

In Dewey’s work (1916), he believed that one of the purposes of education is to reproduce and preserve the experience from the previous generation. On this point I agree more with Freire (1972) who says this replication of experience contributes to the perpetuation of discrimination and oppressive experiences in addition to the ones we would want to replicate and pass on. This is because the banking system takes what the depositor says without question therefore any biases that the individual has now becomes passed on and replicated in that transaction of information. This process of depositing does not allow for student to critically think on their own therefore limiting the previous potential that

student had. It is by this act the Freire considers the banking system not only oppressive but dehumanizing. This process limits a person's ability to become their own being therefore not becoming their own human.

### ***Althusser and Ideology***

This brings us to the ideas of Louis Althusser (1971) around ideology. He first discusses ideology as the concepts which guide our way of thinking. Basically, the general collection of thoughts and beliefs that we use daily to guide how we conduct ourselves. Althusser (1971) details how there are structures in society that teach the ideologies which we hold. Specifically, he defines these structures as “Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)” (Althusser, 1971, p. 128). He lists a few such as:

- “The religious ISA (the system of the different churches),
- The educational ISA (the system of the different public and private ‘schools’),
- The family ISA,
- The legal ISA,
- The political ISA (the political system, including the different parties),
- The trade-union ISA,
- the communication ISA (press, radio and television, etc.),
- the cultural ISA (literature, the arts, sports, etc.)” (Althusser, 1971, p.128)

Through these ISAs, ideology, such as religion, is taught to individuals who participate in these spaces. These structures are shaped by those in power and when ISA's are not followed that is when what Althusser coins the “Repressive State Apparatus” is brought in to enforce compliance with the ideology of the ISA.

Ideology shapes how we grow and interact with each other. When we are unaware of the ideologies that are guiding our actions, we continue to let those in power shape ourselves. However, if you tell an individual that the ideology they have learned is flawed and they should follow a different path, you yourself have now introduced a new ideology in which you are telling them to follow. This brings into question if one does have power over your own ideals? How can someone when having someone show you how power is shaping you with ideology, in a sense is taking that power away from you? This is the main idea that Althusser brings up that is relevant to my philosophy of education which is the idea of lifting the veil for someone. This is the idea that by directly making someone aware of the ideology and power that is influencing them, you then replace that ideology with your own.

### ***My Philosophy***

Bringing Dewey, Freire, Althusser together brings me to my philosophy of higher education and student affairs. Our “ideal” institution should be an institution that strides to facilitate educative experiences. These experiences should not be experiences in which knowledge is simply replicated, as that inherently takes away from one’s humanity as Freire (1972) would say. However, these experiences should be collaborative, should include all those participating, and should produce individual pockets of knowledge based on the previous experiences of those present. In addition, if we are creating spaces where we are facilitating collaboration in the space and not directly depositing information into each other, then this should avoid this phenomenon of lifting the veil for someone as they should be creating their own ideologies and knowledge based off their own experience. I believe by following this we can create an institution that truly works in the service of its students’ growth and development allow for students to pursue their interest freely, therefore helping

to reach their full potential. By applying this to our programming in student affairs, I believe we could have a large impact on students.

### **History of Higher Education**

In this section, I explore a brief history of student affairs as a profession and discuss what the original intent of student affairs was. This section is broken up into two sections (1) the 1800s, where *in loco parentis* was the dominating purpose of student support, and (2) the 1900s, when student affairs began to blossom and move towards developing the whole student. I then discuss how, within this history specifically through the era of Reaganomics, neoliberalism rose and presented itself within the institution. This gives a better understanding of the factors that led to neoliberalism being a dominant ideology in higher education today when we later discuss how to negate these factors with a restructure of programming budgets. This leads into the next section where I discuss what neoliberalism is, how it affects higher education, how it impedes the work we look to do around student development. By doing so, I explore how neoliberal ideals and practices are in direct conflict with the original mission of student affairs being to develop the whole student.

#### ***1800s***

The history of student affairs goes all the way back to colonial times when professors lived in the residence halls with students to supervise, in addition to teaching. This practice was built off of the idea of “*in loco parentis*,” which is Latin for “in place of the parent” (Long, 2012, p. 2). At that time, colleges believed that students needed to be under strict supervision because they were too immature to act on their own. In the mid 1800’s, faculty started to become more specialized and looked to do more research to further their fields,

leaving them with little room to supervise students (Long, 2012). At the same time, students started creating student organizations to stimulate other aspects of their lives while studying.

### *1900s*

By the 1900's, colleges and universities loosened the reigns on strict supervision that was guided by *in loco parentis* and students created their own governing associations with student governments and honor codes (Long, 2012). Around this time, the first college administrators were hired for academic advisement, health centers, and students' personal affairs. In 1937, a report was put out through the publication of the "student personnel point of view" by the American Council on Education which emphasized "the education of the whole student—intellect, spirit, and personality—and insisted that attention must be paid to the individual needs of each student" (Long, 2012, p. 4). This idea is what student affairs is built upon, which is educating the whole student through wholistic development. This is accomplished through activities not only in class but outside of the classroom as well. Shortly after this publication in 1944, the GI Bill, also known as the Servicemen Readjustment Act, was passed (Schuh et al., 2017). This bill increased access to higher education for soldiers who were coming back from World War II at its conclusion. However, this also expanded higher education drastically as there was an influx of students which caused a larger interest in access to college. From there, federal funding increased to expand access, housing opportunities which brought opportunities for more extracurricular activities, and in the 1960s, an even larger increase in federal funding with more federal involvement (Long, 2012). This increase led to policies and procedures that shaped student affairs as seen today, introducing neoliberalism into higher education.



### *Neoliberalism*

Harvey (2007b) defined neoliberalism as:

a theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. (p. 27)

In other words, this idea states that if businesses continue to run and grow, then the well-being of all should continue to grow as well. The role of the government is to ensure this structure continues to work. This changes how society runs in a few ways. The first is what people value under this type of structure. Above all else in a structure such as neoliberalism, the largest value is on the dollar. As Harvey (2007b) stated, according to neoliberalism, for humans to be well/happy, business must be free to continue to maximizing profit. In other words, in neoliberal society, money equals happiness. The neoliberal also puts value on individual liberty, as Harvey states. Every person in this structure must participate in this structure and so the idea, especially in the United States, is you make your own way. One of the biggest slogans for the United States is “work hard and your dreams can come true.” Citizens of the United States are told the harder you work the more you can earn, the happier you will be because money equals happiness. This not only creates an environment where money is everything but to survive in such a structure individualism with free trade and unencumbered markets becomes self-preservation. These values become the core of issues with neoliberalism and how they affect education which I discuss after exploring how it has weaved into higher education in the next section.

