

### HESA Core Curriculum

This document outlines the general course curriculum (core courses and three elective course examples) for the M.Ed. [Higher Education Student Affairs](#) program at [Western Carolina University](#).

Included for each course (listed in the order they are taken by full-time enrolled students) are:

- The semester the course is offered (fall/spring/summer)
- The WCU Graduate Catalog description
- The syllabus description
- The associated student learning outcomes
- The [ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies](#) addressed in the course

For more information about the overall HESA curriculum and holistic student learning outcomes, view our [Curriculum Map](#).

**Fall Semester****HESA 605    Intro to Higher Education Student Affairs    3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Introduction to student affairs in higher education focusing on the foundations of the profession, theoretical bases, models of practice, and employment competencies.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to facilitate open, systematic, and scholarly exploration of professional identity within the broad and diverse student affairs field. Students will be challenged to examine and personally reflect on topics and questions that provide a comprehensive portrait of the student affairs profession in higher education.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Communicate contemporary issues in Student Affairs and articulate the role of Student Affairs.
2. Differentiate the multiple functional areas within Student Affairs.
3. Determine characteristics of effective educational interventions and competencies.
4. Demonstrate self-understanding and commitment to on-going development.
5. Apply empathy, integrity, and compassion in interactions with others.
6. Demonstrate leadership and teamwork skills.

Professional Competencies:

- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Leadership
- Technology

**Fall Semester****HESA 605      History of Higher Education      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: This course surveys the history of higher education in the United States with a dual focus on mainstream collegiate institutions and non-traditional alternatives.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to engage current and future higher education leaders, researchers, and administrators in a critical examination of the history of higher education in the United States. Through readings, lectures, collaborative learning activities, and group discussion, students will investigate how America's colleges and universities have evolved from the colonial period to the present with an emphasis on philosophical, social, and political contexts. Also investigated are the structure, function, curriculum, governance, finance, and outcomes of these institutions and systems. By developing a working knowledge of the events, trends, and issues that have shaped American higher education, students will be better equipped to identify, evaluate, and respond to the complex and critical issues facing higher education today.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Identify the major social, political, and economic shifts that have influenced the evolution of higher education in the United States.
2. Describe the contributions that diverse populations have made throughout the history of higher education in the United States.
3. Differentiate between the various types higher education institutions in the United States and track their evolution over time.
4. Evaluate the evolving role of key stakeholders in higher education, including students, faculty, administrators, the federal government, and governing bodies.
5. Access, interpret, and evaluate primary historical sources.

Professional Competencies:

- Values, Philosophy, and History
- Social Justice and Inclusion
- Law, Policy, and Governance

**Fall Semester****EDRS 602 Educational Research 3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Concepts, methodologies, and procedures in educational research; problem identification, research design, basic data analysis, and applications to educational problems.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to prepare current and future professionals in higher education to review and conduct relevant research to inform conscientious decision-making.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Critically read, review, and apply research in your professional setting.
2. Understand the contribution of research to your field and continuous improvement
3. Conduct research using sound methodology that is appropriate for different lines of and is ethical.
4. Understand mechanisms for ensuring internal and external validity in qualitative and quantitative research.
5. Develop a preliminary understanding of analytical methods in quantitative and qualitative research.
6. Communicate effectively with academic writing conforming to the conventions set forth by the American Psychological Association.

Professional Competencies:

- Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

**Spring Semester****HESA 621      Theories of College Student Development      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Overview of theories of student development most widely accepted in student affairs professional circles.

Syllabus Course Description: This course seeks to provide in-depth understanding of developmental needs and issues of college and university students, identify ways to enhance learning by considering developmental and environmental effects, and offers practice in creating learning opportunities that consider developmental needs.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Explore student development theory as a foundation for the practice of student affairs in a higher education setting
2. Articulate and apply the foundation and principles associated with student development theories
3. Apply student development theories to their work as student affairs professionals
4. Practice critical thinking and writing skills at the graduate level
5. Consider multiple perspectives of the development, interpretation, and application of college student development theories
6. Reflect and integrate self-awareness into their practice as student affairs professionals.

Professional Competencies:

- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Student Learning and Development
- Advising and Supporting
- Assessment, Evaluation, and History
- Social Justice and Inclusion

**Spring Semester****HESA 530      Diversity in Higher Education      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Overview of various college student subcultures and characteristics of today's college students; examination of professional approaches to development of the students within each culture.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to offer students to learn about engaging and supporting students from a variety of identities. We will draw upon broader theoretical constructs related to culture and identity to inform our understanding and analysis of college students. In doing so we will work to unpack these understandings in relation to social justice and diversity constructs, as well as from a lens of equity. The class is a celebration of the diverse characteristics, traditions, and backgrounds that make up a college campus. This is an opportunity for students to learn how campus environments can impact various students differently based on individual and collective identities. Key considerations in the course are communication, support, and intersectionality.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Identify diverse groups of students who currently comprise the population of students in the U.S. colleges and universities and explain how various cultural contexts shape and influence student life and identity.
2. Evaluate critically, the arguments put forth by different authors in course readings.
3. Self-assess your own "culturally bounded" understandings of students and college life, articulating your growing awareness of how your views of reality and past collegiate experiences may influence your understandings, practice, and effectiveness as a student affairs / services administrator or faculty member.
4. Identify services and delivery methods which address the needs and assist in the development of students within various cultural groups.
5. Critique the concepts of social justice, diversity, and equity in the context of the colleges and universities.

