

PROGRAM STATEMENT:

The Penn State College Student Affairs (CSA) Program prepares higher education professionals to provide educational services and programs, facilitate student achievement, and create growth-enhancing environments. Intentionally-designed learning outcomes, the infusion of a social justice perspective throughout the curriculum, and a balanced focus on scholarly practice combine to create a unique and powerful learning experience for graduate students.

The CSA program has six learning outcomes that serve as our foundation. Achievement in each learning outcome area is essential to successful completion of our program and a successful career in student affairs. Consequently, each outcome is infused throughout our courses and co-curricular opportunities. Courses, assistantship, and internship experiences are intentionally aligned with the learning outcomes to maximize student learning.

The faculty and students of the CSA program highlight the importance of the social justice learning outcome. We recognize and honor the many and varied personal characteristics that influence how individuals experience life and, specifically, how students experience higher education. Our program focuses on advocacy with, and on behalf of, all students, but particularly those students who have been traditionally underrepresented and underserved in higher education.

CSA faculty members model scholarly practice and assist students in translating classroom learning into informed practice on college campuses. Our affiliate faculty members, who practice at the highest levels of student affairs and higher education administration at Penn State, serve as academic advisors, course instructors, and assistantship/internship supervisors for CSA students. Student learning during the program is enhanced by exposure to current practitioners serving as active members of the CSA faculty.

We seek to admit prospective students who are committed to working in higher education to improve students' experiences and foster learning and development. We are particularly interested in admitting students who are intellectually curious; open to diversity and social justice; and demonstrate empathy, compassion, and cultural humility in interactions with others. Further, as an academically intensive program, we seek students with strong writing and critical thinking skills. Finally, because of the importance we place on scholarly practice, we seek students who have transferrable skills or direct experience in student affairs administration, gained either as active undergraduate students or as professionals within the field of student affairs.