### ***Reaganomics***

In 1981, President Reagan was sworn into office and his administration began the process of instituting what is known today as Reaganomics, which is how neoliberalism began its entrance into higher education (Schuh, et al., 2017). Reaganomics was the budgetary plan that the Reagan administration pushed for and established during President Reagan's time in office. It was believed that the government had too much power over the economy as a result of how much it was funding within the economy (Kenan, 1994). This impeded the ability for the economy to grow without government intervention interfering on people's liberty. Reaganomics called for cutbacks in government spending to multiple areas to balance out the federal budget and loosen its hold on the economy. State funding to higher education is cut to compensate for the cut of federal funding to the states. Keenan (1994) discusses the decrease in state funding resulting in institutions having to increase tuition and fee prices to compensate for the funds that were cut. This increase had to be even greater than previous since over the years funding had been increased for institutions as they grew and so the increase to cost to students was great. This also meant that institutions had to rely even more on money generated from students and a greater emphasis was put on enrollment at this point. With this reliance on student's tuition to compensate for lack of state funding the University must fit more into the neoliberal society running much more like a business than a public good.

### ***Neoliberalism in Higher Education***

Neoliberalism affects the work of student affairs professionals. With the University having to fit into society's neoliberal structure, there are two main core values: money above all else and individual self-preservation. On a University level, this creates market

competition between universities as they look to bring in more students to generate more funds to stay open with less state funding each year. This battle for resources, with students as the resource, then trickles throughout the institution. Student affairs offices become more imperative to retain students at the University. This shifts the original mission of student affairs in the eyes of the institution from, “lets support our students to develop them as a whole person,” to “let’s retain our students through graduation to sustain our resources and improve our reputation of graduating students compared to other schools.” This shift in thinking creates a highly political and competitive structure within the University. While state funding is cut for the institution as do the funding to various departments at the University. Student affairs professionals, who are representing specific interests around a student’s development/identity based on the office they work for, must advocate daily for more resources. This includes things such as space, funding, programs, and new services for students that they may benefit from. However, resources being limited and with the many different departments there are not everyone is able to receive what they ask for or need. Therefore, departments end up in this competition for resources.

Based on the definition provided by Harvey (2007b), maximization is a key part of neoliberalism. This leads students’ affairs professionals to constantly prove the efficiency and importance of their office in order to receive the resources they need over another office. Assessment has become a central part of student affairs as a result of this competition structure. On one hand, it does help for professionals to see the impact that their services are having on students which is imperative, but the way it is used after is to prove the “success” of departmental services in order to get more resources to continue this work for that departments specific student population. The most commonly used justification for more

resources is the number of students who are utilizing your services because students in higher education are reduced to human capital (Harvey, 2007a). The easiest way to increase the number of students who use your services is to hold a program. The more students who attend your program, the more your department can prove that it is needed. Showing departmental need is important because if you can't prove this a department's resources can easily be taken away. However, this competition culture that has developed from neoliberal ideal in student affairs takes away from the original mission of student affairs and what programming is for, which is to develop the whole student. With my intervention, that will be detailed in Chapter 4, I restructure programming budgets to one shared programming budget to refocus work around programming from succeeding to receive more departmental resources to assisting in developing the whole student. I discuss in the next section how we can look at the whole student through student development theory, how this relates to programming in student affairs, and the effect that neoliberalism has had on this development. This will give a better understanding of what factors need to be addressed when restructuring programming in my intervention.

### **Relevant Theories**

Student affairs looks to be able to develop the whole student (Long, 2012), but there are many theories and ways in which the field looks to develop the whole student. In this section, I discuss self-authorship, how one develops their idea of self, and experientialism. I then bring these three theories together to discuss programming and what it allows student affairs to do.

### ***Self-Authorship***

When it comes to developing the whole student, it is imperative that the student know themselves and what their story is for them to be able to guide their development in the way(s) they wish to grow. This idea of writing their own story comes from self-authorship theory. Self-authorship as defined by Baxter Magolda (2016) as “the internal capacity to define one’s beliefs, identity, and social relations” (Patton et al., 2016, p. 269). Baxter Magolda goes on to lay out four phases that people go through on their journey towards self-authorship. In the first phase, Magolda discusses how folks in this phase follow formulas and the ideas of external forces around them. They are very influenced by those who they perceive as above them and are concerned about what their peers think allowing them to define who they are. Those in this phase follow the formulas of society to the point where they believe those formulas are their own ideas, so they are not likely at this point to question those norms. An example, of this would be the societal expectation of heteronormativity that sets the expectation you will be attracted of someone of the opposite gender and start a family with them. This is not true for all but would be an example of a formula one may believe in.

The second phase that Baxter Magolda describes is the crossroads phase. In this phase individuals start to question societal formulas and dislike how others define them. While a person may start to question things and themselves, they aren’t yet ready to act on these thoughts and desires. In phase three Baxter Magolda defines this the phase of “becoming the author of one’s life” (Patton, et al., 2016, p. 367). In this phase, individuals form their own beliefs and are willing to stand up for them. They know these beliefs may change as nothing stays the same and engage in self-reflection giving them a strong sense of self.

Phase four is the internal foundations phase where individuals have come to an understanding of themselves and their belief systems. They are open to change knowing that things are ambiguous and always changing. Magolda explains they know there are external forces around them, but they do not affect the individual much because they trust themselves and act on their beliefs rationally.

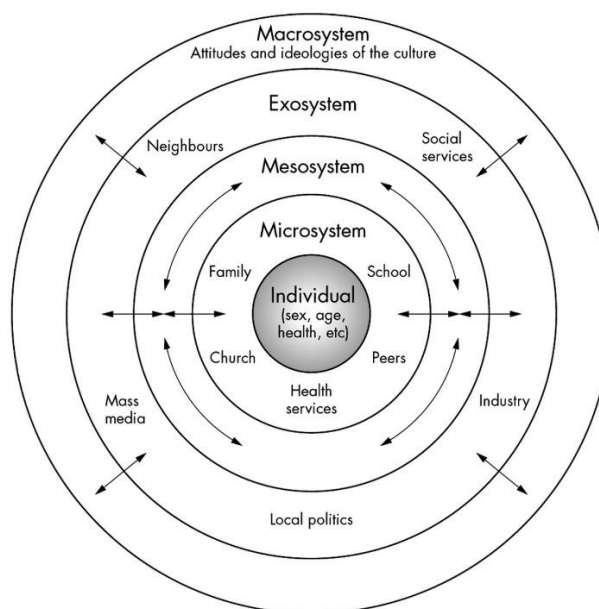
I believe it should be the goal of student affairs professionals to help students develop to phase three or four before they leave the institution. For student's college is a time of exploration and discovery, for the traditionally aged student (17-22), this is also a time where they are discovering what their beliefs are and who they are. They may be coming in at phase one or two. Students may not question those formulas that the world has in place or if they are questioning then they have yet to become comfortable standing up for these beliefs. Going back to Freire (1972), if we are to help students become fully human and reach their full potential, then as student affairs professionals it is our jobs to help students become aware of the forces that affect their sense of self in society and how to navigate those situations. But how do we help students get to a point where they are able to navigate the external forces of society in relation to their sense of self? We do this by helping students explore this idea of self through students exploring their lived experience through programming. To understand how we do this with programming we must first understand what the self is and what goes into the formation of self-identity.

