

# Empowering Women in Higher Education & Student Affairs

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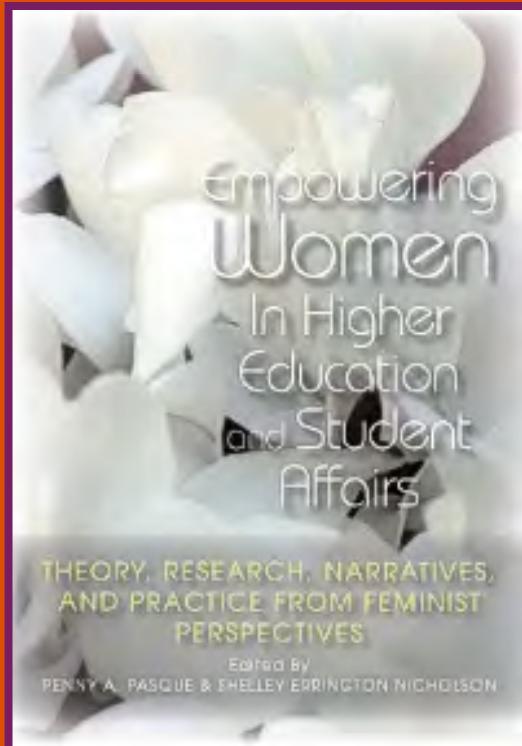
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# Background Information

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# Agenda

- **Setting the Context: A (Re) Examination of History**
  - The Status of Women in Higher Education Quiz
- **Considering Experiences of Women throughout the Academy**
  - Fishbowl Exercise
- **Exploring Identity Contexts**
  - Autonarrative through Point of View Writing Exercise
- **Advancing the Future**
  - Concentric Circle Discussion Questions
- **References**

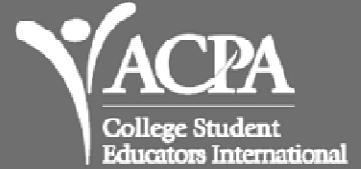
# Setting the Context:

A Contemporary (Re)Examination of Women in Higher Education & Student Affairs

The intersection between feminist theory and the historical, social, professional, and institutional contexts of higher education sheds light on the educational process and how it frequently tracks, underserves, or discriminates against women.

*Judith S. Glazer, Estela M. Bensimon,  
and Barbara K. Townsend  
(1993, p. 1)*

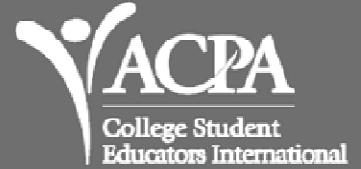




## Women's & Gender Centers at the Start of the Twenty-First Century

By Susan Marine

- Many women's centers were founded in the 1970's and 1980's in response to second wave feminism within the academy.
- Diverse in their missions and founding precepts, these centers typically focus on provision of services and programs that enable women to achieve equality on the coeducational campus as students, employees, and scholars.
- Many women's and gender centers today also incorporate broader issues of gender exploration into their work, including attention to men and masculinities, as well as transgender identities.
- Although women's centers today have a prominent place on many campuses, little is known about the work, including challenges and successes, done by women's center staff in the current political and fiscal climate.
- **Question:** Does your institution have a women's center and, if so, what are the various resources offered?



## Title IX Policy and Women Leaders

By Jennifer Lee Hoffman

- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is widely credited for providing equity in access and educational opportunity for women students in 10 education program areas and for promoting and retaining women in positions of leadership.
- The emergence of coeducation – educating women and men in the same institution – was marked when Oberlin College of Ohio opened as the first coeducational institution in 1833.
- With these new policies, as the purpose of educating women separately from men was replaced with a purpose less differentiated by gender, the strategies women leaders relied on in earlier generations were less effective.
- After the passage of Title IX, women started anew and have relied on super-performance as a strategy to advance a new generation of women leaders.

# Classroom Exercise



## Status of Women in Higher Education Quiz - QUESTIONS

1. Women constitute \_\_\_\_\_ % of chief diversity officers.
2. Women constitute \_\_\_\_\_ % of chief academic officers or provosts.
3. Within the answer to #2, \_\_\_\_\_ % of women of color are chief academic officers or provosts.
4. Title IX was passed in what year?
- 5.What institution was the first of its kind to prepare women to administer comprehensive services, give instruction, and provide guidance and council to women students through positions in higher education?