Professional Competencies:

- Social Justice and Inclusion
- Values, Philosophy, and History
- Advising and Supporting
- Student Learning and Development
- Advising and Supporting

**Spring Semester****HESA 683****Internship I****3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Supervised practicum in higher education functional areas. Three-four hours of field-based practica per week per one credit hour.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is intended to provide students with an internship opportunity to participate in the actual delivery of programs/services within Higher Education. The curricular focus is: experience, reflection, and application.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Explore new areas/offices within student affairs and higher education administration, adding further depth to their administrative experience.
2. Engage in focused discussions on topics in administration and leadership.
3. Reflect on both themselves and their work environments in relation to issues such as establishing a professional identity, becoming aware of strengths and weaknesses, and determining person-environment fit.
4. Apply student development theories to practice.

Professional Competencies:

- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Organizational and Human Resources
- Leadership
- Technology
- Student Learning and Development

**Summer Semester**

**HESA 684    Internship II    3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Advanced supervised practicum in college student personnel programs. Three-four hours of field-based practica per week per one credit hour.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is intended to provide students with an internship opportunity to participate in the actual delivery of programs and services within Higher Education/Student Affairs.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who participate fully in this course will:

1. Explore new areas/offices within student affairs and higher education administration, adding further depth to their administrative experience.
2. Engage in focused discussions on topics in administration and leadership.
3. Reflect on both themselves and their work environments in relation to issues such as establishing a professional identity, becoming aware of strengths and weaknesses, and determining person-environment fit.
4. Apply student development theories to practice.

Professional Competencies:

- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Organizational and Human Resources
- Leadership
- Technology
- Student Learning and Development

**Fall Semester****HESA 611      Organization, Administration, & Finance in Higher Ed      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: An analysis of organizational structures used in higher education student affairs, including administrative responsibilities, planning, budgeting, and working with other units.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to help students develop an understanding of organizational life of institutions of higher education. Strategies for implementing organizational change and operating effectively will be explored, with a particular emphasis on both practicing and fostering leadership, managerial, and intercultural competence. Additionally, introductory aspects of applied budgeting and finance will be explored.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who participate fully in this course will:

1. Describe the institutional structures and processes particular to U.S. education.
2. Differentiate between different theories and models of organizations and their applications.
3. Analyze schools, colleges, and universities as complex, multidimensional organizations
4. Create and manage a program-level budget and contextualize this tool within a larger institutional framework

Professional Competencies:

- Organizational and Human Resources
- Law, Policy, and Governance
- Leadership

**Fall Semester****EDHE 650      Program Assessment and Evaluation      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Principles of evaluation and improvement of programming for all college functions. Special emphasis is placed upon student services and non-curriculum outcomes.

Syllabus Course Description: This course will introduce students to the variety of approaches used to measure, assess, and evaluate higher education at the unit, class, program, and institutional levels. Students will explore regional and program accreditation (e.g., SACSCOC-Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges), academic program review, administrative unit review, the Council on Advanced Standards (CAS) and other avenues to assuring quality institutions of higher education.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Articulate the similarities and differences between evaluation, measurement, and assessment within the context of higher education, specifically within student affairs.
2. Create learning outcomes that are measurable and contextually appropriate while defining multiple sources of evaluation associated with the outcomes.
3. Utilize a variety of evaluative and assessment tools from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives.
4. Design a program assessment plan and report.
5. Identify resources available for assisting in evaluation and assessment in higher education.

Professional Competencies:

- Assessment, Research, and Evaluation
- Organizational and Human Resources
- Technology

**Spring Semester****HESA 630****Legal and Ethical Issues in Higher Education****3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Examination of the regulatory, statutory and case law that governs the ethical operation of institutions of higher education, with particular emphasis on student affairs issues.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed for students who do not intend to become attorneys but require knowledge of the law to inform their professional practice in higher education administration in student affairs units. Students will be challenged to learn how to identify and resolve legal and ethical issues common to higher education, broadly, and student affairs, specifically. Students will be expected to examine the regulatory, statutory, and case law that governs the operation of institutions of higher education with emphasis on student affairs issues. Students will participate in lectures and discussion groups related to these issues and will explore the complexities of this unique area of higher education.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Articulate the major legal issues and topics impacting higher education in both a historic context and current and future trends.
2. Analyze case law for understanding of the legal grounds for decisions impacting higher education.
3. Critically evaluate when, as a student affairs professional or higher education administrator, legal counsel should be engaged in decision-making or advise.
4. Identify ethical dilemmas facing higher education professionals and analyze options of action when faced with such dilemmas.
5. Facilitate discussions on the impact legal issues and ethical dilemmas for a variety of higher education constituents, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, community partners, funding agencies, and government representatives.