### *Idea of Self*

Baxter Magolda in self-authorship theory touch upon the main idea of how the self is formed through external forces that are then internalized to an understanding of who the self is. Bronfenbrenner (Harkonen, 2007) expands on this main idea by creating an ecological

model of how people are socialized in society (see Figure 1). This model discusses how external forces from the immediate environment (microsystem) all the way to a global scale (macrosystem) can affect us as individuals and how we see ourselves. Things such as the opinions of our family (microsystem) to the ideology we follow across the globe (macrosystem) provide those formulas that Baxter Magolda mentions we follow as individuals. Those opinions and ideals of the society we are raised in shape how we view ourselves and what we believe to be acceptable ways of conducting ourselves.

**Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model of Socialization**



### *Experientialism*

Our idea of self and understanding of one’s self is ever changing and learned based on the forces within/around us. John Dewey (1916) describes the way we learn as “reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences” (pp. 89–90). In simplest terms, by reflecting on our past experiences, we then take that into account in future experiences. This is the essence of experientialism, the idea that our past experiences help to

inform our future experiences through the educative and mis-educative experiences that I discussed earlier about Dewey's views of education.

### ***Programming***

The programs that are put together for students in student affairs are opportunities for students to explore and reflect on the experiences they have had up to that point. With programming, we can create an experience in which students collectively can learn from not only their experiences but also from each other. Not everyone has the same experience even if they hold similar identities to someone else. It is important that these experiences help students explore the intersections (Cho; et al., 2013) of their identities in order to understand their whole self. By creating intersectional programming experiences gives students the opportunity to challenge their ideals, the factors that shape their identities, and the how they relate to others. Ultimately, through programming student affairs professionals can help students look at their whole self to take control of their story. However, programs also can be mis-educative as well and in the next section we will discuss how the current effects of neoliberalism create an environment in which the current structure of programming does not allow for students to be able to explore their whole self.

### **Programming in a Neoliberal Institution**

Earlier in this chapter, we discussed how neoliberalism has affected higher education as a whole and specifically student affairs. In this section, I review some of the general factors and discussing specifically how neoliberalism counters the ability of programming to aid in student development. I discuss the competition culture developed by neoliberal ideas that has created an environment that is not sustainable for students to engage in programming to develops their whole selves.



Under a neoliberal structure, student affairs departments must constantly prove their worth in order to keep their resources and potentially receive more resources to meet the demand of their student population. This structure has created an unspoken competition culture between departments who are looking to keep or gain more resources. The more “success” the department has and more it is utilized, the less likely it is to receive cuts later. Student’s utilizing the offices resources has been the biggest measure of success as it allows for proof or retention rates of an office which helps the University sustain students on campus as what they are looked at which is human capital (Harvey, 2007a). Programs are utilized to reach out to students and get them engaged as well as educate students. While as we discussed previously programming can be a very educative experience in terms of helping students down a path of self-authorship under a neoliberal institution programs do not have the same impact that they could.

As a result of competition culture among student affairs departments, many campus departments put together programming for students to attend. While at first sight this could be great with limited space on campus and time in a week, there is usually something going on campus. This can be overwhelming to students who in addition to classes and studying may want to get engaged on campus but don’t know where to start or may try to do too much which may have the opposite effect on their development. This causes students to be very selective with what they attend and don’t attend, often this will result in students picking a couple of offices to get engaged with that may help them explore specific aspects of their identity. Often these offices are the main source of programming the student will engage with on campus moving forward. This results in students becoming siloed in the areas of their development towards self-authorship. Campus departments are focused on their functional

area and typically do only programming that is focused on that identity group. These programs also often will be the office educating students on what is to be part of that identity group which can reinforce the formulas students may have of what is and isn't acceptable of that identity group.

### **My Testimony**

During my time in student affairs, I have had many experiences that have led me to my view of education and understanding for the need of more unified programming that does not compete for student attention. In this section, I outline two accounts of such experiences. The first is an experience that showed me how very real the banking system of education is and limiting it can be. The second account is of a program where resources from across the division of student affairs were combined and departments worked together to put on an end of the year program. I will discuss what I perceived as a graduate student working with this process and what implications this has in terms of my own intervention that I look to address in Chapter 4.

*Account One.* I attended a conference at a medium sized public University. The keynote speaker presented their work through book they had written. For the entirety of their presentation, they read from their book, depositing information without any room for questions or time to process the information. As they read from the book, I found that there were many complex words used that I did not know. This made it very difficult to understand the message they were trying to get across. I found that once I figured out one of their thoughts or ideas, they had moved on to an entirely different thought that I had to decipher. As I looked around the room, I realized I was not the only person in the room who was struggling to understand the information that was being presented. Most of the room were

undergraduate and graduate students seemed to be equally confused and lost. At the end, when a huge critique of the accessibility of their work was presented, the presenter became very defensive and dismissive of the feedback.

This presentation followed a banking style of presentation. The information was simply deposited with no conversation or free flowing of thoughts or ideas. The lack of explanation of words and thoughts made it difficult for many in the audience to be able to understand the information, thus taking away the opportunity for students to gain more knowledge and dehumanizing those students. This is not the format that we as student affairs professionals should take when creating experiences for our students to participate in. Each experience should be unique and produce new knowledge within the space that has been opened. It is also important that these experiences help students come to their own conclusions. As I look to Chapter 4 and discuss how to frame future programming this idea will be at the center of this work.

***Account Two.*** The following account is based on my own observations of how this program was created as only someone who worked this program not as one who helped plan this event. I can only account for what I heard from others who were a part of the planning and implementation process. At a medium sized institution, there was a push to start to create more traditions at the institution to keep students engaged in the campus culture. In this effort, a program was created that was to be an end-of-year event that was a large carnival. This event was one that was advertised as a program put on by campus traditions and the division of student affairs. Funding for this event was pulled from campus department budgets from across those that fell under the division of student affairs. In addition, every campus department was told they were to advertise, work, and bring students to this event.

There was much criticism from many professionals in the division as many thought the event would not be as successful as expected. This was because even though every department was contributing resources, the planning was done by the administrative team that ran the whole division, not by those who worked in the departments that resources were taken from.

However, come the day of the program, despite there being the expectation of rain which moved much of the event indoors, the event brought a large turnout of the student population with lines for activities going down the street.

In regard to my own intervention, this experience brings up three main considerations for me. The first is that with the combined efforts of each student affairs department the ability to reach students is increased. The success of this program resulted from every department promoting the event, attending the event, and bringing students to the event. In addition, with every department participating in the event there were no other programs occurring to impede students from stopping by this event. The second consideration is the impact that program had on the students. The purpose of the program was to create a new tradition that would get students engaged with campus culture. A year later my students were really excited to attend this event again this year. They were very disappointed when it was canceled due to COVID 19. However, this brings up how impactful a simple event such as a carnival had on students. If one were to apply this large-scale model to a program that required students to reflect on the educative experience they were participating in, it could increase the impact of that experience. Finally, this event showed me how important it is for true collaboration with such a large-scale program. Many professionals were not happy that their resources were being pulled or that they were told they had to be involved with this program. A large part of this was because the opportunity for collaboration was not present.