# Classroom Exercise



## Status of Women in Higher Education Quiz - ANSWERS

1. Women constitute 56 % of chief diversity officers.
2. Women constitute 38 % of chief academic officers or provosts.
3. Within the answer to #2, 3 % of women of color are chief academic officers or provosts.
4. Title IX was passed in what year? **1972**
- 5.What institution was the first of its kind to prepare women to administer comprehensive services, give instruction, and provide guidance and council to women students through positions in higher education? **Syracuse University**

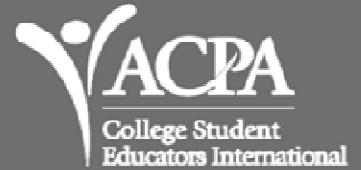
# Considering Experiences of Women throughout the Academy

## An Exploration of Undergraduates, Graduate Students and Administrators

A feminist conceptual model of leadership  
“rests on the assumption that leadership  
manifests itself when there is an action to bring  
about change in an organization, an institution,  
or the social system – in other words, an action  
to make a positive difference in people’s lives.  
Leadership, then, is conceived as a creative  
process that results in change.

*Helen Astin and Carole Leland  
(1991, p. 67)*





## Work - Life Balance for Female Graduate Students

By Racheal Stimpson & Kimberly Filer

*I take it one day at a time – it's crazy and I've had to learn how to be more flexible when a child is sick or I have a deadline. Definitely my personal/social/fun life has fallen by the wayside. I think I'm happy, but I'm not sure I can even relax anymore; I don't know if I remember how.*

*Am I really happy or just too busy to notice that I'm not?*

~ Married Female Graduate Student (p. 69).

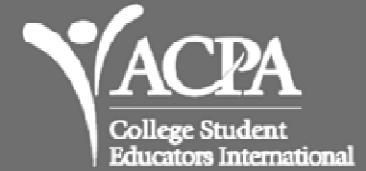
- Female graduate students earned 59% of all master's degrees and 49% of all doctoral degrees in 2005, yet there remain disparities across gender in terms of degree type.
- Female graduate students seem to be less satisfied with their ability to balance work and life.
- Student affairs professionals possess the skills and ability to work with faculty and graduate schools in aiding female graduate students to successfully navigate the work-life conflict and achieve degree completion.
- **Question** – Have you achieved a work-life balance? If so, how? If not, why not?



## High-Achieving Women

By Monica Marcelis Fochtman

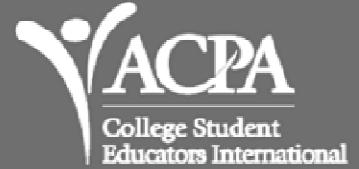
- The literature on high-achieving women, academic motherhood, and work-life balance raises awareness about some of the issues facing academic women, but it does not address issues of persistence (how they do it) or motivation (why they do it).
- Monica Fochtman's research in this chapter uncovers five major themes: three related to how women persist and two related to why women persist.
- **How Women Persist:**
  - ✓ Being Mentored for leadership.
  - ✓ Having mentors and support networks across the career span.
  - ✓ Finding individual work-life balance strategies that work.
- **Why Women Persist:**
  - ✓ A desire to pay it forward and perspective gained from the crucible.
  - ✓ Perspective gained from the crucible.



## A Concept of Self-Investment

By Annemarie Vaccaro

- In this chapter, Annemarie Vaccaro documents a new educational concept called self-investment.
- Self-investment is similar to self-esteem and empowerment; however, it is distinctly an educational concept.
- Results of this study suggests that self-investment is tied directly to participant educational growth and personal development. In addition, there are connections between racial identity and self-esteem.
- It is increasingly important that those in higher education accurately gauge, support, and inspire women who arrive at school with vastly different levels of self-esteem, empowerment, and self-investment.
- **Question** – What do you think of the new concept self-investment? Does self-investment show up in your own life and work in this field? If so, how or where?



## The Influence of Gender in the Workplace

By Jennifer Sader

- Gender plays a role in not only our own identity development, but also in our careers of choice.
- The messages women receive from their environment shapes the choices women make and their career goals and expectations.
- Our constructions of ourselves are not something we assemble consciously like a model airplane. They are more organic and grow out of our experiences. Career fields that wish to encourage healthy development of their students can act more thoughtfully to provide the right conditions and support for that growth.
- **Question** – How has gender played a role in your own career choice, if at all? What support services are offered to encourage healthy development on your campus?