Professional Competencies:

- Law, Policy, and Governance
- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Value, Philosophy, and History
- Organizational and Human Resources

**Spring Semester****HESA 695      Capstone in Higher Education Student Affairs      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: This seminar is the capstone course for the program, integrating theory with practice. It includes in-depth discussion of current trends and issues through case studies.

Syllabus Course Description: This seminar is the capstone course for the HESA graduate program. It will provide students with a culminating opportunity to reflect on their coursework and related professional experiences. Students will prepare an e-portfolio highlighting various aspects of their experiences organized according to the ACPA/NASPA Competency Areas. The course will also include discussions of current issues facing new professionals entering the higher education job market or pursuing doctoral work. Discussions on professional preparation (ie: CVs, interview skills, networking, professional etiquette), emotional preparation/transitions, and practical life skills will also be incorporated into the course.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Reflect (verbally and in writing) on their holistic graduate experience (in and out of the classroom)
2. Design and develop an electronic portfolio demonstrating their lived professional experiences and competencies.
3. Identify and articulate their exemplar professional competencies according to the national standards in the field.
4. Compose documents (CV, cover letter, philosophy statement, writing sample, and e-portfolio) and hone skills (interview preparation, networking, and general life skills) that equip them for entry into the job market.
5. Justify and articulate their understanding of major content areas within the field by responding to key comprehensive questions.

Professional Competencies:

- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Technology
- Leadership

**Example HESA Electives:****HESA 670      Professionalism in Higher Ed: Becoming a Practitioner-Scholar      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: This course is designed to prepare students personally and professionally for a career in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education. Emphasis is placed on developing professional competencies based on national standards and adhering to the responsibilities of a practitioner-scholar.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is designed to prepare students personally and professionally for a career in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education. Emphasis is placed on developing professional competencies based on national standards and adhering to the responsibilities of a practitioner-scholar.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Distinguish the philosophical and practical differences between ‘practitioner’ and ‘scholar,’ and thus hone their practitioner-scholar identity as a 21<sup>st</sup> century educator.
2. Analyze and synthesize multiple sources of data in order to facilitate rigorous discussions and reach critical conclusions regarding timely events and trends in higher education.
3. Develop career skills, competences, and practical tools needed for a profession in Higher Education based on national standards.
4. Identify the characteristics of effective educational interventions informed by research.
5. Credibly communicate key research findings/recommendations to higher education stakeholders and constituents (in written and oral form).

**HESA 625    Teaching and Learning Environments in Higher Education    3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: This course focuses on trends toward collaboration between faculty and student affairs professionals and seeks to understand curriculum and pedagogical issues.

Syllabus Course Description: The course focuses on student learning environments, innovative teaching and learning communities, and service engagement activities that enhance student learning. We will address questions that relate to the institutional environment and how it is framed to support quality teaching and learning on college and university campuses. A cornerstone will be laid, and the course will be framed through an exploration into our individual paradigms (lenses, frames for understanding, conceptualization of epistemology, ontology, axiology, etc.) in juxtaposition with the shifting paradigms that frame higher education (Fried, 2012). Throughout the course, we will reflect on readings and on our own practice as learners, administrators, and leaders.

Learning Outcomes:

This course will prepare you to be a successful teaching and learning partner in a variety of curricular and co-curricular higher education settings. In particular you will:

1. Compare, analyze, and discuss traditional and innovative curricular in colleges and universities
2. Conceptualize a professional philosophy of teaching and learning that will guide your teaching practice (this will be primarily framed by your worldview)
3. Explore the complex relationships among diverse students, institutional missions, curricular designs, and educational outcomes
4. Critically examine contemporary critiques, commentaries, policy statements, and reports related to teaching and learning environments in higher education

**HESA 685      Internship III      3 Credits**

Catalog Course Description: Advanced supervised practicum in college student personnel programs. Three-four hours of field-based practica per week per one credit hour.

Syllabus Course Description: This course is intended to provide students with an internship opportunity to participate in the actual delivery of programs/services within Higher Education. The curricular focus is: experience, reflection, and application. The graduate HESA program is based directly on guidelines established by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). A minimum of 300 hours of supervised practice consisting of two distinct experiences is required. Students must gain exposure to both the breadth and depth of Higher Education/Student Affairs work. Students must gain experience in developmental work with individual students and groups of students in such areas as program planning, implementation, or evaluation; staff training; advising; supervision; and administrative functions and processes.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who participate fully in this course will be able to:

1. Explore new areas/offices within student affairs and higher education administration, adding further depth to their administrative experience.
2. Engage in focused discussions on topics in administration and leadership.
3. Reflect on both themselves and their work environments in relation to issues such as establishing a professional identity, becoming aware of strengths and weaknesses, and determining person-environment fit.
4. Apply student development theories to practice.