Had there been representation from each department helping to plan this event, there may have been more willingness to engage but since the event seemed to be all planned from above there was less buy in from those below. The importance of inclusion of those affected by this intervention is imperative and will be considered when we discuss intervention in Chapter 4.

#### **Chapter 4 Overview**

In Chapter 4, I propose an intervention to address a new way of engaging with programming in student affairs. When discussing this intervention there are many considerations that need to be addressed in order for the intervention to have the intended impact. First, we know from the history of student affairs that the profession was created to address the whole student aiding them not only academically but in areas of body and spirit as well (Long, 2012). I propose crafting a new model of intersectional collaborative programming, that help students explore themselves and develop down a path of self-authorship. I also consider the philosophical framework I am working from to ensure that programs under this model to not limit students' growth through depositing information into them. In addition, for any intervention with programming to be successful, it must address the effects that neoliberalism has had on programming currently. The competition culture created between campus departments for resource needs to be countered in order for programming to go back to being focused on the student's development instead of their human capital. It is for this reason we will also be discussing a budgetary restructure of programming funds as a shared pool among student affairs departments in Chapter 4.

## Chapter 4

As discussed in Chapter 3, neoliberal structures in higher education have affected the original mission of higher education, which was to help develop the whole student (Long, 2012). One of these neoliberal structures is the development of competition culture in student affairs, in which departments must compete for limited resources provided to them by the institution they serve. This competition has led to an overabundance of programming within student affairs in order for departments to show how successful they are at engaging the student population, who have become a main source of income for the University (Harvey, 2007a). This overabundance of programming ironically leads students to disengage with programming or just pick one or two areas that fit an aspect of their identity and only attend programs done by those areas. This limited selection of engagement silos the student's path towards self-authorship as they do not get to explore the connections of their identities that may not be clear to them. In order for student affairs departments to return to their original mission of developing the whole student, they must revisit the goal of helping students discover themselves through understanding their experience.

I propose a two-part intervention that includes a restructuring of the budget and programming models. The restructuring of budgets will involve creating a shared pool of money for large scale collaborative programming throughout the year amongst student affairs departments. The restructuring of programming will set criteria for large scale collaborative events that aid students in exploration of their own experience and their peers' experiences with the end result of understanding of oneself and one's story. I call these events "Pathway" programs as they should be aiding in revealing the pathways between students' experiences.

In order to explore this intervention, I have broken this chapter into four sections which are: (a) Purpose, (b) Review of the Theoretical Frameworks, (c) Intervention Proposal, and (d) Implementation. I will discuss the goals and objectives and the learning outcomes for this intervention. I will briefly review the philosophical, student development, and critical action research (CAR) frameworks, which were presented at length in Chapters 2 and 3, in order to review why I have organized my intervention in this way. I will then outline my program proposal in detail and finish with an implementation plan

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this intervention is to limit the effects neoliberalism has had on the work of student affairs professionals. The competition for resources between departments must be limited in order to develop programming experiences that truly help students develop down a path of self-authorship. This process will help highlight the original purpose of student affairs which was to develop the whole student. In this section, I outline the goals of this structural intervention and discuss some of the objectives that will need to be met in order to meet these goals.

### **Goals**

The goal of this intervention is to limit the effects of competition culture on student affairs programming to enhance student's development down a path of self-authorship. Below are specific goals set for this intervention.

1. Limit the effects of neoliberal practices on the work of student affairs professionals, through the redistribution of campus resources
2. Unify the vision of student affairs to refocus back to student centered thinking instead of operational thinking

3. Create a structure in which students are able to explore their own experiences with others and develop down a path of self-authorship

### ***Objectives***

In order to meet these goals, the following objectives have been set:

1. Create a task force or representatives in various functional areas
2. Hold focus groups to assess attitudes of students, faculty, and staff of the structural change
3. Implement feedback into proposal to create a shared budget between student affairs departments
4. Educate staff on approach of new structure for programming by developing a retreat event
5. Implement new structure and continue to assess impact to change as needed

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

In this section I will review my philosophical, student development, and CAR theoretical frameworks and how they are implemented in my program proposal. In my philosophical section I will restate how the work of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Louis Althusser interact to form my philosophical approach to education. I will briefly discuss self-authorship, experientialism, and importance of intersectional programming to better understand the criteria that programs in this intervention will need to meet. Finally, I will revisit CAR and how that shapes the implementation and evaluation process of this intervention.

### ***Philosophical Framework***

In Chapter 3, I discussed the works of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Louis Althusser. I discussed how the “ideal” institution should be one that strives to provide



educative experiences for its students. These experiences should be collaborative in nature where each individual is involved in the production of knowledge (Freire, 1972). This knowledge is produced through the collaboration drawn upon the shared experiences of those present. Participating in these facilitated collaborative experiences drawn from the individuals own understanding allows for the individuals to come to their own conclusions about their own beliefs and ideology, free from influence. This allows us to avoid lifting the veil (Althusser, 1971) of the factors that are affecting their experience. These ideals are incorporated into the criteria of the proposed program. “Pathway” programs will need to incorporate an interactive section that includes the student’s own experiences to achieve a collaborative understanding of the knowledge being discussed. In addition, “Pathway” programs must have the students reflect on their past experiences and the experience they have at the program in order for them to make their own conclusions on the information given to them.

### ***Student Development Framework***

I discussed Baxter-Magolda’s self-authorship theory (Patton, et. al., 2016) and how programming aides in student self-authorship in Chapter 3. The goal of student affairs is to develop the whole student. In order to do so, I believe that helping students understand who they are through knowing themselves is the key to this development. To understand one’s self I discuss the importance of understanding how one’s past experiences can affect their future experiences through Dewey’s concept of experientialism (1916). Through programming student affairs professionals create new experiences for students to explore themselves. It is important that these programs not only provide new experiences for students to reflect on but also helps students recognize the intersections (Cho et al., 2013) of

their identities to better understand themselves. I use this view of programming as a framework when considering criteria for what “Pathway” programs should be. The goal would be for students to reach Baxter-Magolda’s phase three or four (Patton et. al., 2016) before leaving the institution, with a strong sense of their beliefs, values, and ideals.

### ***Critical Action Research***

When looking at the principles of critical action research, there were three main principles that I explored in Chapter 2. The first was critical theory which allows us to consider what powers are dominating and think of ways in which we can relieve those powers (Fuchs, 2015). In this intervention we have identified the factors of neoliberalism that are affecting student’s development and will be addressing these issues through a budgetary restructure to limit the effects of competition culture in student affairs work. The second and third principles deal with the action research portion that requires accountability and reciprocity (Pulido, 2008). In order to truly engage in action research, you must be held accountable by those you are helping and give back to that community as well. This value will be considered more during the implementation of this intervention as the program is modified based on the feedback of the community of student affairs professional and students it will serve.

### **Program Proposal**

The program I propose is a two-part intervention that aims to create a new way for student affairs departments do programming through the restructure of departmental budgets and creation of a new collaborative programming model. I will first discuss briefly what budget changes I propose and the necessity for these changes. I will then discuss the structure of the “Pathway” programming model and discuss the criteria of what a program in this

structure would consist of. I will also propose a retreat that would be used to plan out this type of programming. In the next section I will address about how I would implement this intervention given the opportunity.