# Classroom Exercise

## Fishbowl Activity (30 Minutes)

### Instructions:

- Divide the class into two groups. If possible, split in ½ by gender (agent = men; target = women and transgender). Have agent students move their chairs into a tight inner circle facing one another. Have the target students form an outer circle behind the chairs of the inner circle. During Round #1 the inner group will discuss and share experiences while the outer group silently observes. After everyone has spoken (or time lapses), the outer group will trade places with the inner group and the discussion will occur again in Round #2. After each group shares, engage in a large group discussion about questions and what it was like to do this exercise.

- ✓ *What is your gender identity? How does it feel to be a member of this gender group?*
- ✓ *What messages have you received about gender in your life?*
- ✓ *What was it like to grow up as a member of this gender?*
- ✓ *What was easy / difficult about growing up as a member of this gender identity?*
- ✓ *What are some of the costs / benefits of growing up as a member of this gender identity?*



# Exploring Identity Contexts:

The Intersections of Class, Gender, Race, and Sexual Orientation for Faculty, Administrators and Students

**Interest in understanding multiple identities emerges from a growing awareness of the non-singular nature in which individual identities are constructed and self-perceived.... Student affairs educators must not presume what is most central to individuals, but must instead listen for how a person sees herself.**

*Susan R. Jones and Marylu K. McEwen  
(2000, p. 145)*





## How Race Matters

By Venice Thandi Sulé

- In this study, Venice Thandi Sulé (2011) reports on the experiences of tenure for Black female leaders in higher education. She found that race can be used as an instrument for institutional transformation.
- This research evidence suggests that academe can serve as a site of mobilization on behalf of social equity.
- Practitioners with a consciousness of race could more easily identify inequities and advocate for changes that may be extended to other forms of social marginalization (i.e. ability, age, religion, sexual orientation).
- This kind of race consciousness is particularly important as it supports social justice agendas within a framework of race and power.
- **Question:** What is/are your own racial identity or identities? In what ways does your racial identity / identities relate to your other social identities?



# Economically Disadvantaged Women in Higher Education

By Penny Rice

- Economic status crosses other socially constructed lines of difference: race/ethnicity, gender, ability, age, sexuality, religion, and others.
- Higher education provides a window of opportunity to enter the middle class for the low class/working class/working poor.
- Poverty, as with financial stability and success, has mistakenly come to be viewed as the product of an individual's abilities, or lack of abilities, rather than the result of an economic and political system steeped in maintaining positions of privilege and power.
- Society must become aware of the hidden impact welfare reform has had on the lives of women and children. The long-term negative impacts of ignoring and not caring for economically disadvantaged women and children still need to be explored.
- **Question** – How has socio-economic status shown up for students you work with in higher education? For yourself?



## Queer Theory & Multiple Dimensions of Identity

By Elisa Abes & David Kasch

- Student development theory literature must include more attention to the ways in which social power structures, such as racism, classism, and heterosexism, mediate student development.
- This chapter explores the application of queer theory to a model of multiple dimensions of identity.
- Identities are constantly forming and reforming and these challenge heteronormative assumptions underlying student development theory, including the construct of self-authorship.
- Elisa Abes and David Kasch propose a fluid perspective on student development that accounts for resistance of heteronormative structures.
- **Question** – Do you perceive traditional student development theories as essentializing? How have student development theories changed over time? How might this fluid perspective offered be useful for your work in higher education?



# Identity Development in College Women

By Amy Stazer Sengupta & Yvette Loury Upton

- College is a time of substantial identity development for the traditional-aged college student. Typically, college students work on developing autonomy, building competence, and forging mature relationships.
- Women students and students of color face additional identity challenges during this time layered upon basic developmental work, as they struggle to create their unique and relational identities based on gender and race.
- The authors urge practitioners to find ways to positively facilitate the developmental process. **Question:** In what ways do you do facilitate the four below items?
  1. Represent gender in a positive and equitable way in programs.
  2. Help women build connections with one another.
  3. Create opportunities for reflective self-expression.
  4. Intervene and help on an individual basis.

# Classroom Exercise – Part I



## Autonarrative through Point of View (1 hour)

### Instructions:

- Read the short Narratives on Gender & Feminism at the end of each section. Also read the Life Stories chapter & the Sister Circles dialogue. Write your own short narrative on gender and/or feminism.
- Author Voice: Try to write the narrative from three different voices – first person, second person and third person voices – see which one you feel best represents your experiences and which is easier for you to write as the author.
- Definitions: First person addresses the synonym “I”. In second person, it is as if the writer is hearing someone talking to them. In this type, the synonym “you” may be used frequently. Finally, the third person takes a more objective point of view and often uses synonyms “he/she/ze”. Note: ze and hir are pronouns often used by students who identify as transgender or gender transgressive.
- Rationale: This allows you to gain the insider (first), outsider (second), and objective (third) voice on your life story. It also may help you to determine your own scholarly / practitioner voice.

