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### Filling in the Gaps: The Hidden Supervision Curriculum

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Filling in the Gaps:  
The Hidden Supervision Curriculum

A Thesis

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

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of  
Master of Science in Higher Education Policy &  
Student Affairs

By

Gianna Machado

May 2022

## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to all my past and present supervisors for showing me exactly the kind of supervisor I wanted to be. To all the students I have supervised throughout my time at West Chester, thank you for inspiring me to be and do better. I hope your most authentic self will always be seen and heard in the workplace.

## Acknowledgements

To my family, thank you for your words of encouragement and faith in me but, most of all thank you for accepting of the times this thesis had to come first. I am so glad that you came along with me on this crazy ride, you are my sun, my moon, and all my stars.

To my best friends, thank you for believing in me when I did not believe in myself, for reminding me I am capable, and for all the random phone calls and text messages reminding me of your support. I could not have done any of this without your support. Each of you inspires me and pushes me to be my best self every single day, love you all endlessly.

To the faculty of the Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs program, I am incredibly grateful for your dedication; you have truly challenged and inspired me. Your commitment and dedication to your students and this program is much appreciated and have not gone unnoticed.

## Abstract

This thesis explores the importance of supervision and the impact that supervision has on both supervisors and supervisees. Throughout this thesis, I explore leadership styles, retention rates, job satisfaction, generational differences, but most importantly I will discuss the lack of education surrounding leadership styles and supervision. Another thing that this thesis will explore is the impact that identity plays in supervision and how different identities may need accommodations in a supervisor and supervisee relationship. In order to address the issues listed, I will explore the different theories, research, and studies that have been done. My intervention will directly respond to the need for educating both supervisors and supervisees. Throughout the intervention, the importance of both parties taking responsibility for developing a working relationship is also discussed in depth.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

My name is Gianna Machado, I am a graduate student in the Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs program at West Chester University. I was born and raised in Central New Jersey, and after I graduated high school, I spent four years in North Jersey at Montclair State University. There, I got my bachelor's degree in Psychology and minored in Social Work and Leadership Development Through Civic Engagement. I had a great deal of experiences throughout my undergraduate career, most of which I still feel like I cannot explain. Moving from what may be considered a more conservative area to a more liberal school caused a culture shock and a major identity crisis. My previous experiences and what I knew as a child were about to be disrupted by reality.

When I was getting ready to move in, I told myself I was going to finally educate myself and experience everything that was never "appropriate" for me to learn or do when I was home. I was determined that this could solve the uneasy feeling I had while living in my hometown. What I did not know at the time was that these experiences would cause an identity crisis while also helping me understand where I fit in this world. At the beginning of my undergraduate career, I was confused and had little to no knowledge of how the world worked. I wanted the confusion to stop, so I made a promise to myself that I would take everything as a learning experience and use the experiences to educate myself. A good amount of my college experience was shaped by the professionals that worked at the university. Whether it was freshman year with my community director or senior year with my boss, each of them played a large role in my current life. The difference between the professionals that had a positive impact versus a negative impact was the way each of them chose to work with me and how much they knew about the identities I personally hold. While there were supervisors who were

incredible at their jobs there were also some who lacked empathy for things I was experiencing; other things that were missing or lacking was professional development, basic knowledge on different identities, willingness to teach and learn, communication skills and flexibility. The lack of education surrounding these specific aspects play a major role in ability to supervise adequately and had a major impact on me as a student and as a student worker.

After my freshman year, I became heavily involved with the university. I was working for the university, attending events, running an organization, and worked closely with the student government association as well as the center for student involvement. Being involved on campus played a significant role in my growth and development as a student. When I started in my organization and working for my university it was for fun and so that I could make some money. Little did I know it would ignite my passion for student affairs. In reflecting on these experiences, it became clear that my experiences were an example of Alexander Austin's (1984) student involvement theory in action. As Austin contends, "meaningful educational engagement in college stimulates increasing cognitive complexity, leading to learning and development" (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 45)

Yet every educational engagement is shaped by the people who are a part of that experience. In particular the people who supervise us and the people we supervise throughout these engagements play a large role. It was clear in my experiences at my university that the role of supervision could make or break the engagements we take up. Yet, for something that has the ability to play such a large role in our lives, we do not address it. People are never taught how to be supervisors and they are also never taught how to be supervised.

The problem I will be addressing for this thesis is the lack of preparation for supervision and the impacts it has on people in the long run. More specifically, I will be



focusing on the lack of preparation for supervision around issues of our intersectional identities around race, gender, sexuality, disability status, and more. In order to address how to be the best supervisors and supervisees, we need to be educated on the different identities that people hold and how to best support each other. Employees are told to leave their baggage at the door, but when did our identities become baggage? How can we expect people to leave behind essential aspects of themselves? In this thesis I argue that it is important to understand how all our identities impact the way people need to be supervised as well as impacting the way people supervise.

### **Identity**

Identity is one thing that supervisors are not prepared to deal with, being aware of different identities, visible and invisible is not something that is taught in a classroom. Many supervisors end up in their role without and supervisory experience and tend to utilize strategies that their supervisors used with them. There are two aspects of my identity that have played key roles in shaping my relationship to the concern of this thesis: gender and invisible disabilities. Being a woman, I struggled when it came to having supervisors who were men. I would often feel inferior and like I always had to be doing my absolute best. Even though I was constantly pushing myself, I never got the recognition that my other male staff always seemed to get. I had a hard time connecting with my male supervisors, but each of them took the time to learn about me and show me that they truly cared and wanted me to succeed. Though I had some absolutely amazing experiences and was incredibly lucky to have had them as supervisors, the first time I had a woman supervisor was the first time I remember feeling empowered at work. Seeing a woman in a position of power made me feel like I could do just about anything.

Another aspect of my identity that influenced my relationship to this topic were the invisible disabilities I have been dealing with for years. ADHD, mental illness, and hearing loss, have all had prominent impacts on the relationships I have been able to build with supervisors. My invisible disabilities have made it hard for me to work effectively, primarily because I was afraid that my past supervisors would not understand my needs.

### **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is a concept that “recognizes that all people possess multiple, intersecting identities” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 42). I grew up identifying as a woman but did not identify as a person with invisible disabilities until later in life. The reconceptualized model of multiple dimensions of identity by Abes et. al. (2007), is one that resonates with me and can be applied to my post-high school experiences. It took each aspect of my current life, gave it a label, and helped me begin to understand where each piece fit. With this model, “all dimensions must be understood in relationship to each other” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 85); dimensions meaning self-perceptions such as race, gender, and sexual orientation and contextual influences like family, social norms, and stereotypes.

Entering college, all I wanted was to meet people who were “different,” people who practiced different religions, who had a different thought process and needs, people who identified with different races and ethnicities. For the first time in my life, I was exposed to so many groups of people and I was able to learn about many different communities. The “complexity of students' backgrounds, characteristics, beliefs, and aspirations” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 84) play an important role while “class, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 84) are equally as important in the dimensions of identity. Entering college made me feel like my life was a puzzle, but half of the pieces were missing.

My first experience with a professional in student affairs was with the community director that oversaw my freshman residence hall, this supervisor they made assumptions about my life, did not trust me these interactions left me confused and hesitant to trust future supervisors. In this case, that person lacked empathy and probably did not realize the amount of impact they would have on my college career. As I moved through the semesters and years, I began to climb the ladders in each of my roles, and eventually became president of my organization and a coordinator for residence life. These roles taught me more about myself and what I was capable of than I ever would have learned on my own. Having positions in student affairs early on made me realize that I wanted to pursue a career in student affairs, I wanted to be the change that I needed as an undergraduate student. Throughout my experiences I needed flexibility, empathy, spaces where my growth and development were encouraged, and understanding of my identities, these were all things that I struggled to get from supervisors. Another thing that I was missing was a supervisor who emphasized the importance of leading a balanced life to help me keep from burning out. My academic success and journey through college was directly sponsored by my involvement. These positions encouraged me and really made me think about the supervisors that inspired to be the best and the ones who showed me what I never wanted to be.

This leads me to my present-day positions; I did a short stint as a graduate hall director at West Chester University and soon after got a job as a graduate assistant for pure education in the office of Wellness Promotion. I have been with the office for just over a year and I also started as a Graduate Assistant in the Student Affairs office at Ursinus College; within these three roles I have had a total of five direct supervisors. In my role at the Office of Wellness Promotion I currently supervise 10 student staff workers. I share these

roles and the amount of supervisors I have worked for, not for fun or for fluff but, because not one of the thirteen supervisors had the same supervision styles and I interact[ed] with each of them differently. I also think it is important to share that I am also a supervisor which is important because throughout the process of writing and researching I will be holding myself accountable as both a supervisor and supervisee.

### **Lack of Preparation for Supervisors & Supervisees**

This concern stemmed from experiences that I have had with previous supervisors and even with students that I supervise. Supervision has since turned into something that I talk to peers about regularly. This problem is something that could start to be solved at the institutional level if people were taught even the bare minimum about supervision, things like communication skills, management and leadership styles, understanding of identities, and decision-making. According to Smerek & Peterson's (2007) research, there is a correlation between job satisfaction and work climate and address the need to educate supervisors. Research shows (Salahuddin, 2010) that needs may also change based on the generation that people were born, we might not have had a need for a program like this previously, but we do now. This concern is important because the supervisor and supervisee relationship should be educational for all parties. You can use your roles to grow as a person as well as growing professionally. Without the respect of acknowledging the importance of the relationship and each other's identities that growth is being stunted. The largest consequence of this concern is the number of students who are dissatisfied in with their jobs, the other major consequence is retention rates within these jobs. Retention rates impact everyone involved with each individual office, and even impact the ability to be successful on a college campus.

To conclude, supervision can play a key role in job satisfaction. By having supervisors and supervisees who acknowledge our identities and are willing to work with each other in a way that works best for each other, people can truly feel seen and heard. It is up to institutions too start expecting change while also providing a space that encourages further education around supervision. Supervision within higher education has the ability to be transformational for all parties we need to start treating it like it is as important as it is. We are being given the opportunity to mold supervisees and have the opportunity to be molded by these same supervisees.

## **Chapter Two: Theoretical Frameworks**

In this chapter I will be talking about my philosophy of higher education after having experienced public education for nearly eighteen years. I will also be addressing theories that have played major roles in talking about the education of educators. Throughout the chapter I talk about the education system and the correlation between supervisors to supervisees and teacher to student. I will also talk about the importance of Critical Action Research and the role it plays in the research I have done on the topic of supervision.