### ***Budget***

The first part of this intervention requires a restructuring of funding within student affairs departments. Currently, many student affairs departments have their own budget that is used to fund operational expenses, personnel expenses, and funding for programming. However, what I propose is that student affairs have one shared programming budget with departments collaborating on larger scale events throughout the year. This collaboration and redistribution of funds would allow for a common effort that would limit the competition culture in student affairs caused by neoliberalism. This move to a collaborative programming model would allow the success of programs to be attributed to the division of student affairs together as opposed to the success of individual areas. This structure would also allow student affairs as a division to hold larger scale events throughout the year versus many small programs in which students must pick and choose to sparingly attend.

While I am proposing a combining of budgets, I do want to make the differentiation of this from typical neoliberal practices of consolidation for the sake of efficiency (Harvey, 2007a). What I propose is a combination of funds specifically for programming to be shared among departments in divisions of student affairs. I am not suggesting a combining of all offices in student affairs. It is still important to have each individual department perspective when supporting the institution's student population. While I propose collaboration for "Pathway" programs, I suggest that each department still have separate personnel and operational budgets. These dollars would be used not only for payment of workers, but also

services that are necessary to continue to provide services to students who interact with that department. For example, the women's resource center would use their funds to provide educational materials to students, health centers would provide free protective items, etc.

In addition, these operational funds would also provide funding for necessary introductory baseline programming that may need to occur for students to engage in the campus community. These programs would be introductory programs around concepts of identity such as LGBTQA, multicultural, women's and gender equity, and mental health identity groups. It is important that each area be able to provide their distinctive programming. In the next section, I will discuss the importance of providing this introductory program so students can build on these experiences as they interact with the "Pathway" programs hosted by the collaboration effort proposed.

When thinking about who would approve budgets for programs, I would create a budget committee comprised of a representative from each department involved in the collaboration. This committee would be led by a senior-level leader in the division of student affairs. It is important that this committee have a representative from all those involved in the collaborative effort. Inclusive participation allows for each department to feel a part of the decision to unify the effort towards the program. This budget committee would meet throughout the year as "Pathway" programs are planned. Their role would be to approve a draft of the budget and then also approve any final purchases that may need to be made leading up to the program.

### ***The Model***

The programming model would include the planning and implementation of six large scale events called "Pathway" programs spread throughout the Fall and Spring semesters,

three each semester. These programs would be determined before the academic year started. Similar to the budget committee, a program review committee would be formed to review any program proposals to ensure they meet the program criteria, which follow the theories and frameworks discussed previously in this chapter and thesis. The criteria for the programs are as followed:

- *Intersectionality* – Each aspect of the program should make one or more connections with other campus departments/students experiences.
- *Interactive* – No large-scale program should be a simple presentation delivering information to students. Programs of this level should include active learning and dialogue.
- *Reflection* – An aspect of reflection should be incorporated through discussion or a follow up activity/engagement after the initial program.

An example of this kind of “Pathway” programming could be a scavenger hunt that required students to find various locations via clues given to them by student affairs professionals. This event could occur in the beginning of the year when students are just getting to campus or back to campus. This scavenger hunt would provide groups of students with clues to a location where two or more offices would be waiting for them. Once found the offices would introduce themselves and what services they provide separately. Then a dialogue would be facilitated around the students’ experiences with those areas that would touch upon the overlaps and differences they have with each other. After the dialogue, the group would be given the next clue and move on to the next location at the time slot designated for searching.

This type of program would be beneficial for students to see and hear the experiences they have related to their peers and engage with the possible intersections of their own experience. With this program students also would gain an understanding of the services available to them and the potential opportunities they have to develop outside of the classroom.

### ***The Retreat***

A retreat would be planned, for one or two days to bring student affairs departments together to discuss the program schedule for the following year. The first year of this new model would require significant conversation and therefore, I am proposing a two-day retreat. This retreat I would seek funding for through the institution's professional development funding if present. The retreat would take place on campus and funding would be used in order to purchase light breakfast refreshments for the morning, provide lunch for participants, and light refreshments throughout the day to help participants stay focused. The amount of funding required would depend on how many participants there are in the division. Resources provided with information that professionals would need to take away would be distributed digitally for a more sustainable process. In Appendix A there is an example of a budget for this retreat based on a smaller number of attendees being 50 people. This budget would be scaled up or down depending on the institutional size of student affairs (see Appendix A).

Two days of conversation would be necessary to help professionals in the division understand what the philosophical and student development frameworks are in which this programming model is built upon. In order for professionals to fully engage in the planning in a collaborative way this understanding is imperative. Professionals who would join the

division after this first year would need to attend the first day of the retreat but those who had already participated would only need to attend the planning day of the retreat.

The day of planning would start with departments sharing up to three priorities of their office for the coming year. Each department would deliver a small presentation of what these priorities were and how the student experience was being affected by those priority areas. For example, an office of leadership and student engagement priorities may be:

- *Increase student engagement:* There has been a decreased number of students engaging in the campus community which correlates with an increase of students leaving the institution. There is a need to help students find a sense of belonging.
- *Understanding leadership:* There are many leadership positions available for students to engage in however students are not filling these positions out of fear of not being a good leader. Building an understanding of leadership could help with student fears around leadership.

This presentation of priorities would allow departments to start to see ways in which they can collaborate with other campus departments by understanding each other's main goals. After these priorities are presented a brainstorming session would occur. This session would allow departments to think of ways their department priorities intersect with students' experiences and potential experiences. The second half of the day would be taking those potential collaborations and synthesizing them into six large scale programs to submit for review.

## **Implementation**

When proposing significant changes in program planning it is important to understand the nuances and details of implementation. In this section I will discuss the

timeline for this intervention and potential challenges I see in implementing this intervention. In doing so I will outline how these factors can be considered and addressed throughout the process of implementation. At the end of this section is a table with the timeline mapped out visually.

### ***Timeline***

In order to begin this new collaboration, it will be important to have time to prepare and adapt. Two academic years might be needed to plan and implement this change. In the first year there would need to be an understanding of the current structure of the division of student affairs at the institution. Participants would need to understand the divisional budgets, current programming model, and policies the institution follows. It is important to understand what the current state of the division, the budgets and what is currently offered to better understand how a restructure could take place and how the intervention can adapt to fit the needs of the institution. To do this, I would institute a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, threat) analyses of the current state of the division of student affairs at the institution (Valentine, 2001).

In the second semester of the first year of implementation, it would be important to hold various focus groups with campus stake holders including: leadership in the division of student affairs, student affairs professional in the division, and student groups. These focus groups would help to gain interest in the intervention as well as get the feedback of those who would be affected by the intervention. This feedback would be used to inform the new structure, and this would align with principles of CAR. Asking for and receiving, and then utilizing, the feedback helps to create transformation. The proposal for the restructuring of



budgets and programming would be given to the institution's leadership at the end of the first academic year.