## Classroom Exercise – Part II

### Autonarrative through Point of View (1 hour)

#### Discussion Questions:

- Share your autonarrative with the people in your small / large group.
- What were your experiences? How did these experiences help define who you are today?
- Which of the narratives on gender and feminism speak to you the most and why?
- In what ways are your experiences similar to or different from the authors in the chapters you read?
- What voice was easiest for you to write from and why? What was most difficult and why?
- How might writing in these different voices help you to determine your own scholarly / practitioner voice? In what contexts might you use different voices?

# Advancing the Future

Strategies for Changing Dominant Paradigms

A new awareness of the role paradigms play in shaping perceptions should give courage to all those who function from non-dominant paradigms and have been silenced by old paradigm positivism. Instead of looking through our paradigmatic filters, we have begun to look at the filters, the assumptions upon which our paradigms are organized.

*Jane Fried  
(1994, p. 253)*

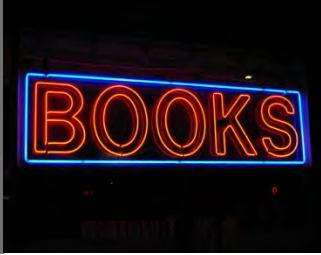




## The Campus Women's Center as a Classroom

By Jennifer Wies

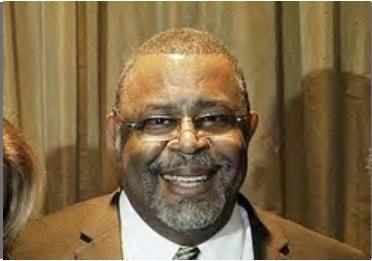
- Women's Center's have a rich and interesting history in academe. Although the women's center have historically been grounded in the women's movements focusing on political activism, they were and are also committed to education and learning.
- In this chapter, Jennifer Wies offers a model for which the university women's center may be utilized as a model for thinking and action. In other words, a classroom.
- The mission of Women's Centers directly connect to the overall objectives of the university in terms of teaching and learning and the pursuit of social justice.
- **Question:** How might you initiate or help support efforts to connect the Women's Center initiatives across academic and student affairs on your campus or at your 'ideal' campus / place to work?



## In (Re)Search of Women in Student Affairs Administration

By Tamara Yakaboski & Saran Donahoo

- It is important to research women in student affairs and higher education to ensure social justice and equity for all in institutions and colleges.
- The authors suggest that researching women in student affairs administration increases our understanding of their experiences and improves retention rates. In addition, they suggest that the current research available on a broader conceptualizations of gender has moved the field away from focusing on the experiences and needs of women, across race and ethnicity.
- The authors argue that researching women in the field can aid the higher education community as a whole by also lessening the marginalization of student affairs and college and university campuses.
- **Question:** How can you work to shift the institutional culture so it does not force women to assimilate to the mainstream masculine environment but, instead, provides a culture where the environment changes and includes everyone in the community/communities (see p. 281, column 2)?



## Leading and Prevention: A Campus Based Sexual Assault Program

By Lindsay Orchowski, Alan Berkowitz and some amazing undergraduate students –  
Eric Zimak, Troy Robison, Justin Reeder, Ryan Rhoads & Christine Gidycz

- This chapter shares important information including, over the last 10 years at one Midwestern university it was documented that 16% - 32% of college women report experiencing some form of sexual victimization over a two- to three-month period.
- The authors provide perspectives, recommendations, and steps for the creation of a sexual assault program on higher education campuses. This includes approaches to sexual assault prevention programs for women and men; recruiting, selecting and training program facilitators.
- **Question:** What are the sexual assault prevention programs at your institution? What did you learn from this chapter that might be beneficial for your own institution?



## Creating a Cohort: Learning and Leading Together

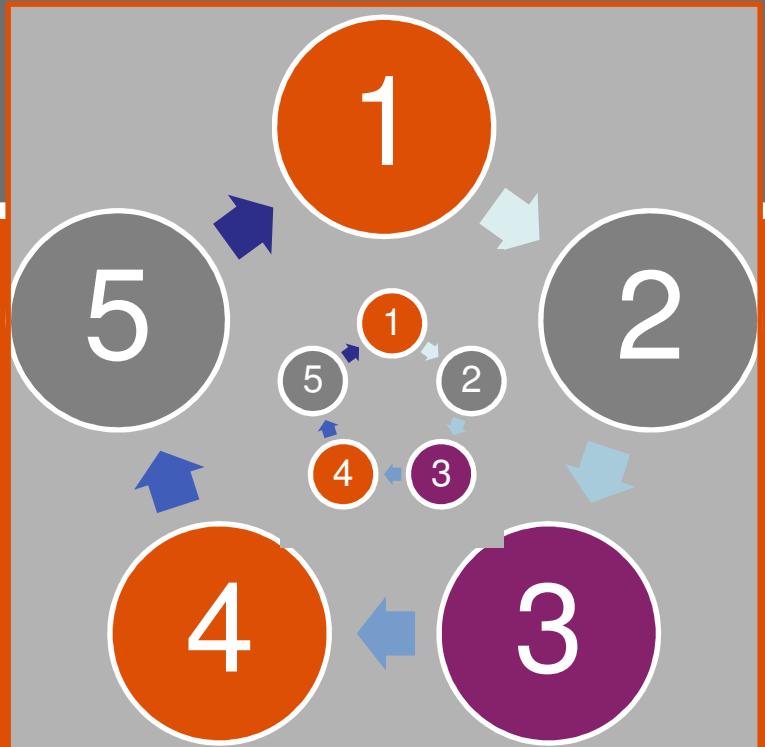
By Lee Hawthorne Calizo

- There are numerous benefits to working together in a group or cohort group. When women work together in groups the dynamics that occur could lead to advancement and progress in the institution.
- In this chapter, Lee Hawthorne Calizo presents the progress of one female cohort group at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and offers recommendations for starting similar groups that can help initiate development and growth across college campuses.
- She suggests that although there are many barriers to women in higher education, having a cohort-based model allows women to provide each other with support and encouragement to persevere and proceed toward goals.
- **Question** – Are you involved in any professional or academic cohort groups? If so, what are they and how useful (or not) have they been for you? How might you initiate cohort groups for professional, academic and/or undergraduate women?

# Concentric Circle Interactive Discussion

## Instructions

- Create an inner and outer circle similar to the instructions in the fishbowl, but make sure there is one person on the inside “paired up with” one person on the outside circle.
- Ask question 1 and give 4-6 minutes for the pair to answer the question.
- Ask the students on the outside of the circle to move one person to the right (so everyone is paired up with a new person).
- Ask the next question (or combine questions) and provide 4-6 minutes for the pair to answer this question.
- Continue this process for the time allowed.
- If time, ask the group to come together and to share the highlights from their conversations.



# Concentric Circle Interactive Discussion

## Discussion Questions

1. What roles do women leaders currently occupy on your college campus, at every level of the organization? What additional roles might women occupy?
2. What role do you think society plays in women opening doors for women in the academy and/or the workplace? What role do you play?
3. What are your career goals and what role does gender play in achieving them?
4. Do you perceive any barriers for women from people and institutional processes or procedures at your institution? If so, what are they? Why might these barriers exist?
5. Do you perceive that you are putting up barriers for yourself, for colleagues, and/or students? If so, why? How might others perceive you? What might you do to interrogate your role in your own career development in more detail in order to develop an action strategy for yourself?
6. What action strategies will you enable you to continue your own academic and/or professional development? Do you have a personal or professional mission statement that you live by? Might a cohort group be useful for you?
7. What supports do you have in the pursuit of your career goals? Where could you find more support?
8. How can you measure and evaluate your success?
9. Are there any other questions you have for yourself or others in the room?

# Additional Resources

- American College Student Personnel Association (ACPA): <http://www.myacpa.org>
- ACPA Standing Committee for Women: <http://www2.myacpa.org/what-is-scw>
  - #ACPASCW & on Facebook
- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA): <http://www.naspa.org>
- National American Student Personnel Association (NASPA): Women in Student Affairs: <http://www.naspa.org/kc/wisa/default.cfm>
- NASPA Women's Knowledge Community <http://www.naspa.org/kc/wisa/default.cfm>
  - #WISA\_KC & on Facebook
- NASPA *Journal about Women in Higher Education*: <http://journals.naspa.org/njawhe>
- National Organization for Women: <http://www.now.org>
- American Association of University Women: <http://www.aauw.org/about>
- National Women's Studies Association: <http://www.nwsa.org>
- Society for Educating Women: <http://educatingwomen.net>
- Additional twitter hashtags: #WLSalt, #SAWomenLead

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