### **My Philosophy of Education**

As a lifelong student, you tend to grow up with an idea that education is what happens in a classroom. It consists of subjects, homework, grades, and a teacher providing you with the knowledge that will help you move forward to the next grade level. Students are able to make their way to the next grade based on memorization skills. But, this is only one way to view education. After experiencing years of sitting in a classroom, beginning to understand what learning and education really are, it was easy to realize that a in classroom is not the only space you learn and teachers are not the only people who can provide you information you did not already have. This idea that education only happens in the classroom encourages standardization of the system, which leads to standardization of the way people *should* be learning. Educational philosopher, John Dewey (1938), explains that “any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience” (p. 25). It is important to talk about education as something that is crucial to everyday life and that impeding the growth of a person or people can have a negative impact. Those who work in higher education should encourage everyone at the university to learn and grow. There is a strong connection between education and development. Education from a supervisor allows

for young professionals to thrive while education that occurs in a classroom can encourage students to pursue careers.

Pedagogy is the practice of teaching; seen as how we teach and how people learn. There is no right or wrong way to do either but understanding that all people are different when it comes to teaching and learning is a key factor. I would argue that I have an analytical, non-standardized philosophy of education. This means that I believe that everybody learns, teaches, and understands in different ways and that my belief is backed up by analysis. The current educational system, to me, is a system that is designed to suit the needs of the “standard” student. This educative experience may work for some students, but it does not, and will never work for all of them. This is a major deficit in our education system. Dewey explains that “the main purpose, or objective, is to prepare the young for future responsibilities and for success in life” (Dewey, 1938, p.18). While this may be true, the way we teach and supervise being standardized will not adequately prepare all people for their future. So, why are we teaching and supervising in ways that are not allowing people to thrive? This same line of thinking can be applied in the workplace regarding supervisor/supervisee relationships. In most cases, the supervisor would be similar to a teacher and the supervisee would be similar to the student.

The theory of problem posing, which was coined by Paulo Freire, gives the idea that people are never done learning; therefore, there will always be more to learn whether the person is a teacher, student, supervisor, or supervisee. The continuation of learning through daily life experiences will be different for everyone depending on what stage of life you are in and what your job is. The idea that a person may learn something new from their supervisee on the job, while someone else may be doing more of the teaching is another

aspect of the theory of problem posing. “The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (Freire, 2000, p.81). On the other side of this, learning techniques are different for everyone. Some people are more visual learners while others need hands-on experience to learn. Without adequate knowledge and training, there is an expectation that both people learn the same information in the same exact way. I believe that this expectation should be shattered for the greater good of all people.

### **Education: A Journey With No Destination**

Education is the journey of a student pursuing learning where thought development is constantly occurring. Education is about the full process of growing and gaining knowledge and new skills or sprucing up old ones. Education should not just include students but should be a shared experience that encourages growth in a positive direction between teachers and students. Anyone can be considered an educator, a teacher, supervisor, or student; anyone has the ability to pass along new knowledge. In the case of supervisors and supervisees, both groups should be continuously learning from each other. As Oakeshott mentions in *The Idea of a University*, “the world of learning needs no extraneous cement to hold it together” (p. 25), which to me implies that learning is not something that people have to work at. Everything is constantly changing, supervisors need to be changing along with it; without a change in the supervisors, the supervisee will not be set up for future success. It should be a goal of both teachers and supervisors to be open-minded and willing to learn whilst they are doing their jobs and teaching. The importance of this change in mindset could prove to be astronomical and could make a significant difference to supervisees and students alike.



The most consistent thing about how people learn is inconsistency. You may learn something new and not even know it. As humans, we are absorbing knowledge constantly, from all around us. I believe that the current educative experience should reflect that more. Less emphasis on standardization and more emphasis on real-life experiences and understanding are germane to one's education. If schools latched on to the differences in the way students learned they would theoretically be able to create curriculums that are non-standardized and in-turn level the playing field for all different types of learners.

### **How in-class education relates to education in the work world**

Many people in the teaching community and beyond, understand that the standard grading system does not work in the favor of every student. Not every student is great at taking standardized tests, and almost every student requires different help in the classroom. This has begun to change with the introduction and normalization of individualized education programs (IEPs) and 504 plans; IEPs and 504 plans help students who have learning disabilities and difficulties. Students with IEPs or 504 plans are given more leniency in the classroom. Some students may only have to sit close to the board to stay less distracted while others may get extra time on tests or be excused from standardized tests completely. People needing different teaching styles does not end once a student is out of school, it pushes its way into their professional lives.

By accepting that learning does not only take place in the brick-and-mortar classroom, but you can also gain a deeper understanding of what education really is: fluid and never-ending. Following Freire's work, "education is thus constantly remade" (Freire, 2000, p. 84); as time goes by the expectations of what learning and education look like continue to change. People start to make more educated decisions based on new information

and their surroundings, thus constantly adjusting and remaking education. Supervisors need to be trained to work through the changes in the best way for their supervisees. Workers may all have different ways that they learn best, supervisors should be inclined to supervise them all individually. I do believe that it would work better in the long run and forge better working relationships if supervisors were able to work with their supervisees and teach them in the way they learn best.

### **Action Research**

Action research is defined by Ernest Stringer (2013) as “a systematic approach to investigation that enables people to find effective solutions to problems they confront in their everyday lives” (p. 27). This description of action researched can be compared with Brydon-Miller, et al. (2003) description “it is not a single academic discipline but an approach to research that has emerged over time from a broad range of fields” (p. 11). Both take the time to explain that this form of research does not have set guidelines, it is instead based on everyday social issues that people face. Action research is something typically practiced in the social sciences regarding social problems, and creates change through action. Using this method, you have the ability to make changes and conduct research somewhere that has meaning to you. Participants in an action research study can be anyone—a single person to a group of people—who shares the same ideas and thoughts. By picking a topic that is important to the researcher, they will typically already know what group of people is needed to participate in the study and what group of people they are trying to get the research to impact.

## **Core Principles of Action Research**

Through the years, it has been found that the most effective ways of producing positive outcomes through research are accomplished using participatory approaches (Stringer, 2014). Action research consists of four core principles, relationships, communication, participation, and inclusiveness. These core principles enforce the thought that “action research seeks to develop and maintain social and personal interactions that are nonexploitative and enhance the social and emotional lives of all people who participate” (Stringer, 2014, p. 46). Using these participatory approaches is not only productive but it is an organized way to research. Relationships play a massive role in every individual's day-to-day life but, it also plays a large role in action research as well. Good relationships have a way of making people feel safe and cared for, the same way a poor relationship can make you feel like no one cares. The reason good relationships are so important in action research is because they “have direct impacts on the quality of people’s experience and, through that, the quality of outcomes of any human enterprise” (Stringer, 2014, p.46). The relationships we hold with others directly affects the work they produce whether it be for a full-time job or research; this relationship will let the participants know you care about the research you are doing and will encourage them to participate and provide quality outcomes. While these good relationships are important boundaries do need to be set to ensure that there is no bias data is not getting skewed.

To maintain a good working relationship with participants you need to keep the lines of communication open. According to Stringer (2014), communication is another core principle in action research and consists of “four fundamental conditions for communication” (Stringer, 2014, p. 48) understanding, truth, sincerity, and appropriateness. When

communicating with a participant the information needs to be relayed in a way that the receiver understands the information, this can be easily accomplished by using simple terms when explaining. It is also important that the information being relayed to the receiver is accurate information and that there are “no hidden agendas” (Stringer, 2014, p. 48). It is easy for people to lose trust in the someone if they feel that they have been deceived or lied to. Losing that trust puts a strain on the relationship between researcher and receiver, which can cause a negative impact. The last condition, appropriateness, consists of what information you are telling the receiver and how you are telling them. If you are relaying information to someone and they feel the way you have relayed the information was inappropriate, the relationship could put the relationship at risk.

Along with relationships and communication, participation plays a key role in action research. The goal of participation is “provide a climate that gives people the sense that they are in control of their own lives and that supports them as they take systematic action to improve their circumstances” (Stringer, 2014, p. 50). When talking about participation, control takes the lead in encouraging people to become more engaged. The goal of action research is for people to engage in things they care about, when people care about the research it is more likely for them to participate. Action research take place in an environment where the researcher is comfortable and is working on something they care about. This also goes for the participants of action research because “feelings of ownership that motivate people to invest their time and energy to help shape the nature and quality of the acts, activities, and behaviors in which they engage” (Stringer, 2014, p. 52), they want to see the change in their environment so they are likely to participate.

The last core principle of action research is inclusiveness which is an important factor in action research because it allows for diversity. Usually “the voices of the most powerless groups tend to go unheard, their agendas ignored, and their needs unmet” (Stringer, 2014, p. 53). Giving a voice to those who are typically powerless creates better conditions for them. Inclusiveness allows for more research to be conducted, working on smaller problems and moving their way up to the larger issues. With action research people are working on issues that mean something to them and impact people they care about, this opens up a new world of possibilities and keep things relevant to all people not just the people with power.

### **The Process**

Action research is a process this starts with gathering data, also known as “look.” This consists of framing the research question, gathering the information, understanding the data, and group processes. Framing the research question is important because “the underlying problem in action research is to establish the nature of the issue or problem and how it might be stated” (Stringer, 2014, p. 109). The question is the first thing being looked at, is this something that will interest people and is the key issue blatantly stated? The “look” aspect also focuses on gathering the data which “enables researchers to extend their understanding of the experience and perspective of stakeholders—those mainly affected by or having an influence on the issue investigated” (Stringer, 2014, p. 111). Action research looks to understand the responses of knowing and willing participants rather than coming up with a hypothesis. Next is understanding the data, there are three ways to do so. This area looks to help researchers understand the participants and give additional information if

needed. Lastly, there are group meetings which are used to encourage participants to openly talk about their individual thoughts and experiences.

The next step in the process for action research is the “think” aspect, which dives into the reflection and analysis. This phase takes a harder look at the information that came out of the “look” phase and “identify significant features and elements that seem to have a significant influence on events” (Stringer, 2014, p. 140). In this phase it is important to interpret the data; this gives participants the ability to understand what may be problematic and it give the researchers the ability to work on issues that are considered to be more relevant. Stringer (2014) shares that here are two phases of analysis and interpretation, the first is distilling the data which organizes the data into categories and “unpacks them to identify the elements that compose them” (p. 143). Phase two of analysis and interpretation is enriching the analysis which is used to “further clarifies or extends participants’ understanding by adding information from other stakeholders and data sources” (Stringer, 2014, p. 150).

The last step in the process for action research is “act” and this is the phase where solutions are created and implemented. In this phase of action research participants work together to “formulate actions that lead to a resolution of the problem” (Stringer, 2014, p. 169). The goal is to take it step by step, finding a way to create a positive outcome, what changes can be made for a more desirable outcome, and creating a plan for specific aspects. Unlike other approaches, action research does not follow the same step-by-step to solve every problem but instead takes into account the different experiences people may have. By

this point the data has been collected and combed through and now it is time to spring into action by creating a plan.

Action research is different from other approaches to research, take quantitative research, for example, which focuses on the collection and analysis of numbers. According to Creswell (2009) both action research and quantitative research have similar research methods, coming up with a question, collecting and analyzing data and understanding the data. Where they begin to differ is towards the end, action research creates a plan and acts according to that plan while qualitative research does a write up. There are a few ways to conduct quantitative research such as case studies and narrative research and offer both close-ended and open-ended questions. This approach holds a “postpositivist worldview, experimental strategy of inquiry, and pre- and post-test measures of attitudes” (Creswell, 2009, p.16), meaning there is a specific hypothesis and the data is analyzed. Action research does not follow a specific hypothesis, instead it makes an attempt at understanding the participants and the data.

### **Critical Action Research**

*Critical* action research is defined, in a few ways, by Stephen Kemmis (2008). The more generalized definition he provides for critical action research is “a particular form of action research that aims to respond to challenges” (p. 123). Another definition that Kemmis (2008) provides is that *Critical* Action Research “must work in the conversations and communications of participants about crises and difficulties confronted by social systems and the life worlds in which people find meaning, solidarity and significance” (p. 123). Critical Action Research is a form of Action Research, which is a generalized approach to solving

problems that are prevalent in a community you care about. In Critical Action Research, it is suggested by Kemmis (2008) that research undertaken collectively by participants in a social practice to achieve historical self-consciousness in and of their practice as praxis. This should be done as an individual and especially in groups that aim for self-understanding. This is an important framework to use in Higher Education and Student Affairs because it truly focuses on the issues in society and can help professionals develop themselves and their practice further. Another reason that Critical Action Research is important is because it encourages Higher Educational professionals to delve into their areas and work through the planning and reflecting.

## **Conclusion**

With many definitions and a solid model, the question still remains, what is action research? Action research has come a long way through the years, starting as industrial democracy with short term plans and progressing to what it is now. This model consists of four core principles, relationships, communication, participation, and inclusiveness and it has a three-step process, look, think, and act. It allows participants to feel that the research is worthwhile and is something that they want to participate in to create the change they wish to see. Critical Action Research is a form of action research that follows the concept that knowledge is power and seeks to improve society. In the case of developing core knowledge and education on supervision practices, Critical Action Research helps me understand the issue as a whole and address some of the things that can be done to improve the issues with supervision. It will inform the interventions that I recommend, such as learning modules and education on identities. Critical Action Research also helps me challenge what the idea that



supervisors no longer need to learn. Action Research is the change that the people need, and Critical Action Research has shown to be a successful way to achieve the results that people want.

### **Chapter Three: The Literature Review**

In this chapter I will explore the literature related to my concern that higher education supervisors are not prepared to support diverse student workers on campus. First, I will explore history of the university, paying particular attention to how the university was founded with a particular kind of student in mind. I will also address the exclusion of BIPOC and LGBTQ students as well as students with disabilities. Next, I will discuss some important factors that have shaped my concern that supervisors are not adequately prepared to supervise diverse student workers. More specifically, I will discuss the laws and policies that now exist to protect the rights of BIPOC, LGBTQ, and students with disabilities on college campuses. Lastly, I will share relevant literature that helps frame my concern. I will highlight the work of Shupp and Arminio (2012), Salahuddin (2010), and others throughout the chapter.

#### **History of Higher Education: Who Do Institutions Serve?**

The impact of hundreds of years of slavery in our nation will never be erased. Likewise, the immoral birth of universities in the United States of America has contributed to the systematic racism that we continue to face in our world today. The compensation for slave laborers, for example, could never match the way that enslaved people were treated; they never owned land or had the wealth to hand down to their predecessors. Although U.S. colleges and universities were not the only ones to use slave labor, it often flies under the radar completely that they used slave labor at all. History needs to be more accurately displayed to the public.

I was completely unaware of the immoral beginnings of colleges and universities in the United States of America, until reading *Ebony and Ivy* by Craig Steven Wilder (2013). I

believe the cultural significance of this text is much greater than it is given credit for. The book's evidence should be embedded in high school history classes. Instead, the master narrative surrounding colleges' and universities' beginnings is one that forgets stolen land and slavery in totality. This kind of whitewashing is often used to cover up the wrongdoings of past Americans, where the goal is to paint Americans as people who can do no wrong when, they were just the people who managed to gain all the power. As explained by Wilder (2013), colleges and universities began to whitewash their history in an attempt to "cleanse the stain of human slavery from the story of its prosperity" (p.280). The true history being neglected continues to have an impact on not only universities but the world we live in today.

### **Who is the university for?**

Colleges and universities were not always a place for all students. Harvard University, for example, was founded in 1636 and is the oldest college in the United States. The institution serviced white men and was primarily for those who wanted to be ministers. In this section I will detail some of the history around the exclusion of people of color, women, the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities. When universities started, minoritized and marginalized groups were the support people and not the students or faculty.

### ***People of Color***

The education of Black Americans was prohibited in most southern states as well as being disfavored in the northern states, prior to the Civil War. After the Civil War ended, Black Colleges and Universities or HBCU's started to develop, providing Black Americans with access to higher education. Soon after, Black men were able to

start attending colleges and universities, women were able to start applying and attending, resulting in “seven significant women’s colleges being founded” (Parker, 2015, p.7). The discrimination stems so deep that even two years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, where it was established that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment, students were still turned away from pursuing higher education based on race. In cases like *Lucy v. Adams* (1955), where a Black student who had been accepted to an institution in 1953 and the “acceptance was rescinded because she was not white” (“Autherine Lucy Foster,” n.d.). In 1956, Autherine Lucy Foster was finally able to attend the University of Alabama after having the decision reversed, but it only lasted three days “due to riots and threats against her life” (“Autherine Lucy Foster,” n.d.). This is just one of many instances where BIPOC students have experienced inequity and have been historically excluded at the hands of an institution.

### ***Women***

When women were first allowed to start attending colleges it was incredibly hard for women to get into schools. There were policies that stated for every woman there needs to be three men or they would only accept women if there were spots left after all the men were accepted. Parker (2015) suggested that this did not change until the 1960s and 1970s, when there was a push toward “equality in the workplace and in education encouraged the changing of the roles of women in higher education administration and faculty.” The 1964 Civil Rights Act was a game changer as it called for “equal treatment of minority groups and the elimination of sexual discrimination” (Parker, 2015, p.9), finally making it a bit easier for the minority groups to further their education.

The first school that allowed both men and women to attend was Oberlin Collegiate Institute, which opened in 1833, where “women were allowed to study in the Female or Teachers Department” (“Women of Oberlin College,” 2017). Even after this point where women were allowed to attend an institution, it was difficult to get in, they did not have as many options when it came to what they were allowed to study, and the education was a bit inequitable; thus, the rise of the seven women’s colleges in 1926 named the “Seven Sisters.” These schools paralleled the Ivy League schools that were originally men’s colleges and “were founded to promote education for women that would be at an equal level to the education offered to men” (Lewis, 2019) Women’s colleges typically had a more difficult time raising money so their joint effort was important.

### ***LGBTQ+ Community***

Another group that has been impacted by the history of higher education is the LGBTQ+ community. Throughout the history of higher education in the United States, many LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty were forced to stay in the closet in fear of their lives because there were no laws protecting them. People who identify within the community have historically been excluded from institutions, to the point where they would form private groups so they had a place to openly express themselves. Rankin et al. (2019), talks about how in the 1940’s at least three public universities expelled students and fired faculty who were, or, were presumed to be, homosexual (Rankin et al., 2019, p. 436). For students, faculty, and staff, it was more safe for them to hide pieces of themselves and stick with more underground groups. Not only were people in the queer community excluded from studying at an institution but even when they were finally allowed, and the climate had

changed, they are still not represented as much in research. This became extremely evident when Rankin et al. (2019) talks about the data that did exist and:

the documentation offered by historians is ‘white’ and ‘gay/ lesbian’ and does not include the narratives or struggles of transgender, nonbinary, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, intersex, aromantic, demisexual people, nor those in the community identifying outside of a white racial identity. (Rankin et al., 2019, p. 436)

While some documentation is better than none, there was no information on non-white queer folks and no acknowledgment that people might fall in the “grey” areas.

Though this might sound like something that has changed drastically over time, this group of students has and continues to be excluded. On September 18, 2010, a Rutgers University student left a note on Facebook apologizing and then committed suicide. This student’s roommate had been harassing and embarrassing him for being gay, this was enough for the student to end his life. Marine (2011) mentions that “more than 12 percent of the 1,195 hate crimes committed against BGLT persons in 2006 happened at schools and colleges, further demonstrating the reality that the campus is no guaranteed safe haven for queer students” (p. 2). There are stories that get reported by news sources every day about queer college students being harassed, assaulted, and even taking their own lives, this group is in need of attention.

### ***People with Disabilities***

The next group of individuals that I would like to mention are those with disabilities. People with disabilities did not always have access to higher education and even when they did gain the right to further their education, institutions were not always required to provide

students with disabilities accommodations that would encourage the success of a disabled student. According to Harbour and Madaus (2011), students with disabilities make up “an estimated 11 percent of all students in higher education” (p. 5). Students with disabilities have typically been ignored in higher education but when they were finally allowed to acknowledged, even the slightest bit, it was at institutions such as “the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb” or “the National Deaf-Mute College” (p. 5). Disabilities that had to do with site and hearing were the ones that were first recognized in higher education. It was not until 1944 when more physical disabilities were recognized and accommodated. This was when the GI Bill of Rights was passed and influenced by the Veterans from World War I. Though laws and policies have changed and been updates, students still must go through extensive processes to “prove” to an institution that they have a need for an accommodation. Students with disabilities have to put in an unequitable amount of effort to access resources and accommodations that would make their learning experience just as useful and accessible as those without a disability.

### **Relevant Factor: Law, Policy, & Equity**

In this section I will discuss the laws and policies that govern issues of equity in higher education regarding BIPOC and LGBTQ students, as well as students with disabilities. I will provide a brief summary of these laws focusing on the protections they provide for students on college campuses and explain how these laws should inform supervision of student workers on campus.

### **Gender & Sexuality Equality & Higher Education**

Throughout the history of higher education in the United States, many LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty were forced to stay in the closet in fear of their lives because

there were no laws protecting them. The hatred for the LGBTQ+ community is so deeply rooted that in 2006 there were still 33 institutions that banned enrollment of LGBTQ+ students. There are policies such as the Equality Act that are supposed to protect the LGBTQ+ from discrimination and Title IX which should protect students from discrimination based on their gender identity or sexual orientation. Rankin et. al. (2019) talks about some of the most recent studies that have been done surrounding LGBTQ+ students. These articles are primarily “examining queer- spectrum students’ health outcomes relative to their experience” (p. 444). While transgender student experiences are being included in some research, it is being done at much lower rates.

The Equality Act (2019), or H.R. 5, is a bill that “prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system” (“H.R.5 - equality act,” n.d.). This bill brings attention to the historical mistreatment of queer and female identifying students. It is also a bill that allowed students to feel protected. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 “prohibits sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity) discrimination in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Office for Civil Rights, 2021). This means that people cannot be denied aid, admission into an educational program, disqualified for a job, etc. based on their gender identity. These two pieces of legislation have empowered queer and female identifying people. These impact supervision because it requires people to learn about these communities enough to work with people who are part hold the identities. They are also important because they are pieces of legislations that could be potentially overturned. As we have seen in today’s political world, rights can be given and taken away



from groups of people. It is important to acknowledge the fear this may cause in people that are being supervised, especially when the legislation protects them in the workplace. Any emotions that stem from possible changes to protection could cause changes in the way a person works or how much they accomplish.

### **Disability Equality & Higher Education**

The first piece of documentation that started to protect the rights of people with disabilities was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This protected the rights of people with disabilities in programs that received federal funding. Next was The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), this was a civil rights law that prohibited discrimination in all public areas of life such as schools, transportation, jobs, etc. After the ADA came Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), this Act changed the definition of the term disability making it easier for people to seek protection from the ADA. Most recently, the Final Rule implementing the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (Final Rule 2016) was issued, which set the proper meaning of the term disability along with a few other things.

It is important to keep updated on the laws surrounding students with disabilities, it could impact the amount of information you are allowed to ask the student, it can also change what might be considered a disability. When supervising it can be incredibly important for a supervisor to know of any accommodations that a supervisee might need. For example, if someone is hard of hearing, they might need access to closed captions when on a virtual call or for their supervisor to speak a bit louder when in person. This is one example of many that should be respected in the workplace. Also, the Final Rule 2016 is a great example of how laws can be constantly reassessed and changed. Making sure to keep

up with the changes shows a persons' dedication to their supervisees and their work in higher education. The Final Rule 2016 protects people with disabilities from being bombarded with inappropriate comments and questions and affords them protections at their workplace and within and institution.

### **Racial Equality & Higher Education**

Non-white students have a long history of being mistreated and legislation supports that. The Civil Rights Act was not signed into law until 1964, which was only 58 years ago. This law “prohibited discrimination in public places, provided for the integration of schools and other public facilities, and made employment discrimination illegal” (“Civil Rights Act,” 2022). The Civil Rights Act opened up doors for all non-white people but primarily people who identified as Black. They were allowed to attend institutions and were not supposed to be denied based on the color of their skin. This also opened up the door for new job opportunities along with other experiences. As seen on the news and other mediums, there are people who disagree with the Civil Rights Act and do not believe that the people this law impact should have rights. Even 58 years later, race is constantly impacting peoples lives. Work should feel like a place that is safe; to do that supervisors need to be fully aware of laws such as the Civil Rights Act and be generally educated on related topics, so they can best support their staff. Day to day life, the past, and fear for the future can severely impact a person's ability to show up as their best self at work. The least a supervisor can do is support their supervisee in whatever way they need in each moment, they should be prepared when race is the thing that is impacting them the most.

Overall, there are many laws and policies that impact the way supervisors are able to hire, deny, accommodate, etc. their workers. While the laws and policies are in place to protect

the individual, it is vital for the supervisor to understand the impacts that these laws and policies have on people and the fear that the only thing protecting them is a law or policy that could change. As you can see with the above laws and policies, there have been many times that the country has moved in the right direction. Changing things as needed, when there is new information, supervisors need to be able to change with the laws. It is also important for supervisors need to have the ability to assess the political climate, when there is something major going on in the world they need to think about how that might impact their supervisees. They need to work with each individual supervisee to see if they might need additional supports during those times, ensuring that the work gets done and the supervisee feels valued and seen.

### **Current State of the Concern: Supervision**

#### **What is Supervision?**

The term supervision can be defined as “the continuous process of providing guidance to an individual with the intended outcome of employee and institutional growth” (Nichols & Baumgartner, 2016, p.62). The issue I will be exploring throughout this paper is leadership styles in student affairs with the main question being, does the relationship with a supervisor and leadership style impact supervisees in higher education and student affairs? Over the years, different leadership styles have been shown to encourage and discourage students from pursuing jobs in higher education and student affairs. People who are just starting in student affairs are leaving the field and most are not being replaced, this refers to the attrition rate. The “attrition rates for new professionals in student affairs range from 20 to 40% within the first six years of professional practice” (Davis & Cooper, 2017, p.55).

There could be many reasons for such high rates of staff leaving and not being replaced but, why are they leaving in the first place?

The relationships between supervisors and supervisees have shown to be important when looking to keep these new professionals and student staff interested in this profession. This relationship has the chance to provide supervisee's a good experience and one that allows them to want to excel in student affairs. Likewise, the relationship and leadership style a supervisor uses can deter students away from wanting to pursue a career in student affairs if they had a poor experience. In cases like this, the leadership style and relationship between the supervisor and supervisee have a direct impact on the new professional or student staff member.

### **The Relevance of Supervision**

Some students in college are lucky enough to have a supervisor that they create an incredible bond with, one that will last a lifetime. These supervisors can often inspire the students they have a close bond with; causing the student to follow a similar career path. It is also possible that there is a poor relationship and that is the factor that pushes the supervisees' away from the field. When supervisors care about their role and the way they supervise it gives those who are being supervised a reason to want to do and be the best that they can be. When there is a poor relationship, or the supervision skills are lacking it has the potential to cause someone to dislike the position they are in. Supervisors have the ability to inspire or deter people from a career in student affairs. Most professionals in the field of higher education/ student affairs start as undergraduate students, working for Residence Life, Student Involvement, Admissions, etc. These experiences are a prime time for these students to learn about the field of higher education; "the future of student affairs depends

on the proper education and training of entry-level staff members” (Shupp & Arminio, 2012, p.157). It is up to the supervisors to ensure that the students and new staff feel supported in their early roles so they can flourish later on.

Throughout my research on this topic, I have found that there are quite a few studies that find leadership styles important when it comes to staff attrition within the field of Student Affairs. Some of the factors that are playing a role in this are work overload, lack of mentoring, and inadequate supervision. These are issues that could be solved by taking a closer look at supervisors and their leadership styles. Every supervisor has been supervised at some point and the experiences they had could have shaped them into the supervisor they are. Many have experienced only one or two forms of supervision and could think that is the only effective way to supervise. In reality, everyone has different preferences when it comes to supervising and being supervised. It is about adjusting and adapting to the needs of both parties, “research shows that students desire more training in supervision” (Nichols & Baumgartner, 2016, p.62). This is showing us that students want to understand leadership and the different models of supervision to better themselves. Furthermore, Nichols and Baumgartner (2016) explained that supervision is not only focusing on short and long-term goals but should also be promoting two-way communication and growth.

The information provided throughout the research shows that there is a large amount of work that needs to be done. In order to support students and staff better, there need to be more training programs provided to the professional staff regarding leadership styles, what works, and what does not typically work. Professionals in student affairs could use this information to better themselves and run a more unified team. If student affairs educators are willing, they could put synergistic supervision to the test, in an attempt to support the

needs of the staff. Another reason this information is helpful to student affairs educators is that the research is showing that the leadership styles that are currently being used are not incredibly successful.

### **My Experiences with Supervision**

Identity-based inequality is found within higher education. When working as an undergraduate student, I started hosting sessions to help first-year students fill out housing forms. I was working with a student who had identified as biracial, and we had gotten to the question of race where you could only select one option. I sat for a second trying to select both the Black/African American box as well as the White box, but it kept going back and forth. For a second, the student and I thought the form was flawed and with no context she replied, “click other.” The system I was working for at the time was making people choose one of their identities or making them choose to be other. Even though it is not something I have personally experienced as an undergraduate, it is not something that any student should have to experience, we should never want them to feel like an “other.” This can also be seen when students are filling out forms that ask about a person’s gender and only have the options of male and female. Another area where identity-based inequity exists within the institution and impacts supervision are disabilities, both visible and invisible, examples might include ADHD, hearing loss, wheelchair users, etc. When I was working in a first year building as an undergraduate, we had a potential student who was blind; I had to work with the student and their mother to do a walk-through of the building to make sure that we made any accommodations before the student moved in. This taught me the importance of working to listen to students when it comes to their needs, it opened my eyes to see that if it was that simple to work with a student it would be just as easy to work with a supervisee. There are

also people who were and are impacted by multiple factors, leading to the discussion of intersectionality. Intersectionality is a concept that “recognizes that all people possess multiple, intersecting identities” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 42), therefore a person can be a student of color and part of the LGBTQ+ community or a first generation, female, with ADHD.

While the previous examples are not true for all departments and institutions, it is enough to realize that the change needs to be made from within. These are systemic issues that are not only impacting people in the moment, but they are impacting people later down the line. With the inequalities being systemic, it is vital that they are recognized at each institution and addressed. The reason this is important to supervision is because supervision is not a skill that is taught prior to working, it is typically expected that you will learn about supervision through the role that you are in. I plan to address new and returning supervisors and provide them knowledge on identity-based needs as well as needs that are out of anyone’s control, such as information on grief, to help them understand potential needs of their supervisee’s. For people who have been supervisors without training, it is vital to present them with new knowledge that helps them continue to grow as well as information on supervision styles; to let them know there is no one right way to supervise. It is important that “all dimensions must be understood in relationship to each other” (Patton et. al., 2016, p. 85); dimensions meaning self-perceptions such as race, gender, and sexual orientation and contextual influences like family, social norms, and stereotypes.

## **Supervising Diverse Student Workers**

After surveying the research on the topic of supervision, I have concluded that professionals in higher education and student affairs need to understand the impact of their leadership styles more thoroughly. This research showed me the various impacts of leadership styles on outcomes such as retention rates and job satisfaction. I also found information on what leads a supervisor to lead the way they do. Generational differences came into play with older generations being more autocratic leaders while younger generations tend to be more transformational or transformative. One thing that I could not find about supervision was if there was any correlation between race and leadership styles. There are many stereotypes that exist around race so I thought there would be more information around the correlation. Another topic that I would have liked to find more information on is the correlation between gender and supervision. While there were some studies that showed the number of women in leadership roles, they did not discuss how those women leaders supervise. Students career choices were also found to be impacted by a leader's leadership style. The following are examples of the major findings from my research throughout my program.

### **Research and Methods**

Smerek and Peterson (2017) and Tull (2006) used a range of participants across each of their studies who were faculty or staff members in higher education, they were either student workers, graduate students, full time faculty and staff, as well as any part time faculty and staff members. Different studies were done, many of them including job satisfaction surveys for both supervisors and supervisees. Shupp & Arminio (2012) and Bateh and Heyliger (2014) used questionnaires for participants, they had questions that



related to specific aspects of leadership styles, things people like in supervision and things people do not like. A good majority of research done were classified as quantitative research studies, studies that are focused on gathering numerical data.

### **Leadership Styles**

Though there might be a few different thoughts around leadership styles, I am going to be using autocratic, participative, laissez-faire, transactional, transformational, and servant leadership. Some of them are similar in practice while others are more so outliers. Autocratic leadership can be described as a style where “supervisees do not challenge the leader” and where the “leader has control over the decisions” (Mohajeri, 2021). Participative leaders “offer guidance, values input from team members, and but make decisions on their own” (Mohajeri, 2021). Laissez-faire leaders will often “offer minimal guidance and give group members freedom” (Mohajeri, 2021). Transactional leadership can be identified by “leaders setting the goals and followers agree to accomplish those goals with rewards for completing work” (Mohajeri, 2021). Another style of leadership I would like to address is transformational leadership, this leader is a motivator and “helps members reach their potential using a hands-on leadership style” (Mohajeri, 2021). Finally, I will mention servant leadership, this leader “shares power and serves others by using self-reflection” (Mohajeri, 2021).

### **Job Satisfaction**

Conversations around job satisfaction can quickly become stereotypical, people are dissatisfied with the amount of work they have or the low wages. What I have found through my research is that supervisees in higher education are typically dissatisfied with their jobs due to inadequate supervision. Tull (2006) showed that there was a positive

correlation between synergistic supervision and job satisfaction for new professionals. In a different study that was developed by Bateh and Heyliger (2014), research showed that transformational leaders were most satisfied while participants who were working with passive/avoidant leaders reported being least satisfied. There are a few leadership styles that are shown to be more effective and others, not as effective. People who have leaders that are under the umbrella of transformational tend to be more satisfied while people who were working with more passive and avoidant leaders were least satisfied. All supervisee's have different needs and that includes the need to be supervised in different ways. When their supervision needs are met, they are likely to experience job satisfaction, which can lead to them producing better work, working more efficiently, and better retention rates.

### **Retention Rates**

Through the findings in the research of Shupp & Arminio (2012) and Bateh and Heyliger (2014), I learned about the impact that faculty and staff have on retention rates. The demeanor of higher up supervisors impacts new professionals as well as student workers, when they are entering the field at any level, they are looking to their supervisor to be supportive. Shupp & Arminio (2012) even suggest that “institutions struggling with retaining entry-level student affairs administrators establish support groups across campus for each new cohort of employees” (p. 169). If they do not get what they need from the supervisors, the supervisees will leave because they do not feel supported in their role. The goal for any department should be to create an environment that sets its staff up for success, it should provide a space where supervisees feel valued, and where they are given opportunities to excel. Supervisors who work on their leadership styles and are willing to

work with their supervisees based on the style that works best for them will lead to job satisfaction, which directly correlates with better retention rates.

### **Generational Differences**

Over the years expectations in the workplace have changed significantly. A study completed by Salahuddin (2010) showed that over the years, the core and work values of supervisee's as well as their preferred styles of supervision have changed. In the younger generations values such as honesty have become more important, in these cases leadership styles that involve more group think efforts and offer opportunities for transparency would be more beneficial. For older generations things like competency were more valued and things like honesty were ranked lower on their wants and needs from supervisors. Leaders that are thought to be more competent might be more authoritative, not looking to collaborate with supervisees, but instead telling the supervisees exactly what is happening and what they need to do. This is relevant because a supervisor might be working with supervisees who value different things and who need to be supervised in different ways in order to succeed. This is also relevant because the generational differences could be the reason supervisors, supervise the way they do.

### **Other Important Topics Related to Supervision**

Two aspects that could impact the way a person chooses to supervise, or the needs of a supervisee are race and gender. Though race and gender have been mentioned in a couple articles, there is not much information on styles of leadership that non-male identifying people lean towards. This also raises the question, do supervisees expect different interactions depending on race, gender, and age can impact the way people choose to supervise. While Salahuddin (2010) talks about the research they did on generational

differences, there is not much research on generational differences in supervision outside of that study. Supervisors play a large role in job satisfaction for supervisees and the lack of data makes me question whether or not gender and race might play a larger role in the end.

Leadership styles can play a major role in supervisees, on any level, job satisfaction. There are some leadership styles that are seen as more effective and some that are significantly less effective in today's society. Supervisees values have changed, because of this, supervisors need to make adjustments that align with the supervisees values and needs. If needs are not being met, the supervisees will be unhappy and more likely to leave their roles. This data reinforces the need for two interventions, one for supervisors and one for supervisees. Using this data, courses and trainings could be created to teach supervisors new strategies and leadership styles, this would be a great opportunity for professional development. For supervisees to also have to take courses or trainings that teach them how to be better supervisees, it might encourage the supervisors by acknowledging that they are not the only ones making changes. Great supervision leads to better retention rates, and happy more effective supervisees.

### **My Work Experience**

Over the past two years in my graduate assistantships, I have learned immense amounts about supervision. In the two years I have supervised 20 students in a more direct capacity while also working with some students for shorter periods of time in a less intense capacity. They each came in and had different identities that impacted the way they needed to be supervised. Some of them just needed smaller things like the acknowledgment of a pronoun change or to have fidget items when we were in meetings. Others challenged me to learn more about them to figure out what might work best, simply because they did not

know, while a select few just needed a space to be heard and be themselves. Over these two years I have had the opportunity to see all of my supervisee's grow in ways that I could have never expected. They want to produce their best work and are constantly challenging themselves to do their best. When I first started working with this group, they were nervous about making mistakes and not wanting me to find out. Now I have supervisees who come to me and ask what we can do together to fix it. The growth in communication and trust have been amazing to see.

I have also learned a good amount about being supervised. I have had five supervisors between the roles that I have had and each of them supervises in a different way. Some are more vocal about what they need from me and want to go through each motion step by step while others ask my opinion and value my input. I have been able to learn that each of these leadership styles work for them and their individual needs but I have also learned that some of their styles challenge me to be a better professional while others do not challenge me at all. My graduate assistantships have also taught me about my personal needs and that if I do not ask for what I need then no one will know that it exists. At the start of my first role as a supervisor I did research about the different styles of leadership, learning that there are about six, each with their own approach. I read about each one and tried to align myself with one or two of them that I could put into practice. I also started asking my supervisors what style of leadership they thought they had used and some of them were not even aware that there were outlines of styles. This was a major factor that informed my concern and something I wanted to address. My intervention will be addressing this by hosting sessions on leadership styles and identity for both supervisees and supervisors. These sessions will encourage people to learn their needs as well as learning

about how they can meet others needs and work efficiently. I have learned that by putting these theories into practice, both supervisors and supervisees are much more satisfied with each other and the work.

The main challenge that exists in the day-to-day work in higher education and student affairs is the lack of education on supervision. As people make their way into the field, many find themselves as supervisors, whether it be of under graduates, graduate students, or post-graduate professionals. People are entering these roles never having supervised before and never being taught about supervision in any capacity. They are supervising based on their own experiences and what they think supervision is supposed to look like. While there is no one right way to supervise, it is important to still learn the basics and common practices. It is important to acknowledge that stereotypes are another challenge that play a role in the day-to-day work. The system was built idolizing white men and trying to make people believe that they are the only ones capable of things like supervision or running departments. People who identify as anything aside from a white man they might act the same way as their white male counterpart but be described differently. Addressing the stereotypes and the language that institutions use are going to be crucial.

## Chapter Four: Program Design & Implementation

This thesis explores the importance of supervision, how supervision impacts students, and the role that identity plays in our supervision needs. My overarching thematic concern is that not enough student affairs practitioners are taught how to supervise. Supervision has a tremendous impact on people on many levels; in my experience, these impacts could range from a student quitting a job, having plans to enter a field and changing due to their experience with a supervisor, thinking they have to supervise the same way as their supervisor, and more. One issue that can drive these impacts is that all people are different in terms of race, religion, neurodivergence, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and visible and invisible disabilities. In my observations, all of these things can create barriers between supervisor & supervisee.

My intervention includes the development an institute, the Supervision Development Institute (SDI), that will create and deliver active, engaged, high quality instruction to professional staff members who supervise undergraduate and graduate students. An institute can be defined as “a society or organization having a particular object or common factor, especially a scientific, educational, or social one” (Brown, 2020). The institute would facilitate multiple professional development sessions throughout the year on topics including: standard supervision practices, basic education on minoritized and marginalized groups, and on identification of what type of supervision style each person uses. The goal of this is to help people, from all levels within the same department build stronger relationships through education while also positively shaping their understandings of supervision.

The main component of this institute will be its annual *Supervision Development Conference* (SDC) that will be formatted similarly to an academic conference with individual sessions dedicated to topics that would inform participants on the importance of understanding different identities as well as about general information on supervision. The SDC will help a) raise awareness of supervision styles, b) educate student affairs professionals on identities, c) educate student workers on identities, and d) educate student workers on how to advocate for their identities.

While the intention of the SDC is to reach professionals who are already supervising, it will also provide learning opportunities for graduate and undergraduate student workers. Learning about supervision strategies prior to or upon entering the world of supervision can benefit them as well as their future supervisee's. As time passes, the Supervision Development Institute, via the SDC, will have time to grow and more departments, organizations, and institutions will have the ability to attend and inform its educational efforts. In what follows I will outline the major goals and outcomes of the SDC.

### Goals & Outcomes

<b>Program Goal 1: Raise Awareness of the Different Supervision Styles</b>	
<b>Program Outcome:</b>	<b>Learning Outcome:</b>
1-1: 40% of graduate student supervisors will attend the SDC within the first year of the institute launch.	SDC participants will be able to list and describe the six most common supervision styles.
50% of undergraduate supervisors will partake in the in-person workshops to becoming familiar with identities.	SDC Participants will be able to verbalize ways to better assist students of at least two different identities.



<b>Program Goal 2: Educate Student Affairs Professionals on Identities</b>	
Program Outcome:	Learning Outcome:
50% of Student Affairs Professionals, who identify as supervisors, will be able to explain one impact that holding a different identity has on their relationships.	SDC participants will be able to list and describe some of the impacts that their identities and their supervisee's identities play in their professional relationship.
60% of Student Affairs Professionals, who identify as supervisors, will be able to list 6 identities that students might hold that require acknowledgement.	SDC participants will be able to list the identities they hold and the identities that some of their supervisee's hold.

<b>Program Goal 3: Educate Student Workers on Identities</b>	
Program Outcomes:	Learning Outcome:
50% of student workers will attend SDC workshops on identity in the workplace.	Student workers who participate in the SDC workshops will describe the roles their identities play in their work lives
80% of students who have attended the SDC workshops will be able to explain different needs they have based on their identities.	Student workers will be able to describe two identity-based needs they have in the workplace

<b>Program Goal 4: Educate Student Workers on Advocating for their Identities</b>	
Program Outcome:	Learning Outcome:
80% of students who attend the SDC workshop will describe ways that their identities differ from their supervisors.	Student workers will be able to explain their specific needs to their supervisors.
80% of students who attend the SDC workshop will be able to identify ways that they can collaborate with supervisors who hold different identities/have different needs.	Student workers will be able to identify an identity their supervisor holds that they do not and list three ways that they can work with their supervisor despite the difference in identities.

### **Program Proposal**

The Supervision Development Institute will start with a smaller group of professionals who are invited to lead this effort on improving supervision at their institution. Each professional would have the ability to bring up to two graduate students and two upper-class undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing careers in higher education. The main goal of this institute is to provide professional development opportunities where student affairs departments are able to attend and work together, opening lines of communication between supervisors and supervisees. The main component of these efforts will be the SDC, which will provide general knowledge on supervision, identities, advocacy, etc. and has the potential to grow and shift with the institution as it grows. The SDC, and the Supervision Development Institute more broadly, encourages supervisory relationships to be a two-way street, requiring both parties to take responsibility in building the relationship and ensuring that all parties needs are being met.

## **Supervision Development Conference**

### ***SDC Goals & Outcomes***

The first goal that I have for this institute is to raise awareness of the different supervision styles. This is an important topic to be covered because some folks might not have basic knowledge surrounding supervision. It will be important for people to have general knowledge on supervision before attending sessions on more intense topics, but more specifically, it will be important because they are acting as supervisors and supervisees in their everyday life. Institute participants should be able to list the six most common supervision styles as well as two basic identities that someone might hold.

The first program goal directly correlates to the second, which is educating student affairs professionals on identities. The outcomes would be participants listing their own identities as well as their supervisor/supervisees' identities and having the ability to describe the impacts that their identities have in their professional relationships. The next goal I mention focuses on educating student workers on identities and to identify the way their own identities impact them in the workplace. My final goal challenges student workers to advocate for themselves and their identities. This goal is really meant to encourage students to better understand themselves and their needs and see if their needs differ based on their identity. The outcome of this goal would be student workers having the ability to verbalize their specific needs as well as identifying needs that their supervisors hold that they do not. This second part will be incredibly important because it has the ability to humanize supervisors and see them as people who also might have different needs based on supervision.

### ***SDC Format, Schedule, Sessions & Workshops***

<b>Supervision Development Institute Schedule</b>	
Location: Space at any institution that can host around 100 guests	
Date/Time: Two half day events when students are not in session	
<b>Day 1</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	<b>Session Description</b>
<b>8:30 AM</b>	Breakfast (optional)
<b>9:00 AM</b>	Department Introductions
<b>9:20 AM</b>	What is Supervision and Why Does it Matter?
<b>10:00 AM</b>	What Identities do you Hold?
<b>10:30 AM</b>	Department Break-Out Activity
<b>10:50 AM</b>	Break
<b>11:00 AM</b>	How to Advocate for Yourself in the Workplace
<b>12:00 PM</b>	Close-out and Lunch Offered
<b>Day 2</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	<b>Session Description</b>
<b>8:30 AM</b>	Breakfast (optional)
<b>9:00 AM</b>	Ways to Respect Religion in the Workplace
<b>9:20 AM</b>	The Impacts of Race in the Workplace
<b>10:00 AM</b>	Advocating for your Invisible or Visible Disability

<b>10:30 AM</b>	Who Deserves a Seat at the Table?
<b>10:50 AM</b>	Break
<b>11:00 AM</b>	Theories to Practice
<b>12:00 PM</b>	Close-out and Lunch Offered

As explained in the Supervision Development Conference schedule, the institute would take place on the institute's campus between two half day periods. It would be ideal to choose a date that tends to be a bit more "quiet," which could be times when students are not in session. The location would need to be a space where tables can be set up and that has access to technology needed for presentations. The SDC will take place in-person and be spread out over to days and run from 8:30am-1:00pm with an optional but encouraged breakfast and lunch. Should the institution deem it necessary, the sessions could be recorded for folks who could not attend and could also be live streamed for participants who are not able to attend in person or who may not feel comfortable.

In the SDC Schedule, I have outlined general topics that should be covered and how much time those topics might take. The first day of the SDC is geared towards basic knowledge on supervision styles and identities, while the second day has room to be more focused on putting theories to practice and how to apply the knowledge you are being presented in your supervision practices. This will also be a great time for sessions that teach participants how to advocate for themselves and their needs appropriately and effectively in the workplace. A more detailed outline of the session on "Identity and Supervision" can be found in Appendix A.

## Theory to Practice

The literature that sparked the idea for my program was *Development and Validation of the Inclusive Supervision Inventory for Student Affairs* by Matthew R. Shupp, Amy B. Wilson, Carmen M. McCallum. This article was the first that I saw where multicultural competence and multicultural supervision were mentioned. The article defines multicultural competence as “a tripartite model of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills” (p. 123). More specifically, this article explored the “positive correlation... between supervisor and supervisee and the supervisees’ overall multicultural competence” (p. 123). This article encouraged me to reflect on my own experiences with supervisors and supervising, and recognize the ways in which identities like race, religion, neurodivergence, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and visible and invisible disabilities, had played an important role in my experiences. I was inspired to develop my intervention around the thought that if supervisors and supervisees understood each other’s identities, it could be possible that their relationships and expectations would be more reasonable and mutually beneficial.

Entire sessions at the SDC will be dedicated to supporting supervisors and supervisees in learning about identities that can impact their relationships. These sessions not only inform participants about identities that impact supervision, but also provide insight into practices that they can use to accommodate various identities into supervisory relationships. The sessions will also support student workers in learning how to advocate for their identities in the workplace. Based on the literature from Shupp et al (2018), this could lead to more positive experiences at work.

### **ACPA/NASPA Leadership Competencies**

The ACPA/NASPA Leadership Competencies have had a pretty large influence on me and what I think is important when working as a student affairs practitioner. The list of competencies is a great help when setting personal and professional goals and is also useful when working with supervisees. As someone who identifies as a transformational leader, I think it is incredibly important to help each student reach their full potential. With the ACPA/NASPA competencies, there are some pre-set goals but you also have the ability to develop your own goals to reach different levels of competency for each goal. The leadership competencies can be used in any field, and they are beneficial for professional and student staff to keep bettering themselves. As a supervisor, I have all my students fill out an ACPA/NASPA competency sheet and have them set goals based on the competencies. My supervisor also expects that I fill out a competency assessment and they make it a point to fill one out as well, in hopes of encouraging student workers we tell them that we also fill them out and set goals.

The ACPA/NASPA professional competencies will play a relatively large role in my thematic concerns and intervention. My thesis focuses on improving supervision, and I am hoping to have an intervention that involves classes and training sessions on this topic. The competencies set up goals that are great to work towards and the hope is that if they are used in the form of training or a course so individuals would take them more seriously. They address the different knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are required to be an effective leader. The goals encourage people to really assess themselves and the knowledge they have, it is incredibly important to be realistic when completing a sheet like this. Different competency goals can be assigned to modules that might help students better understand the

competency or help them reach a new level of competency. The main competencies that this intervention would tackle are a) Leadership, b) Social Justice and Inclusion, c) Student Learning & Development, and d) Advising & Supporting. The table below highlights the ways that each of these will be addressed in my intervention.

Competency	Application
<p><b>Leadership:</b> the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of a leader, whether it be a positional leader or a member of the staff, in both an individual capacity and within a process of how individuals work together effectively to envision, plan, effect change in organizations, and respond to internal and external constituencies and issues.</p>	<p>SDC participants will be encouraged in workshops to identify their personal values and beliefs about supervision while acknowledging that others may have different values, beliefs, and needs. This will encourage participants to find a medium that works for all parties in the supervision relationship.</p>
<p><b>Social Justice &amp; Inclusion:</b> the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups and seeks to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power. This competency involves student affairs educators who have a sense of their own agency and social responsibility that includes others, their community, and the larger global context.</p>	<p>SDC participants will engage in critical reflection to identify personal biases around identity. They will learn about different identities and how they relate to supervision.</p>
<p><b>Student Learning &amp; Development:</b> addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs practice, as well as understanding teaching and training theory and practice</p>	<p>SDC participants will articulate models and theories surrounding student learning related to supervision. They will also be able to develop learning outcomes and apply the outcomes to building relationships with supervisors/supervisees.</p>



<p><b>Advising &amp; Supporting:</b> addresses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to providing counseling and advising support, direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance to individuals and groups.</p>	<p>SDC participants will articulate ways to work as a supervisor or supervisee to folks who hold identities that are different than their own.</p>
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### **Related Professional Experience**

Any type of leadership that everyone has the opportunity to be involved in would be necessary to help address my concern. It is important to experience the different styles of leadership because in my experience each style can generate successful careers and meaningful relationships. Academically, I have seen my three professors from my first year of graduate school, work well to support the cohort. These professionals had different styles of leadership, but they each created a relationship with their students and were willing to collaborate to benefit the students. I have seen different supervision styles work in student affairs as well. When I participated in West Chester's division of student affairs meetings, every student affairs professional attends the meeting and there are many leadership styles represented there, every one of them is willing to work together to reach a common goal. This is something that has influenced my intervention because it taught me that it was possible to work with people who supervise differently than myself. More importantly it has challenged me to have an open mind when working for people who supervise differently than I do. It has also influenced my intervention because this program is where I learned that supervision was not going to be taught in the classroom, aside from a few conversations throughout the two-year program.

There were several moments this semester that turned out to be significant learning experiences. For example, in my current position I was exposed to different conflicts that I was responsible for addressing. Having to address a variety of conflicts which ranged from situations I was comfortable with to uncomfortable with allowed me to learn how to efficiently handle conflicts despite comfortability. Through mid-year evaluations I was also provided significant learning experiences. With these evaluations I learned how much feedback and respectful constructive criticism is genuinely appreciated by students.

Working with the students has given me much insight about advising and supporting students. My interactions with the diverse student body allowed me to truly see individual differences among each student. This taught me the importance of viewing each one in an individualized manner, and which encouraged me to support each one differently according to their individualized needs in order to help them succeed. I've also learned about the importance of being transparent with students when advising and supporting them. Being transparent, allowing students to see you as an individual who is honest and respectful makes them more comfortable receiving support from you and encourages them to put their best foot forward. Students see you as someone who is doing what they can to help when you are transparent with them. Supporting students is a two-way street, they need you as much as you need them; while in the midst of supporting them I have also learned and gained so much.

### **Potential Challenges**

This intervention would cost around \$15,400; this money would fund the catering, promotional items, basic supplies and presenter needs, and a student worker who is able to assist with the facilitation of the conference. Thus, finding grants and writing grant proposals

will take a good amount of time. Likewise, this does not guarantee that we would be awarded the money. Finding funding to support this work will be one of the primary challenges. For any funding that is not covered by grants, I would ask the institution, which could pose as a challenge because institutions do not often have large sums of money in addition to expected budgetary expenditures.

Another potential challenge is noted by Shupp et al. (2018), who noted the “lack of rigorous research methodology or a validated research instrument from which to develop an empirically based model of supervision” (p. 122-123). This could pose as a challenge because it could keep participants from buying into a new program surrounding education on supervision. If there was more research on the topic it could be used to push the agenda, but without it, getting folks to register for the institute could be a bit more difficult. Registration for my intervention will be relying heavily on senior level Student Affairs staff pushing the staff from departments to attend; because of this I will have to have them all on the same page when it comes to the importance of this work. I thought there would be much more information on supervision in higher education due to the nature of the profession, but I have found that it is a relatively new topic in the field.

I want to provide supervisors and supervisees the education they deserve. The implementation of my intervention will not be easy, but I feel as though it is important for the future of student affairs. My intervention is asking for supervisors and supervisees to take workshops and sit through educational sessions to continue learning about supervision and the roles that identity might play in the workplace. By having supervisees take courses and trainings on how to be and do better as leaders and in the workplace. My hope is that they

will take some responsibility for the relationship they build with their supervisor. As for supervisors, they will have the chance to teach and learn alongside each other even if they do not see eye to eye. I fear that by asking the supervisors to take trainings it might feel like telling them they are not doing good enough. In both situations I would like for it to feel like professional development, but I am aware that it might not be a well-received intervention.

Another challenge that I might face would be different leadership styles thinking their style is superior and that they do not need to make any changes; it is important to acknowledge that people have different styles, but we also need to be able to adapt and adjust to work with other's styles. I would never ask someone to change their leadership style, but it is important to know the best ways to utilize your style of leadership. I am hoping that with the right wording I will be able to get that message across.

## **Chapter Five: Implementation and Evaluation**

As described in the image below, the preparation for the Supervision Development Conference will take around 20 months and be split into four sections, two Fall sections, one Spring section, and one summer section. The first need for the conference would be developing a committee of student affairs staff members that will help with general preparation and planning, and would be responsible for reviewing presenters' proposals. The person taking lead on bringing the overall institute to life, but more specifically the conference, would need to call on people from different departments to be part of the planning committee; this would need to happen 20 months before the conference will take place. Once the members of the planning committee are confirmed, they would come together and develop guidelines for people who are applying to present. This would consist of a) topics that they think are necessary to cover for their specific campus, b) how long they would like the proposal versus the full presentation to be, and c) other specific requirements that they think would benefit their institution. 18 months prior to the conference, the committee members would begin promoting the conference at department meetings and via email. The promotion emails and announcements will provide information about the conference and ask people to submit proposals to be a presenter at the conference. The last of the responsibilities that need to take place in the first semester of planning will take place 16 months prior to the conference. During this time, committee members will be responsible reviewing applications and asking applicants to submit session proposals. The next section of responsibilities are 12 and 10 months prior to the conference. 12 months/three semesters prior, the committee would start looking into locations and reserving locations and dates for the conference to take place. This is also going to be the timeframe

when speakers are finalized and asked to send in finalized session plans. Finally, during this time frame, the official marketing for the event will begin. Marketing for this program is going to consist of social media posts, emails, physical flyers, and conversations during division meetings. At the 10-month prior mark, the committee needs to be signing contracts confirming locations and opening up guest registration using a virtual sign-up method. Months six and five would be the semester prior to the conference; six months prior to the conference taking place, committee members should be building a schedule for the conference. The approved sessions should be assessed based on content and placed on the schedule in an order that makes the most sense. Another thing that will be happening at the six-month mark work be finalizing descriptions for each of the sessions that are approved. Five months prior to the event, decisions about the food and beverages that will be provided need to be made. This will also be an important time to increase promotion for the registration of the event. Emails will be sent, updated flyers will be posted, and conversations during division meetings will be happening to push for student affairs staff to register. Finally, two months prior to the conference an announcement will be made that it is the final month to register, the link to register will be added to emails and social media posts. The last thing that needs to happen is signing contracts with the catering company that will be used for the conference. When all of these marks are met, the committee will be set up for success and it will all come down to facilitation of the conference.

### **Funding**

The first year of the institute it will not be too expensive, but it will require some funding to support a student worker, incentives, food and beverage, presenter needs, etc. One way to alleviate some of the financial burdens would be to utilize the offices that exist

on campus such as parking (for temporary parking passes) and dining services to provide food and beverages. Since the pilot of this initiative is meant to start at one school, we would not need money for things such as a location or travel. While using on campus locations will save a large portion of money, we will still have to find funding for food, to provide potential incentives for attendees, and a keynote speaker who is not affiliated with the institution.

To obtain funding for the institute, I would first look to see what money might be available through the institution. I would reach out to the Division of Student Affairs to see if they have money in their budget to help support the initiative. I would like to use the funding from the school on things such as the food and beverage costs and incentives for the attendees.

After looking through institutional resources, I would look into grants offered by the state and through national programs such as NASPA or ACPA, that specifically support professional growth and development. These grants would be used to provide things like printing costs, any specific needs for each individual session, and the keynote speaker. As for the development of educational modules for student staff, this would not require much financial support. One expense would be to hire someone experienced in the school's software to build out an online session. This session would include recordings of presenters from the institute along with online versions of any activities or assessments that they facilitated. The purpose of this is to develop a learning module that coincides with the information being provided at the institute. These modules will show up on student workers' pages and used as continued learning throughout their time in their office. The modules

would specifically for the student workers because not all student workers would have the opportunity to attend the institute but still deserve the education.

Please refer to Appendix B for more information about how the budget will be used.

### **Marketing and Recruitment**

I would look within the division of student affairs for help with marketing and incentivizing the program. I would work with people such as the Vice President of Student Affairs to encourage student affairs staff to participate. I would ask for the division to find a way to incentivize the institute by promoting some type of certification for attendees. I would also like to see this opportunity spoken about during directors' meetings and have conversations spread through each department within the division. The institute would also provide directors the ability to work with their specific departments where they can also encourage their student staff members to attend as well. The institute will be marketed as a tool that promotes both professional development and team building for departments. By using this strategy when marketing, I am hoping that it would entice multiple professional staff members from each department and selected student workers to attend.

As for the student staff members, each department would be allowed to select up to three student staff members to invite. This would be a great opportunity for professional growth for student coordinators, students who are interested in pursuing a career in higher education, or even students who are simply interested in learning more about supervision.

Another thing that I would like to use as a marketing and recruitment tactic would be allowing staff members to present on different topics surrounding supervision. This would give attendees the opportunity to present on supervision related topics that they are educated



on and share those topics with peers. Educational and interactive presentations can be used as a learning tool but also to encourage student staff to interact with the professional staff in ways that they might not have before. It is also a great way to encourage senior level staff to share the knowledge they have gained throughout their time with newer professionals and vice versa, bringing us back to the concept of synergistic supervision a “joint-effort, two-way communication and a focus on competence and goals” (Shupp et al., 2018, p. 122).

### **Efforts to Adopt**

I would lead the effort for an institution to adopt my intervention by sharing statistics on the impact that the great resignation had on student affairs, retention rates of student staff, and job satisfaction rates within the field. In an blog post by Stebleton and Buford (2021), they mention that “approximately 37% of workers under the age of 40 are thinking about leaving their current work.” After experiencing a pandemic “the boundaries have been in some ways eliminated or at least become ambiguous.” these sessions will be beneficial in helping supervisors and supervisees re-establish boundaries. If these efforts were not enough to show a need for the institution to endorse further education on supervision, I will pull the number of institutions that require students to take courses on general supervision and identity-based supervision.

### **Leadership Informed Strategies**

This institute was inspired and modeled by programs such as NASPA where attendees can propose presentations and present them to their peers. Another model that has informed my strategies is Northouse’s (2019) work on effective leaders. Leadership is defined by Northouse as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2019, p. 5). Northouse (2019) mentioned that

effective leaders are the people who can influence those around them and transformative leaders who make the change happen. When I think of transformative leaders, I think of the leaders who listen to the needs of the people around them and make the appropriate changes. Effective leaders make me think of those who follow the rules but still show up and encourage you to be the best you can be, effective leaders will likely use the strengths of the individuals on their team. Northouse (2019) implied that there are many different leadership styles and different styles work for different people. Similarly, to the fact that no two people are the same, no two people will interact with leadership styles the same way. To be a good leader is to know that in order “to be effective, organizations need to be nourished both competent management and skilled leadership” (Northouse, 2019, p. 13). With that, I believe that supervisors should have the ability to work with and supervise all types of individuals and be able to adapt their leadership styles to accommodate the needs of their supervisees. While supervisors and supervisees do not always see eye to eye when it comes to supervision, it should not be expected that either party completely changes their values. When working with each other but there needs to be some level of competency different styles of supervision that will allow you both to work effectively.

This connects directly to my intervention because the main goal is to promote continued education and learning for all staff members within student affairs whether they are directors or student workers, supervisors, or supervisees. My intervention was inspired by NASPA, after having the privilege to attend a NASPA conference, I saw how incredible it was to bring so many people with different backgrounds and areas of interest together to learn. When I thought about all the research presented above and about leadership in general it sparked this thought that learning about supervisor and supervisee needs with both parties

in the room could be life changing for some people. It also provides all participants to see new perspective and learn about how things might have changed over the years. The Supervision Development Institute but more specifically the Supervision Development Conference will provide the opportunity for participants to make an educated decision when choosing what leadership style they would like to practice. While conferences such as NASPA have guided my framework, the work of Northouse (2019) has guided much of the content for the conference; mainly inspiring the sessions on general knowledge about supervision and the different leadership styles.

### **Assessment & Evaluation**

Assessments and evaluations play a large role in the success of my intervention. For the institute, I would love to see it flourish into a conference that can be attended by a multitude of people from different institutions across the country. For this to happen, we would have to start small and use assessments and feedback from evaluations to allow growth. Finding what works and what does not along with assessment of learning outcomes can be helpful in turning the institute into a larger scale intervention. It is also important to acknowledge that the world is constantly changing and that the sessions will have to change and grow with the needs of student affairs professionals. To that same point, as things are changing in the student affairs world the needs of supervisors and supervisees will change. This means that the online learning modules for students will also need constant updates and changes made to it. Both forms of intervention require a feedback component from participants to see if they feel as though they are gaining something or feel as though they need more from the intervention.

For attendees there would be a pre-assessment in the form of a survey. This pre-assessment will inquire about how much knowledge the participant feels they have on supervision, their leadership style, and even address identity in the form of demographics; directly assessing program goals one and two as mentioned in chapter four. The survey starts by asking if they are a supervisor, supervisee, or both. I will ask questions about how much they feel they know about the topic of supervision and how they would describe their style of supervision. Lastly, there will be a question about what they are interested in learning about throughout the conference and their personal demographics. A full version can be found in Appendix C. As for the post-assessment, I plan to ask all the same questions with the addition of asking if they have changed what style of leadership they plan to practice. Another question that will be added is a space for participants to leave two major take-aways from the conference one about the needs of themselves or those around them and the second about identity. I will also have an added question where they can leave thoughts and suggestions for improvements. The two sets of results will be compared to check for any changes in trends from pre-assessment to post-assessment and the open-ended responses will be reviewed and assessed for any consistencies. These will assess knowledge gained by participants around the impact that identity has on supervision, if participants have learned more about different styles of leadership, and explaining needs that they or the people around them may have. Please see Appendix D for the full survey.

Assessment and evaluation of the online learning modules will look a bit different. Each topic will have a pre and posttest that has questions related to each individual topic and follow the goals of the learning outcomes. The online learning module will also have a space for students to leave feedback whenever they would like. Having this feature available

provides participants with the ability to make comments and suggestions as they move through the module. It can also serve as a space for people to make comments if there are issues with the module so the issues can be addressed as quickly as possible.

### **Limitations & Looking Ahead**

As mentioned in chapter three, there are laws that protect marginalized and minoritized identities at institutions that supervisor's need to be aware of. This can be a limitation because these identities are something that we are still learning about and have laws that are still changing, meaning the curriculum around them will have to change as laws and equitable practices evolve to best support groups of people who are marginalized based on identity.

This intervention does not force the professional staff to attend the institute, it only encourages it. This could mean that all supervisors across the division might not attend due to things like lack of time or thoughts that they do not need to be educated on supervision. While I think it is essential to build our understanding on supervision, getting buy-in will be a potential challenge faced in implementing this intervention.

One thing that I do not address in my intervention is the effectiveness of an online learning module for student staff members. I have personally seen the students I have supervised struggle with online trainings and have heard similar feedback when speaking with colleagues. I would also like to address the fact that an online modality is not the most accessible form of training that is supposed to promote accessible learning and working environments for student workers, but given the logistics, it might be the only option to reach all campus workers. In an ideal world, we could have conferences and in-person trainings to reach everyone.

Looking ahead, there is potential for this intervention to reach every professional staff member within the division of student affairs at the starting institution. This might be possible by hosting the institute over the summer when there are not as many students on campus or by choosing another time when students are not typically on campus, but staff members are. It could also be offered as a series of events that takes place in the beginning half or second half of a workday and all divisional meetings are cancelled for those times. As for the learning modules, once the curriculum is established and piloted, the sessions could be offered in person. Students could attend each module in person and have the chance to work peer to peer or it could be offered to all student staff together during their initial training. The in-person option could lead to another limitation, which would be finding a person or people to facilitate the modules the in-person learning.

### **Conclusion**

The institute is dedicated to promoting and enhancing supervision by providing timely training seminars, educational resources, online modules, and the Supervision Development Conference. One of the main goals of my intervention, is to normalize education on supervision for anyone who is entering a supervisory role. Another goal of the interventions is to assign the responsibilities of building a quality supervisor: supervisee relationship to both parties rather than one party assuming all responsibility. While there are going to be some unavoidable differences caused by generational gaps, difference in beliefs, personal needs that cannot always be met, etc., the differences should not come from a lack of education. This could be the start of providing a well-rounded education to student affairs workers, surrounding supervision and the roles that identity plays in all lives.

While I would like to say that this intervention is geared to mainly impact current supervisors, the inspiration really came from the students' needs. Shupp and Arminio (2012) said that "entry-level student affairs staff are the profession's future and seasoned professionals must lay a strong supervisory foundation" (p. 157). While I could not agree more, I believe that we can start even earlier with our undergraduate student staff. Student workers are the future of student affairs, the student workers at institutions are the future of student affairs. The experiences they have with supervisors can have a massive impact on their decision to explore a future in higher education. Supervision is a powerful thing, providing supervisees the space to be people first, a space where they are seen and heard and where their input is valid. According to Nasser (2020), supervision is a key skill in the development of new professional staff members" and also addressed how "supervision is a difficult skill to master and may be a lifelong process" (p. 2). As it currently stands, supervision is a thing that is learned mainly from personal experiences, but it has the potential to be so much more. The more senior professionals are the people we are learning from and "are often not questioned in their practices" (Nasser, 2020, p. 2). Even though so much has been learned from them and their practices, the world is constantly changing and the approach to supervision needs to change with it. We owe it to our past, present, and future selves as well as our past, present, and future supervisees to continue to promote and allow growth. As much as undergraduate and graduate supervisees are the future of higher education, supervisors are the sculptors of that future.

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**Appendices**  
**Appendix A**  
**Supervision Development Conference: Session Four Department Break Out**

**Time:** 10:30AM

**Location:** TBD

**Facilitators:** Program Staff

**Topics:** Identity and Supervision

**Time Needed:** 20 minutes

**Session Goal:** Openly discuss the identities each individual might hold and how they might need to be supported in the workplace

**Learning Outcome:** After the session, supervisors and supervisees will know at least one need from each individual.

**Session Outline**

- **Introduction (10 minutes)**
  - Have each member of the office/department list the identities they hold and one need that comes from one of the identities.
    - Start with the most senior level and make your way down
    - Ex: A person identifies as disabled and they need closed captions when they are on virtual meetings
- **Discussion (10 minutes)**
  - How did this activity make you feel?
  - Are there any “needs” that a participant want to better understand?
  - What are ways to communicate that your “needs” have changed or shifted?

**Appendix B  
Budget**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Food/Beverage</b>	Campus Catering: Meeting Wrap Up Package	34.29 per person	\$3,429
<b>Incentive</b>	Reusable water bottles Utensils	427.50 \$519	\$946.50
<b>Marketing</b>	Word of mouth Email	--	--
<b>Location</b>	On-campus location	--	--
<b>Supplies</b>	Pens Notebooks	\$172.50 \$265.49	\$437.99
<b>Presenter needs</b>	Schedule Map Pamphlets		\$1,000
<b>Student worker</b>	\$15 per hour 20 hours a week 32 weeks for the academic year	\$300 per week	\$9,600
			\$15,413

### Appendix C Pre-Assessment

Are you a:

- Supervisor
- Supervisee
- Both

How much do you feel you know about leadership styles?

- None at all
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

How would you describe your leadership style?

- Autocratic – leader has control over the decisions
- Participative - values input from team members but make decisions on their own
- Laissez-faire - offer minimal guidance and give group members freedom
- Transactional - leaders set goals and followers accomplish the goals with rewards
- Transformational - help members reach their potential using hands-on leadership
- Servant - shares power and serves others by using self-reflection

	Yes	Neutral	No
Do you feel as though your gender identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your sexual identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your racial identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your ethnicity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your religious identity relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel valued by your supervisor or supervisee?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think your supervisor or supervisee understand the identities you hold?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you believe your supervisor or supervisee actively try to understand your needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your supervisor or supervisee acknowledge your identities appropriately?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say

## Sexuality

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual

## Race

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- White or Caucasian
- Not Listed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Religion

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Unaffiliated
- Jewish



Muslim

Atheist

Not Listed: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything you are hoping to learn throughout this conference?

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## Appendix D Post-Assessment

Are you a:

- Supervisor
- Supervisee
- Both

How much do you feel you know about leadership styles?

- None at all
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

How would you describe your leadership style?

- Autocratic – leader has control over the decisions
- Participative - values input from team members but make decisions on their own
- Laissez-faire - offer minimal guidance and give group members freedom
- Transactional - leaders set goals and followers accomplish the goals with rewards
- Transformational - help members reach their potential using hands-on leadership
- Servant - shares power and serves others by using self-reflection

Has your style of leadership changed from the beginning of the conference?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I have some new ideas would like to explore

	Yes	Neutral	No
Do you feel as though your gender identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your sexual identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your racial identity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your ethnicity is relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your religious identity relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your relevant to how you supervise or are supervised?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel valued by your supervisor or supervisee?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think your supervisor or supervisee understand the identities you hold?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you believe your supervisor or supervisee actively try to understand your needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel as though your supervisor or supervisee acknowledge your identities appropriately?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say

## Sexuality

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual

## Race

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- White or Caucasian
- Not Listed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Religion

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Unaffiliated
- Jewish

- Muslim
- Atheist
- Not Listed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list two major take-aways from the conference one about the needs of themselves or those around them and the second about identity.

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Please leave any thoughts and suggestions for improvements.

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