In the beginning of the second academic year upon approval of the proposal, the budget requests for the following year would be prepared. This would occur in the second academic year as many institutions take budget requests midway through the academic year to finalize the upcoming year budgets in the spring. The rest of the time leading up to spring break of the second academic year would be spent recruiting representatives from each student affairs office to be a part of the budget committee or the program approval committee. These representatives would be volunteers that the leadership of each student affairs office has identified as interested. The other task that would need to be completed is the planning retreat that would occur during spring break of the second semester.

After the planning retreat occurs over spring break of the second academic year it would be up to the committees to meet in the months following to review these programs. Large scale programs would first be reviewed by the program review committee to ensure that the programs meet the criteria of the programming model. Once the program has passed review upon any revisions that may need to be addressed, the program would then move to the budget committee to approve the requested allocated funds for the program. This process would occur over the summer months leading to the start of academic year three where the programs would be implemented

**Table 2: Implementation Timeline**

Fall Semester Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWOT analyses of current state of student affairs division</li> </ul>
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Spring Semester Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups held to gain feedback from campus stake holders</li> <li>• Incorporate feedback into proposal</li> </ul>
Summer Semester Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present proposal for restructure of budgets and programming model</li> </ul>
Fall Semester Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon approval of restructure the budget request for the third academic year would be compiled and submitted</li> <li>• Recruit representatives from each student affairs department to join budget or program approval committees</li> <li>• Begin planning programming retreat for spring semester year 2</li> </ul>
Spring Semester Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish planning for programming retreat</li> <li>• Hold programming retreat over spring break</li> </ul>
Summer Semester Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programming committee reviews programming submissions for approval</li> <li>• Upon approval Budget committee reviews and approves budget requests for programs</li> </ul>
Fall Semester Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First large-scale programs occur</li> </ul>

### ***Potential Challenges***

The most significant challenge of this intervention is getting the campus community invested in a new way of providing co-curricular programming. When large changes occur, there is usually resistance from those it affects when they are not included in the process of change. I witnessed this with the large-scale program I discussed in Chapter 3. When the large-scale program was being developed there was much critique from professionals within the division of student affairs. Much of the criticism was the result of a leadership not taking

feedback from staff who were expected to work the event but not contribute to its design. It is for this reason that the first academic year is important to get feedback from the professionals and the students this intervention will serve in order for them to be a part of the change that would occur. This collaboration itself also will build community through a collective effort to tailor the program to the institution.

In addition, to getting the campus community invested in this structural change, another big challenge to this intervention is the high turnover rate not only of professional staff but the students it serves. In student affairs professionals, like the field and the students, are constantly moving and changing from year to year. This makes it difficult to keep some consistency with staff dynamics with new professionals in the division having to be introduced to the new structure. The population of students within the institution is also constantly changing with students graduating and transferring out of the institution. This means the needs of the campus community also change year to year. In order to meet those needs it is imperative to continue to gauge the needs of the community and make changes as necessary in order to continue to enact change.

The other significant challenge for this program will be assessment. This intervention focuses on tailoring experiences that will have individual impact as students reflect on their own experiences. With this in mind much of the assessment would need to be qualitative open-ended questions to gauge the individual impact these events have on the students. A consideration would be to incorporate a pre- and post- evaluation in order to gauge the development as a result of the experience they have with the program. We will discuss how assessment and evaluation looks more in chapter five.



## Chapter 5

In this chapter I discuss what leadership is and why it is important in implementing my intervention and how I plan to evaluate and assess my intervention. I outline some limitations of my intervention, and where it could go. I discuss leadership in order to develop an understanding of the challenges that will arise and how they can be met by leadership. I discuss assessment and evaluation in order to establish how information will be collected in order to adjust in the future if necessary. I address the limitations of my intervention in order to bring attention what I was either unable to discuss during this thesis or am unable to fully address at this time.

### **Leadership**

Good leadership is imperative in order for change to occur in society and in our institutions. A good leader to me is someone who considers the voices that are present and those that may not be heard to promote a collaborative shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) for a group to work towards. A transformative leader looks to promote growth, collaboration, and a shared vision through phases of transition (Tichy et al., 1984). In a neoliberal institution where student affairs departments may be divided in collective vision as a result of competition culture (Harvey, 2007a), transformational leadership provides the guidance departments need in order to work towards a new shared vision (Tichy et al., 1984). It is for this reason that I discuss what role leadership will play in my structural intervention. I then discuss the types of leadership through the lens of Bolman and Deal's (2013) four frames model that will be necessary in order to implement this intervention successfully at an institution. Finally, I explore through The Social Change Model of Leadership Development

(Astin & Astin, 1996) and how I as an entry level student affairs professional would aid in the leadership of this program.

### ***Leadership & Intervention***

As I discussed in Chapter 4, my intervention is a structural intervention that proposes a shared budget for divisional programming, a shift from siloed, departmental budgets and an overabundance of small-scale programming efforts. This new structure would require departments to collaborate more and reduce the competition culture between student affairs departments by realigning departmental focus to a shared vision of student development. In Chapter 3, I discussed the example of a large-scale program that student affairs leadership pulled together to create a new campus tradition. While the event was a success, many professionals in the division were skeptical and were resistant to the new idea. With this intervention many changes would to occur from mid to senior level leadership positions. The most important thing to ensure the success of the structural change is gaining the belief and approval of those professionals it affects most. New ways of operating can be difficult and new interventions require thoughtful transformative leadership (Tichy et al., 1984).

James Kouzes and Barry Posner (2012) completed a case study that looked at what type of leadership helps organizations achieve large goals. From the study they identified five key concepts that allowed leaders to help their organizations overcome challenges. One of these concepts is inspiring a shared vision. A leader who takes this approach looks to motivate the group and promote collaboration to work towards the shared vision collectively. In order to provide this vision, it is important for the leader to be able to identify various possibilities to inspire belief that the group can overcome those situations. By motivating the team with positivity, the team members are able to work through most issues together

(Kouzes & Posner, 2012). This type of approach is what is needed from leadership who will implement this structural intervention. When a shared vision is inspired, team members feel connected to the process and the goal. When the goal is student success student affairs educators can be intrinsically motivated to come together with leadership to achieve success as a division. This is important because when the vision is not shared by the division the success is viewed as that of leadership and not the division.

While inspiring a shared vision will help to provide direction for the division of student affairs it is important to consider how the vision is created. Bolman and Deal (2013) outline four frames that student affairs administrators use to lead through organizational problems and making decisions. These frames shape how the individual views a situation and decides how to proceed. The four frames are the structural frame, the human resource frame, the political frame, and the symbolic frame (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

According to Bolman and Deal (2013), in the structural frame, the leader views the organization as a factory of many moving parts working together. In this frame the leader tends to look at data to determine efficiency and make improvements (Bolman & Deal, 2013). In the human resource frame, the organization is looked at as a family and the focus is on developing the individuals of the team. When the needs of the organization match with the needs of those working in the organization things run more smoothly and this frame strives for that (Bolman & Deal, 2013). In the political frame Bolman and Deal (2013) describe this frame as seeing the organization as a battle ground for resources and colliding interests. Those who use this frame create spaces for constructive conflict and act as negotiators between subgroups with conflicting interests (Bolman & Deal, 2013). In the symbolic frame the organization is a place of stories with the meaning behind something being more

important than the thing itself. Those using this frame bring the ideals of the organization to the forefront and weave them into everyday work (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Each frame can be used to approach any situation. Bolman and Deal (2013) discuss many professionals use just one or two frames in their leadership. However, it is important to consider the context of the task at hand and determine which frame is right for that moment to approach the situation with a full view. Bolman and Deal (2013) call this the reframing where a situation is looked at through all four lenses before deciding on next steps.

It is important that as leader's leadership works on this intervention that they assess situation and use all four frames. In order to inspire a shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2012) to promote collaboration and investment in the intervention leadership may find the symbolic and human resources frames beneficial. The human resource frame (Bolman & Deal, 2013) allows leaders to develop a sense of valued input from those they serve, while the symbolic frame would allow leaders to establish what the vision is and continue to remind folks why it is they are doing what they are doing. While these two frames would help leadership to address one of the biggest issues this intervention would face which is the division wide investment, the other two frames are important too. With the structural frame leadership would be able to analyze how to restructure the current flow of the organization to fit the new structure. The political frame would be important as leadership worked to convince the institution to allow the change to structure understanding the bottom line would need to be laid out in a neoliberal institution. Being able to reframe one's leadership and inspire a shared vision are the most important qualities required to implement this structural intervention.

While this intervention requires great mid- to senior-level leadership, change on this level requires collaboration at all levels. As an entry level professional in the field I would



take The Social Change Model of Leadership Development (Astin; et al. 1996) approach to help aid in this transition to a new way of engaging students. This model is based off developing leadership in students that is collaborative and promotes positive change (Astin & Astin, 1996). There are seven critical values that if modeled and displayed should promote positive change within the campus community. Astin calls these values the 7 C's which are, consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, and citizenship (Astin & Astin, 1996). I discuss what Astin (1996) describes each of these values is and how I would display this working towards my interventions to promote change at the institution I am working at in the future.

The first two values consciousness of self and congruence are interconnected (Astin & Astin, 1996). Consciousness of self is knowing one's beliefs and values in order to understand others while congruence is acting upon those values beliefs and strengths consistently (Astin & Astin, 1996). As an entry level professional knowing my own beliefs, values, and strengths and acting upon consistently is important for others to understand what I am about and for me to understand them. This allows me to be able to better exercise leadership through collaboration which is the value that looks at leadership as a group process and engage in each other's difference toward a shared goal (Astin & Astin, 1996). This value of collaboration is the corner stone of this intervention and by be willing to engage in this process and by showing commitment (Astin & Astin, 1996) other professionals would hopefully be more willing to engage in this process. Through the value of collaboration, I would engage with the value of controversy with civility which requires the acknowledgement of the differences among myself and colleagues (Astin & Astin, 1996). Through open and honest feedback, we would acknowledge these differences and would

resolve through building resolutions into our common purpose or shared vision of future work (Astin & Astin, 1996). Citizenship is the final value that comes through actively engaging with the community to promote positive change. All seven of these values are important to model to promote change in the division. The best way for me to display these values with my colleagues would be to engage in the committees that would hold focus groups with other campus stake holders. These focus groups would help to promote this restructure process and receive feedback from the community to improve it.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

While the purpose of this intervention is to limit the effects of neoliberalism on higher education the University is still a reflection of society (Dewey,1916). As long as society values neoliberal practices the University will continue to work within that framework. This is one of the reasons assessment and evaluation is important in order to continue to work under this new restructured programming model. In order to continue to work under a structure that limits neoliberalism it is necessary to still work within that structure to continue to limit these effects. Assessment and evaluation are also necessary in the CAR framework, in order to make changes to structure to fit the needs of the community it serves (Pulido, 2008). In this section I discuss the assessments I would implement which involves focus groups before implementation, a survey given at the “Pathway” program, and a survey for student affairs professionals at the end of each semester to gauge effectiveness and satisfaction with the restructure. I then discuss how I would evaluate this restructure through pre and post intervention evaluation of attendance, cost of programs, student satisfaction, and student engagement data.

### ***Assessment***

In order to assess attitudes and needs of the campus community from this restructure focus groups would be held pre intervention. These focus groups would be held with students, faculty, and staff. It is important to gain feedback from each one of these groups in order to gain each perspective and incorporate as much feedback as possible in the final proposal. In the beginning of the focus group, the initial idea of the restructure at that moment in time would be presented to the groups. Once an understanding of the restructure was reached, open ended questions (see Appendix B) would be asked to guide dialogue and gain feedback from the group. This feedback would then be taken and considered in the final version of the proposal for restructure. Similar focus groups after implementation would be held to continue to get real time feedback on any adjustments that may need to be made as new needs arise with new groups.

After the restructure began there would be assessments given at each “Pathway” program. These assessments may each be unique in their own way depending on the program. This would be a result of the professionals putting together the assessment changing the form of assessment based on the program being done. Depending on the program the form of assessment and questions asked will differ in order to spark self-reflection but also assess that learning occurred. With that in mind at each “Pathway” program there would be three categories of questions that would need to be collected and would be uniform at each event. The first would be the student’s demographic information (name, age, race, ethnicity, gender, etc.). This information would be used to understand what groups of students are being reached and if there are gaps in the groups we are reaching. Second, would be how did the student hear about the event. This would assess how students are getting the information of “Pathway” programs, from what is most effective to least

allowing efforts to be more focused in advertising. Finally, satisfaction data would be collected to understand if students are enjoying the programs and wanting to continue to engage or if the program needs to be reevaluated for the next time. This data would be collected with a Likert scale one through five of satisfaction (see Appendix C).

The last assessment I would implement is a survey of student affairs professionals after the first semester of “Pathway” programs. This survey asks professionals about their perceived effectiveness of the programs, feedback they have, and satisfaction with the restructure (see Appendix D). This survey would be given each semester after the first to continue to gain feedback from the professionals working with this programming to gain real time feedback and adjust as necessary. Considerations from this feedback may be incorporated into the questions for the continued focus groups as well to promote dialogue around these suggestions.

### ***Evaluation***

To gauge how engaged students are with the experiences that are put together by student affairs data from before the restructure and after would be evaluated. The first sets of data that would be evaluated and compared would be how many programs occur, attendance at these programs, the cost of these programs, and any student satisfaction data available. This data would be taken before and after the restructure to compare how many students were present at programs before the restructure and after at programs. Is the division spending more or less after the restructure and what has that done for attendance at the events? Finally, having student satisfaction data from before and after letting us know if students like the “Pathway” events or prefer the smaller ones. Having this data allows for continued restructure if necessary, in order to continue to meet the needs of the campus.

Another set of data that would be evaluated would be NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) data (About NSSE). This survey is a national survey that many institutions use to gauge student engagement on various levels on their campuses. This survey is given to first year students and graduating students in fall semester of that year. This survey measures a variety of indicators of engagement however the indicators I would focus on are “Collaborative Learning”, “Discussions with Diverse Others”, and “Supportive Environment” (About NSSE). “Collaborative Learning” and “Discussions with Diverse Others” fall under the theme of “Learning with Others” in the engagement indicators section. These sections have questions centered around collaborative learning between students that would indicate if this learning increases in graduating students after the restructure has occurred. The “Supportive Environment” gives a better idea of how supported the students feel as a result of various offices on campus (About NSSE). This data would indicate the level of support student affairs is providing and if that support needs to be adjusted to meet ensure that students are feeling supported.

### **Limitations and Future Plans**

There are many additional avenues in which I could explore with this topic. While I have reduced some of these topics in my thesis down, there are three factors that I believe limit the scope of my intervention. First, are the ways in which student affairs professionals work together. While I have discussed how collaboration is important the fact remains that student affairs professionals may be resistant to this type of collaboration or the divisional structure may not be conducive to collaboration. It is for this reason why mid- and senior-level leadership is important in not only promoting a shared vision but also making structural changes as necessary to promote collaboration. The second limitation that this intervention

has is the assumption that there is funding to put-on large-scale events such as “Pathway” programs. Depending on funding available based on state allocations and federal funding institutions may not be able to facilitate programs of this caliber forcing professionals to have to do more with less. Finally, students’ willingness to engage with this kind of programming is also not a guaranteed factor. There are always individual events to occupy students time in hall, off campus, and beyond. To address this, I believe it is even more important to include these types of outlets in collaboration for these “Pathway” programs to entice students to engage with these experiences.

Writing this thesis in the spring of 2020 has been an interesting experience with the COVID-19 pandemic spreading throughout the world. As I reflect on the past few months of quarantine it has become very apparent just how unsustainable neoliberal practices are in times of crisis such as this. Many jobs in the United States have been put to a halt, businesses are shutting down, and people are not able to leave their homes. Institutions have taken major financial hits with classes moving entirely online and refunds to students being distributed. Despite that, the original mission of higher education to develop the whole student still stands. While the work of student affairs professional has moved to a distance it seems as a division of student affairs, we have never been closer. Professionals have collaborated cross departments to continue to work with students from all across the country. Through crisis student affairs professionals have found new ways to engage and have come together with a shared vision of aiding our students. It is for this reason I believe that my intervention is possible and important to continue to stay unified in the work we do even in times of no crisis.

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### Appendix A: Retreat Budget

<b>Day 1: Breakfast</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Servings</b>	<b>Cost per unit</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	Muffin tray	18	\$ 20.00	3	\$ 60.00
	Fruit salad tray	20	\$ 25.00	2	\$ 50.00
	Apple Juice	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
	Orange Juice	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
<b>Total:</b>					<b>\$ 150.00</b>
<b>Day 1: Lunch</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Servings</b>	<b>Cost per unit</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	Deluxe Sandwich Tray	30	\$ 25.00	2	\$ 50.00
	Caesar Salad	30	\$ 30.00	2	\$ 60.00
	Family Size Bag of Potato Chips	20	\$ 5.00	3	\$ 15.00
	Iced Tea	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
<b>Total:</b>					<b>\$ 135.00</b>
<b>Day 2: Breakfast</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Servings</b>	<b>Cost per unit</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	Assorted Bagel Tray	18	\$ 20.00	3	\$ 60.00
	Fruit salad Tray	20	\$ 25.00	2	\$ 50.00
	Apple Juice	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
	Orange Juice	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
<b>Total:</b>					<b>\$ 150.00</b>
<b>Day 2: Lunch</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Servings</b>	<b>Cost per unit</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	Cheese Pizza	8	\$ 10.00	6	\$ 60.00
	Gluten Free Tomato Basil Pizza	8	\$ 15.00	2	\$ 30.00
	House Salad	30	\$ 30.00	2	\$ 60.00
	Iced Tea	30	\$ 10.00	2	\$ 20.00
<b>Total:</b>					<b>\$ 170.00</b>
<b>Refreshments</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Servings</b>	<b>Cost per unit</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
	Granola Bars	10	\$ 5.00	8	\$ 40.00
	Bananas	8	\$ 4.00	8	\$ 32.00
	Bag of Apples	12	\$ 10.00	5	\$ 50.00
<b>Total:</b>					<b>\$ 122.00</b>
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$ 727.00</b>				

## **Appendix B: Focus Group Questions**

Below is a list of open-ended questions that would be asked during the focus groups sessions with students, faculty, and staff:

- What are your initial thoughts of the restructuring of budgets in student affairs to one shared programming budget?
- How do you feel this restructure of budgets would impact you (student, faculty, staff)?
- What are your initial thoughts of “Pathway” programs?
- How do you feel “Pathway” programs would impact you (student, faculty, staff)?
- If implemented what types of intersections of identity do you feel need to be explored?
- Any final thoughts to share?

### Appendix C: “Pathway” Programs Survey Questions

Below is a list of survey questions that would be given at each “Pathway” program in addition to the assessment prepared by the professionals creating the program:

- What is your name?
- What gender do you identify as?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Nonbinary
  - Trans
  - Intersex
  - Prefer not to answer
  - If Not Listed, Please Write In:
- What race(s) do you identify as? (select all that apply)
  - Black or African American
  - White
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - Native American
  - Asian American
- Do you identify as Hispanic or Latinx?
  - Yes
  - No
- What year of school are you?
  - First

- Second
- Third
- Forth
- Graduate Student
- How did you hear about this event? (check all that apply)
  - Word of Mouth
  - Flyer
  - Banner
  - Email
  - Social Media Post
  - If Not Listed, Please Write In:
- One a scale from 1-5 would you say you enjoyed this program?
  - 1: Strongly Disagree
  - 2: Disagree
  - 3: Neutral
  - 4: Agree
  - 5: Strongly Disagree
- One a scale from 1-5 how likely would you attend an event like this in the future?
  - 1: Definitely Not Likely
  - 2: Not Likely
  - 3: Not Sure
  - 4: Likely
  - 5: Definitely Likely

### Appendix D: Staff Check in Survey

Below is a list of survey questions that would be asked to professional staff members at the end of each semester of “Pathway” programs to assess if changes need to be made for the future:

- Please select your agreement with the effectiveness (1-5) of the following categories:
  - Shared programming budget
    - 1: Very Not Effective
    - 2: Not Effective
    - 3: Neutral
    - 4: Effective
    - 5: Very Effective
  - “Pathway” programs
    - 1: Very Not Effective
    - 2: Not Effective
    - 3: Neutral
    - 4: Effective
    - 5: Very Effective
  - Collaboration with other departments
    - 1: Very Not Effective
    - 2: Not Effective
    - 3: Neutral
    - 4: Effective
    - 5: Very Effective

- Impact on student's engagement
  - 1: Very Not Effective
  - 2: Not Effective
  - 3: Neutral
  - 4: Effective
  - 5: Very Effective
- In the following space please indicate any needs or changes you feel need to be made in the future:
- Rate you level of satisfaction from 1-5 with regards to your work with our programming structure:
  - 1: Very Not Satisfied
  - 2: Not Satisfied
  - 3: Neutral
  - 4: Satisfied
  - 5: Very Satisfied
- Please use the space below to discuss why you selected the above answer: