5-2023

An Exploration of Emotional Intelligence and the Professional Competency of Academic Support Student Affairs Professionals

Margaret Shannon Williamson
University of New Orleans, New Orleans, mshannonwilliamson@gmail.com

An Exploration of Emotional Intelligence and the Professional Competency of Academic Support Student Affairs Professionals

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Educational Administration

by

Margaret Shannon Williamson

B.S. Abilene Christian University, 2008
M.S. Abilene Christian University, 2010

May 2023

Dedication

For the many students I've worked with who pushed me to dig deep and do the soul-searching heart work it required to be fully present with them. Thank you for teaching me about empathy, resilience, optimism, and relentless hope. I will always be grateful that I had the privilege of playing a small part in your educational journey.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Chris Broadhurst, my committee chair, for the many hours of work he put in to support me in this endeavor. Your feedback was both timely and helpful and I especially appreciate the encouragement and confidence you offered when I was certain I was a hopeless case. You have helped me grow as a writer and researcher and I will forever be grateful for that. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to the members of my committee, Dr. Chris Belser, Dr. Colby Stoever, and Dr. Nia Haydel. Dr. Belser, your thoughtful feedback was much appreciated. Colby, I really appreciate your assistance on my methods and statistical analyses. Your feedback was invaluable and your encouragement and checking in along the way during this dissertation process has meant the world to me. Nia, you have been a source of encouragement and mentorship for over a decade, and I probably would not have pursued this PhD without your influence. Thank you for making the time to serve on my committee and always cheering me on in my professional and personal pursuits. Special thanks to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and Dr. Matt Tarr for approving a grant from the Principal Investigator Enhancement fund to finance this research project. I could not have afforded to use the EQi 2.0 in this study were it not for your generous support.

I am grateful to my classmates and peers in the program. Doctoral work can feel isolating because most folks have no concept of what you're doing or the mental gymnastics and endurance it requires. I count myself very lucky to have supportive colleagues in the program who never made me feel like I needed to compete with them but were genuinely happy to see everyone succeed. I am cheering for all of you!

Thank you, Robert, Myrna, Kelly, Annie, and Matt. Our weekly family dinner and your love and support was an anchor for me throughout this program. Thank you for being my family

and caring for me throughout this process. I will never be able to express how much you all mean to me. Thank you, John, for being the most supportive partner throughout this journey. You are my safe place when I worry I am not enough and your love has carried me through the ups and downs of writing this dissertation.

Finally, every good thing I have in my life, this dissertation included, I owe to my recovery. The first time I ever heard the words “emotional intelligence” I was in a trauma treatment center fighting for my life and never imagined that one day I would be completing my dissertation on the subject. The journey to healing and becoming emotionally healthy has been long and costly, but I know it led me to this research and the self-reflection and heart-work being a good educator requires. Along my journey I have met many therapists, angels, and fellow recovery warriors who all played a part in saving my life and helping me find my path to healing, recovery, and hope. This dissertation would not have been possible without each of you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between the Emotional Intelligence of student affairs practitioners and their professional competency. 248 academic support professionals completed the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi 2.0) to measure their emotional intelligence. Using the competencies identified by the 2015 joint publication on student affairs competencies by the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), participants provided a self-rating of their attainment of the ten professional competencies. Demographic data, years of experience in the field, educational background, and professional development opportunities were also measured. A hierarchical multiple regression was run for each of the professional competencies to create a predictive model. Emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor for eight of the ten professional competencies. While years of experience was significant for nearly all competencies, educational background was only a significant predictor for four competencies and professional development was not a significant predictor in any model. Notably, the Social Justice and Inclusion competency was the only predictor where years of experience was not significant nor were the other covariates. The only significant predictor of Social Justice and Inclusion competency attainment was the interpersonal emotional intelligence realm including empathy and social responsibility. This study provides implications for graduate preparation programs, professional development opportunities, professional associations, supervisors and university leaders, and human resources.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Student Affairs, Professional Competency

Chapter One

Introduction

With a sharper focus on student retention rates and the call for colleges and universities to deliver a return on education, campuses have spent considerable effort designing customized supports to ensure students complete their programs of study. Scholars agree that high school academic performance alone is not enough to predict student success and persistence in college. (Astin, 1993; Berger & Milem, 1999; Johnson, 1997; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Murtaugh, Burns, & Schuster, 1999; Pascarella & Chapman 1983; Randsell, 2001; Tinto, 1975). More than half of the variance in institutional retention rates can be attributed directly to differences in the students who initially enroll, rather than because of any differential institutional intervention or effort (Astin, 1993). However, scholars have been critical of attributing student attrition to the shortcomings of student cognitive abilities, as it ignores the impact of social context and institutional practices and supports (Berger et al., 2021; Habley et al., 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1995; 2006). Even when these environmental factors are included, student retention models have limited predictive accuracy and often are not generalizable (Aljohani, 2016; Berger et al., 2012; Boston & Ice, 2011; Caisson, 2007; Jeffreys, 2012; Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2007).

Based on the limited ability of these commonly used predictors to account for differences in college student retention, scholars are looking toward other, non-cognitive variables like self-esteem, grit, and mindset to complete the picture of what factors influence student persistence (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017; DeWitz, Woolsey, & Walsh, 2009; Duckworth, 2016; Dweck, 2007; Friedlander, Reid, Shupak & Cribbie, 2007; Han, Farrugia, & Moss, 2017; Krumrei-Mancuso, Newton, Kim, & Wilcox, 2013). In the search for non-cognitive factors, emotional intelligence has emerged in the literature as a key factor of college and career success (Jaeger & Eagan, 2007;

Laciano & Curci, 2014; Parker, Creque, Barnhart, Harris, Majeski, Wood, Bond, & Hogan, 2004; Parker, Duffy, Wood, Bond, & Hogan, 2005; Parker, Hogan, Eastabrook, Oke, & Wood, 2006). Emotional intelligence is defined as "A set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way" (Stein, Book, & Kanoy, 2013, p. 4). Emotional intelligence skills enable college students to engage in the self-regulation and time management that collegiate academics require, minimize risk taking behaviors, manage stress, and navigate social dynamics with peers and faculty. Most universities do not include explicit teaching of emotional intelligence skills in their formal curriculum but instead rely on indirect modeling from faculty, staff, and peer leaders to improve students' skills (Brackett & Elbertson, 2006; Curci et al., 2014; Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor, Weissberg, & Schellinger, 2011). This modeling occurs in and out of the classroom as students watch faculty, staff, and more experienced students negotiate conflict, communicate expectations and boundaries, give and receive criticism, form connections, and tolerate stress.

Emotional intelligence is fluid and individuals can work to improve their level of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2011; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011; Stein, Book, & Kanoy, 2014). The neurologic connection between the rational and emotional brain is the physical source of emotional intelligence. Effective communication between the limbic system, where emotions are generated, and the cerebral cortex, where rational thinking originates, must be effectively regulated by the prefrontal cortex executive functioning (Goleman, 2011; Goleman & Seigel, 2016; Richardson & Begley, 2012; Siegel, 1999). The brain grows to its mature size during the teen years but the prefrontal cortex, one of the last parts of the brain to mature, is not fully developed until age 25 (Ariam et al., 2013). During this time of development, the

neurocircuitry of the brain strengthens and allows for enhanced problem-solving skills, multitasking, and processing complex emotions (Dahl, 2003). Many parts of the brain, including this connection between the emotional and rational brains, retain neuroplasticity, or the ability to regenerate or grow neural pathways, throughout adulthood (Fuchs & Flügge, 2014; Goleman & Seigel, 2016). As a result, improving emotional intelligence is a biological process that occurs as the brain changes through practicing emotional regulation strategies and changing habits (Goleman, 2011; Siegel, 1999; Stein, Book, & Kanoy, 2014). While research is clear, emotional intelligence can be improved, limited research has been conducted about exactly how students learn these skills in a higher education context.

Research Problem

Emotional intelligence has been linked to success in college students regardless of their personal characteristic or educational contexts (Bastian et al., 2005; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Lopes, Mestre, Guil, Kremenitzer & Salovey, 2012; Luciano & Curci, 2014). With a clear link between student success and emotional intelligence established, scholars are beginning to explore how emotional intelligence can be fostered in high school and the first year of college so that institutions can bolster student achievement and persistence by helping students develop emotional intelligence skills. Interdisciplinary teamwork has been found to improve students' level of emotional intelligence without impeding the attainment of their academic goals (Peregal-Felices, Marcos-Jorquera, Gilar-Corbi, & Jimeno-Morenilla, 2017). Research also indicates that faculty play a significant role in modeling emotional intelligence for students and that students show higher levels of emotional intelligence when they interact with faculty mentors who possess high levels of emotional intelligence (Brackett & Elbertson, 2006; Lillis, 2011-2012). While there is some attention to explicit teaching emotional literacy through social emotional

learning in primary and secondary education, most of higher education relies on indirect modeling over explicit teaching of emotional intelligence as part of the formal curriculum (Bailey et al., 2011; Durlak et al., 2011; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). As a result, university faculty play a significant role in modeling emotional intelligence for students and students show higher levels of emotional intelligence when they interact with faculty mentors who possess high levels of emotional intelligence (Brackett & Elbertson, 2006; Curci et al., 2014; Lillis, 2011-2012).

Outside of the classroom, student affairs staff have the greatest professional interaction and influence on students (Eaton, 2016; Gansemer-Topf & Ryder, 2017; Reynolds, 2013). Out-of-class engagement, especially activities developed and supervised by student affairs professionals (e.g. living on campus, service learning, leadership development), have a positive relationships with cognitive outcomes, student learning and development (Kuh, 1995; Martin & Seifert, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). While student involvement in activities traditionally staffed by student affairs staff have a strong relationship with student success, the research is sparse on studies that explain the direct impact of student affairs professionals on student outcomes (Love, 1995; Martin & Seifert, 2011; Martin et al., 2020). In other words, high impact practices clearly have an impact on student success, but little is known about how interacting with the student affairs professionals who coordinate these activities can influence student outcomes. However, even with little known about the ways staff impact students, emerging studies are showing that interaction with student affairs staff has a positive impact on student attitudes and behaviors ultimately suggesting that they could serve as models for students' emotional learning (Hatch & Garcia, 2017; Martin et al., 2020; Mu & Fosnacht, 2019).

Student affairs professionals, by virtue of their roles and responsibilities, must have a diverse knowledge and skill base including understanding of student development, social justice,

leadership, legal risk assessment, and building rapport (Bell, 2013; Herdlein, 2004; Herdlein et al., 2013; Lovell & Kosten, 2000). Student affairs staff serve as helping professionals on college campuses, providing direct assistance to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff (Burke et al., 2016). Student affairs work requires strong interpersonal skills both to form connections with the students they serve and to form collaborations with academic partners, who often rely on student affairs staff to initiate and maintain partnerships (Arceleus, 2008; Cho & Sriram, 2016; Kezar & Lester, 2009). While a there is a body of literature that consistently identifies advising and helping skills, student development theory, multicultural competence, professional ethics, and communication as the core knowledge for student affairs practitioners, this study seeks to further expand on that research and identify how emotional intelligence may serve as a foundation for this requisite skill base (Cuyjet et al., 2009; Dickerson et al; 2011, Gansemer-Topf & Ryder, 2017; Hoffman & Brescaini, 2012). Given the frequency of meaningful contact between students and student affairs professionals and the way these interactions seem to influence student attitudes and behaviors, it is clear that student affairs practitioners also play an important role in the modeling of emotional intelligence skills for students (Eaton, 2016; Gansemer-Topf & Ryder, 2017; Hatch & Garcia, 2017; Martin et al., 2020; Mu & Fosnacht, 2019; Reynolds, 2013)

Statement of Purpose

Using a sample of academic support student affairs practitioners from across the United States, this study explored the relationship between the emotional intelligence skills of student affairs professionals and their professional competencies. Professional competency was measured through a self-rating of an individual's attainment of the ten competencies for student affairs professionals outlined in the 2015 ACPA/NASPA document created by the Joint Task

Force on Professional Competencies and Standards (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). This study reviewed other variables that may also explain the attainment of professional competencies including the education, professional development, and years of experience of the participants. Prior research has shown these variables to have some influence on the attainment of some of the student affairs competencies (Grabsch et al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). The present study limited participants to those employed in one of the academic support functional areas of student affairs as defined by ACPA and NASPA (2010; 2015) including: academic advising, disability support services, first-year experience and orientation, or learning assistance/academic support services. The decision to exclude other functional areas in student affairs was a methodological choice to avoid risking emotional intelligence or professional competence factoring by functional area given the sample size. Determining how emotional intelligence of student affairs practitioners predicts or moderates their attainment of the competencies can create opportunities to include emotional intelligence training and coaching in the formal curriculum of higher education master's preparation programs and the ongoing professional development that student affairs practitioners receive, ultimately unlocking the key emotional work required for a student affairs professional to be excellent in the field. This study examined the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between the various emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals and their professional competency in the field? (2) Do the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals predict or moderate their professional competency, beyond the influence of their years of experience, education, and professional development?

Study Implications

The research questions of this study aim to shed more light on student affairs staff and how their emotional intelligence impacts their competence as professionals. Higher education staff are an under researched population and while there is a growing body of literature about student affairs professionals' education, preparation, and training, there is much more to be explored about what makes a student affairs professional effective in their work. Establishing a connection between emotional intelligence and professional competence may help student affairs graduate training programs redesign their approach to preparation in the field, particularly for how practicum, internship, and other hands-on field experiences are administered. Further, for professionals currently working in the field, understanding this connection to emotional intelligence may assist them in gaining increased competency in areas that they have previously worked on with limited success.

The work of social justice and inclusion has been an important part of student affairs from the early days and is particularly timely in the present moment. In 2017 ACPA announced their Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization committing to devote resources and time to addressing racial justice in higher education through research, scholarship, and tools to support personal and professional growth (ACPA, 2017). During the summer of 2020 after the unjust killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and too many other unarmed Black men and women, the United States entered a period of mourning and racial reckoning with protests in support of racial justice occurring in all 50 states. As student affairs professionals navigate the complexities of these difficult moments during a global pandemic exacerbated by long standing health disparities and systemic inequities, many campuses are turning to anti-bias and anti-racism training to support faculty, staff, and administrators to confront their own bias and evaluate the policies and practices of their campuses. Offering training campus wide is a

meaningful step and may help to dismantle the systems of oppression that keep marginalized employees from accessing leadership positions or marginalized students from successfully navigating their academic progression (Kirkinis, 2016; Stark, 2018). While anti-racism and anti-bias training can be potentially helpful tools for increasing the inclusivity of an institution, the training is ineffective if the participants lack the emotional intelligence to engage effectively in such training (Evans, 2020; Kirkinis, 2016; Spanierman & Cabrera, 2014). I would argue that such training, without the groundwork of emotional intelligence, risks serious harm if student affairs professionals and senior administrators lack the basic self-awareness, empathy, and emotional expression these difficult conversations require. Further, strong emotional intelligence among educators has been linked to positive attitudes about multicultural education and stronger multicultural communication competence. (Arslan & Yigit, 2016; Washington et al., 2013).

Definition of Terms

ACPA- American College Personnel Association; a not-for-profit organization that leads the student affairs profession and higher education community in providing outreach, advocacy, research, and professional development to create equitable and inclusive learning environments that foster college student learning.

Emotional Intelligence- "A set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain interpersonal relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way" (Stein et al., 2013, p. 4)

Functional Area- The various functions that can be housed in a student affairs department depending on the unique needs of the campus. NASPA has identified 39 functional areas that are commonly housed in a student affairs division: Academic Advising, Admissions, Alumni Programs, Campus Activities, Campus Safety, Career Services, Civic Learning and Democratic

Engagement, Clinical Health Programs, College Union, Community Service/Service Learning, Commuter Services, Counseling Services, Disability Support Services, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, GLBT Student Services, Graduate and Professional Student Services, Greek Affairs, Intercollegiate Athletics, International Student Services, Learning Assistance/Academic Support Services, Multicultural Services, Nontraditional Student Services, On-campus Dining, On- Campus Housing, Orientation, Recreational Sports, Registrar, Spiritual Life/Campus Ministry, Student Affairs Assessment, Student Affairs Fundraising and Development, Student Affairs Research, Student Conduct (Academic Integrity), Student Conduct (Behavioral Case Management), Student Media, TRIO Programs, Veterans Services, Wellness Programs, and Women's Centers.

Professional Competency- the 10 skill areas identified by ACPA and NASPA required for a student affairs professional to be successful in the higher education field, regardless of functional area. These skills include Personal and Ethical Foundations; Values, Philosophy, and History; Assessment, Evaluation, and Research; Law, Policy, and Governance; Organizational and Human Resources; Leadership; Social Justice and Inclusion; Student Learning and Development; Technology; and Advising and Supporting.

NASPA- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators; a not-for-profit organization that drives professional innovation and evidenced-based, student-centered practice throughout higher education.

Student Affairs Professional- An individual who works as a full-time employee for a college or university in one of the 39 functional areas defined by NASPA

Chapter Two

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter two will provide an overview of the foundations of emotional intelligence in evolutionary psychology, testing and measurement, and developmental psychology. The definitions of emotional intelligence are explored at length through an examination of the competition between ability and mixed theoretical models of emotional intelligence. This study used the Bar-On Model as a theoretical framework for understanding emotional intelligence as it examines how emotional intelligence relates to the professional competency of student affairs professionals. The Bar-On model and the published measure, the EQi, are reviewed in detail and critiques of the model are discussed. Once the theoretical model is defined, a review of literature of emotional intelligence and student success is presented. The history and purpose of student affairs is explored and the professionalization of the field, most recently through the competency movement, is presented. Literature on the competency and training of student affairs professionals is reviewed and the chapter concludes with a rationale for why the Bar-On Model of emotional intelligence is connected to the research problem.

Emotional Intelligence

The study of emotional intelligence originates in the foundations of evolution and intelligence testing and measurement (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Goleman, 1995, 1998; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Darwin established the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaptation suggesting that gut reactions- those raw emotional states that often elicit automatic physical responses- played a key role in our ability to adapt and survive (Darwin, 1872/1965). Thorndike (1920) built upon this research to describe what he called ‘social intelligence’ and emphasized how it impacted human performance. Thorndike’s (1920) work challenged the

common conceptualization of intelligence at the time, indicating that in isolation intelligence failed to consistently predict job performance. To explain this phenomenon, Thorndike (1920) theorized that there were a number of different intelligences, including abstract intelligence (the ability to understand and express verbal and mathematical concepts), mechanical intelligence (the ability to apply spatial placement and movement), and social intelligence (the ability to understand and identify with the feelings of others).

A movement of research focused on describing, defining, and assessing socially competent behavior emerged from Thorndike's work (Chapin, 1942; Doll, 1935; Moss & Hunt, 1927; Moss et al., 1927). Wechsler (1940; 1943), a pioneer of cognitive testing and measurement, famously included Comprehension and Picture Arrangement in his IQ test that is still widely used today because of the influence of this scholarship. Although Wechsler spent much of his career developing cognitive assessments, he believed that theoretical models of IQ would never be complete until they could account for what he called "non-intellective" factors (Wechsler, 1943). Decades later Gardner (1983, 1993) expanded on Thorndike's theory posing seven forms of intelligence instead of three: mathematical-logical intelligence, verbal intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and interpersonal intelligence. Of relevance to the emergence of theories of emotional intelligence was Gardner's splitting of Thorndike's social intelligence into two branches, intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal intelligence is defined by Gardner (1983, 1993) as the ability to self-reflect to have an accurate self-image, while interpersonal intelligence focuses on the ability to identify with the feelings of others. Gardner's work largely focused on the implications for student learning and classroom instruction for children, but these ideas lay the groundwork for future theories of emotional intelligence.

Early Definitions of Emotional Intelligence

While the study of emotion and cognition dates back to the late 1800s, it is only within the last several decades that research about emotional influences on learning and personal development has been integrated with the research on more traditional cognitive success predictors (Kaufman, 1993; Love & Guthrie, 1999; Love & Love, 1995; Mayer e al., 2000). Although Goleman is often considered to be the father of emotional intelligence, it was first defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as a "form of social intelligence involving the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's feelings and actions" (p.189). Later, Goleman (1995) popularized the concept of emotional intelligence with the publication of his best-selling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ,* where he describes how to apply Salovey and Mayer's research to daily life. After further research, Mayer & Salovey (1997) found this definition incomplete and expanded the definition to include a connection between feelings and thoughts. Their revised definition of emotional intelligence is "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge, and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p.10). The same year as Mayer and Salovey's revised study was published, Bar-On entered the literature publishing the first measurement of emotional intelligence. He defines emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-On, 1997, p.14).

Competing Models of Emotional Intelligence

The literature has narrowed emotional intelligence into two primary threads of research (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Mayer et al., 2000; Mayer et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2011). The first category, ability-based models, aligns with Mayer and Salovey's (1990) original ideas and focuses on the interplay of intelligence and emotions. The second category, mixed models, combine the original ability-based construct with other factors ultimately conceiving emotional intelligence as a complex set of mental abilities, traits and dispositions (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Goleman, 1995; Petrides et al., 2007; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Ability-Based Models

Ability-based models treat emotional intelligence as an ability, similar to visio-spatial ability, that can be measured and is generally stable over time (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Mayer & Salovey, 1997, 2006; Zeidner et al., 2004). Ability-based models presume that (a) individuals possess multiple intelligences beyond IQ; (b) emotions play a vital role in an individual's life; (c) there is significant variation in ability to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions among individuals; and (d) this variability impacts how an individual adapts to their environment (Mayer et al., 2008; Mayer et al., 2016; Mayer et al., 2008; Salovey & Mayer 1990). The model focuses on cognitive processing and the adaptive use of emotions to reason with information (Salovey, 1997). Research on the ability-based models have found emotional intelligence to predict career outcomes including leadership behaviors, job performance, employee stress and well-being (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Samad, 2011; Zeidner et al., 2004).

Mixed Models

Mixed models treat emotional intelligence as a set of multifaceted core competencies that are fluid and can change significantly over time with effort (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Goleman,

1995, 1998; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Roberts et. al, 2010; Walter et al., 2011). Mixed models shift focus from honing in on only cognitive processing of emotional information to include non-cognitive skills like empathy and optimism in addition to the cognitive ability to perceive and understand emotion (Bar-On, 2006). The ultimate goal of mixing the range of factors is to increase the applicability of emotional intelligence to leadership and career issues (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Mayer et al., 2000; Mayer et al., 2000). Goleman (1995, 1998) argued that emotional intelligence is a set of competencies that can be learned and practiced to improve performance, rather than a fixed ability. He divided emotional intelligence into four domains: self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On (1997, 2006) built upon Goleman's research adding adaptability and stress management as constructs in the mix. Goleman (1995, 1998) and Bar-On (1997, 2006) posit that emotional intelligence -unlike other forms of intelligence like verbal, mathematical-logical, or spatial intelligences- can be developed within relatively short periods of time in measurable ways and that emotional intelligence differentiated work performance far more than other intelligences or skills. Interestingly, Bar-On (2006) rejected the delineation between mixed and ability models both in theory and psychometric measure. He wrote "all models of human behavior are influenced at least to some extent by a 'mixed' cross-section of bio-psycho-social predictors and facilitators including biomedical predispositions and conditions, cognitive intelligence, personality, motivation, and environmental influences" (Bar-On, 2006, p. 11). He went on to say that the field of psychology has used this mix of factors since the 1970s and even David Wechsler (1940, 1943) argued that these "mix" of factors impacted measurement of intelligence through IQ (Bar-On, 2006).

Competing Scholars

In the literature there appears to be obvious competition and even tension between the three primary authors, Salovey, Goleman, and Bar-On. Salovey was a faculty member at Yale when he and Mayer, of the University of New Hampshire, published their study that first coined the term emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Goleman, also working at Yale, founded the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) at the Yale Child Development Center in 1994 then published his best-selling book on the topic in 1995 and quickly became widely known among both academics and non-academics for his research (Goleman, n.d.). CASEL moved to the University of Illinois at Chicago in the late 1990s and Salovey founded the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (YCEI) in 2003 (CASEL, n.d.; YCEI, n.d.). Today the work of CASEL and YCEI overlaps significantly as they research emotional intelligence and how we can enhance social and emotional learning for both children and adults. Bar-On, an Israeli psychologist, published the first measure of emotional intelligence in 1997, beating Mayer, Salovey and Caruso to publish and sell their measure to a psychometric firm. From 1995-2006 a flurry of studies were published comparing these models and making the case for why one model or measure was superior to the others (Bar-On, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006; Bar-On et al., 2003; Boyatzis et al., 2001; Boyatzis & Sala, 2004; Brackett & Geher, 2006: Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Brackett & Salovey, 2004; Gignac, 2005; Plake & Impara, 1999; Salovey et al., 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004; Zeidner et al., 2001). During that period, Bar-On seemed to have more attention internationally while Salovey and Goleman were more well-known stateside. Bar-On was at times criticized for not being educated at an Ivy league school or having studies published in international journals instead of tier one journals in the United States. Goleman was often positioned as an inferior scholar because he was rarely the first author on a peer reviewed journal but instead published a

book geared to popular culture instead of more academic writing. These studies ultimately slowed when Goleman left the academy to pursue other opportunities and when Salovey left YCEI to make advances in the academic ranks at Yale, first to Dean in 2004, then provost in 2008, and finally to the presidency in 2013 where he still serves today (Goleman, n.d.; Yale, 2020). While the debate over ability and mixed models persists in our discussion of emotional intelligence, much of the current literature offers support for the validity in both ability and mixed models and scholars choose the model that seems most appropriate to their research problem (Boyatzis, 2018; Davis & Humphrey, 2014; Miao et al., 2017; O'Connor et al., 2019).

Bar-On Model of Emotional Intelligence

Bar-On's work is built on the foundations of evolution and intelligence testing and measurement (Bar-On, 2006). Darwin established the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaptation (Darwin, 1872/1965). Thorndike (1920) built upon this to describe social intelligence and emphasized how it impacts human performance. Wechsler (1940; 1943), a pioneer of cognitive testing and measurement, observes the impact of non-cognitive and affective factors on intelligence. The Bar-On (1997, 2006) model ultimately combines the observations from Darwin to the present to define emotional intelligence as the ability to effectively understand and express one's self, understand and relate to others, and cope with life's daily demands.

Bar-On (1997, 2006) identifies five realms of emotional intelligence: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision making, and stress management. The self-perception dimension involves the ability to be aware of one's own thoughts and feelings, to understand and accept one's own strengths and limitations, and to persistently pursue meaning and purpose. The self-expression dimension encompasses openly expressing emotions in non-destructive ways and

freedom from emotional dependence. The interpersonal dimension includes skills of developing and maintaining connections with others, understanding the feelings of others, and showing concern for the needs of others. The decision-making realm includes the ability to realistically assess problems and find solutions when emotions are involved and avoiding rash behaviors. Finally, the stress management realm focuses on coping with challenges, remaining positive despite setbacks, and adapting to unpredictable circumstances. Within these five realms are fifteen emotional intelligence skills: self-regard, self-actualization, emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, assertiveness, independence, interpersonal relationships, empathy, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, impulse control, flexibility, stress tolerance and optimism. Each realm and skill is listed with a brief definition in Appendix A (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011).

Emotional Quotient

Bar-On operationalized his model through developing a measure of emotional intelligence through what he called the emotional quotient (EQ) (Bar-On, 1988; Stein et al., 2013). Bar-On believed that EQ could measure emotional and social skills in the same way that IQ measures cognitive ability. In 1997 Bar-On introduced the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), a self-report measure of emotional intelligence. The EQ-i was the first measure of its kind to be published by a psychometric test publisher, the first measure of emotional intelligence to be peer-reviewed in the *Buros Mental Measurement Yearbook and* is the most widely used measure of emotional intelligence to date (Bar-On, 2004, 2006; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Plake & Impara, 1999; Stein et al., 2013). Over the years, the EQ-i has been translated into more than 30 languages.

The EQ-i consists of 133 items that are rates on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "very seldom or not true of me" (1) to "very often or true of me" (5). The EQ-i is appropriate for individuals over the age of 17 and takes 15-20 minutes to complete (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Multihealth Systems Assessment, 2011). Upon completing the assessment, individuals receive a total EQ score, scores on each of the 5 realms as well as scores on each of the 15 subscales listed in the model in Appendix A. Raw scores are automatically converted into standard scores based on a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15, intentionally mirroring modern IQ assessments (Bar-On, 2006). The EQ-i has two validity indices, positive and negative impressions, that automatically adjust the scaled scores based on a participant's overly positive or overly negative response style. This is included by design to reduce the distorting effects of self-report bias, ultimately increasing the accuracy of the results (Bar-On, 2006; Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Improving Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1995, 1998) and Bar-On (1997, 2006) have always argued that emotional intelligence is fluid and individuals can work to improve their level of emotional intelligence. While there is likely some genetic component to emotional intelligence, a great deal of the competency comes from learning and practice (Goleman, 2004). The neurologic connection between the rational and emotional brain is the physical source of emotional intelligence. Effective communication between the limbic system, where emotions are generated, and the cerebral cortex, where rational thinking originates, must be effectively regulated by the prefrontal cortex executive functioning (Goleman, 2011; Goleman & Seigel, 2016; Richardson & Begley, 2012; Siegel, 1999). The adolescent brain is still developing through the mid-twenties, during the time that most students are attending college (Araim et al., 2013). During this time of development, the corpus callosum gains white matter, strengthening the communication in the

brain and allowing adolescents to improve their self-regulation and critical thinking skills (Araim et al., 2013; Dahl, 2003). The plasticity of the brain is particularly sensitive to environmental factors like stress, trauma, and neurotoxins (e.g. alcohol, caffeine, etc.) during adolescence, impacting the communication between the prefrontal cortex and the limbic system and ultimately, emotional intelligence (Araim et al., 2013; Goleman & Seigel, 2016). Many parts of the brain, including this connection between the emotional and rational brains, have neuroplasticity, or the ability to regenerate or grow neural pathways, into adulthood (Fuchs & Flügge, 2014; Goleman & Seigel, 2016). As a result, improving emotional intelligence is a biological process that occurs as the brain changes through practicing emotional regulation strategies and changing habits (Goleman, 2011; Siegel, 1999; Stein et al., 2014). Bar-On (1997) initially developed the EQ-i in part because he was so convinced that emotional intelligence was a learned skill set and he was committed to developing an assessment to measure the learning and provide more specific information to develop emotional intelligence training. Research supports that emotional intelligence as measured by the EQ-i can be learned and improved through training even over relatively short periods of time (Bar-On, 2006; Batool, 2013; Curci et al., 2014; Depape et al., 2006; Durlak et al., 2011; Stein et al., 2014).

Criticisms of Bar-On's Model

Some researchers have been critical of Bar-On's (1997, 2006) model of emotional intelligence arguing his model overlaps with personality. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2000) criticize mixed models like Bar-On's citing that the inclusion of other factors like mood and personality dilutes the scientific rigor of emotional intelligence as a construct. Van Rooy et al., (2005) agree adding that mixed models like Bar-On's do not make a clear delineation between personality and emotional intelligence. However, Bar-On (2006) rejects this supposition, citing

that in the meta-analyses led by Van Rooy, both his assessment as well as Mayer and Salovey's measure overlapped with personality and that in both measures the 80-85% of both the conceptual and psychometric models could not be explained by personality or IQ (Bar-On 2006; Van Rooy &Viswesvaran, 2004; Van Rooy et al., 2005). Cherniss et al. (2010) supports Bar-On's position indicating that Bar-On's "emotional intelligence does in fact represent a set of abilities that are distinct from either the IQ or the Big Five personality traits (openness to novel experience, conscientiousness, extraversion and introversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism)" (p. 240). Mayer et al. (2008) found that ability-based models and mixed models both adequately conceptualized and measured EI, which is particularly significant as Mayer is one of the originators of the ability-based model. Joseph and Newman (2010) assert that criticizing mixed models like Bar-On's for overlapping with personality is unfair as various studies have found statistically significant correlations between personality and emotional intelligence as measured by both ability-based and mixed models making. Further, Bar-On (2006) argues that his measure of emotional intelligence is not conflated with personality because the 15 emotional competency scores increase from childhood to around age 50 and a wide swath of studies revealed that scores could be increased significantly within a short period as a result of training; personality on the other hand is not nearly as malleable of a trait and measures of personality trait tend to remain relatively stable over time (Bar-On, 2003, 2004; Petrides et al., 2007).

Emotional Intelligence and Student Success

It has been well established that non-cognitive factors impact student success. Self-esteem is often regarded as highly correlated with students' academic performance (DeWitz, Woolsey, & Walsh, 2009; Friedlander et al., 2007; Krumrei-Mancuso et al., 2013). Grit and academic mindset have been so well documented as factors in student achievement they have

worked their way into most K-12 schools in some form (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017; Duckworth, 2016; Dweck, 2007; Han et al., 2017). Family background and support has also shown to be not only correlated with students' academic and social outcomes, but also the strength of their emotional coping skills (Cheng et al., 2012; Johnson et al., 2010). Furthermore, non-cognitive factors influence student persistence in addition to their GPA (Lounsbury et al., 2004). The influence of these non-cognitive factors seems to be consistent across racial and gender subgroups as well as other special student populations (Duckworth, 2016; Dweck, 2007; Friedlander et al., 2007; Hope et al., 2013; Melzer & Grant, 2016). Non-cognitive variables appear to be a possible missing link in explaining the success of students in college, career, and beyond.

Emotional intelligence has emerged in the literature as a key non-cognitive factor of college and career success. Students' emotional intelligence predicts GPA for students in both high school and college (Durlak et al., 2011; Jaegar & Eagan, 2007; Lanciano & Curci, 2014; Parker et al., 2004). Students with strong emotional intelligence not only perform better in terms of GPA, but they are more likely to persist and graduate (Parker et al., 2006). Specifically, first-year college students who possess strong interpersonal skills and are adaptable, are able to transition much better to university life and are more likely to persist through to their second year and have a higher GPA (Parker et al., 2005). Furthermore, some emotional intelligence competencies were found to be highly negatively correlated with procrastination behaviors as well as locus of control for university students. The less adaptable and the lower their stress tolerance was, the more likely students were to procrastinate (Deniz et al., 2009).

Emotional Intelligence and Student Wellbeing

Emotional intelligence not only supports students' academic success but also is related to their emotional health and wellbeing. For university students, higher emotional intelligence has been correlated with higher life satisfaction, better problem-solving and coping, and lower anxiety (Bastian et al., 2005). Additionally, researchers have found that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with self-efficacy and better mental health outcomes for college students (Gupta & Kumar, 2010). Students with poor mental health outcomes are more likely to receive a lower grade point average, drop out of college or be unemployed than their peers without mental health challenges (American College Health Association, 2015). Further, positive self-talk and emotional intelligence are positively correlated among undergraduate and graduate students (Depape et al., 2006). Positive self-talk was found to support self-awareness and self-regulation skills among university students, with students with positive self-talk reporting higher rates of impulse control and more easily identifying their own emotional state (Depape et al., 2006). Perhaps even more significantly, emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor of student behavior, even when accounting for the covariance of other emotional influences like clinical depression (Salami, 2010). Emotional intelligence also was found to be a protective factor against students' risk-taking behaviors during their first year of college (Rivers et al., 2013). Ultimately, more attention should be given to positive psychology and emotional intelligence education as it improves the positive elements in students' lives proactively rather than reactively trying to solve problems when crises emerge.

Impact of Emotional Intelligence in Diverse Contexts

Emotional intelligence predicts academic achievement as measured by GPA and time spent studying, for college students even when controlling for gender differences, cognitive abilities, and personality traits (Luciano & Curci, 2014). The ability to manage emotions, a

critical emotional intelligence competency, was highly correlated with high school students' ability to adapt to high school life in the freshman year, even when researchers controlled for demographic factors, personality, and cognitive ability (Lopes et al., 2012). Emotional intelligence time and time again stands alone against the Big Five personality trait framework, perhaps the most common conceptualization of personality theory (Bastian et al., 2005; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Lanciano & Curci, 2014; Lopes et al., 2005) and is often separated from self-esteem (Depape et al., 2006; Rivers et al., 2013).

Not only is emotional intelligence differentiated from other non-cognitive factors in the research, but the impacts of emotional intelligence are seen in students from a wide variety of educational contexts and settings. Emotional intelligence influences the success of students at every level- secondary, postsecondary, undergraduate, graduate, and professional school (Durlak et al., 2011; Fernandez et al., 2012; Goroshit & Hen, 2012; Gupta & Kumar, 2010; Jaegar & Eagan, 2007; O'Meara et al., 2013; Parker et al., 2004; Rutledge et al., 2015, Salami, 2010; Soutter & Seider, 2013). The implications of emotional intelligence on student outcomes seems to happen regardless of institution type including both four-year universities, community colleges, public, private, and charter schools, minority serving institutions and religiously affiliated schools (Austin et al., 2005; Fernandez et al., 2012; Hope et. al., 2013; Krumrei-Mancuso et al., 2013; Lanciano & Curci, 2014; Nasir & Masrur, 2010; Porchea et al., 2010; O'Meara et al., 2013; Ruteledge et al., 2015). Even students in an exclusively online environment succeed at higher rates when their emotional intelligence is strong (Berenson et al., 2008). Emotional intelligence is correlated with student achievement for college students in the United States and Canada, as well as students in Asian, African, European, and Middle Eastern

universities (Gupta & Kumar, 2010; Nasir & Masrur, 2010; Ruteledge et al., 2015; Salami, 2010; Shim et al., 2017).

Student Affairs

The roots of the student affairs profession reach all the way back to the colonial era when residential colleges modeled after Oxford and Cambridge were created in New England (Long, 2012). The doctrine of in loco parentis allowed universities to closely manage student behavior in the place of parents (Thelin, 2004). While faculty in the colonial area were largely live-in teachers, by the mid-1800s faculty at U.S. colleges were heavily influenced by the German model, in which the sole purpose of faculty was to train student intellect. During this time, faculty shifted their time from involvement with students to research and expanding expertise (Long, 2012). As the turn of the century approached, faculty were rarely involved with student discipline. This changing role of faculty meant that colleges needed administrative staff to manage housing and discipline of residential students and in the early 1900s the first student affairs professionals were hired. Over the last century, the role of student affairs professionals has evolved as higher education has become more accessible to historically marginalized groups and new perspectives on the development of students has emerged (Long, 2012; Thelin, 2004).

Purpose of Student Affairs

From the beginning, the student affairs profession has always been inextricably tied to supporting students' social and emotional learning. In 1937 the American Council on Education (ACE) published *The Student Personnel Point of View*, the foundational document for the field. In *Point of View* ACE (1937) argued that higher education had strayed from their purpose and that student affairs, or student personnel as they termed it then, was the way back to developing students' highest potential. There is a great deal of agreement in the scholarship that the purpose

of student affairs is to support the academic mission of the institution by providing services, programs, and environments that support the learning and personal development of students (Dalton & Crosy, 2011; Porterfield et al., 2011, Sriram, 2014). ACE (1937) noted how vital it is for universities to view students holistically:

> This philosophy imposes upon educational institutions the obligation to consider the student as a whole - his intellectual capacity and achievement, his emotional make, his physical condition, his social relationships, his vocational aptitudes and skills, his moral and religious values, his economic resources, his aesthetic appreciations. It puts emphasis, in brief, upon the development of the student as a person rather than upon his intellectual training alone (ACE, 1937, p. 3)

Point of View goes on to explain that if universities have any chance of fulfilling their mission, they must hire student personnel to tend to the personal growth of students as the pressures for faculty to focus on research and scholarship were rapidly increasing and their care for students' emotional and social wellbeing were deteriorating as their capacity was maxed out (ACE, 1937; Hevel, 2016).

Student Affairs Professionals Profound Influence on Students

Outside of the classroom, student affairs staff have the greatest professional interaction and influence on students (Martin & Seifert, 2011; Martin et al., 2020). Students obviously benefit from being engaged in campus life and resources, but even when students are not engaging in high impact practices, students benefit from interactions with university staff (Martin & Seifert, 2011). Engaging with student affairs professionals has been shown to have a positive relationship with their academic motivation, positive attitude and critical thinking skills, even when students have not engaged in campus activities or resources but simply had higher

levels of exposure to university staff (Martin et. al., 2020). Additionally, student interaction with student affairs professionals, like academic advisors and enrollment counselors, helped them persist from a first term to a second term, improved student grades, and gave students more confidence in their academic growth during college (Hatch & Garcia, 2017; Mu & Fosnacht, 2019). While the impact student affairs staff have on student success is well documented, scholars agree that this connection is nuanced and more research is needed on the nature of this connection and what makes student affairs professionals competent in their role (Hatch & Garcia, 2017; Martin et al., 2020; Martin & Seifert, 2011; Mu & Fosnacht, 2019).

Professionalizing Student Affairs

Over time student affairs administrators' roles have expanded and continuously grown (Dalton & Crosby, 2011; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Porterfield et al., 2011). The professionalization of the field began when deans of women and deans of men, often hired by university presidents to assist with discipline at the college, gathered to discuss common issues on their campuses in the early 1900s (Hevel, 2016). These meetings of deans of women and deans of men ultimately led the to the formation of professional associations and by the 1950s the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and College Student Educators International (ACPA) were the major organizations of the field with organizations for specific functional areas coming along in 1960s and 1970s (Farr, 2010; Hevel, 2016; Schwartz, 2010). The first research publications, the *Journal of College Student Personnel* and the *NASPA Journal*, founded in 1969 and 1963, emerged offering a place for scholarship that had previously been limited to campus newspapers or occasionally national magazines (Caple, 1998; Hevel, 2016). While the Teachers College at Columbia University offered summer training programs for deans of women as early as the 1910s, it was not until psychology research about college

students surged in the late 20th century that master's degree programs in student personnel became more mainstream (Aleeman & Finnegan, 2009; Hevel, 2016).

To further guide the complex work of student affairs, professional organizations published pivotal documents outlining key knowledge and skills for practitioners often providing a call to action for student affairs professionals or institutions of higher learning. These foundational documents include *Points of View 50 Years Later* (NASPA, 1987), *The Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1996), *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (ACPA & NASPA, 1997), *Learning Reconsidered* (ACPA, 2004), and *Envisioning a Future of Student Affairs* (ACPA, 2010). These documents outline the societal pressures facing student affairs practitioners, a vision for student success, and the vital role student affairs staff play in supporting student learning and developing students into responsible and caring members of the global community.

Many of these documents articulate that part of the role of student affairs professionals is to teach and model emotional intelligence skills for students. *Points of View 50 Years Later* lays out the importance of emotional skills for the learning that happens in college:

> Feelings affect thinking and learning. Although students are in college to acquire knowledge through the use of their intellect, they feel as well as think. Students are whole persons. How they feel affects how well they think...Helping students understand and attend to these aspects of their lives can enhance their academic experiences. (NAPSA, 1987, p. 9-10)

In the *Student Learning Imperative,* the authors define the hallmarks of a college educated person, argue that after college students will have to integrate both academic and emotional skills, and state that student affairs professionals must model these skills for the

students they serve (ACPA & NASPA, 1997). *Learning Reconsidered* highlights how student learning and personal development are so wrapped up together that we should not use language to differentiate between them; one simply cannot learn cognitively without developing effectively (ACPA, 2004). The author goes on to say student affairs is integral to the learning process because of the ways we provide students with the opportunity to engage in their learning emotionally (ACPA, 2004). The student affairs profession has always been committed to viewing students holistically and finding unique ways to support their emotional development as they are developing academically. A major purpose of the profession is to help students to learn to reflect as means of developing self-awareness, practice listening as a means of cultivating empathy, and support students to develop health coping strategies as they learn to navigate the daily challenges of college and adulthood. At their core, these skills are emotional intelligence.

ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies

In the 2000s, there was considerable attention to the growing diversity of students enrolling in college and the parallel push for accountability. By 2007, ACPA commissioned a Task Force on Certification for student affairs professionals and charged them with identifying competencies and knowledge sets that could be used as a curriculum for all professionals (ACPA, 2007). This group published their initial findings in a report where they outline six competencies as well as a set of basic skills, attributes, and values all student affairs professionals should enter the field with:

> The foundational skills upon which all student affairs professionals build include effective written and oral communication; technology skills; interpersonal skills; listening; and personal, time, and task management. Basic attributes include self-awareness, integrity, honesty, empathy, self-confidence, self-directedness, self-reflection,

> and insight. Expected values include emphasizing developmental interactions with students, committing to developing the whole student, respecting differences, and on-going learning. (ACPA, 2007, p.5)

While the task force highlighted communication and technical skills, most of the skills and attributes listed are emotional skills. The task force uses several words that are found in the Bar-On's (1997, 2006) model of emotional intelligence as skills or their definitions including interpersonal skills, self-awareness, empathy, self-confidence, and self-direction.

In 2010, ACPA and NASPA endorsed a joint publication *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners*. The document identified competencies that define the professional knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking required of student affairs professionals regardless of their functional area or specific role (ACPA & NASPA, 2010). The document was updated in 2015 to include 10 professional competencies for student affairs: personal and ethical foundations; values, philosophy, and history, assessment, evaluation, and research; law, policy, and governance; organizational and human resources; leadership; social justice and inclusion; student learning and development; technology; and advising and supporting (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). These competencies and their definitions are listed in Appendix B. The purpose of the competencies was "to set out the scope and content of the professional competencies required of student affairs educators in order for them to succeed within the current higher educational environment as well as projected future environments" (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 7). The task force specifically left out competencies like critical thinking or oral and written communication skills, arguing that those are necessary for all educators and their aim was to highlight competencies specific to the professional success of student affairs practitioners and provide a vision for where the field is headed in the future (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). Each competency is

described and detailed expected outcomes for those who have attained the competency are listed for foundational, intermediate, and advanced attainment. The competencies have been used by graduate preparation programs to design curriculum, as many map their professional development from them, and it is common for practitioners to use them to develop job description, complete program assessments, or conduct performance reviews (ACPA & NASPA, 2010, 2015; Eaton, 2016; Muller et al., 2018; Wise & Hatfield 2014).

Limitations of the Competency Framework

Many elements of the competencies, such as personal and ethical foundations, values, philosophy and history, leadership, inclusion, and advising and support, require self-awareness, reflection, and the ability to formulate meaningful connections with students, families, and colleagues. Mid-level managers note that the NASPA/ACPA competencies encompass many of the transferable skills they want in their employees but that they have significant gaps and do not adequately encompass all the skills needed to be a high performing student affairs practitioner (Eaton, 2016; Gansemer-Topf & Ryder, 2017; Sriram, 2014). Notably, communication skills are not included in the NASPA/ACPA document and both mid-level managers and senior student affairs officers cite effective communication and the ability to understand and adapt to different contexts as the most essential skills for student affairs professionals (Gansemer-Topf & Ryder, 2017; Reynolds, 2011; Sriram, 2014). Furthermore, student affairs preparatory programs are often seen as ineffective in preparing new professionals as attainment of a master's degree only has a relationship with four of the ten professional competencies (Assessment, Evaluation and Research; Law, Policy, and Governance; Organizational and Human Resources: and Advising and Supporting), exposing very common gaps in curriculum (Muller, Grabsch, & Moore, 2018). Although managers and leaders in student affairs emphasize the importance of soft skills, student

affairs professionals cite the greatest need for professional development in technical skills like assessment and policy (Grabsch et al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). More research is needed on how the NASPA/ACPA competencies are developed, strengthened, and maintained in student affairs professionals at all levels. Furthermore, the competencies fail to capture many of the soft skills required for student affairs practitioners so additional research and revisions are needed to conceptualize the relationship between social-emotional skills and competency in student affairs professionals.

Competency Attainment

Essentially, the conversation in the student affairs profession about competency is driven by the desire for student affairs professionals to become better scholar-practitioners so they can improve the student experience. An interest in competency development is the fruit of professionals' earnest pursuit of excellence (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007). There has been some debate about if these competencies should be used for certification of student affairs professionals (ACPA, 2012; Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Grasgreen, 2012; Sriram, 2014). However, even with the interest in pursuing certification, there is very little published literature on competency measurement or attainment. Sriram (2014) published a measurement scale for the competencies as they were written in 2010 with some recommendations for additions and deletions based on the findings in the study. ACPA and NASPA (2015) incorporated some of those recommended changes and released an updated version of the competencies in 2015 but no new measures have been published. Muller et al., (2018) completed an exploratory study to determine what impact demographics, pre-professional experiences, education, and years in the field have on student affairs professionals' attainment of professional competencies. They surveyed over 1000 student affairs practitioners from a variety of functional areas, racial

backgrounds, institution types, and education levels. This data set was also used by Grabsch et al., (2019) to discuss the professional development needs. While every competency is not addressed here, I do want to unpack some of the key findings from these studies.

Education and Competency Attainment

Muller et al. (2018) found that while those who had completed a doctoral degree measured higher on most competencies, a master's degree was only related to higher attainment on four of the ten competencies. For the student learning and development (SLD) competency those with master's degrees reported higher attainment than those with bachelor's degrees, and those with master's degrees in student affairs or higher education administration scored higher than those with a master's degree in other fields (Muller et al., 2018). However, student learning and development was the only competency that had significantly different competency attainment, meaning that a master's degree in student affairs or higher education administration does not lend itself to better foundational preparation for the field in nine of ten NASPA/ACPA competencies (Muller et al., 2018). While further studies are needed on student affairs competency attainment and measurement, this finding reveals a disturbing disconnect between graduate training programs and work in the field, ultimately rendering student affairs preparatory programs ineffective or outdated, not having updated their curricula to reflect these changes in the field. This is an opportunity for student affairs preparation programs to rethink their learning outcomes and approaches so they can produce graduates more prepared to enter the field.

Technology Attainment

The technology (TECH) competency encompasses the use of technology for the advancement of student learning and development as well as the work performance of student affairs professionals including digital literacy and digital citizenship (ACPA & NASPA, 2015).

Interestingly, Muller et al. (2018) found that attainment of the technology competency had no relationship with years of experience or education level. Gender was the only factor that demonstrated a difference in attainment with those who identified as men scoring slightly higher than those identifying as women (Muller et al., 2018). Student affairs professionals rated technology as one of their lowest areas of attainment and was rated as one of the greatest professional development needs in the field (Grabsch et al., 2019). This competency is more of a technical skills set and relies less on emotional intelligence skills, however upon reading the detailed foundational, intermediate, and advanced outcomes, it is clear that the emotional intelligence skills of flexibility, defined by Bar-On (1997, 2006) as adapting emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to unfamiliar, unpredictable, and dynamic circumstances, and stress tolerance, defined by Bar-On (1997, 2006) as coping with difficult situations and believing that one can manage or influence situations in a positive manner, support a student affairs professional's ability to remain adaptable to new technologies and tolerate the stress of troubleshooting new digital tools.

Social Justice and Inclusion Attainment

When examining the social justice and inclusion (SJI) competency, neither doctoral degree attainment or years of experience were predictive in the attainment of SJI and those who had completed a master's degree actually had lower attainment of SJI (Muller et al., 2018). The only factors that influenced the attainment of this competence were race, disability status, and sexual orientation with participants who identified as a person of color scoring higher than those identifying as White, those identifying as having a disability scoring higher than those who did not report having a disability, and those who identify as being part of the LGBTQ+ community scoring higher than those who reported being heterosexual (Muller et al., 2018). Grabsch et al.

(2019) published an additional study on the same data set and noted that while graduate students, new professional and mid-level professionals ranked their top need for professional development as social justice and inclusion, for senior level student affairs professionals it was not a priority and did not rank in their top five competencies for professional development. While more research is needed on this issue, it seems abundantly clear that the current curriculum in both master's and doctoral programs, as well as the ongoing professional development for professionals working in the field is sorely lacking in preparing professionals to engage in social justice, equity or inclusion work.

Research Problem's Connection to Bar-On's Model of Emotional Intelligence

The purpose of this study was to examine how emotional intelligence impacts the professional competency of student affairs professionals; thus the Bar-On model is most appropriate because it is designed to help identify skills that need guided intervention to improve performance, which aligns well with the study's focus on student affairs professional competencies. A mixed model is more appropriate for this study as ability alone is inadequate to fully understand the social and emotional functioning of an individual as they navigate the pressures of student affairs work. Mixed models incorporate social skills and ability to cope with environmental stressors with self-perception ability and as a result are strongly preferred in corporate and educational settings (Cherniss et al., 2010; Mayer et al., 2008; Mayer et. al., 2000, Miao et al., 2017; O'Connor et al., 2019). Further, the measures mixed-model theorists have created are designed for applied settings unlike ability models (Joseph & Newton, 2010). Bar-On created the first measure of emotional intelligence with the specific aim of using it to improve individuals' performance in academic and professional settings (Bar-On, 1997; Joseph & Newton, 2010; Parker et al., 2004: Petrides et al., 2004; Walter et al., 2011). When Bar-On's

measure of emotional intelligence is compared with Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso's ability-based measure and Goleman's mixed model measure, his assessment performs favorably in predicting occupational outcomes. The average predictive validity coefficient for Bar-On's model to predict work performance is .54, while Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso's measure ranges between .22 and .46 in comparable studies (Brackett & Salovey, 2004; Bar-On, 2006; Joseph & Newton, 2010; Miao et al., 2017; O'Connor et al., 2019). Because the EQ-i seems to be the strongest predictive measure for career outcomes, it is the best fit for my research problem examining the professional competency of student affairs professionals. Further, from a theoretical standpoint, Bar-On's (1997, 2006) strong position that emotional intelligence is a learned skill set that can be practiced and improved is an important underpinning for the study. Framing emotional intelligence as teachable and learnable is essential when comparing it to professional competency which is also by nature, teachable and learnable. Because of Bar-On's commitment to emotional intelligence being a skillset that can be improved quickly through training and practice, as I examine how emotional intelligence influences the professional competency of student affairs practitioners, my hope is that the findings from the study will ultimately help inform the education, training, and professional development in the student affairs field.

The focus of the present study was to understand what, if any, impact emotional intelligence has on the student affairs professional competencies. The language of the ACPA/NASPA competencies and the 15 skill definitions in Bar-On's model overlap frequently. For example, the social justice and inclusion (SJI) competency includes the words "social responsibility" in the description which is one of the skills Bar-On (1997, 2006) includes in the interpersonal realm of emotional intelligence. Exploring the leveled outcomes finds further overlap between the SJI competency and Bar-On's model with empathy, self-awareness and

emotional expression. In Table 1 I have created a cross reference of the language overlaps between Bar-On's model and the ACPA/NASPA competencies. I created this table by carefully combing through each competency description and outcomes for words or phrases directly from Bar-On's realms, skills, or their definitions.

Table 1

Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Skills and ACPA/NASPA Competencies with Shared Language

ACPA/NASPA Competency	**EI Skill(s) with Shared Language**
PPF- Personal & Ethical Foundations	Self- Awareness, Self-Regard, Problem Solving, Interpersonal Relationships
VPH-Values, Philosophies, & History	Social Responsibility
AER- Assessment, Evaluation & Research	---
LPG- Law, Policy, & Governance	---
OHR- Organizational & Human Resources	Emotional Expression, Assertiveness
LEAD- Leadership	Interpersonal Relationships, Emotional Self-Awareness, Emotional Expression, Assertiveness, Self-Regard
SJI- Social Justice & Inclusion	Reality Testing, Emotional Self-Awareness, Empathy, Social Responsibility
SLD- Student Learning & Development	Emotional Self-Awareness, Empathy
TECH- Technology	Problem Solving
A/S- Advising & Supporting	Problem Solving, Empathy, Emotional Expression, Assertiveness

While the results of this study that explore how emotional intelligence skills are related to the competencies are presented and explored in Chapters four and five, the shared language highlighted in Table 1 illustrates their apparent connection. There are certainly emotional intelligence skills that may be related upon data analysis even though they do not have any direct shared language with a competency. For example, the law, policy and governance competence is largely a technical skill and did not share language directly with any of the emotional intelligence skills, however I would assert that a student affairs professional with low impulse control is not likely to be competent at risk management. Table 1 is not intended to be all encompassing of all the potential relationships, but a miniature discourse analysis of the competency document that highlights the shared languages between the competencies and the Bar-On emotional intelligence skills.

Additionally, my study measured professional competency via a self-report Likert rating as that is the only current measure available. Sriram (2014) published the first and only ability measure of student affairs competencies, but the national professional organizations that govern these competencies updated them in 2015 after his scale was published (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). A Likert self-report rating of competencies has been used in the literature and Bar-On's measure matched up well as the EQ-i 2.0 is also a self-reported Likert scale data (Bar-On 1997, 2006; Grabsch et al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). I prefer Bar-On's (1997; 2006) measure as it provided me with data points from each realm score and subscale that allowed me to drill down to identify how specific emotional intelligence skills influence the ten different student affairs competencies. Ability model measures offer only four subscales (Mayer et al. 2000). Finally, from a feasibility standpoint, I am certified to administer and interpret the EQ-i, the EQ-i can be

completed in half the time of the ability measures and is significantly more affordable than ability measures (Multihealth Systems International, 2011).

Conclusion

My study used the Bar-On (1997, 2006) theory of emotional intelligence as the lens for exploring the relationship of emotional intelligence and the professional competency of student affairs practitioners. The Bar-On model was selected because it is the theory of emotional intelligence that both theoretically and operationally aligns with measuring work performance. The theory is embedded in methods of the study through the defining of the variables as well as the instrumentation as I operationalize emotional intelligence by using Bar-On's (1997, 2006) model and assess it with his published measure of emotional intelligence the EQ-i.

Chapter Three

Research Methods

This quantitative study followed a survey research approach to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence skills and the competency of student affairs professionals. The two research questions that guided this study were: (1) What is the relationship between the various emotional intelligence skills of student affairs professionals and their professional competency in the field? and (2) Do the emotional intelligence skills of student affairs professionals predict their professional competency, beyond the influence of their years of experience, education/training, functional area of practice, and professional development?

In this research, emotional intelligence skills were generally defined as the fifteen skills identified on the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi 2.0), the leading measure of emotional intelligence to date. The EQi 2.0 identifies five realms of emotional intelligence with three skills in each area. The realms are self-perception (including the skills of emotional self-awareness, self-regard, and self-actualization), self-expression (including the skills emotional expression, independence, assertiveness), interpersonal skills (including the skills interpersonal relationships, empathy, and social responsibility), decision making (including the skills reality testing, problem solving, and impulse control), and stress management (including the skills flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism) (Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011; Stein et al., 2014). Professional competency of student affairs professionals were conceptualized as the professional's self-rating of proficiency in the ten professional competencies listed in the Joint Statement released by College Student Educators International (ACPA) and Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA) in 2015. The professional competencies outline ten fundamental areas that student affairs professionals should be proficient in to be considered

effective practitioners: advising and helping; assessment, evaluation, and research; equity, diversity, and inclusion; ethical professional practice; history, philosophy, and values; human and organizational resources; law, policy, and governance; leadership; personal foundations; and student learning and development. Within each of these areas are lists of skills, values, and knowledge broken into three levels of proficiency: basic, intermediate, and advanced (ACPA & NASPA, 2010, 2015). Confounding variables that may also influence or moderate professional competency, such as years of experience, education/training, and professional development, were also considered in this study.

Research Design

A quantitative approach was used for this study as quantitative methods are most appropriate for demonstrating relationships between variables. Quantitative research includes survey research and experiments. Experimental research reviews the efficacy of specific treatment on a desired outcome through administering treatment to some participants while withholding treatment from others (Creswell, 2014). Survey research, which was used in this study, quantifies trends, attitudes, or opinions of a sample population through questionnaires with the intent of generalizing the findings from the sample (Creswell, 2014). Quantitative inquiries collect and analyze data through a range of methods including instrument-based questions, performance data, attitude questions, observational data, census data, statistical analysis and interpretation. Quantitative research seeks to establish a replicable relationship between variables and make implications for larger groups that would be cost and time prohibitive to study by examining a representative sample (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019; Fowler, 2009). Utilizing survey research is most appropriate for the present study. There are well established previously published survey instruments for the primary variables of emotional

intelligence and competence of student affairs professionals and survey research allows us to sample participants from a wider range of institution types, demographic backgrounds, and geographic locations.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

The study's participants included student affairs professionals currently employed at a college or university in the United States. Although the EQ-i 2.0 has been tested on "more than 500,000 people from over 45 countries" (Stein & Book, 2006, p. 244), international participants were not included. Although the globalization of higher education in the 2000s has spurred great interest in the American model of student affairs at universities in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, student affairs work varies widely from country to country making it difficult to include international subjects (Ciobanu, 2013; Long, 2012). Further, NASPA and ACPA are U.S. oriented organizations as is their professional competency framework. While the field of student affairs frequently lacks diversity in senior leadership, there is greater diversity at the entry and mid-levels. In 2019, approximately 32.3% of student and academic affairs support staff identified as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019).

The neurological connection between the prefrontal cortex and limbic system is the physical source of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2004). Participants must be over the age of 25, as the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for managing complex emotions and decision-making skills, is not fully developed until the mid-twenties (Ariam et. al., 2013; Dahl, 2003). Participants were required to hold a master's degree and be employed in one of the academic support functional areas of student affairs as defined by ACPA and NASPA (2010; 2015) including: academic advising, disability support services, first-year experience and orientation, or learning assistance/academic support services. The age requirement of 25 and a

required Master's degree did not present any threats to recruitment or sampling as most student affairs positions require a master's degree and as a result, the vast majority of professionals, even those in their first year of experience, are over the age of 25. The decision to exclude other functional areas in student affairs was a methodological choice to ensure that functional area of practice would not be a confounding variable as there is a risk variation in emotional intelligence or professional competence might factor by functional area given the sample size. Participants were recruited via email, professional association list-serves, social media, and other snowball methods. This study included 248 participants, in part due to financial constraints. The EQi 2.0 is a proprietary psychometric assessment owned by Multihealth Systems International and is offered at a research discount of $7 per assessment, about $2,000 for this project.

Instrumentation

The selection of appropriate instruments was guided by the review of literature and feasibility of available instruments. A basic demographic questionnaire was used to obtain information about participants' age, gender, race, education, years of experience, functional area of practice, and professional development opportunities. These demographic questions provided helpful information about the sample population as well as helped determine if there are any moderating influences on these demographics and the primary variables of this research, emotional intelligence and professional competence. Emotional intelligence was measured by Bar-On's (1997, 2006) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i 2.0). Professional competency was measured via a self-report Likert rating as that is the only current measure available. Sriram (2014) published the first and only ability measure of student affairs competencies, but the national professional organizations that govern these competencies updated them in 2015 after his scale was published (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). A Likert self-report rating of competencies has

been used in the literature and Bar-On's measure match up well as the EQ-i 2.0 is also self-reported Likert scale data (Bar-On 1997, 2006; Grabsch et al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018).

EQ-i 2.0

The EQ-i 2.0 consists of 133 brief self-report items measured on a five-point Likert response scale. It takes approximately 20 minutes to complete but there is no imposed time limit. Items are stated in the first person as declarative statements and respondents indicate the degree to which a statement accurately represents their attitudes and behavior. The EQ-i 2.0 employs a five-point Likert scale ranging from one, *very seldom or not true of me*, to five, *very often true of me* (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). The EQ-i 2.0 can be used to assess individuals 18 years of age and older. The assessment provides a total EI score, five composite scale scores, and fifteen subscale scores. These scales and subscales are depicted in Appendix A (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Bar-On (1997, 2006) modeled the EQ-i scoring system from the Weschler intelligence tests. As such, EQ-i 2.0 raw scores are converted into standard scores based on a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Scores are computer generated. The EQ-i 2.0 is a proprietary tool and as such, the items are not included in an appendix for review.

Reliability. The EQ-i 2.0 was normed over a number of years in several countries with responses from over 4,000 participants who are representative of the North America population, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, and education level. The EQ-i 2.0 has strong internal consistency with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .77 to .97, suggesting that subscales of items are measuring single, cohesive constructs (Cronach, 1951; Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Table 2 summarizes the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) values for the EQ-i 2.0.

Table 2

Internal Consistency (Crobach's Alpha) of EQ-i 2.0 Normative Sample (Multihealth Systems International, 2011)

Scale	# of items	EQ-i 2.0 Normative Group										
			Male					Female				
		Total	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Total EI	**118**	**.97**	.97	.97	.97	.97	.97	.97	.97	.98	.97	.98
Self- Perception Composite	**24**	**.93**	.93	.93	.93	.92	.92	.94	.93	.94	.94	.93
Self-Regard	**8**	**.91**	.92	.91	.90	.89	.86	.92	.91	.92	.92	.90
Self-Actualization	**9**	**.88**	.88	.88	.88	.88	.87	.90	.89	.90	.88	.87
Emotional Self-Awareness	**7**	**.81**	.79	.81	.81	.80	.81	.80	.80	.81	.81	.80
Self-Expression Composite	**23**	**.88**	.88	.88	.88	.87	.86	.88	.88	.88	.88	.89
Emotional Expression	**8**	**.84**	.83	.85	.84	.84	.82	.83	.85	.82	.84	.82
Assertiveness	**7**	**.77**	.76	.75	.75	.77	.77	.78	.77	.79	.78	.79
Independence	**8**	**.81**	.82	.79	.80	.75	.75	.81	.82	.80	.81	.82
Interpersonal Composite	**23**	**.92**	.92	.92	.92	.92	.93	.92	.91	.93	..92	.93
Interpersonal Relationships	**7**	**.86**	.87	.89	.87	.86	.87	.86	.86	.88	.86	.87
Empathy	**9**	**.88**	.86	.88	.87	.88	.88	.87	.85	.88	.86	.86
Social Responsibility	**6**	**.80**	.77	.81	.78	.81	.82	.80	.80	.81	.80	.82
Decision Making Composite	**24**	**.88**	.87	.88	.89	.88	.88	.89	.86	.87	.87	.88
Problem Solving	**8**	**.85**	.83	.85	.86	.85	.85	.85	.84	.84	.82	.85

Reality Testing	**9**	**.81**	.80	.80	.79	.80	.84	.79	.80	.83	.81	.81
Impulse Control	**8**	**.77**	.79	.75	.79	.74	.75	.81	.75	.77	.76	.77
Stress Management Composite	**24**	**.92**	.90	.92	.91	.91	.92	.92	.91	.92	.92	.91
Flexibility	**8**	**.80**	.78	.80	.77	.78	.80	.82	.83	.79	.80	.82
Stress Tolerance	**8**	**.87**	.86	.84	.85	.86	.89	.86	.85	.86	.87	.87
Optimism	**8**	**.89**	.88	.90	.88	.89	.88	.89	.89	.90	.89	.89
N		**4000**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**

While there is no universal standard criterion for a minimum acceptable alpha level, typically alpha levels over .90 are considered excellent, .80 to .89 are considered good, and .70-.79 are considered acceptable (Borg & Gall, 2006; John & Benet-Martinez, 2000). Most of the values in Table 2 indicate excellent reliability for the EQ-i 2.0.

In addition to strong internal consistency, the EQ-i 2.0 has strong test-retest reliability. A person's emotional intelligence should not change much in a short time in the absence of any emotional intelligence targeted interventions (Bar-On, 1997;2006; Stein & Book, 2000). The test- retest correlations were high for the EQ-i 2.0 when tested at two to four weeks (r = .92) and eight weeks (r =.81) (Carlson et al., 2014; Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Test-retest correlations for the composite and subscales can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

EQ- 2.0 Test-retest Correlations (Multihealth Systems International, 2011)

Scale	**Test-retest *r***	
	2-4 weeks	**8 weeks**

Total EI	.92	.81
Self- Perception Composite	.90	.80
Self-Regard	.88	.84
Self- Actualization	.88	.74
Emotional Self-Awareness	.82	.72
Self-Expression Composite	.86	.80
Emotional Expression	.81	.74
Assertiveness	.80	.75
Independence	.85	.81
Interpersonal Composite	.91	.76
Interpersonal Relationships	.88	.77
Empathy	.89	.72
Social Responsibility	.86	.77
Decision Making Composite	.88	.83
Problem Solving	.82	.73
Reality Testing	.84	.75
Impulse Control	.78	.81
Stress Management Composite	.90	.78
Flexibility	.85	.70
Stress Tolerance	.85	.76
Optimism	.88	.80

Test-retest correlations for the various composite were high ranging from r = .86 (Self-Expression Composite) to r = .91 (Interpersonal Composite). Individual subscales showed good test-retest reliability ranging from r = .78 (Impulse Control) to r = .89 (Empathy). Overall, the data suggests that the EQ-i 2.0 captures the temporal stability of emotional intelligence.

Validity. The EQ-i is a revision of Bar-On's (1997) original EQ-i further refining the measurement of emotional intelligence. The instrument was developed by testing a pool of over 1,000 items created from a survey of mental health literature and narrowing them based on their conceptual and statistical fit to the fifteen emotional intelligence skill definitions (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). This systematic method of item development established content validity. Multiple factor analyses were conducted to explore and confirm the subscales of the EQ-i 2.0. Additional items were added for validity (e.g. Item 133 "I responded to every item in this inventory openly and honestly") and then items were sequenced in an order that revealed the least intrusive items first to build rapport with respondents while remaining items were randomly scattered through the inventory (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Additional validity scales of Positive Impressions, Negative Impressions, and Inconsistency Index were also added. The EQ-i 2.0 contains fifteen subscales and three validity scales, with six to nine items each for a total of 133 items. The Positive and Negative Impression validity scales are designed to detect an overly positive or negative response style that can occur intentionally or unintentionally (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Positive impressions are sometimes prompted by a lack of insight, an unwillingness to face one's limitations, or various needs such as social conformity, approval, or self-protection (Crowne & Marlow, 1964; Edwards, 1966; Jackson, 1974; Loevinger, 1957). Conversely, negative impressions can be caused by low self-esteem, depression, or various needs such as sympathy, attention or help resolving personal problems (Crowne & Marlow, 1964; Frederiksen, 1965; Humbley & Zumbo, 1996; Jackson, 1974; Loevinger, 1957). The Inconsistency Index measures if respondents rate similar items in opposite ways. Inconsistent responses can be caused by deliberate sabotage, fatigue, inattention, inability to comprehend the directions or items, or a lack of motivation (Edwards, 1966; Humbley &

Zumbo, 1996; Jackson, 1974; Loevinger, 1957). All validity scales of the EQ-i 2.0 showed expected differences between known invalid responses and those of control groups (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Overall, the EQ-i 2.0 is a valid measure of emotional intelligence.

Professional Competency Measure

Professional competency was measured via a self-report Likert rating as that is the only current measure that has been published in tier I journals since the most recent update of the ACPA/NASPA competencies in 2015. Sriram (2014) published the first and only ability measure of student affairs competencies, but they were updated in 2015 after his scale was published (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). A self-report Likert rating was used to measure competency attainment in two recent studies (Grabsch et. al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). These studies used the same survey and I obtained permission to use them from the researchers (D. Grabsch, personal communication, February 2, 2021). The instrument includes a self-reported attainment of the ten ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas. For attainment, a five-point Likert rating scale was used from *no ability* to *exceptional ability*. Each competency was listed and defined using the definitions provided by ACPA/NASPA (see Appendix B and D). A panel of three student affairs professionals and higher education faculty outside of the research team and not in the study population reviewed the instrument to establish face and content validity (Grabsch et. al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). Due to the nature of the self-reported attainment, reliability analysis like internal consistency was not appropriate. A copy of the instrument and permission from the researchers can be found in Appendix D.

Variable Selection

Using a sample of student affairs practitioners from across the United States, this study sought to explore the relationship between the emotional intelligence skills of student affairs

professionals and their professional competencies. In 2010, ACPA and NASPA endorsed a joint publication *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners*. The document identified competencies that define the professional knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking required of student affairs professionals regardless of their functional area or specific role (ACPA & NASPA, 2010). The document was updated in 2015 to include 10 professional competencies for student affairs: personal and ethical foundations; values, philosophy, and history, assessment, evaluation, and research; law, policy, and governance; organizational and human resources; leadership; social justice and inclusion; student learning and development; technology; and advising and supporting (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). These competencies and their definitions are listed in Appendix B. Professional competency was the dependent variable of this study as measured by a self-rating of attainment on each competency, described in detail in the instrumentation section above.

Independent Variable

The Bar-On model of Emotional Intelligence is most appropriate because it is designed to help identify skills that need guided intervention to improve performance, which aligns well with the study's focus on student affairs professional competencies. Bar-On (1997) sought to marry the research of intelligence testing and measurement with emerging emotional intelligence literature. Ultimately, Bar-On (1997, 2006) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to effectively understand and express oneself, understand and relate to others, and cope with life's daily demands. Bar-On's (1997, 2006) model of emotional intelligence is conceptualized through the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), a self-report measure that assesses an individual's emotional intelligence on a variety of skills.

Bar-On operationalized his model through developing a measure of emotional intelligence through what he called the emotional quotient (EQ) (Bar-On, 1988; Stein et al., 2013). The Emotion Quotient measures five realms of emotional intelligence: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision making, and stress management. The self-perception dimension involves the ability to be aware of one's own thoughts and feelings, to understand and accept one's own strengths and limitations, and to persistently pursue meaning and purpose. The self-expression dimension encompasses openly expressing emotions in non-destructive ways and freedom from emotional dependence. The interpersonal dimension includes skills of developing and maintaining connections with others, understanding the feelings of others, and showing concern for the needs of others. The decision-making realm includes the ability to realistically assess problems and find solutions when emotions are involved and avoiding rash behaviors. Finally, the stress management realm focuses on coping with challenges, remaining positive in spite of setbacks, and adapting to unpredictable circumstances. Within these five realms are fifteen emotional intelligence skills: self-regard, self-actualization, emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, assertiveness, independence, interpersonal relationships, empathy, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, impulse control, flexibility, stress tolerance and optimism. Each realm and skill is listed with a brief definition in Appendix A (Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011).

Covariates and Background Variables

In addition to emotional intelligence and professional competency a number of covariates and background variables were included in a demographic questionnaire. The full questionnaire can be viewed in Appendix C. It included questions about participants' race, gender, age, years of professional experience, education, and professional development opportunities. The education

covariate refers to if the participant has a master's degree in student affairs/higher education, a related field (e.g. counseling), or another area. The professional development covariate asked participants on average how many professional development activities (.e.g. conferences, webinars, etc.) they attend in a year. Because COVID-19 may have impacted normal professional development activities, this question is intentionally worded to say "on average" instead of asking about how much professional development the participant has completed in the last year. A complete summary of variables in this study is included in Table 4.

Table 4

Study Variable Definitions

Variable	**Operational Definition**	**Values**	**Variable Type**
Professional Competency: Personal and Ethical Foundations (PEF)	Likert self-rating of attainment for PEF (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Values, Philosophy, and History (VPH)	Likert self-rating of attainment for VPH (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER)	Likert self-rating of attainment for AER (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Law, Policy, and Governance	Likert self-rating of attainment for LPG (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent

(LPG)			
Professional Competency: Organizational and Human Resources (OHR)	Likert self-rating of attainment for OHR (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Leadership (LEAD)	Likert self-rating of attainment for LEAD (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Social Justice and Inclusion (SJI)	Likert self-rating of attainment for SJI (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Student Learning and Development (SLD)	Likert self-rating of attainment for SLD (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Technology (TECH)	Likert self-rating of attainment for TECH (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Professional Competency: Advising and Supporting (A/S)	Likert self-rating of attainment for A/S (Grabsch et.al., 2019)	Ordinal (0-5)	Dependent
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Perception	EQ-i 2.0 Self-Perception score (Bar-On 1997; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011)	Ratio (0- 160)	Independent
Emotional Intelligence: Self-Expression	EQ-i 2.0 Self-Expression score (Bar-On 1997; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011)	Ratio (0- 160)	Independent

Emotional Intelligence: Interpersonal	EQ-i 2.0 Interpersonal score (Bar-On 1997; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011)	Ratio (0- 160)	Independent
Emotional Intelligence: Decision Making	EQ-i 2.0 Decision Making score (Bar-On 1997; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011)	Ratio (0- 160)	Independent
Emotional Intelligence: Stress Management	EQ-i 2.0 Stress Management score (Bar-On 1997; Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011)	Ratio (0- 160)	Independent
Years of Experience	Number of years a participant has been employed as a student affairs professional	Ratio (0- xx)	Covariate
Education	The subject area a participant earned their master's degree in	Nominal (College Student Personnel/Higher Education, Counseling or related field, Other)	Covariate
Professional Development	The average number of professional development activities they attend each year	Ratio (0-xx)	Covariate
Functional Area	The participant's self-reported identification of what area of student affairs academic support they currently work in	Nominal (Learning or Academic Support Services, Academic Advising, First-Year Experience and Orientation Programs, Disability Support Services, none of these)	Background
Race	The participant's self-reported identification of what racial group they belong to	Nominal (Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Indigenous, Multiracial)	Background
Gender	The participant's self-reported identification as man, woman, or other gender.	Nominal (Man, Woman, Nonbinary/Nonconforming, prefer not to respond)	Background
Age	The participant's self-reported age in years	Ratio (0-xx)	Background

Data Collection

Following approval from the Institutional Review Board, participants were recruited via email, list servs, social media, and other snowball methods. I targeted list servs for academic support professionals including ACPA's Commission for Academic Support in Higher Education, NACADA, the Learning Support Consortium, Disability Service Professionals, and the College Student Personnel Talks list. In addition to professional organization emails, I utilized social media to share with personal and professional contacts including linked in, twitter, Facebook, and Facebook groups for higher education, with a concerted effort in reaching out to professionals from a variety of institution types and different regions. Potential participants viewed a brief description of the study, eligibility requirements, the voluntary nature of the study, and assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, they could remove themselves at any time, and were asked to consent prior to accessing the survey. Upon their consent to participate in the study, participants completed a survey consisting of several instruments via Qualtrics and the Multihealth Systems Assessment Portal. Upon agreeing to participate in the study, participants were presented with a brief questionnaire to ensure they met participant requirements and collected information about years of experience, educational background, professional development experiences, and demographic characteristics. Next, respondents provided a self-rating of their attainment of the ten student affairs professional competencies via a 5-point Likert scale ranging from no ability to exceptional ability (Grabsch et. al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). Each NASPA/ACPA competency was listed and defined for participants (see Appendix D). Next, the EQi 2.0 assessment was presented to assess emotional intelligence. While ideally I prefer to administer demographics at the end of a survey, the EQ-i 2.0 must be administered via the Multihealth Systems Assessment

Portal, so I included these demographics and the professional competency measure in a Qualtrics survey which then linked to the EQ-i 2.0.

Data Analysis

Data was extracted from the Multihealth System Assessment Portal and Qualtrics, stored in Excel for manipulation, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was cleaned to remove incorrect or misformatted data and match participant responses from Qualtrics and the Multihealth System Assessment Portal. Nearly 400 participants began the survey, but only 252 participants completed both the Qualtrics form and the EQi assessment. As a result, participants who did not complete the EQi were removed from the study. Of the 252 participants who completed both the Qualtrics and EQi forms, none had missing data instances; however, three participants used a midpoint response style, that is they provided a moderate response to all questions, regardless of what the item stated. These three cases were removed. Data was analyzed first using Pearson correlations to establish the existence, direction, and strength of relationships between variables. A post hoc Bonferroni correction was used to reduce Type I error (Curtin & Schulz, 1998; Field, 2013). Scatter diagrams of residuals, partial plots, and normal probability plots of residuals were constructed to test assumptions. Analysis began with evaluation of assumptions. Normality was determined by inspecting the skewness, kurtosis, mean, median, mode, and histograms of the continuous predictor variables and of the error scores. Each variable was assessed for outliers. One extreme outlier case was deleted. In the deleted case the respondent's answer for the professional development question was far more than three standard deviation units above the average response. That, combined with the fact the participant's responses for the EQi portion of the study flagged the Inconsistency Index caused doubt that the participant was reading and comprehending the

questions, so the case was deleted. This made for a total of four deleted cases and left a remaining 248 participants. For the professional development and years of experience variables the Winsorization technique was used to retain the participants but minimize the influence of outliers on the data. Then, a hierarchical multiple regression was run for each of the professional competencies except Technology. No analysis was conducted on the Technology competency as it had no significant correlation to any of the emotional intelligence realms. In each regression analysis a competency was entered as the dependent variable and independent variables were entered in two blocks with covariates of education, years of experience, and professional development opportunities entered in block one and covariates and the five emotional intelligence realms entered in block two. Each model was assessed for accuracy by examining standardized residuals and Cook's distance. Cases causing undue influence were removed and a second analysis was run to produce a final model.

Ethical Implications

While the risks to participants were minimal and participants were not part of vulnerable populations, two ethical concerns were attended to during this research: informed consent and confidentiality. Every research participant has a right to confidentiality and rigorous standards of data protection were adhered to. In the present study, the primary risk was that participants may be asked to disclose information they consider personal or sensitive in nature. To minimize risk, participants' responses were anonymous. Further, participation is 100% voluntary and participants could opt out of the study at any time. Participants were informed of risks before agreeing to begin the survey.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals in the United States and their professional competencies as defined by the Joint Task Force on Professional Competencies and Standards (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). After reviewing descriptive statistics of the sample, data was first analyzed using Pearson correlations to establish the existence, direction, and strength of relationships between variables. Then, a hierarchical linear regression was run for each of the professional competencies. In each regression analysis a competency was entered as the dependent variable and independent variables were entered in two blocks with covariates of education, years of experience, and professional development opportunities entered in block one and covariates and the five emotional intelligence realms entered in block two.

Each inferential statistic will be introduced, and a general discussion of the results will be presented. However, a more detailed discussion will be included in the subsequent chapter with a discussion of the implication of those results. To begin, the research question will be restated followed by a robust review of the descriptive statistics before beginning the discussion of the inferential results.

This study examined the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between the various emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals and their professional competency in the field? (2) Do the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals predict or moderate their professional competency, beyond the influence of their years of experience, education, and professional development?

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were compiled for all variables on the demographic questionnaire including race, age, gender, educational background, student affairs functional area, years of experience, and professional development opportunities. Next, descriptive statistics were compiled and reported for the independent variables, emotional intelligence realms of self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision making, and stress management, and the dependent variables, the ACPA/NASPA competencies: Personal and Ethical Foundations; Values, Philosophy, and History; Assessment, Evaluation, and Research; Law, Policy, and Governance; Organizational and Human Resources; Leadership; Social Justice and Inclusion; Student Learning Development; Technology; and Advising and Supporting.

Demographic Information

The sample consisted of 248 student affairs practitioners employed full time at a college or university in the United States in an academic support functional area, including academic advising, first-year experience, learning support, and disability services. The demographics of the participants are displayed in Table 5. The overall sample included 56 (22.6%) student affairs practitioners who identified as men, 189 (76.2%) who identified as women, one (0.4%) who identified as gender nonbinary or nonconforming, and one (0.4%) who preferred not to respond. For race, two (0.8%) identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, two (0.8%) identified as Asian, 29 (11.7%) identified as Black or African-American, 202 (81.5%) identified as White, seven (2.8%) identified as more than one race, and six (2.4%) preferred not to respond. Additionally, 18 (7.3%) participants identified as Hispanic or Latinx. The mean age of the 248 participants was 37.8 years (*Mdn*= 36, *SD*= 9.19) with participants ranging in age from 25 to 66 years. The majority of participants were under age 45 with 108 (43.5%) participants age 25-34,

84 (33.9) participants age 35-44, 41 (16.5%) participants age 45-54, and 15 (6.0%) participants age 55 or older.

Educational and Professional Background

Participants were required to have a master's degree or higher to participate in the study but were asked in the demographic questionnaire what academic field their advanced degree was in. 133 (53.6%) participants earned their highest degree in higher education, student affairs, or college student personnel studies. 43 (17.3%) earned their highest degree in counseling or a related field (e.g. social work, clinical psychology, etc.). The 72 (29%) remaining participants earned their highest degree in another academic field, highlighting the educational diversity of the academic support field. Other fields cited included: Adult Education, Agricultural Communication, Anthropology, Business Administration, Chemistry, Communication Studies, Creative Writing, Curriculum and Instruction, Divinity, Educational Psychology, English, Family Consumer Science, Fine Arts, Health Management, History, Instructional and Learning Technologies, Journalism, K-12 Education Leadership, Kinesiology, Law (Juris Doctorate), Library Science, Linguistics, Management, Music, Natural Resource Management, Nonprofit Leadership, Organizational Leadership, Political Science, Public Health, Religion, Sociology, Special Education, Sports Management, Strategic Communications, Teaching, and Urban Studies.

Participants were required to work in an academic support functional area including academic advising, disability services, first-year experience, or learning support. However, jobs in student affairs often have responsibilities that cross into multiple functional areas of practice. As a result, most participants indicated their work include multiple academic support areas or an additional area in addition to an academic support function so, percentages do not add up to

100%. 143 (57.7%) of participants indicated they worked in academic advising, 27 (10.9%) indicated they worked in disability services, 89 (35.9%) indicated they worked in first-year experience, 93 (37.9) indicated they worked in learning support, and 23 (9.3%) indicated they had additional work duties in another functional area. Additional functional areas listed by participants included: Admissions, Advising Technology Systems, Career Services, Counseling Services, Diversity and Inclusion, Dual Enrollment, Financial Aid, Health and Wellness, International Student Services, Library Services, One Stop, Opportunity Programs, Residence Life, Student Retention, Student Success, Success Coaching, Transfer Student Services, TRIO Programs, and Tutoring Services.

The mean years of experience in higher education of the 248 participants was 10.9 years (*Mdn*= 9, *SD*= 7.77) with participants ranging in age from one to 40 years of experience. 78 (31.5%) of participants had five years or less of experience in higher education, 95 (38.3) reported six-14 years of experience, 58 (23.4) reported 15-24 years of experience, and 17 (6.9%) reported 25 years or more of experience in higher education.

The mean number of professional development activities completed per year by the 248 participants was 2.3 activities (*Mdn*= 2, *SD* = 2.96) with participants ranging from zero activities to 40 activities per year. Notably, only one participant reported 40 activities per year and the next highest reported activity level was 12 activities per year. 21 (8.5%) reported participating in no professional development activities, 186 (75.0%) reported engaging in one to three professional development activities each year, 35 (14.1%) indicated they engaged in four to six activities per year, and six (2.4%) participated in seven or more activities.

Table 5

Demographic Frequency and Percentages

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
All Participants	248	100
Gender		
Man	56	22.6
Woman	189	76.2
Nonbinary or Nonconforming	1	.4
Other	1	.4
Prefer not to respond	1	.4
Race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	.8
Asian	2	.8
Black or African-American	29	11.7
White	202	81.5
Multiracial	7	2.8
Prefer not to respond	6	2.4
Hispanic or Latinx		
Yes	18	7.3
No	229	92.3
Prefer not to respond	1	.4
Age		
25-34	108	43.5
35-44	84	33.9
45-54	41	16.5
55 +	15	6.0
Highest Degree Earned		
Higher Ed/Student Affairs/College Student Personnel	133	53.6
Counseling or related field	43	17.3

Other	72	29.0
Functional Area		
Advising	143	57.7
Disability Services	27	10.9
First-Year Experience	89	35.9
Learning Support	93	37.5
Other (in addition to one above)	23	9.3
Years of Experience in Higher Education		
1-5	78	31.5
6-14	95	38.3
15-24	58	23.4
25 +	17	6.9
Professional Development Activities Per Year		
0	21	8.5
1-3	186	75.0
4-6	35	14.1
7+	6	2.4

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables, the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies, were measured via a self-report Likert rating scale used in two recent studies (Grabsch et. al., 2019; Muller et al., 2018). The instrument included a self-reported attainment of the ten ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas. For attainment, a five-point Likert rating scale was used from *no ability* to *exceptional ability*. Each competency was listed and defined using the definitions provided by ACPA/NASPA (see Appendix B and D). A copy of the instrument and permission from the

researchers can be found in Appendix D. Table 6 includes the mean, standard deviation, and range of the rating for each competency.

Personal and Ethical Foundations (PEF) ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with a mean rating of 4.2460 (SD = 67337). Values, Philosophy, and History (VPH) ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with an average rating of 3.5685 (SD= .95831). Assessment, Evaluation and Research (AER) ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with an average of 3.1734 (SD= .99298). Law, Policy, and Governance (LPG) ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with an average score of 3.2218 (SD= 1.01168). Organizational and Human Resource attainment was rated from 1 to 5 with a mean of 3.5685 (SD= .94982). Leadership attainment ratings ranged from 2 to 5 with a mean of 4.0726 (SD= .77589). Social Justice and Inclusion attainment ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with an average of 3.7782 (SD= .82669). Student Learning Development attainment ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with a mean of 4.0282 (SD= .90165). Technology attainment ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with an average rating of 3.8750 (SD=.85159). Advising and Support attainment ratings ranged from 2 to 5 with an average rating of 4.4073 (SD=.70816).

Table 6

Professional Competencies Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	SD	Range
PEF- Personal & Ethical Foundations	248	4.2460	.67337	4.00
VPH-Values, Philosophies, & History	248	3.5685	.95831	4.00
AER- Assessment, Evaluation & Research	248	3.1734	.99298	4.00
LPG- Law, Policy, & Governance	248	3.2218	1.01168	4.00

OHR- Organizational & Human Resources	248	3.5685	.94982	4.00
LEAD- Leadership	248	4.0726	.77589	3.00
SJI- Social Justice & Inclusion	248	3.7782	.82669	4.00
SLD- Student Learning & Development	248	4.0282	.90165	4.00
TECH- Technology	248	3.8750	.85159	4.00
A/S- Advising & Supporting	248	4.4073	.70816	3.00

Competency Attainment by Gender

As shown in Table 7, men and women had some variation in their competency attainment ratings. Women rated themselves higher than men in Personal and Ethical Foundations, Advising and Support, Social Justice and Inclusion, and Technology. Men rated themselves higher than women in Values, Philosophy and History, Assessment, Evaluation and Research, Law, Policy and Governance, Organizational and Human Resources, and Student Learning and Development. Men and women in this sample rated Advising and Support as their highest competency attainment, which is to be expected due to the study's criteria that all participants work in an academic support functional area. However, for women, Personal and Ethical Foundations was also an area of strength, whereas men had no secondary competency elevated significantly (a quarter of a point) above their other competency scores. Both men and women rated their weakest competencies as Assessment and Evaluation and Law, Policy and Governance. Gender nonconforming individuals were not included in this table due to their small sample size.

Table 7

Professional Competencies Descriptives by Gender

		PEF	*VPH*	*AER*	*LPG*	*OHR*	*LEAD*	*SJI*	*SLD*	*TECH*	*A/S*
Woman	mean	4.31	3.56	3.13	3.19	3.56	4.07	3.81	4.02	3.91	4.48
	N	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189
	SD	.645	.958	.937	.987	.936	.789	.833	.948	.797	.673
Man	mean	4.02	3.66	3.30	3.34	3.66	4.05	3.61	4.07	3.71	4.21
	N	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56
	SD	.726	.940	1.17	1.12	.978	.749	.779	.759	1.00	.803

Competency Attainment by Race

As shown in Table 8, across racial groups, Advising and Supporting was the strongest competency attainment, which, again, is to be expected due to the study's criteria that all participants work in an academic support functional area. Men and women had some variation in their competency attainment ratings. For most racial groups, Advising, Evaluation and Research and Law, Policy, and Governance were rated as the weakest competency areas. White participants rated themselves as significantly higher (a quarter of a point) than Black participants in Organizational and Human Resources, Law, Policy, and Governance, and Student Learning and Development. Black, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, and Multiracial participants rated themselves higher than White participants in Social Justice and Inclusion.

Table 8

Professional Competencies Descriptives by Race

		PEF	*VPH*	*AER*	*LPG*	*OHR*	*LEAD*	*SJI*	*SLD*	*TECH*	*A/S*
Amer. Indian	mean	4.00	4.00	3.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	4.50	4.50
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

or Alaska Native	SD	.000	1.41	.707	.707	.000	.000	.707	1.41	.707	.707
Asian	mean	4.50	3.50	2.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	5.00
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	SD	.707	2.12	.000	.000	.000	.000	.707	1.41	.707	.000
Black or African-Amer.	mean	4.21	3.57	3.10	2.97	3.21	4.03	3.90	3.86	3.72	4.45
	N	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
	SD	.978	1.27	1.05	1.09	1.18	.944	1.05	1.16	.751	.736
White	mean	4.25	3.57	3.21	3.24	3.62	4.09	3.73	4.07	3.89	4.40
	N	202	202	202	202	202	202	202	202	202	202
	SD	.631	.907	.986	1.01	.907	.761	.803	.843	.866	.700
Prefer not to respond	mean	4.00	3.33	2.83	3.50	3.83	4.00	3.83	3.33	4.33	3.83
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	SD	.632	1.03	1.47	.548	.983	.632	.753	1.21	.816	.983
Multi-racial	mean	4.43	3.43	3.00	3.43	3.29	3.86	4.14	4.14	3.43	4.71
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	SD	.535	.787	.577	.976	1.11	.899	.378	.899	.787	.488

Summary of ACPA/NASPA Competencies Descriptive Statistics

As shown in Table 6, participants had the highest ratings of attainment for the Advising and Support (M= 4.4073, SD = .70816) and Personal and Ethical Foundations (M= 4.2460, SD= .67337) competencies, although Table 7 revealed that women rated their attainment of personal and ethical foundations much higher than men. Participants' weakest competency attainment ratings were for Assessment, Evaluation and Research (M= 3.1734, SD= .99298) and Law, Policy, and Governance (M=3.2218, SD=1.01168).

Independent Variables

The independent variables, the realms of emotional intelligence, were measured by the EQ-i 2.0. The EQi 2.0 consists of 133 brief self-report items measured on a five-point Likert response scale. The assessment provides a total EI score, five composite scale scores for each of the EI realms, and fifteen subscale scores (three skills per realm). These scales and subscales are depicted in Appendix A (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). EQ-i 2.0 raw scores are converted into standard scores based on a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). When interpreting scores for an individual participant, scores below 90 are considered low, scores below 75 are considered very low, scores above 110 are considered high, and scores above 125 are considered very high. In large samples like the present study, average scores will generally be between 98 and 102, given the standardization of the assessment. Averages for a sample of this size below 95 would be considered low and averages over 105 would be considered high. Scores are computer generated. Means, ranges and standard deviations of the EQi 2.0 total, realm, and skill standard scores can be found in Table 9.

Self-Perception

The self-perception realm standard score ranged from 53 to 126 with an average of 95.9395 (SD= 13.79962). While ranges this wide in a sample of this size are not abnormal, it is notable that the average was below the average of professionals completing the tool worldwide (100). The self-perception realm contains three skills, self-regard, self-actualization, and emotional self-awareness. Self-regard scores ranged from 37 to 126 with a mean of 91.3750 (SD= 16.43292). Self-actualization scores ranged from 52 to 125 with a mean of 97.6411 (SD = 15.75561). Emotional self-awareness scores ranged from 64 to 126 with a mean of 102.5403 (SD =12.71576).

Self-Expression

The self-expression realm standard score ranged from 59 to 129 with a mean of 95.3548 (SD = 14.70283). The self-expression realm contains the skills of emotional expression, assertiveness, and independence. Emotional expression standard scores ranged from 17 to 126 with an average of 100.4476 (SD = 16.08043). Assertiveness scores ranged from 48 to 128 with a mean of 94.6653 (SD = 14.17776). Independence standard scores ranged from 42 to 125 with an average score of 92.7984 (SD = 17.14925).

Interpersonal

The interpersonal realm standard scores ranged from 56 to 128 with a mean of 102.8790 (SD = 12.48876). The interpersonal realm contains the skills of interpersonal relationships, empathy, and social responsibility. Interpersonal relationships standard scores ranged from 51 to 125 with a mean of 98.8710 (SD= 15.69572). Empathy scores ranged from 46 to 124 with an average of 105.5645 (SD= 13.80268). Social responsibility scores ranged from 26 to 124 with a mean of 102.6048 (SD= 12.72335).

Decision Making

The decision making realm standard scores ranged from 48 to 130 with an average of 96.5645 (SD= 14.13053). The decision making realm includes the skills problem solving, reality testing, and impulse control. Problem solving standard scores ranged from 24 to 123 with an average of 92.8871 (SD= 16.05316). Reality testing scores ranged from 48 to 130 with a mean of 98.8105 (SD= 12.95400). Impulse control scores ranged from 40 to 125 with an average of 99.2944 (SD= 14.86178).

Stress Management

The stress management realm standard scores ranged from 50 to 127 with an average score of 91.6573. The stress management realm contains the skills flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. Flexibility scores ranged from 54 to 128 with a mean of 95.1210 (SD= 14.5554). Stress tolerance scores ranged from 40 to 124 with an average of 93.3871 (SD= 14.91200). Optimism standard scores ranged from 0 to 124 with an average of 91.0282 (SD= 17.06938).

Table 9

EQ-i 2.0 Emotional Intelligence Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	SD	Range
Total EI	248	95.6976	13.28728	70.00
Self-Perception	**248**	**95.9395**	**13.79962**	**73.00**
Self-Regard	248	91.3750	16.43292	89.00
Self-Actualization	248	97.6411	15.75561	73.00
Emotional Self-Awareness	248	102.5403	12.71576	62.00
Self-Expression	**248**	**95.3548**	**14.70283**	**70.00**
Emotional Expression	248	100.4476	16.08043	109.00
Assertiveness	248	94.6653	14.17776	80.00
Independence	248	92.7984	17.14925	82.00
Interpersonal	**248**	**102.8790**	**12.48876**	**72.00**
Interpersonal Relationships	248	98.8710	15.69572	74.00
Empathy	248	105.5645	13.80268	78.00
Social Responsibility	248	102.6048	12.72335	98.00
Decision Making	**248**	**96.5645**	**14.13053**	**82.00**
Problem Solving	248	92.8871	16.05316	99.00

Reality Testing	248	98.8105	12.95400	82.00
Impulse Control	248	99.2944	14.86178	85.00
Stress Management	**248**	**91.6573**	**14.64780**	**77.00**
Flexibility	248	95.1210	14.55554	74.00
Stress Tolerance	248	93.3871	14.91200	84.00
Optimism	248	91.0282	17.06938	124.00

Emotional Intelligence Proficiency by Race

As shown in Table 10, across racial groups, the strongest area of emotional intelligence was the Interpersonal realm which includes the skills of interpersonal relationships, empathy, and social responsibility. For most racial groups, the weakest emotional intelligence area was the stress management realm which includes the skills of flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. Notably, Black participants scored higher than all racial groups on the total EI score and in each of the five realms.

Table 10

Emotional Intelligence Descriptives by Race

		Total	*Self-Perception*	*Self-Expression*	*Inter-personal*	*Decision Making*	*Stress Management*
Amer. Indian or Alaska Native	mean	96.5000	102.5000	101.0000	99.5000	95.0000	88.0000
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2
	SD	19.09188	14.84924	18.38478	13.43503	12.72792	22.62742
Asian	mean	90.0000	93.5000	85.0000	102.5000	89.0000	86.5000
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2
	SD	22.62742	19.09188	15.55635	13.43503	22.62742	26.16295
	mean	100.8966	100.8621	99.2759	105.3103	103.5172	95.1379

Black or African-Amer.	N	29	29	29	29	29	29
	SD	11.99805	13.88659	12.80596	10.61032	12.54882	13.92768
White	mean	95.4901	95.5347	95.3663	102.9208	96.0149	91.7822
	N	202	202	202	202	202	202
	SD	13.01864	13.53717	14.80031	12.67165	13.81631	14.30486
Prefer not to respond	mean	88.1667	90.0000	85.3333	93.0000	94.5000	87.1667
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6
	SD	15.41968	15.98750	16.69331	16.62528	16.35543	13.77558
Multi-racial	mean	88.0000	91.1429	88.7143	101.1429	88.0000	80.0000
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7
	SD	17.47379	16.99440	13.93693	9.59911	20.03331	21.53292

Summary of EQi 2.0 Descriptive Statistics

The EQi 2.0 total standard score for participants ranged from 61 to 131 with a mean of 95.6976 (SD= 13.28728), slightly below the national average for working professionals. The strongest overall realm for participants was interpersonal (M= 102.8790, SD = 12.48876). The strongest skills for participants were empathy (M= 105.5645, SD= 13.80268), emotional self-awareness (M= 102.5403, SD = 12.71576), and social responsibility (102.6048, SD= 12.72335). The weakest overall realm for participants was stress management (M= 91.6573, SD 14.64780). The weakest skills for participants were self-regard (M=91.375, SD=13.79962), optimism (M =91.0282, SD = 17.06938), independence (M=92.7984, SD = 17.14925), and problem solving (M= 92.8871, SD= 16.05316). The greatest spread of scores occurred in emotional expression with a range of 109 and optimism with a range of 124.

Social responsibility is commonly a highly rated skill for helping professionals, so it is unsurprising that this skill was highly rated for the present sample. While the published literature

on the impact of COVID-19 on emotional intelligence skills is very limited, there are some interesting trends being reported by Multi-Health Systems International, the EQi proprietor, and emotional intelligence consulting firms. MHS maintains that upon broad analysis of EQi 2.0 scores collected from 2017 to 2022, there are no statistically significant differences in skill areas that would warrant adjusting the norming of the assessment, but that there are some important trends to note, and individuals commonly experience shifts in their scores in response to life stressors and their own efforts for personal development (MHS International, 2022). It is especially notable that this sample's highest rated skills were empathy and emotional self-awareness. MHS consultant Steven Stein reported a slight downward trend in empathy and emotional self-awareness scores for his clients, arguing that in times of crisis, individuals tend to lose focus of their own feelings and the feelings of others as managing the emergency consumes their attention (Stein, 2021). Consistent with our sample's outcomes, optimism was the emotional intelligence skill hardest hit by the pandemic according to Michael Miller of Six Seconds, an Emotional Intelligence think tank. Miller (2021) stated that optimism declined by over five percent in 2020 and he anticipated further decline as burnout set in for employees navigating the impacts of COVID-19. Also consistent with our sample, it was also found that leaders have struggled with self-regard as it was difficult to feel good about one's own strengths and challenges during extreme volatility and with the disconnection of feedback during remote work (Beatty, 2022).

Inferential Statistics

Prior to conducting a hierarchical linear regression analysis for each of the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies, the relevant assumptions of this statistical analysis were tested. Pearson correlations were examined to assess if the assumptions for regression are

met. As seen in Table 11, there were no correlations between independent variables greater than .8, thus the predictors meet the assumption of multicollinearity. Correlations were also examined between ACPA/NASPA competencies and the emotional intelligence realms.

Table 11

Correlation Matrix of Independent Variables and Covariate

	n	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
1.Years of Experience	247	10.8	7.77	—						
2.Prof Dev Activities	247	2.12	1.74	.000	—					
3.Self-Perception	247	95.8	13.7	.147*	.051	—				
4.Self-Expression	247	95.3	14.7	.206**	.033	.701**	—			
5.Interpersonal	247	102.8	12.5	.099	.009	.617**	.526**	—-		
6.Decision Making	247	96.5	14.2	.142*	-.021	.608**	.612**	.375**	—-	
7.Stress Management	247	91.7	14.7	.231**	-.003	.646**	.644**	.536**	.643**	—

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Scatter diagrams of residuals, partial plots, and normal probability plots of residuals were constructed to test assumptions. Analysis began with evaluation of assumptions. Normality was determined by inspecting the skewness, kurtosis, mean, median, mode, and histograms of the continuous predictor variables and of the error scores. Each variable was assessed for outliers. One extreme outlier case was deleted. The respondents answer for the professional development question was far more than three standard deviation units above the average response. That, combined with the participant's response style for the EQi portion of the study caused doubt that the participant was reading and comprehending the questions, so the case was deleted. For the

professional development and years of experience variables the Winsorization technique was used to retain the participants but minimize the influence of outliers on the data.

A hierarchical regression analysis was run for nine of the ACPA/NASPA competencies. No analysis was conducted on the Technology competency as it had no significant correlation to any of the emotional intelligence realms. In all initial analyses, a single ACPA/NASPA competency was used as the dependent variable and the independent variables included the following: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision making, stress management, years of experience, education, and professional development. Two blocks of variables were used in each hierarchical analysis. In the first step, years of experience, education, and professional development were forced into the equation as independent variables. In the second step of the hierarchical model, the five EQi realms were added as well as the covariates of years of experience, education, and professional development. Each model was assessed for accuracy by examining standardized residuals and Cook's distance. Cases causing undue influence were removed and a second analysis was run to produce a final model. Each competency analysis is summarized below.

Personal and Ethical Foundations

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Personal and Ethical Foundations competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 12, in model one, years of experience ($\beta = .314$, $p < .001$, $sr^2 = .099$) contributed significantly to the regression model, [$F(4, 232) = 7.511$, $p < .001$] and accounted for 9.9% of the variation in personal and ethical foundation competency

attainment. In this model professional development (β= .070, p= .260), educational background in counseling (β = .071, p = .273), and educational background in another related field (β = -.043, p = .508) were not significant predictors. In model 2, the self-perception (β= .325, p <.001, sr^2=.037), self-expression (β= -.244, p = .007, sr^2=.023), and interpersonal (β= .168, p = .025, sr^2=.016) emotional intelligence realms accounted for an additional 15.8% of the variation in Personal and Ethical Foundation competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,227) = 10.831, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Self-Perception is an expected significant predictor as ACPA and NASPA describe the Personal and Ethical Foundation competency as reliant upon self-awareness: "Professional development to advanced-level proficiency (of Personal and Ethical Foundations) involves higher order critique and self-awareness, applications to healthy living and professional practice, and modeling, mentoring, and facilitating the same among others" (ACPA/NASPA, 2015, p. 12). Self-perception, self-expression, and interpersonal skills were significant predictors of Personal and Ethical Foundations competency attainment, but self-expression negatively impacted the model. Additionally, Personal and Ethical Foundations was the only competency that self-expression contributed to the predictive model.

Table 12

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Personal and Ethical Foundation Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**T**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.339	.099	< .001
Years of Experience	.314	4.197	< .001	.099			
Professional Development	.070	1.130	.260	.005			
Counseling or related	.071	1.099	.273	.005			

Other academic discipline	-.043	-.663	.508	.002			
Step 2					.534	.257	< .001
Years of Experience	.282	4.842	< .001	.074			
Professional Development	.069	1.220	.224	.005			
Counseling Education	.050	.842	.400	.002			
Other Academic Discipline	-.054	-.913	.362	.003			
Self-Perception	.325	3.504	< .001	.037			
Self-Expression	-.244	-2.735	.007	.023			
Interpersonal	.168	2.250	.025	.016			
Decision Making	.082	1.011	.313	.003			
Stress Management	.087	-.957	.339	.003			

Values, Philosophy, and History

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Values, Philosophy, and History competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 13, in model one, years of experience (β= .344, p <.001, sr^2=.118), educational background in counseling or related field (β= -.197, p = .002, sr^2=.036), and educational background in another academic area (β= -.187, p =.003, sr^2=.032) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 228) = 11.757, p<.001] and accounted for 15.6% of the variation in Values, Philosophy, and History competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .070, p= .260) was not a significant predictor. As evidenced by the negative beta score for the educational background, those who completed counseling or other academic fields were predicted to have lower attainment for the Values, Philosophy, and History

competency that those who completed a student affairs academic program. In model 2, the self-perception (β= .371, p <.001, sr^2=.049) emotional intelligence realm accounted for an additional 6.7% of the variation in Values, Philosophy, and History competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,223) = 8.397, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. While education was not a significant predictor in most competency areas, those with advanced degrees in higher education/college student personnel and counseling fields were more likely to rate themselves as high in Values, Philosophy, and History than those with degrees from other disciplines, suggesting that educational training in higher education can serve to give professionals a connection to the values and history of the student affairs profession.

Table 13

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Values, Philosophy, and History Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.414	.156	< .001
Years of Experience	.344	5.687	< .001	.118			
Professional Development	.051	.837	.404	.003			
Counseling or related	-.197	-3.126	.002	.036			
Other academic discipline	-.187	-2.975	.003	.032			
Step 2					.503	.223	< .001
Years of Experience	.330	5.539	< .001	.103			
Professional Development	.049	.842	.401	.003			
Counseling Education	-.231	-3.749	<.001	.047			
Other Academic Discipline	-.189	-3.107	.002	.032			
Self-Perception	.371	3.829	< .001	.049			
Self-Expression	-.157	-1.707	.089	.009			

Interpersonal	.068	.870	.385	.003
Decision Making	-.058	-.715	.475	.002
Stress Management	-.023	-.252	.801	.0002

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 14, in model one, years of experience (β= .285, p <.001, sr^2=.081) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 228) = 5.6968, p<.001] and accounted for 7.9% of the variation in Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .089, p= .161), counseling education (β= -.084, p= .206), and other educational field (β= .023, p= .732) were not significant predictors. In model 2, the decision making (β= .191, p = .031, sr^2=.018) emotional intelligence realm accounted for an additional 2.1% of the variation in Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,223) = 3.814, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Interestingly, decision making and stress management were significant predictors of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency attainment, but stress management negatively impacted the model, meaning that those with higher stress management scores were less likely to be proficient.

Table 14

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.308	.079	< .001
Years of Experience	.285	4.506	< .001	.081			
Professional Development	.089	1.405	.161	.008			
Counseling or related	-.084	-1.269	.206	.006			
Other academic discipline	.023	.343	.732	.0004			
Step 2					.365	.098	< .001
Years of Experience	.274	4.208	< .001	.068			
Professional Development	.086	1.360	.175	.007			
Counseling Education	-.108	-1.634	.104	.010			
Other Academic Discipline	.020	.299	.765	.0004			
Self-Perception	.133	1.089	.277	.005			
Self-Expression	-.025	-.249	.804	.0002			
Interpersonal	.007	.086	.932	.00003			
Decision Making	.191	2.165	.031	.018			
Stress Management	-.115	-1.179	.240	.005			

Law, Policy, and Governance

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Law, Policy, and Governance competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 15, in model one, years of experience (β= .299, p <.001, sr^2=.089) and educational background in another academic discipline (β= -.140, p= .034,

sr^2=.018) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 227) = 7.003, p<.001] and accounted for 9.4% of the variation in Law, Policy, and Governance competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .035, p= .577) and counseling education (β= -.050, p= .446) were not significant predictors. As evidenced by the negative beta score for the educational background, those who have an education background in other academic fields were predicted to have lower attainment for the Law, Policy, and Governance competency than those who completed a student affairs academic program or have a degree in counseling or a related field. In model 2, the decision making (β= .184, p = .037, sr^2=.016) emotional intelligence realm accounted for an additional 5.1% of the variation in Law, Policy, and Governance competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,222) = 5.341, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Education was a significant predictor with those who have advanced degrees in higher education or counseling and related fields were more likely to rate themselves as proficient in understanding issues of compliance, policy formation, and the impact of governance structures on the profession than those with educational backgrounds in other fields. As expected, decision making skills contributed significantly to the model as they are essential to risk management, a central component of the Law, Policy, and Governance competency.

Table 15

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Law, Policy, and Governance Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.331	.094	< .001
Years of Experience	.299	4.763	< .001	.089			

Professional Development	.035	.559	.577	.001			
Counseling or related	-.050	-.764	.446	.002			
Other academic discipline	-.140	-2.134	.034	.018			
Step 2					.422	.145	< .001
Years of Experience	.257	4.095	< .001	.062			
Professional Development	.043	.702	.483	.003			
Counseling Education	-.048	-.738	.461	.002			
Other Academic Discipline	-.155	-2.411	.017	.022			
Self-Perception	.029	.286	.775	.0002			
Self-Expression	-.031	-.320	.749	.0003			
Interpersonal	-.124	-1.476	.141	.008			
Decision Making	.184	2.095	.037	.016			
Stress Management	.160	1.615	.108	.009			

Organizational and Human Resources

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Organizational and Human Resources competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 16, in model one, years of experience (β= .374, p <.001, sr^2=.139) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 226) = 9.796, p<.001] and accounted for 13.3% of the variation in Organizational and Human Resources competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .087, p= .160), counseling education (β= -.020, p= .752) and education in another academic discipline (β= .020, p= .756) were not significant predictors. In model 2, while none of the emotional intelligence realms were

significant predictors the overall model accounted for an additional 3.4% of the variation in Law, Policy, and Governance competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,221) = 6.128, p < .001]. Organizational and Human Resources was the only competency in which the only significant predictor was years of professional experience and no emotional intelligence skills contributed to the predictive model.

Table 16

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Organizational and Human Resources Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**T**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.384	.133	< .001
Years of Experience	.374	6.075	< .001	.139			
Professional Development	.087	1.408	.160	.007			
Counseling or related	-.020	-.316	.752	.0004			
Other academic discipline	.020	.311	.756	.0004			
Step 2					.447	.167	< .001
Years of Experience	.350	5.622	< .001	.114			
Professional Development	.081	1.337	.183	.006			
Counseling Education	-.047	-.733	.464	.002			
Other Academic Discipline	.010	.155	.877	.00008			
Self-Perception	.187	1.836	.068	.012			
Self-Expression	.130	1.401	.162	.007			
Interpersonal	-.015	-.188	.851	.0001			
Decision Making	.029	.337	.736	.0004			
Stress Management	-.127	-1.354	.177	.007			

Leadership

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Leadership competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 17, in model one, years of experience (β= .244, p <.001, sr^2=.059) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 227) = 3.666, p=.006] and accounted for 4.4% of the variation in Leadership competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .019, p= .766), counseling education (β= -.044, p= .519) and education in another academic discipline (β= -.005, p= .942) were not significant predictors. In model 2, self-perception (β= .243, p = .011, sr^2=.022) and decision making (β= .242, p =.007, sr^2=.025) contributed significantly to the regression model and accounted for an additional 19.0% of the variation in Leadership competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (9,222) = 8.829, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. It is unsurprising that self-perception realm was the only realm of emotional intelligence that was a significant predictor of this competency as the self-expression realm skills of assertiveness, and emotional expression seem closely tied to the competency definition as outlined by ACPA/NASPA. Interestingly, decision making was the only other emotion intelligence realm that was a significant predictor of Leadership Attainment, despite the language of the ACPA/NASPA definition highlighting self-expression and stress management skills.

Table 17

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Leadership Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**T**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**

Step 1					.246	.044	.006
Years of Experience	.244	3.791	< .001	.059			
Professional Development	.019	.299	.766	.036			
Counseling or related	-.044	-.647	.519	.002			
Other academic discipline	-.005	-.073	.942	.00003			
Step 2					.513	.234	< .001
Years of Experience	.178	2.995	.003	.029			
Professional Development	.016	.280	.780	.0002			
Counseling Education	-.088	-1.434	.153	.007			
Other Academic Discipline	-.022	-.358	.721	.0004			
Self-Perception	.243	2.554	.011	.022			
Self-Expression	.049	.560	.576	.001			
Interpersonal	.082	1.037	.301	.004			
Decision Making	.222	2.724	.007	.025			
Stress Management	-.064	-.698	.486	.002			

Social Justice and Inclusion

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Social Justice and Inclusion competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 18, in model one, the regression model [F (4, 229) = .753, p=.557 was not significant. In model 2, interpersonal (β= .320, p <.001, sr^2=.056) contributed significantly to the regression model and accounted for 10.1% of the variation in Social Justice and Inclusion competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (9,224) = 3.923, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Interestingly, Social Justice and Inclusion was

the only model where years of experience was not a significant predictor of competency attainment and where only one variable in the whole model was significant. The significance level in Model 2 was p<.001, suggesting that interpersonal skills of empathy, interpersonal relationships and social responsibility are very strong predators of the Social Justice and Inclusion competency.

Table 18

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Social Justice and Inclusion Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.114	-.004	.557
Years of Experience	.099	1.510	.132	.009			
Professional Development	-.011	-.162	.871	.0001			
Counseling or related	-.031	-.455	.650	.0009			
Other academic discipline	-.056	-.815	.416	.003			
Step 2					.369	.101	< .001
Years of Experience	.080	1.240	.216	.006			
Professional Development	-.009	-.142	.887	.00008			
Counseling Education	-.063	-.961	.338	.004			
Other Academic Discipline	-.049	-.743	.458	.002			
Self-Perception	.018	.168	.867	.0001			
Self-Expression	.012	.123	.902	.00006			
Interpersonal	.320	3.794	<.001	.056			
Decision Making	.153	1.709	.089	.011			
Stress Management	-.126	-1.249	.213	.006			

Student Learning and Development

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Student Learning and Development competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 19, in model one, years of experience (β= .219, p <.001, sr^2=.048), counseling education (β= -.225, p <.001, sr^2=.047), and educational background in another academic discipline (β= -.192, p= .004, sr^2=.034) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 228) = 7.178, p<.001] and accounted for 9.6% of the variation in Student Learning and Development competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= .076, p= .227) was not a significant predictor. As evidenced by the negative beta score for the educational background, those who have an education background in counselor education or other academic fields were predicted to have lower attainment for the Student Learning and Development competency than those who completed a student affairs academic program. In model 2, the self-perception (β= .411, p <.001, sr^2=.059) and interpersonal (β= .166, p =.029, sr^2=.015) emotional intelligence realms accounted for an additional 17.0% of the variation in Student Learning and Development competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,223) = 10.352, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Interestingly, educational background was a significant predictor of competency in Student Learning and Development, and one of only two competencies where educational background in higher education was a predictor whereas education was not significant for those with degrees in counseling and related fields or other academic fields.

Table 19

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Student Learning and Development Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.334	.096	< .001
Years of Experience	.219	3.489	<.001	.048			
Professional Development	.076	1.210	.227	.006			
Counseling or related	-.225	-3.454	<.001	.047			
Other academic discipline	-.192	-2.946	.004	.034			
Step 2					.543	.266	< .001
Years of Experience	.182	3.108	.002	.031			
Professional Development	.060	1.060	.290	.004			
Counseling Education	-.261	-4.380	<.001	.061			
Other Academic Discipline	-.186	-3.136	.002	.031			
Self-Perception	.411	4.319	<.001	.059			
Self-Expression	-.051	-.563	.574	.001			
Interpersonal	.166	2.193	.029	.015			
Decision Making	-.021	-.257	.798	.0002			
Stress Management	-.091	-1.006	.316	.003			

Advising and Supporting

A hierarchical linear regression was calculated to predict Advising and Supporting competency attainment based on years of experience in higher education, professional development, educational background in counseling or related field (vs. student affairs), educational background in other academic areas (vs. student affairs,) and the five emotional intelligence realms. As seen in Table 20, in model one, years of experience (β= .227, p <.001, sr^2=.051) and educational background in another academic discipline (β= -.248, p<.001,

sr^2=.056) contributed significantly to the regression model, [F (4, 227) = 7.624, p<.001] and accounted for 10.3% of the variation in Advising and Supporting competency attainment. In this model professional development (β= -.059, p= .342) and counseling education (β= -.007, p = .918) were not significant predictors. As evidenced by the negative beta score for the educational background, those who have an education background in other academic fields were predicted to have lower attainment for the Advising and Supporting competency than those who completed a student affairs or counseling or related fields educational program. In model 2, the self-perception (β= .267, p =.008, sr^2=.025) and stress management (β= -.209, p =.030, sr^2=.017) emotional intelligence realms accounted for an additional 8.0 % of the variation in Advising and Supporting competency attainment and this change in R^2 was significant, [F (5,222) = 6.756, p < .001]. All other predictors were not significant. Interestingly, educational background was a significant predictor of competency in Advising and Supporting with those who had educational backgrounds in higher education or counseling and related fields being more proficient than those with degrees in other areas. Additionally, self-perception and stress management were significant predictors of Advising and Supporting competency attainment, but stress management negatively impacted the model, meaning that those with higher stress management scores were less likely to be proficient.

Table 20

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables predicting Advising and Supporting Competency Attainment

Variable	**β**	**t**	**p**	**sr^2**	**R**	**R^2**	**p**
Step 1					.344	.103	< .001
Years of Experience	.227	3.631	<.001	.051			

Professional Development	-.059	-.952	.342	.003			
Counseling or related	-.007	-.103	.918	.00004			
Other academic discipline	-.248	-3.801	<.001	.056			
Step 2					.464	.183	< .001
Years of Experience	.225	3.649	<.001	.047			
Professional Development	-.065	-1.090	.277	.004			
Counseling Education	-.049	-.781	.436	.002			
Other Academic Discipline	-.250	-3.967	<.001	.068			
Self-Perception	.267	2.671	.008	.025			
Self-Expression	-.003	-.032	.974	.00001			
Interpersonal	.159	1.947	.053	.013			
Decision Making	.076	.888	.375	.003			
Stress Management	-.209	-2.182	.030	.017			

Summary

Overall, these results suggest that emotional intelligence predicts or moderates all the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies except for Organizational and Human Resources. Table 21 includes a summary of what variables were significant for each competency. Self-perception was a significant predictor of Personal and Ethical Foundations; Values, Philosophy and History; Leadership; Student Learning and Development; and Advising and Supporting. Self-expression was a significant predictor for Personal and Ethical Foundations. The Interpersonal realm was a significant predictor of Personal and Ethical Foundations; Social Justice and Inclusion; and Student Learning and Development. Decision Making was a significant predictor of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research; Law, Policy, and Governance; and Leadership. Stress Management was a significant predictor of Assessment, Evaluation and

Research; and Advising and Support. Interestingly, stress management was the only realm with a negative relationship to the competencies it predicted, meaning that the better the participants' stress management skills were, the less likely they were to be proficient at Assessment, Evaluation, and Research and Advising and Supporting. Years of experience was found to be a significant predictor in all competency areas except Social Justice and Inclusion, which only was predicted or moderated by the interpersonal emotional intelligence realm and no other variable. Professional development was not a significant predictor for any of the ACPA/NASPA competencies. Educational training was a significant predictor in Values, Philosophy and History; Law, Policy, and Governance; Student Learning and Development; and Advising and Supporting, suggesting that specific education in college student personnel or counseling had no impact on most professional competencies. A detailed discussion of these results will be explored in the next chapter.

Table 21

Summary of Significant Predictor Variables for Each NASPA/ACPA Professional Competency

	Model 1				Model 2								
	Years Exp	Pro Dev	CRF edu	Oth edu	Year Exp	Pro Dev	CRF edu	Oth edu	SP	SE	Int	DM	SM
PEF	x				x				x	X (-)	x		
VPH	x		x	x	x		x	x	x				
AER	x				x							x	x(-)
LPG	x			x	x			x				x	
OHR	x				x								
Lead	x				x				x			x	
SJI											x		
SLD	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x		

AS	x			x	x			x	x				x(-)

Chapter Five

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals in the United States and their professional competencies as defined by the Joint Task Force on Professional Competencies and Standards (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). In this research, emotional intelligence skills were defined as the fifteen skills identified on the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi 2.0), the leading measure of emotional intelligence to date. The EQi 2.0 identifies five realms of emotional intelligence with three skills in each area. The realms are self-perception (including the skills of emotional self-awareness, self-regard, and self-actualization), self-expression (including the skills emotional expression, independence, assertiveness), interpersonal skills (including the skills interpersonal relationships, empathy, and social responsibility), decision making (including the skills reality testing, problem solving, and impulse control), and stress management (including the skills flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism) (Multihealth Systems Assessments, 2011; Stein et al., 2014). Professional competency of student affairs professionals was conceptualized as the professional's self-rating of proficiency in the ten professional competencies listed in the Joint Statement released by College Student Educators International (ACPA) and Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA) in 2015. The professional competencies outline ten fundamental areas that student affairs professionals should be proficient in to be considered effective practitioners: advising and helping; assessment, evaluation, and research; equity, diversity, and inclusion; ethical professional practice; history, philosophy, and values; human and organizational resources; law, policy, and governance; leadership; personal foundations; and student learning and development (ACPA & NASPA, 2010, 2015). Confounding variables that

may also influence or moderate professional competency, such as years of experience, educational background, and professional development engagement, were also considered.

This study examined the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between the various emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals and their professional competency in the field? (2) Do the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals predict or moderate their professional competency, beyond the influence of their years of experience, education, and professional development? Overall, the findings suggest that some aspect of emotional intelligence predicts or moderates all the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies except for Law, Policy, and Governance, and Organizational and Human Resources. Years of experience was found to be a significant predictor in all competency areas except Social Justice and Inclusion. Professional development was only significant for one competency and educational training was a significant predictor in Values, Philosophy and History; Law, Policy, and Governance; Student Learning and Development; and Advising and Supporting, suggesting that specific education in college student personnel or counseling had no impact on most professional competencies. This chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of these findings, provide implications for policy and practice, as well discuss limitations and areas for further study.

Discussion of Findings

Several notable findings emerged from the results of this study. Overall, EQi 2.0 scores were low for the sample, indicating professional stress and burnout risk. Also of note were the differences between Black and White participants in both emotional intelligence scores and competency self-ratings. Self-Perception was found to be a critical emotional intelligence skill for competent student affairs professionals. While years of experience was significant for nearly

all ACPA/NASPA competencies, education had limited influence on competency attainment and professional development was not significant in any model. The Social Justice and Inclusion competency had a unique predictive model, suggesting it is the only competency not impacted by experience or education level but is only influenced by emotional intelligence. Each of these items is discussed in detail below.

Burnout Risk Looming

Bar-On (1997, 2006) modeled the EQ-i scoring system from the Weschler intelligence tests. As such, EQ-i 2.0 raw scores are converted into standard scores based on a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). The sample scored below 100 on all realms of emotional intelligence except for the interpersonal realm where the average score was 102.9. Stress management scores were particularly low with an average score of 91.7 (typically for large samples averages are very close to 100). While the published literature on the impact of COVID-19 on emotional intelligence skills is very limited, Multihealth Systems International (2022) maintains that there are no statistically significant differences in skill areas that would warrant adjusting the norming of the assessment due to COVID-19, but that individuals commonly experience shifts in their scores in response to life stressors and their own efforts for personal development. Thus, it is reasonable to assert that the stressors student affairs professionals have faced in the last several years (the COVID-19 pandemic, the pivot between virtual and in-person learning, the racial reckoning during the summer of 2020, tensions after the 2020 presidential elections, increasing political scrutiny of education policies and practices in state legislatures, etc.) have resulted in limited capacity of emotional intelligence. Consistent with our sample's outcomes, optimism was the emotional intelligence skill hardest hit by the pandemic according to Michael Miller of Six Seconds, an

Emotional Intelligence think tank. Miller (2021) stated that optimism declined by over five percent in 2020 and he anticipated further decline as burnout set in for employees navigating the impacts of COVID-19. Also consistent with our sample, it was found that leaders have struggled with self-regard as it was difficult to feel good about one's own strengths and challenges during extreme volatility and with the disconnection of feedback during remote work (Beatty, 2022).

Our findings of difficulty with stress management are consistent with a recent NASPA report that found 84% of student affairs professionals experience a level of stress and crisis management responsiveness that may lead to burnout (NASPA, 2022). The Compass Report: Charting the Future of Student Affairs is based on an 18-month project to identify issues and trends that could affect the higher education industry in the years ahead. In addition to high levels of stress, the report suggested that 88% of respondents felt they were not compensated adequately for their work, 81% felt undervalued and unappreciated by their institutions, and nearly all respondents believed their responsibilities will increase in the near future (NASPA, 2022).

As in many helping professions currently, there is a burnout crisis looming and retaining effective, experienced professionals is essential to the success of the field. Maslach and Jackson (1986) characterize burnout by three symptoms: (1) Emotional Exhaustion, conceived as the feeling of being physically and emotionally overextended or depleted; (2) Depersonalization, defined as cynicism and a negative or detached attitude towards others; and (3) reduced Personal Accomplishment, a decline in feelings of competence or loss of self-confidence. It is well documented that emotional intelligence skills are a protective factor against burnout. High rates of emotional intelligence proved to be a protective factor against burnout among experienced physicians, entry level physicians, and nurses (Khesroh et. al., 2022; Nastasa & Farcas, 2015).

Emotional intelligence was found to have a strong negative association with burnout among K-12 teachers (meaning burnout levels decrease as emotional intelligence increases) regardless of their location and years of teaching experience, (Fiorilli et. al., 2019; Kant & Shanker, 2021). Emotional intelligence has been found to predict job burnout regardless of occupation and in both entry level employees, mid managers, and executives (Gong, Chen, & Wang, 2019). Employees with high emotional intelligence can harness emotional information in effective ways to solve daily problems and offset work frustrations because emotional intelligence buffers the effects of negative emotions in those experiencing burnout (Nastasa & Farcas, 2015). While emotional intelligence has been shown to be a protective factor of burnout, more research is needed to establish a clear correlation or link between Maslach and Jackson's (1986) three factors of burnout- Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and reduced Personal Accomplishment- and specific emotional intelligence skills or realms. For example, the emotional intelligence skills of Optimism and Self-regard seem to align with Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment respectively, this is not well established in the literature.

When interpreting EQi scores for an individual, it is important not only to note what areas they are strong or weak in, but also what areas may need balancing (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). Balance is taken into consideration as it often impacts the way others perceive us. For example, someone who scored 124 on assertiveness and a 104 on empathy may come across as uncaring when communicating assertively. While both scores are above average, the 20 point spread between them indicates that the individual may need to work on improving empathy to balance these skills so their assertive communication is more empathetic. Scales are considered to be "out of balance" if they differ by more than 10 points (Multihealth Systems International, 2011). It is notable that the group average for the interpersonal realm was more

than 10 points higher than the stress management realm average. Typically, group averages do not have realms that are unbalanced in this way as scores regress to the mean in large samples. This unusual gap between averages in the stress management and interpersonal realms gives the impression that student affairs professionals, while they have strong interpersonal skills, may have difficulty leveraging relationships as a means of social support during times of stress.

Need for Self-Perception

Self-perception, one of the five realms of emotional intelligence, involves the ability to be aware of one's own thoughts and feelings, to understand and accept one's own strengths and limitations, and to persistently pursue meaning and purpose (Bar-On, 1997, 2006). The self-perception realm was the emotional intelligence skill set that was a significant predictor of attainment for half of the ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas including: Personal and Ethical Foundations; Values, Philosophy and History; Leadership; Student Learning and Development; and Advising and Supporting. The results of this study suggest that self-perception skills are critical to being a competent student affairs professional and must be a focus of student affairs preparatory programs, professional development, and supervision.

For the specific skills in the self-perception realm respondents averaged a score of 102.5 for emotional self-awareness, a 97.6 for self-actualization, and a 91.4 for self-regard. Individuals with lower self-regard have decreased performance and resist taking on greater challenges at work due to feeling uncertain about their own abilities (Gupta & Kumar, 2010; Multihealth Systems, 2011; Stein et. al., 2013). Lower self-regard often leads individuals to underestimate their own capabilities, having feelings of inadequacy, and an inability to forgive themselves for weaknesses or mistakes (Stein et. al., 2013). Low self-regard scores in the present sample may be explained by the state of stress in the profession over the last two years of COVID-19 and

other challenges, as studies indicate leaders have struggled with self-regard as it was difficult to feel good about one's own strengths and challenges during extreme volatility and with the disconnection of feedback during remote work (Beatty, 2022). As noted above, scales are considered to be "out of balance" if they differ by more than 10 points and averages in a sample size as large as this one are rarely more than 10 points apart (Bar-on, 2006; Multihealth Systems International, 2011; Stein et. al., 2013). In this sample, self-regard scores are significantly lower than emotional self-awareness, giving the impression that while the student affairs professionals who participated in this study were able to clearly understand their emotions, they have a difficult time accepting these emotions and seeing their strengths and weaknesses in a balanced way. Healthcare professionals often have a similar profile with low self-regard scores in comparison to their self-awareness and self-actualization, often causing healthcare workers to be overly self-critical and more vulnerable to burnout (Khesroh et. al., 2022; Natasa & Farcas, 2015). This out of balance skill set will most certainly contribute to more rapid burnout among student affairs professionals.

Undervaluing of Self-Expression and Stress Management in Student Affairs

Of the five realms of emotional intelligence, self-perception (described above), interpersonal, and decision making skills all contributed to professional competency. The interpersonal realm of emotional intelligence involves the ability to develop and maintain mutually satisfying relationships, recognizing and appreciating how other people feel, and having social consciousness and concern for the greater community (Bar-On, 1997, 2006). The decision-making realm involves the ability to understand how emotions impact decision making, recognizing when emotions or personal bias keeps you from being objective, and avoiding rash decisions (Bar-On, 1997, 2006). The interpersonal realm was a significant predictor of

competency attainment for personal and ethical foundations, social justice and inclusion, and student learning and developments while the decision-making realm was significant for leadership, assessment, evaluation and research, and law, policy and governance competency attainment. While these realms had less impact than self-perception, they should remain a focus for student affairs practitioners who want to improve in these competency areas.

While the self-expression and stress management realms were only significant for one or two competency areas respectively, they had negative Beta values, suggesting that having a higher score in this emotional intelligence realm lowered competency attainment. Self-expression involves the ability to openly express one's feelings, communicating and defending one's personal rights and values in a non-destructive manner, and being free from emotional dependency on others (Bar-On, 1997, 2006). Self-expression was only significant in the model for personal and ethical foundations competency which is focused on the ability to articulate one's personal convictions and code of ethics and align these values to their professional actions (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). Stress management involves the ability to adapt in unpredictable circumstances, coping with difficult and stressful situations, remaining hopeful despite setbacks (Bar-On, 1997, 2006). Stress management was significant for the advising and supporting competency, which is focused on establishing rapport with students, appropriately challenging and supporting students, and implementing crisis management and intervention responses (ACPA/NASPA, 2015).

It is counterintuitive that self-expression, which emphasizes assertive and open communication skills, would negatively impact a competency that centers around identifying and communicating ethical values. It is equally counterintuitive that stress management, which emphasizes flexibility, coping with difficult emotional situations, and remaining positive in spite

of challenges, would negatively impact a competency centered around connecting well with students and advising students and organizations in difficult and emotionally charged situations. While further research of these findings is needed, the timing of the survey and the political nature of the field may explain these surprising results. The survey was administered in January and February of 2022 with student affairs professionals coming through a two year stretch of dealing with COVID-19 related stress as well as traumatizing social and political events such as the racial unrest following the murder of George Floyd, months of election denial following the 2020 presidential election, and the attack on democracy on January 6, 2021. These events likely impacted the sample's stress management and self-expression scores on the EQ-i. Furthermore, the political nature of student affairs may create a professional environment where self-expression and stress management skills are not valued. Dr. Kyle Ashlee described higher education as having a dehumanizing culture in his 2019 essay *The Student Affairs State of Affairs*. Ashlee (2019) stated:

> The current season of change sweeping through college campuses seems to be concerned, above all, with profit, efficiency, and accountability. A focus on the bottom line often takes priority over caring for people. While this is a false dichotomy, Student Affairs professionals often feel forced to compromise on what is best for students in the name of what is best for the budget. As a result, higher education has become a stressful, frantic, and toxic place to work.

Toxic work environment in student affairs seems to be a pervasive concern. One study found that while burnout is often cited as the primary reason student affairs practitioners leave the field, workplace bullying is likely the cause (Yoder, 2019). Unrealistic and unsustainable expectations are often accepted as norms by scholars and practitioners alike and they tend to tout self-care as a

coping strategy rather than examining the system itself (Prisloe, 2022). Moreover, many feel frustrated that leaders seem to have a selective amnesia about the trauma of the pandemic and recent socio-political unrest (McClure, 2021). This challenging landscape of student affairs may be creating environments where the skills of self-expression and stress management are not valued and as a result were not significant in many professional competency areas and when they were significant, they negatively impacted competency attainment.

Ineffective Educational Training and Professional Development

Educational background and professional development were included as covariates in the predictive model of this study as it seemed intuitive that student affairs professionals who had greater opportunities for professional development or specific educational training in higher education, college student personnel, or the closely related field of counseling, would likely be more competent in the field than their counterparts whose educational training was in another academic area or who had less access to professional development. However, educational background was only a significant predictor of competency in 4 areas: Values, Philosophy, and History; Law, Policy, and Governance; Student Learning and Development; and Advising and Supporting. Professional Development was not a significant predictor for any of the NASPA/ACPA competencies.

Student affairs graduate preparation programs are clearly in need of greater alignment with the professional expectations of the field. Muller, Grabsch, and Moore (2018) did a large survey of over 1,000 student affairs professionals and concluded that a master's degree had very limited impact on competency attainment and that participants with a master's degree in college student personnel actually had lower attainment in the Social Justice and Inclusion competency area. One explanation for this, provided in the recent *Compass Report*, may be the professional

demands of student affairs practitioners are changing rapidly and graduate programs cannot keep up with the changing demands of the profession, specifically the trend of student affairs professionals having increasing responsibilities in multiple areas requiring a highly qualified generalist (NASPA, 2022). In earlier studies of the competencies researchers hypothesized that the limited impact of competency attainment was related to the competencies being new or recently changed and more time being needed for graduate programs to align with these competencies, however, the present study was conducted nearly seven years since the latest competency update, and the results still indicate that master's training has no impact on most professional competencies (Grabsch, et. al., 2019; Muller et. al., 2018; Sriram, 2014).

While prior studies on the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies included questions asking student affairs practitioners to rank the areas they felt professional development was most needed, no published study has explored exposure to ongoing professional development as a predictor of competency (Grabsch, et. al., 2019; Muller et. al., 2018; NASPA, 2022). The results of the present study showed that the number of professional conferences or trainings a participant attended each year had no impact on the predictive models for any of the ACPA/NASPA competencies. Ultimately, these results suggest while professional development activities may have other benefits like networking or boosting morale, the current professional development structure in the field is not improving professional competency attainment in any area. While many consider professional development to be more style than substance, regardless of the substantive nature of the content, it is often a singular occurrence and not integrated into practice or revisited during supervision. As a result, more research is needed about the efficacy of professional development in higher education.

Race, Competency Attainment, and Emotional Intelligence

White participants rated themselves higher than participants of color in all competencies except social justice and inclusion. Their ratings were especially high in Organizational and Human Resources, Law, Policy, and Governance, and Student Learning and Development. Participants of color scoring higher than their white counterparts are consistent with the prior research findings of Muller, Grabsch, and Moore (2018). When examining the social justice and inclusion (SJI) competency, neither doctoral degree attainment or years of experience were predictive in the attainment of SJI and those who had completed a master's degree actually had lower attainment of SJI (Muller et al., 2018). The only factors that influenced the attainment of this competence were race, disability status, and sexual orientation with participants who identified as a person of color scoring higher than those identifying as White, those identifying as having a disability scoring higher than those who did not report having a disability, and those who identify as being part of the LGBTQ+ community scoring higher than those who reported being heterosexual (Muller et al., 2018). In the present study, White participants rated their attainment of Social Justice and Inclusion lower than participants of color. Additionally in the predictive model, year of experience, professional development, and educational background had no impact on competency attainment. The only significant predictor among the variables tested were interpersonal emotional intelligence skills which include empathy, interpersonal relationships, and social responsibility, suggesting that bolstering these skills may be the only viable strategy to improving social justice and inclusion within the field.

However, I am doubtful that the White participants are actually more competent than participants of color in all other competency areas. Although all participants of color rated themselves lower on competency attainment than their White counterparts, Black participants had higher emotional intelligence than White participants in all five emotional intelligence

realms. As a result, it is more likely that the people of color participating may not be rating themselves accurately in competency attainment or have been socialized within the field to believe their competency is at a lower level.

Black student affairs practitioners, especially Black women, are underrepresented in leadership roles in the field (Curtis, 2011; Enke, 2014; Hart, 2003; Turner, Norwood & Noe, 2013). Roberts, Mayo, Ely, & Thomas (2018) identify emotional intelligence, authenticity, and agility as keys to Black women's success in leadership roles; traits that closely relate to the emotional intelligence realms of self-perception and interpersonal skills, self-expression, and stress management and decision making. Further, research supports that Black men and women in senior leadership positions must resist knee-jerk reactions to respond in constructive ways and to avoid being penalized for the "angry Black" stereotype (Harvard, 1986; Roberts, Mayo, Ely, & Thomas, 2018). Roberts, Mayo, Ely, and Thomas (2018) found that emotional intelligence skills are "especially useful for those who encounter bias" because they walk a "tightrope" of expression and interpersonal interaction (p. 129) potentially inferring that Black respondents had higher emotional intelligence than their White counterparts out of necessity. Finally, Black employees endure negative racial stereotypes related to their job competence and as a result they are more likely to experience backlash from their White managers and peers when engaging in self-promotion (Wayne et. al., 2022). This may explain why Black respondents rated their competency lower than their White peers.

Implications for Theory, Policy, and Practice

This study sought to understand the relationship between emotional intelligence and professional competency among academic support student affairs professionals. Findings provided support for using Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence framework to support competency

in a number of areas outlined by the ACPA/NASPA professional competencies. Additionally, this section outlines several implications for policy and practice including integration of emotional intelligence into student affairs graduate training programs and professional supervision, using an equity lens when doing emotional intelligence work, and using emotional intelligence as a daily professional practice for student affairs leaders.

Integrating Emotional Intelligence with Student Affairs Preparation and Training

The student affairs profession has many opportunities for integrating emotional intelligence into graduate preparation programs, training and development through national organizations, and individual campuses ongoing professional development. It has long been established that emotional intelligence is a teachable and learnable set of skills and that with training and practice, they can improve, including improved scores on the EQ-i assessment, in relatively short time periods (Bar-On, 2006; Boyatzis, 2007; Goleman, 1998; Mattingly &Kraiger, 2019).

Assessment and Feedback

First and foremost, emotional intelligence assessment and feedback should be a regular part of student affairs graduate training as well as professional development. The present study used Bar-On's EQ-i in my study, but there are several assessments that can give different kinds of information that can be used for different needs. These assessments can provide personalized reports for individuals (that they should review the interpretation with a trained professional as with all psychometric assessments) that provide insight into strengths and growth areas and provide strategies for them to try individually to improve their skills. This type of assessment should be mandatory in student affairs graduate programs perhaps as part of a seminar course in the first term. Professional organizations like NASPA and ACPA could include this as a service

at their national conventions similar to how they provide resume reviews, mock interviews, and headshots. Further, individual campuses should invest in systematic assessment and feedback for their employees that occurs regularly, at least every few years. These assessment results can be incorporated into team workshops and individual discussions between employees and supervisors. All directors and senior leaders should be required to complete a 360 degree emotional intelligence assessment, and these should occur regularly on a rotation of professional development every two-three years so leaders can get an understanding of how congruent they are when working with those they supervise, peers, and those above them. Simply completing an assessment has been shown to provide moderate improvements in emotional intelligence with larger, more sustained gains in emotional intelligence with further coaching or training (Neale et al., 2009; Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019).

Coaching and Training

Emotional intelligence coaching is growing in popularity and could be used in tandem with individual assessments. Faculty and administrators in graduate training programs should map the curricular and cocurricular experiences they offer back to emotional intelligence skills as well as the NASPA/ACPA competencies to ensure there are multiple experiences that reinforce these skills and competencies throughout each students time in the program. Emotional intelligence assessments could be used in a first-semester seminar or during an orientation program. Completing and emotional intelligence assessment at the beginning of the graduate training program would enable students to identify specific emotional intelligence skills they wish to improve or balance during each semester and part of their advising could be identifying the coursework and cocurricular experiences that student needs to work on the specific skills they need to improve or balance. Individual coaching could be incorporated for graduate students

as part of their preparation for internship and practicum experiences. Internship and Practicum supervision should be designed to have students reflect on their emotional learning as they navigate new professional skills. Universities could also implement coaching for employees through human resource initiatives for new hires or as part of development for low performing employees. Emotional intelligence coaching is generally only helpful if used over multiple sessions with a trained coach although there is some debate on how many sessions is needed to be effective with some researchers claiming a minimum of three sessions will show improvement while others indicate that 10-12 sessions are needed (Boyatzis, 2007; Dolev & Leshem, 2016; Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019; Neale et al., 2009).

Emotional intelligence training can be incorporated in professional conferences, training on campus, and other professional development activities. A growing number of universities have included emotional intelligence into their MBA programs and student affairs preparation programs could certainly follow this integration (Di Meglio, 2013). However, the training must be well designed and it is essential that training is both active and personal (Boyzatis, 2007, 2018; Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019; Neale et al., 2009). Active learning techniques so participants can practice emotional intelligence skills in real time together and there must be time for them to reflect on their own personal development or receive individualized feedback from instructors or peers. Current professional development strategies often are not structured to allow deep learning or provide ongoing feedback while individual practice new skills. One time webinars or one-day trainings are unlikely to provide the time necessary for an individual to realize significant growth in emotional intelligence skills. Emotional intelligence trainings will require follow up sessions and opportunities for reflection and feedback. Further, professional development must be a safe

experience where participants can be a vulnerable, are given permission to not know the answer and make mistakes.

Further, taking a lesson from our K-12 colleagues, emotional intelligence should be integrated into daily interactions. Many social emotional learning programs are incorporated into half-hour or hour long weekly lessons but are then rarely integrated into daily life at school when students and teachers need to pull on their emotional skills most, in the hallways, playgrounds and cafeterias at school (Brackett et al., 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Larusso et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2017). Most importantly, training should be geared to helping student affairs professionals become emotionally intelligent themselves, *not* shifting the focus on how they can teach their students these skills. A growing number of scholars who work with social emotional learning in K-12 education have cited that teachers and administrators must target their own emotional intelligence in order to be effective in incorporating social emotional learning with their students (Brackett et al., 2006; Cohen & Sandy, 2007; Dolev & Leshem, 2016). While there are countless studies on social emotional learning for children, "little attention has been given to the importance of adults being social-emotional learners themselves" (Cohen & Sandy, 2007, p. 71). Teachers are given little opportunities to pursue their own emotional competencies through professional development (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). We must provide student affairs professionals with the opportunity to engage in their own emotional intelligence work before we expect that they can teach or model these skills for students.

Prioritizing Emotional Intelligence in the Profession

Emotional intelligence assessments, coaching, and training can be costly and time consuming. To incorporate them, there must be a financial commitment in order to use sound psychometric instruments along with properly credentialed trainers and coaches. Further, there

must be a commitment of time and attention as time spent on emotional intelligence training means time not available for other things, which can be particularly challenging for graduate programs who may already be struggling to fit everything into their curriculum. Further, there is a movement to further professionalize the field through certification exams for mid-level professionals (NASPA, 2022). As the field grapples with the realities of time and cost, I recommend prioritizing emotional intelligence assessments and coaching over certifications from professional associations. Certification exams attempt to further professionalize the field according to the professional organizations championing them, but the current professional development offered by these same organizations have not led to any improvement in competency attainment to the competencies that they have defined for the profession. Ultimately, these certification efforts are unlikely to result in actual gains in competency but rather another division where practitioners with more resources or working at more resourced institutions have access while their under-resourced counterparts are pushed away from obtaining certification. Investing time and resources into improving emotional intelligence for student affairs staff seems much more likely to result in improved competency and connection with students. While emotional intelligence assessments and coaching may be cost prohibitive for some colleges, online coursework and digital badges provide affordable training for introductory concepts. While investing in emotional intelligence will have a cost to institutions, the results of this study indicate that emotional intelligence has a clear link to professional competency, and ultimately more competent student affairs professionals will result in better student success outcomes. As barriers are broken and the academy becomes more diverse, it is imperative for institutions to have professionals who are competent in social justice and inclusion, and the results of this study showed that improving interpersonal emotional intelligence skills is essential to that competency.

Ultimately, an investment in student success professionals will reap a return in student success and persistence.

Emotional Intelligence as a Practice

Integrating Emotional Intelligence assessments and coaching are a powerful beginning, but the student affairs profession must adopt emotional intelligence as an integrated practice of the profession. The results of this study suggest that student affairs professionals, while they have strong interpersonal skills, have difficulty leveraging relationships as a means of social support during times of stress. Fiorilli et.al. (2019) found that social support from teacher's workplace relationships was more effective on burnout than external support from their private life and that emotional intelligence was essential to maintaining good social interactions with other teachers and administrators. It is essential leaders at all levels in student affairs foster positive social support among staff, especially given the burnout crisis looming in the profession. This type of genuine, reciprocal social support does not occur overnight after one morale boosting event. Instead, it requires leaders to be vulnerable, transparent, empathetic, and consistently attending to the emotional connections on their teams.

The results of this study show that strong self- perception can support professional competency more than any other emotional intelligence skill set, however the sample had developed their self-actualization more than their self-awareness, a combination that often leads to being overly self-critical. Self-perception skills have also been shown to be a key trait for high performing leaders in both nonprofit and corporate settings (Gong et. al., 2018). Faculty in student affairs training programs and leaders who manage both entry and mid-level student affairs professionals must learn to support practitioners in not only learning to reflect and be more self-aware but also to have a balanced self-appraisal rather than be overly critical. The

recent Compass Report (2022) highlighted that student affairs professionals have increasing responsibilities across multiple areas, unrealistic and unclear expectations for staff, and a lack of preparation for supervisors in the field, creating an environment where the ability to have a realistic, balanced understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses becomes a critical survival skill to remain in the field. Leaders who are highly self-aware are often described as having humility, recognizing that they are not perfect and do not know everything (Boyatzis, 2007; 2018). To create a healthy culture of continuous self-improvement, leaders must practice humility and place value on ongoing learning and growth.

Finally, the results of this study suggest that self-expression and stress management are undervalued or suppressed in the student affairs profession. As previously stated, these results are likely due to some of work environment issues that have been pervasive for years including toxicity, workplace bullying, and normalized unrealistic and unsustainable expectations (McClure, 2021; Prisloe, 2022; Yoder, 2019). Ultimately, toxic cultures don't allow self-expression skills to thrive, and people are punished for being assertive, communicating openly about their feelings, or working independently. Supervisors in student affairs must be trained in how to receive assertive communication from their direct reports and how to supervise in ways that reward an employee's independence and productive emotional expression.

Equity Imperative

Grabsch et al. (2019) noted that while graduate students, new professional and mid-level professionals ranked their top need for professional development as social justice and inclusion, for senior level student affairs professionals, it was not a priority and did not rank in their top five competencies for professional development. While more research is needed on this issue, it seems abundantly clear that the current curriculum in both master's and doctoral programs, as

well as the ongoing professional development for professionals working in the field, is sorely lacking in preparing professionals to engage in social justice, equity or inclusion work. The work of social justice and inclusion has been an important part of student affairs from the early days and is particularly timely in the present moment.

In 2017 ACPA announced their Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization committing to devote resources and time to addressing racial justice in higher education through research, scholarship, and tools to support personal and professional growth. During the summer of 2020 after the unjust killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and too many other unarmed Black men and women, the United States entered a period of mourning and racial reckoning with protests in support of racial justice occurring in all 50 states. As student affairs professionals navigate the complexities of these difficult moments in the midst of a global pandemic exacerbated by long standing health disparities and systemic inequities, many campuses are turning to anti-bias and anti-racism training to support faculty, staff, and administrators to confront their own bias and evaluate the policies and practices of their campuses. Offering training campus wide is a meaningful step and may help to dismantle the systems of oppression that keep marginalized employees from accessing leadership positions or marginalized students from successfully navigating their academic progression (Kirkinis, 2016; Stark, 2018). While anti-racism and anti-bias training can be potentially helpful tools for increasing the inclusivity of an institution, the training is ineffective if the participants lack the emotional intelligence to engage effectively in such training (Evans, 2020; Kirkinis, 2016; Spanierman & Cabrera, 2014). I would argue, based on the results of the present study, that such training, without the groundwork of emotional intelligence, risks serious harm if student affairs

professionals and senior administrators lack the basic self-awareness, empathy, and emotional expression these difficult conversations require.

The student affairs profession must approach integrating emotional intelligence with an equity lens. Emotional intelligence, while a critical skill set, does not happen in isolation. Harm can be done if emotional intelligence is not presented in a way that also takes social, political, and cultural context. Dena Simmons, the former assistant director of the Yale Center of Emotional Intelligence, urges educators not to whitewash social emotional learning. She describes the ways that emotional intelligence skills can help us build communities that foster brave conversations across differences, confront inequity and hate, prevent violence and build a more peaceful world. But Simmons (2019) cautions against using emotional intelligence devoid of context, "What's the point of teaching children about conflict resolution skills if we're not talking about the conflicts that exist because of racism or white supremacy? Without that, social emotional learning risks turning into white supremacy with a hug" (para. 11). In January of 2021 Simmons left her post at Yale to start her own firm focused on teaching emotional intelligence for racial justice and healing, citing experiencing racist microagressions in the workplace and being limited in publication at Yale because it was assumed that schools in conservative districts would cancel their use of the social emotional learning curriculum that the Center sells if it included Simmons lessons on race, equity for LGBTQ+ people, and empathy for those with disabilities (Horta & Price, 2021). Simmons' experience serves as a reminder that it is critical to be mindful of the complexity of the sociopolitical contexts in which we do this work and the identities we bring to the process. Further, her experience reminds us that no amount of experience in education or knowledge of emotional intelligence research can exempt us from lacking essential emotional intelligence skills.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several significant limitations to the present study. The common limitations of survey research include incomplete responses or missing items, lack of depth in forced choice responses, and participants intentionally or unintentionally misreporting their behaviors (Creswell, 2014; Fowler, 2008). In this study both professional competency and emotional intelligence were measured through self-report instruments that measure participants' perception of their skills rather than their actual proficiency. In any self-report tool, participants may interpret answer choices in different ways or present themselves in a more positive light, inflating their responses. While surveys ask multiple questions to measure the same construct, forced choice responses are limited in the depth they can glean from participants. Additionally, it is common for participants to miss items or provide incomplete responses making it difficult to analyze incomplete data or cause case deletions.

Sampling presented an additional limitation. The sample of the study was limited to 250 participants due to financial constraints and the cost of the EQi. Ideally, a larger sample would have been used to improve the generalizability of the study, help identify outliers, and reduce margin of error (Field, 2013). Additionally, the sample was about 81.5% White and ideally would have included more participants of color. In 2019, approximately 32.3% of student and academic affairs support staff identified as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (Digest of Education Statistics, 2019). Snowball methods were used to recruit including professional list-servs, social media, and email correspondence. Minority Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges, and Tribal Colleges were all included in outreach, as were both public and private institutions, but still White participants were slightly overrepresented in the sample. Second, the measure for professional competency, while it has been used in prior Tier I publications

previously, is not a strong measure, statistically speaking. Unfortunately, there is no current published assessment to measure professional competency for the ACPA/NASPA competencies. A more comprehensive measure for the ACPA/NASPA competencies is desperately needed in the field and should be an area for future research. While Sriram (2014) designed a tool for the 2010 competencies and the Joint Task Force used the results of his study in their update of the competencies in 2015, no updated measure was ever published. While the self-rating used in this study was used in prior research including Grabsch et al (2019) and Muller, Grabsch, & Moore (2018), ultimately a more psychometrically sound measure is needed for future study of the competencies.

Additionally, future research is needed on stress management and self-expression skills among student affairs practitioners. As noted earlier, these skills were only significant in one or two competency areas and in both cases negatively impacted the model. Future research on stress management is needed as chronic stress of COVID-19 and social unrest will likely have long term, irreversible impacts on the field and on the wellbeing of student affairs professionals. As stated earlier my interpretation of this data is that the field has undervalued self-expression skills like independence and assertiveness, but certainly more in-depth qualitative research exploring this phenomenon is needed.

Finally, this study should be expanded to student affairs functional areas outside of academic support. Student affairs as a profession is broad and while this study had to be limited in functional area because of the small sample size due to financial constraints, this study should be expanded to include student affairs practitioners in other functional areas such as residence life, student activities, student conduct, campus ministry, multicultural services, financial aid, career services, and more. The ACPA/NASPA competencies were not specifically made for

academic support professionals, but student affairs as a whole, so excluding other functional areas from this study may certainly change the outcome of the predictive models.

Conclusion

This quantitative study examined the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between the various emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals and their professional competency in the field? (2) Do the emotional intelligence skills of academic support student affairs professionals predict or moderate their professional competency, beyond the influence of their years of experience, education, and professional development? A survey of 248 academic support professionals was conducted where participants completed the EQi-2.0, an emotional intelligence assessment, a self-rating of their attainment of the 10 ACPA/NASPA professional competencies in student affairs, and a demographic questionnaire. A hierarchical multiple regression was run for each of the professional competencies to create a predictive model. In each regression analysis a competency was entered as the dependent variable and independent variables were entered in two blocks with covariates of education, years of experience, and professional development opportunities entered in block one and covariates and the five emotional intelligence realms entered in block two. Emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor for eight of the ten professional competencies. While years of experience was significant for nearly all competencies, educational background was only a significant predictor for four competencies and professional development was not a significant predictor in any model. Notably, the Social Justice and Inclusion competency was the only predictor where years of experience was not significant nor were the other covariates. The only significant predictor of Social Justice and Inclusion competency attainment was the interpersonal emotional intelligence realm including empathy and social

responsibility. These findings highlight the need to include emotional intelligence training and coaching in the formal curriculum of higher education graduate preparation programs and the ongoing professional development that student affairs practitioners receive. Further, in recent years there has been a greater focus in the field on equity and inclusion, and these findings suggest that emotional intelligence may be a prerequisite for becoming more proficient at Social Justice and Inclusion. Ultimately, the findings of this research suggest that emotional intelligence is required for a student affairs professional to be highly competent in the field and we must all do our own emotional intelligence work so we can be the emotionally responsive, bold, caring leaders and educators that our students, colleagues, and communities need.

References

ACPA: College Student Educators International & NASPA − Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (2010). ACPA and NASPA professional competency areas for student affairs practitioners. Washington, DC: Authors.

ACPA: College Student Educators International & NASPA − Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. (2015). ACPA and NASPA professional competency areas for student affairs educators. Washington, DC: Authors

ACPA: College Student Educators International & NASPA − Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. (2017). Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization. Washington, DC: Authors

Akos, P. & Kretchmar, J. (2017). Investigating Grit at a Non-Cognitive Predictor of College Success. *The Review of Higher Education*, 40(2), 163-186.

Aljohani, O. (2016). A comprehensive review of the major studies and theoretical models of study retention in higher education. *Higher Education Studies,* 6 (2), 1-18.

American College Health Association, (2015). American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association.

Arcelus, V. J. (2008). In search of a break in the clouds: An ethnographic study of academic and student affairs cultures. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Ariam, M., Haque, M., Johal, L., Mathur, P., Nel, W., Rais, A., Sandhu, R., and Sharma, S. (2013). Maturation of the adolescent brain. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*, 9, 449-461.

Arslan, S., and Yigit, M. F., (2016). Investigation of the impact of emotional intelligence efficacy on teachers' multicultural attitudes. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 7 (11), 147-157.

Ashlee, K. (2019). *The Student Affairs State of Affairs.* Medium. https://medium.com/the-future-of-education/the-student-affairs-state-of-affairs-db19815c9a98

Astin, A. (1993) An empirical typology of college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 34,* 36-46.

Bailey B., Christian, H., Hepler, V., & Speidel, A. (2011). *Creating the school family: Bully-proofing classrooms through emotional intelligence*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance.

Bar-On, R. (1988). *The development of a concept of psychological well-being.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Rhodes University, South Africa.

Bar-On, R. (1997). *Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory Technical Manual*. Toronto: Multi-Health Systems.

Bar-On, R. (2006). The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI). *Psicothema, 18,* 13-25.

Bastian, V., Burns, N., & Nettelbeck, T. (2005). Emotional intelligence predicts life skills, but not as well as personality and cognitive abilities. *Personality and Individual Differences, 39,* 1135-1145.

Bell, L. A. (2013). Theoretical foundations. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castaneda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, & X. Zuniga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (3rd ed.) (pp. 21-25). New York, NY: Routledge.

Berenson, R., Boyles, G., & Weaver, A. (2008). Emotional intelligence as a predictor for success in online learning. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 9* (2). http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/385/1036.

Berger, J. & Milem, J. (1999). The role of student involvement and perceptions of integration in a casual model of student persistence. *Research in Higher Education, 40* (6), 641-664.

Berger, J., Ramirez, G. B., & Lyon, S. (2012). Past to Present: A Historical Look at Retention. In A. Seidman (Ed.), *College student retention: Formula for student success* (pp. 7-34). Rowman & Littlefield.

Bloomfield, J. & Fisher, M.J. (2019). Quantitative research design. *Journal of Australian Rehabilitation Nurses Association.* 22 (2), 27-30. http://doi.org/10.33235/jarna.22.22.27-30

Borg, W. R., & Gall, M.D. (2006). *Educational research: An introduction* (8th ed.). New York, Longman.

Boston, W., & Ice, P. (2011). Assessing retention in online learning: An administrative perspective. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration,* 14(2).

Boyatzis, R.E. (2007). Developing emotional intelligence through coaching for leadership, professional and occupational excellence. In R. Bar-On, J.G. Maree & M.J. Elias (Eds.), *Educating People to Be Emotionally Intelligent* (pp. 155-168). Westport, CT: Praeger

Boyatzis, R. E. (2018). The behavioral level of emotional intelligence and its measurement. *Frontiers in Psychology,* 9(01438). http://doi.org/ 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01438

Brackett, M. A., & Elbertson, N. A. (2006). Emotional intelligence in the classroom: Skill-based training for teachers and students. In J. Ciarrochi & J. D. Mayer (Eds.), *Improving*

emotional intelligence: A practitioner's guide (pp. 1-27). New York, NY: Psychology Press/Taylor & Francis.

Brackett, M. A., & Geher, G. (2006). Measuring emotional intelligence: Paradigmatic shifts and common ground. In J. Ciarrochi, J. P. Forgas, & J. D. Mayer (Eds.), *Emotional intelligence and everyday life* (2nd ed., pp. 27-50). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Brackett, M., Reyes, M., Rivers, S., Elbertson, N., Salovey, P. (2012). Assessing teachers' beliefs about social and emotional learning. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment,* 30 (3), 219-236. http://doi.org/10.1177/0734282911424879

Burke, M., Dye, L., and Hughley, A. (2016). Teaching mindfulness for the self-care and well being of student affairs professionals. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 34 (3), 93-107.

Caison, A. (2007). Analysis of Institutionally Specific Retention Research: A comparison between survey and institutional database methods. *Research in Higher Education*, 48(4), 435-451. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11162-006-9032-5

Carlson, J. F., Geisinger, K. F., & Jonson, J. L. (Eds.). (2014). The nineteenth mental measurements yearbook. Lincoln, NE: Buros Center for Testing.

Cheng, W., Ickes, W., & Verhofstadt, L. (2012). How is family support related to students' GPA scores? A longitudinal study. *Higher Education,* 64(3), 399-420.

Cho, A., and Sriram, R. (2016). Student affairs collaborating with academic affairs: Perceptions of individual competency and institutional culture. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 34 (1), 56-69.

Ciobanu, A. (2013). The role of student services in the improving of student experience in higher education. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 92 (2013), 169-173.

Cohen, J. & Sandy S. (2007). The social, emotional and academic education of children: Theories, goals, methods and assessments. In R. Bar-On, J.G. Maree, & M.J. Elias (Eds.), *Educating People to Be Emotionally Intelligent* (pp. 63-78). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4thed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika, 16*, 297–335.

Crowne, D. P., & Marlowe, D. (1964). *The approach motive: Studies in evaluative dependence*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Curci, A., Lanciano, T., & Soleti, E. (2014). Emotions in the Classroom: The Role of Teachers' Emotional Intelligence Ability in Predicting Students' Achievement. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 127(4), 431-445. doi:10.5406/amerjpsyc.127.4.0431

Curtin, F., & Schulz, P. (1998). Multiple correlations and Bonferroni's correction. *Biological Psychiatry*, 44(8), 775-777.

Curtis, J. W. (2011). *Persistent inequity: Gender and academic employment* [PDF]. American Association of University Professors. Retrieved from: http://www.aaup.org/

Cuyjet, M. J., Longell-Grice, R., & Molina, E. (2009). Perceptions of new student affairs professionals and their supervisors regarding the application of competencies learned in preparation programs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50 (1), 104-119.

Dahl, R.E. (2003). Beyond raging hormones: The tinderbox in the teenage brain. *Cerebrum, 5* (3), 7-22.

Darwin, C. (1872/1965). *The expression of the emotions in man and animals.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Deniz, M., Tras, Z., & Aydogan, D. (2009). An investigation of academic procrastination, locus of control, and emotional intelligence. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 9* (2) 623-632.

Depape, A., Hakim-Larson, J., Voelker, S., Page, S., & Jackson, D. (2006). Self-talk and emotional intelligence in university students. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 38* (3), 250-260. DOI: 10.1037/cjbs2006012.

DeWitz, S. J. & Woolsey, M. L. & Walsh, W. B. (2009). College Student Retention: An Exploration of the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Purpose in Life Among College Students. *Journal of College Student Development,* 50(1), 19-34.

Dickerson, A. M., Hoffman, J.L., Anan, B.P., Brown, K.F., Vong, L.K., Bresciani, M. J., Monzon, R., & Oyler, J. (2011). A comparison of senior student affairs office and student affairs preparatory program faculty expectations of entry-level professional competencies. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice,* 48(4), 463-479.

Di Meglio, F. (2013, May 15). Want an MBA from Yale? You're going to need emotional intelligence. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-05-15/want-anmba-from-yale-youre-going-to-need-emotional-intelligence

Dolev, N., and Leshem, S. (2016). Developing emotional intelligence competence among teachers. *Teacher Development,* 21 (1), p. 21-39.

Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance.* New York, NY: Scribner.

Durlak, J., Dymnicki, A., Taylor, R., Weissberg, R., & Schellinger, K. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development,* 82(1), 405-432.

Dweck, C. (2007). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Eaton, P.W. (2016). The competency-based movement in student affairs: Implications for curriculum and professional development. *Journal of College Student Development 57*(5), 573-589. doi:10.1353/csd.2016.0061.

Edwards, A. L. (1966). Relationships between probability of endorsement and social desirability scale value for a set of 2,824 personality statements. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 50,* 238-239.

Enke, K. (2014). Conceptions of power among senior women administrators at liberal arts colleges in the upper midwestern United States. *NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education, 7(*2), pp. 199-225.

Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics* (4thed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Fernandez, R., Salamonson, Y., & Griffiths, R. (2012). Emotional intelligence as a predictor of academic performance in first-year accelerated graduate entry nursing students. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 21,* 3485-3492. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2012.04199.

Fiorilli, C., Benevene, P., De Stasio, S., Buonomo, I., Romano, L., Pepe, A., Addimando, L. (2019). Teachers' burnout: The role of trait emotional intelligence and social support. Frontiers in Psychology, 2019 (12). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02743

Fowler, F. J., (2009). *Survey Research Methods, 4th edition.* Thousand Oaks, California. Sage Publications.

Frederiksen, N. (1965). Response set scores as predictors of performance. *Personnel Psychology, 18,* 225-244.

Friedlander, L. J. & Reid, G. J. & Shupak, N. & Cribbie, R. (2007). Social Support, Self-Esteem, and Stress as Predictors of Adjustment to University Among First-Year Undergraduates. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(3), 259-274.

Fuchs, E. & Flügge, G. (2014). Adult neuroplasticity: More than 40 years of research. Neural Plasticity, 2014. https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/541870.

Gansemer-Topf, A.M., & Ryder, A. (2017). Competencies needed for entry-level student affairs work: Views from mid-level professionals. *College Student Affairs Journal 35*(1), 40-54. http://doi.org/10.1353/csj.2017.0004.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.

Goleman, D. (2011). The brain and emotional intelligence (Digital Edition). North Hampton, MA: More Than Sound.

Goleman, D., & Siegel, D. (2016, March 28). Brainpower: Mindsight and emotional intelligence in leadership [Video]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLybgb6XpPAVFvpUd2zgeUzYxw-H_BZqh

Gong, Z., Chen, Y., Wang, Y. (2019). The influence of emotional intelligence on job burnout and job performance: Mediating effect of psychological capital. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2019 (10), 2707. https://doi.org/10.3389%2Ffpsyg.2019.02707

Goroshit, Marina; Hen, Meirav. (2012). Emotional intelligence: A stable change? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 24 (1), p. 31-42.

Grabsch, D.K., Moore, L.L., Muller, K., & Mazzolini, A. (2019). Student affairs professionals self-reported professional development needs by professional level. *College Student Affairs Journal, 37*(2), 143-155. http://doi.org/10.1353/csj.2019.0011.

Guba, E. G. (1990). The Paradigm Dialog. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Gupta, G., & Kumar, S. (2010). Mental health in relation to emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among college students. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 36*, (1), 61-67.

Habley, W. R., Bloom, J. L., & Robbins, S. (2012). *Increasing Persistence: Research-based Strategies for College Student Success.* Wiley.

Han, C. & Farruggia, S. P. & Moss, T. P. (2017). Effects of academic mindsets on college students' achievement and retention. *Journal of College Student Development,* 58(8), 1119-1134.

Harlow, L. L. (2014). The essence of multivariate thinking: Basic themes and methods. Florence, KY: Routledge.

Hart, J. (2003). Mobilization among women academics: The interplay between feminism and the profession (Rep.). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED478752)

Harvard, P. A. (1986). Successful behaviors of Black women administrators in higher education: Implications for leadership, The Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, San Francisco, CA, 1986.

Hatch, D.K., & Garcia, C.E. (2017). Academic advising and the persistence intentions of community college students in their first weeks in college. *The Review of Higher Education, 40* (3), 353-390. http://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2017.0012.

Herdlein, R. J. (2004). Survey of chief student affairs officers regarding relevance of graduate preparation of new professionals. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice,* 42, 51–71.

Herdlein, R. J., Riefler, L., Mrowka, K. (2013). An integrative literature review of student affairs competencies: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 50(3), 250-268.

Hoffman, J. L., & Bresciani, M. J. (2012). Identifying what student affairs professionals value: A mixed methods analysis of professional competencies listed in job descriptions. Research and Practice in Assessment, 7, 26-40.

Hope, E., Chavous, T., Jagers, R., & Sellers, R. (2013). Connecting Self-Esteem and Achievement: Diversity in Academic Identification and Dis-identification Patterns Among Black College Students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(5), 1122-1151.

Humbley, A. M., & Zumbo, B. D. (1996). A dialectic on validity: Where we have been and where we are going. *The Journal of General Psychology, 123*, 207-215.

Jaeger, A. J., & Eagan, M. K. (2007). Exploring the Value of Emotional Intelligence: A Means to Improve Academic Performance. *NASPA Journal*, 44(3), 512–537.

Jeffreys, M. R. (2012). *Nursing Student Retention: Understanding the Process and Making a Difference.* Springer Publishing Company.

Jennings, P., Greenberg, M. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*. 79 (1), 491-525.

Johnson, J. (1997). Commuter college students: What factors determine who will persist and who will drop out? *College Student Journal, 31*, 323-332.

Johnson, V. K. & Gans, S. E. & Kerr, S. & LaValle, W. (2010). Managing the Transition to College: Family Functioning, Emotion Coping, and Adjustment in Emerging Adulthood. *Journal of College Student Development,* 51(6), 607-621.

Jackson, D. N. (1974). *Personality research form manual*. Goshen, NY: Research Psychologists Press.

John, O.P., & Benet-Martinez, V. (2000). Measurement: Reliability, construct validation, and scale construction. In H.T. Reis & C.M. Judd (Eds), *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology* (339-369). Cambridge University Press.

Jones, S. J., & Bouffard, S. M. (2012). Social and emotional learning in schools: From programs to strategies. *Social Policy Report, 26*(4), 1-22.

Joseph, D., & Newman, D. (2010). Emotional intelligence: An integrative meta-analysis and cascading model. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 9* (1), 54-78. DOI: 10.1037/a0017286.

Kant, R., & Shanker, A. (2021). Relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout: An empirical investigation of teacher educators. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 10 (3), 966-975. https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v10i3.21255

Kaufman, J. (1993, April). Mood and memory research: The need for a more holistic approach. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA

Kezar, A., & Lester, J. (2009). Organizing higher education for collaboration: A guide for campus leaders. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Khesroh, E., Butt, M., Kalantari, A., Leslie, D., Bronson, S., Rigby, A., & Aumiller, B. (2022). The use of emotional intelligence skills in combating burnout among residency and

fellowship program directors. *BMC medical education*, *22*(1), 127. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-022-03187-z

Krumrei-Mancuso, E. J. & Newton, F. B. & Kim, E. & Wilcox, D. (2013). Psychosocial Factors Predicting First-Year College Student Success. *Journal of College Student Development,* 54(3), 247-266.

Kuh, G. D. (1995). The other curriculum: Out-of-class experiences associated with student learning and personal development. *Journal of Higher Education,* 66(2), 123–155.

Lanciano, T., & Curci, A. (2014). Incremental Validity of Emotional Intelligence Ability in Predicting Academic Achievement. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 127(4), 447-461. doi:10.5406/amerjpsyc.127.4.0447.

LaRusso, M. D., Brown, J. L., Jones, S. M., & Aber, J. (2009). School context and micro contexts: The complexity of studying school settings. In L. M. Dinella (Ed.), *Conducting science-based psychology research in schools* (pp. 175−197). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Lillis, M. (2011-2012). Faculty emotional intelligence and student-faculty interactions: Implications for student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention, 13 (2)*, 156-178.

Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluence, revisited. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), The sage handbook of qualitative research (4th ed) (pp. 97-128). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Loevinger, J. (1957). Objective tests as instruments of psychological theory. *Psychological Reports, 3*, 635-694.

Long, D. (2012). The foundations of student affairs: A guide to the profession. In L. J. Hinchliffe & M. A. Wong (Eds.), Environments for student growth and development: Librarians and student affairs in collaboration (pp. 1-39). Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries

Longwell-Grice, R., & Longwell-Grice, H. (2007). Testing Tinto: How Do Retention Theories Work for First-Generation, Working-Class Students? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 9(4), 407-420. http://dx.doi.org/10.2190/CS.9.4.a

Lopes, P., Mestre, J., Guil, R., Kremenitzer, J., & Salovey, P. (2012). The Role of Knowledge and Skills for Managing Emotions in Adaption to School: Social Behavior and Misconduct in the Classroom. *American Educational Research Journal*, 49(4), 710-742.

Lounsbury, J. W. & Saudargas, R. A. & Gibson, L. W. (2004). An Investigation of Personality Traits in Relation to Intention to Withdraw From College. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45(5), 517-534.

Love, P. G. (1995). Exploring the impact of student affairs professionals on student outcomes. *Journal Of College Student Development, 36,* 162–170.

Love, P. G., & Love, A. G. (1995). Enhancing student learning. ASHE/ERIC Higher Education Report, no. 4, Washington, DC: Association of Higher Education.

Love, P. G. & Guthrie, V. L. (Eds.). (1999). Understanding and applying cognitive development theory. *New Directions for Student Services,* No. 88. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lovell, C. D. & Kosten, L. A. (2000). Skills, knowledge, and personal traits necessary for success as a student affairs administrator: A meta-analysis of thirty years of research. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 37(4), 553-572.

Martin, G.L. & Seifert, T.A. (2011) The relationship between students' interactions with student affairs professionals and cognitive outcomes in the first year of college, *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 48* (4), 389-410, http://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.6198.

Martin, G.L., Smith, M.J., Takewell, W.C., & Miller, A. (2020) Revisiting our contribution: how interactions with student affairs professionals shape cognitive outcomes during college, *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 57* (2), 148-162, http://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2019.1631834.

Mattingly, V. and Kraiger, K. (2019). Can emotional intelligence be trained? A meta-analytical investigation. *Human Resource Management Review*, 29 (2), 140-155.

Maslach, C., and Jackson, S.E. *Maslach burnout inventory manual* (2nd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press

Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D. R., & Salovey, P. (2000). Emotional Intelligence meets traditional standards for an intelligence. *Intelligence*, 27(4), 267–298.

Mayer, J., Roberts, R., & Barsade, S. (2008). Human abilities: Emotional intelligence. *The Annual Review of Psychology, 2008* (59), 507-36. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.psych.59.103006.093646.

Mayer, J. & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In Salovey, P. & Mayer, P (Ed.), *Emotional development and emotional intelligence* (pp. 3-31). New York: Basic Books.

McClure, K. (September 2021). Higher ed, we've got a morale problem– and a free t-shirt won't fix it. Ed Surge. https://www.edsurge.com/news/2021-09-27-higher-ed-we-ve-got-a-morale-problem-and-a-free-t-shirt-won-t-fix-it

Mu, L., & Fosnacht, K. (2019). Effective advising: How academic advising influences student learning outcomes in different institutional contexts. *The Review of Higher Education 42*(4), 1283-1307. http://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2019.0066.

Muller, K., Grabsch, D. & Moore, L. (2018) Factors influencing student affairs professionals' attainment of professional competencies, *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *55* (1), 54-64, http://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2017.1345755.

Multi-Health Systems. (2011). *Emotional quotient inventory 2.0 (EQ-I 2.0) user's handbook.* Toronto, ON.

Multihealth Systems, Inc. (May 12, 2022). *Stability of EQi 2.0 scores through the COVID19 pandemic.* Linked in. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/stability-eq-i-20-scores-through-covid-19-?trk=pulse-article_more-articles_related-content-card

Murtaugh, P., Burns, L., & Schuster, J. (1999). Predicting the retention of university students. *Research in Higher Education, 40*, 355-371.

Nasir, M., & Masrur, R. (2010). An exploration of emotional intelligence of the students of International Islamic University Islamabad in relation to gender, age, and academic achievement. *Bulletin of Education and Research, 32* (1), 37-51.

NASPA. (March 2022). The compass report: Charting the future of student affairs. https://naspa.org/about/future-of-student-affairs-report/the-compass-report-charting-the-future-of-student-affairs

Natasa, L. & Farcas, A. (2015). The effect of emotional intelligence on burnout in healthcare professionals. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 181, 78-82. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.015

Neale, S., Spencer-Arnell, L., Wilson, L. (2009). *Emotional intelligence coaching: Improving performance for leaders, coaches, and the individual.* Kogan Page.

O'Meara, K. & Knudsen, K. & Jones, J. (2013). The Role of Emotional Competencies in Faculty-Doctoral Student Relationships. *The Review of Higher Education,* 36 (3), 315-347.

Parker, J., Creque, R., Barnhart, D., Harris, J., Majeski, S., Wood, L., Bond, B. & Hogan, M. (2004). Academic achievement in high school: Does emotional intelligence matter? *Personality and Individual Differences, 37,* pp. 1321-1330. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2004.01.002.

Parker, J., Duffy, J., Wood, L., Bond, B., & Hogan, M. (2005). Academic achievement and emotional intelligence: Predicting the successful transition from high school to university. *Journal of the First-Year Experience, 17* (1), 1-12.

Parker, J., Hogan, M., Eastabrook, J., Oke, A., Wood, L. (2006). Emotional intelligence and student retention: Predicting the successful transition from high school to university. *Personality and Individual Differences, 41,* 1329-1336.

Pascarella, E. & Chapman, D. (1983). A multi-institutional, path analytic validation of Tinto's model of college withdrawal. *American Educational Research Journal, 20* (1), 87-102.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). How college affects students: Vol. 2, A third decade of research. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pertegal-Felices, M. L., Marcos-Jorquera, D., Gilar-Corbi, R., & Jimeno-Morenilla, A. (2017). Development of Emotional Skills through Interdisciplinary Practices Integrated into a University Curriculum. *Education Research International*.

Phillips, D. C., & Burbules, N. C. (2000). *Postpositivism and educational research.* Rowman & Littlefield.

Porchea, S., Allen, J., Robbins, S., & Phelps, R. (2010). Predictors of Long-Term Enrollment and Degree Outcomes for Community College Students: Integrating Academic, Psychosocial, Socio-demographic, and Situational Factors. *The Journal of Higher Education,* 81(6), 680-708.

Prisloe, D. (2022). Toxic rhetoric: Unpacking discussions of self-care. *The Vermont Connection*, 43 (1), 204-216.

Randsell, S. (2001). Predicting college success: The importance of ability and non-cognitive variables. *International Journal of Educational Research, 35,* 357-364.

Reynolds, A. L. (2013). College student concerns: Perceptions of student affairs practitioners. *Journal of College Student Development, 54* (1), 98-104. http://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2013.0001.

Richardson, R. & Begley, S. (2012). *The emotional life of your brain: How its unique patterns affect the way you think, feel, and live--and how you can change them.* New York. Penguin Group.

Rivers, S. E. & Brackett, M. A. & Omori, M. & Sickler, C. & Bertoli, M. C. & Salovey, P. (2013). Emotion Skills as a Protective Factor for Risky Behaviors Among College Students. *Journal of College Student Development,* 54 (2), 172-183.

Roberts, L. M., Mayo, A., Ely, R., & Thomas, D. (2018, March-April). Beating the odds. *Harvard Business Review,* 126-131.

Rutledge, S., Cohen-Vogel, L., Osborne-Lampkin, L., & Roberts, R. (2015). Understanding Effective High Schools: Evidence for Personalization for Academic and Social Emotional Learning. *American Educational Research Journal,* 52(6), 1060-1092.

Salami, S. (2010). Emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, psychological well-being and students' attitudes: Implications for quality education. *European Journal of Educational Studies, 2* (3), 247-257.

Salovey, P., & Grewal, D. (2005). The science of emotional intelligence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 14* (6), 281-285.

Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional Intelligence. Imagination, Cognition, and *Personality, 9,* 185–211.

Siegel, D. (1999). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Shim, S. S. & Wang, C. & Makara, K. A. & Xu, X. & Xie, L. & Zhong, M. (2017). College students' social goals and psychological adjustment: Mediation via emotion regulation. *Journal of College Student Development,* 58 (8), 1237-1255.

Simmons, D. (2019, May 15). *Without context social-emotional learning can backfire.* Ed Surge. https://www.edsurge.com/news/2019-05-15-dena-simmons-without-context-social-emotional-learning-can-backfire.

Soutter, M., & Seider, S. (2013). College access, student success, and the "new" character education. *Journal of College and Character*, 14(4), 351–356.

Sriram, R. (2014). The development, validity, and reliability of a psychometric instrument measuring competencies in student affairs. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 51* (4), 349-363, htp://doi.org/10.1515/jsarp-2014-0037.

Stein, S. (n.d.). *Key takeaways for coaching leaders more effectively post pandemic.* Multihealth Systems, Inc Blog. https://mhs.com/in-the-wake-of-the-pandemic-what-have-we-learned-about-emotional-intelligence-key-takeaways-for-coaching-leaders-more-effectively/#msdynttrid=y4FBC3BAX7kx7r8JaFLtj1d75-wub-4cp6XJQipM0jI

Stein, S., Book, H., & Kanoy, K. (2013). *The student EQ edge: Emotional intelligence and your personal success*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Taylor, R., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A metaanalysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development,* 88, 1156-1181.

Thelin, J. (2004). *A History of American Higher Education.* Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thorndike, E. L. (1920). Intelligence and its uses. *Harper's Magazine, 140*, 227-235.

Tinto, V. (1995). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research, 45 (1),* 89-125.

Tinto, V. (2006). Research and practice of student retention: What next? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice,* 8 (1), 1-19. http://dx.doi.org/10.2190/4YNU-4TMB-22DJ-AN4W

Turner, P. K., Norwood, K., & Noe, C. (2013). A woman with a plan: Recognizing competencies for ascent to administration in higher education. *NASPA Journal about Women in Higher Education, 6(*1), pp. 22-47.

Washington, M., Okoro, E., Okoro, S., (2013). Emotional intelligence and cross-cultural communication competence: An analysis of group dynamics and interpersonal relationships in a diverse classroom. *Journal of International Education Research,* 9 (3), 241-246.

Wayne, S., Sun, J., Kluemper, D., Cheung, G., Ubaka, A. (2022). The cost of managing impressions for Black employees: An expectancy violation theory perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001030.

Wechsler, D. (1940). Nonintellective factors in general intelligence. *Psychological Bulletin, 37,* 444-445.

Wechsler, D. (1943). Nonintellective factors in general intelligence. *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology,* 38, 100-104.

Wise, V.L. & Hatfield, L.J. (2014). Employee evaluation using professional competencies. Developments, 12 (2). http://www.myacpa.org/article/employee-evaluation-using-professional-competencies.

Yoder, H. (2019). When the compassionate are abusive: Workplace bullying in student affairs. *About Campus,* 24 (4), 10-14. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1086482219891296.

Appendix A

EQi 2.0 Model with Skills and Definitions (Multihealth Systems, 2011)

Appendix B

ACPA/NASPA Professional Competency Area Descriptions and Levels

Competency Area	Description	Development
Personal and Ethical Foundations (PEF)	The thoughtful development, critique, and adherence to a holistic and comprehensive standard of ethics and commitment to one's own wellness and growth.	Foundational outcomes emphasize one's values and beliefs in relation to professional codes of ethics and personal wellness. Advanced development involves a higher order of self-awareness.
Values, Philosophies, and History (VPH)	The alignment of one's personal values, philosophies, and history to those of the student affairs profession.	Foundational development is a basic understanding of VPH while advanced development is a more critical understanding of VPH application.
Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER)	The ability to use AER processes and methodologies to inform decision making and shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER uses in higher education.	Professional growth starts with the shift from understanding to application. It is a shift from focusing on separate small scale applications to larger scale applications that involve multiple departments or divisions.
Law, Policy, and Governance (LPG)	The knowledge and application of laws, legal constructs, and governance structure and how they impact one's professional practice.	Professional growth is the shift in understanding from a departmental level to an institutional level that takes into account regional, national, and international contexts.
Organizational and Human Resources (OHR)	The growth of an individual threw processes commonly associated with student affairs.	Professional growth is the shift in scale, scope, and interactivity within OHR.
Leadership (LEAD)	The skills, knowledge, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without positional authority. It involves both the individual as a leader and the processes commonly associated with leadership.	Foundational development is knowledge. Advanced development applies the knowledge gained while fostering the development of leadership in others.
Social Justice and Inclusion (SJI)	The process and goal of using one's knowledge, skills, and disposition to acknowledge	Foundational development is understanding oppression, privilege, and power. Intermediate and

	issues of oppression, privilege, and power. It is the goal to meet the needs of all groups.	advanced levels reflect social justice in practice and the connections between leadership and advocacy.
Student Learning and Development (SLD)	The application of concepts and principles for student development and learning theory.	Professional growth is the shift from constructing learning outcomes to larger and more various forms of programs and applications.
Technology (TECH)	The use of resources and technology to improve performance in the student affairs profession.	Professional growth is the shift from understanding to facilitation to creating innovative ways to engage students.
Advising and Supporting (A/S)	The knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals.	Professional growth is the development of advising and supporting strategies.

(ACPA & NASPA, 2010; 2015)

Appendix C

Demographic Questionnaire

What is your Age? (drop down single digits in years- start at 25 years old as younger participants are excluded)

What is your Gender? (man, woman, gender nonconforming/nonbinary, other, prefer not to respond)

What is your race? (Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Multiracial, White, prefer not to respond)

Ethnicity (Hispanic or Latinx, Not Hispanic or Latinx, prefer not to respond)

Do you have a Master's degree or higher? (yes/no- exclusion for no)

What subject is your Master's degree in? (higher education/student affairs administration/college student personnel, counseling or related field, other academic area/write in)

Are you currently employed full time at a college or university in the United States? (Yes/no- exclusion criteria)

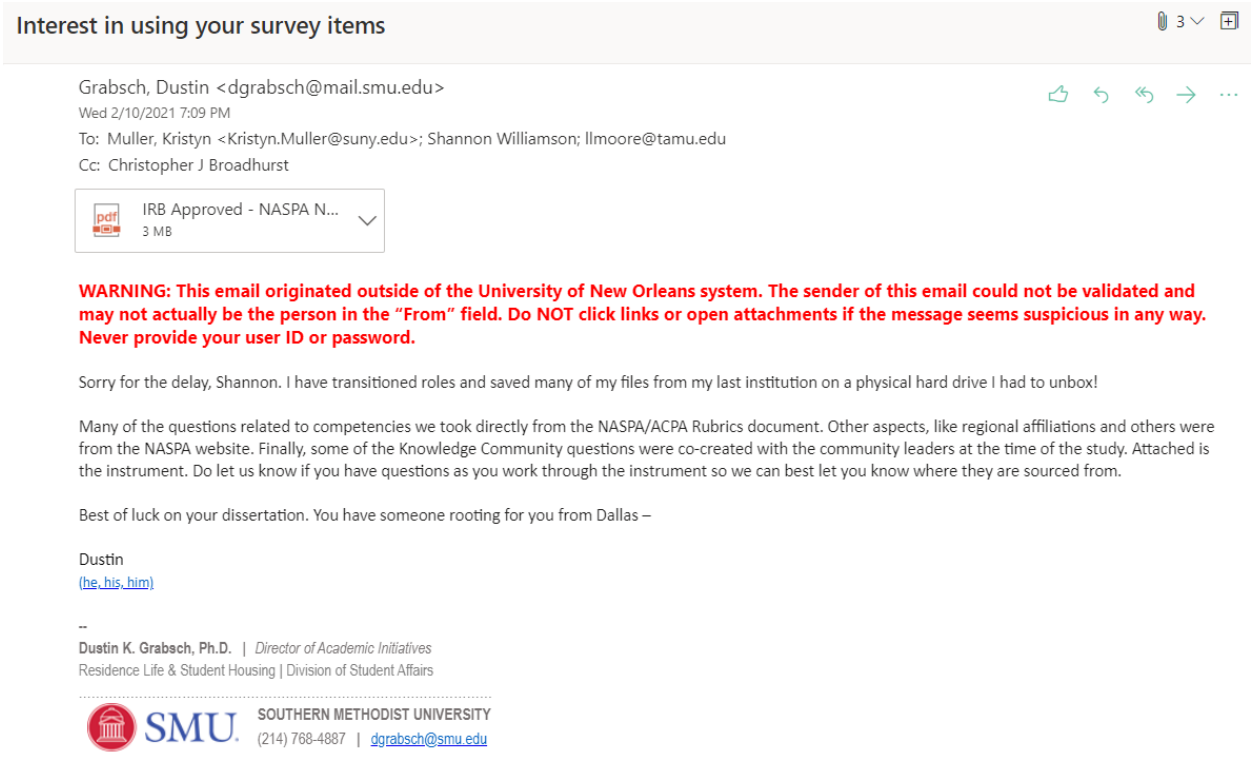
Which of these functional areas do you work in? (Learning or Academic Support Services, Academic Advising, First-Year Experience and Orientation Programs, Disability Support Services, none of these- exclusion criteria)

How many years have you been working professionally in higher education? (drop down in years)

On average, how many professional conferences or trainings have you attended in a calendar year? (drop down numeric count 0-20+)

Appendix D

Permission to Use Professional Competency Rating Scale



Interest in using your survey items

Grabsch, Dustin <dgrabsch@mail.smu.edu>
Wed 2/10/2021 7:09 PM
To: Muller, Kristyn <Kristyn.Muller@suny.edu>; Shannon Williamson; llmoore@tamu.edu
Cc: Christopher J Broadhurst

IRB Approved - NASPA N...
3 MB

WARNING: This email originated outside of the University of New Orleans system. The sender of this email could not be validated and may not actually be the person in the "From" field. Do NOT click links or open attachments if the message seems suspicious in any way. Never provide your user ID or password.

Sorry for the delay, Shannon. I have transitioned roles and saved many of my files from my last institution on a physical hard drive I had to unbox!

Many of the questions related to competencies we took directly from the NASPA/ACPA Rubrics document. Other aspects, like regional affiliations and others were from the NASPA website. Finally, some of the Knowledge Community questions were co-created with the community leaders at the time of the study. Attached is the instrument. Do let us know if you have questions as you work through the instrument so we can best let you know where they are sourced from.

Best of luck on your dissertation. You have someone rooting for you from Dallas –

Dustin
(he, his, him)

--
Dustin K. Grabsch, Ph.D. | *Director of Academic Initiatives*
Residence Life & Student Housing | Division of Student Affairs

SMU SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
(214) 768-4887 | dgrabsch@smu.edu

Professional Competencies Survey Items

Professional Competencies: NASPA and ACPA released an updated and reworked set of Professional Competency Areas in early fall 2015. The areas are indeed to define the broad professional knowledge, skills, and for some competencies, attitudes expected of student affairs professionals working in the U.S., regardless of their area of specialization or positional role within the field. All student affairs professionals should be able to demonstrate their ability to meet the basic list of outcomes under each competency area regardless of how they entered the profession.

Please rate each professional competency as to the RELEVANCE it has in your current position/role and your level of ATTAINMENT of mastery.

	Relevance low---------high	Attainment low---------high
Personal and Ethical Foundations (PEF). Involves the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop and maintain integrity in one's life and work; this includes		

thoughtful development, critique, and adherence to a holistic and comprehensive standard of ethics and commitment to one's own wellness and growth. Personal and ethical foundations are aligned because integrity has an internal locus informed by a combination of external ethical guidelines, an internal voice of care, and our own lived experiences. Our personal and ethical foundations grow through a process of curiosity, reflection, and self-authorship		
Values, Philosophy and History (VPH) Involves knowledge, skills, and dispositions that connect the history, philosophy, and values of the student affairs profession to one's current professional practice. This competency area embodies the foundations of the profession from which current and future research, scholarship, and practice will change and grow. The commitment to demonstrating this competency area ensures that our present and future practices are informed by an understanding of the profession's history, philosophy, and values.		
Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER) Focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, and use various AER methodologies and the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education.		
Law, Policy and Governance (LPG) Includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to policy development processes used in various contexts, the application of legal constructs, compliance/policy issues, and the understanding of governance structures and their impact on one's professional practice		
Organizational and Human Resources (OHR) Includes knowledge, skills, and dispositions used in the management of institutional human capital, financial, and physical resources. This competency area recognizes that student affairs professionals bring personal strengths and grow as managers through challenging themselves to build new skills in the selection, supervision, motivation, and formal evaluation of staff; resolution of conflict; management of the politics of organizational discourse; and the effective application of strategies and techniques		

associated with financial resources, facilities management, fundraising, technology, crisis management, risk management and sustainable resources		
Leadership (LEAD) Addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without positional authority. Leadership involves both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad-based constituencies and issues. This can include working with students, student affairs colleagues, faculty, and community members.		
Social Justice and Inclusion (SJI) While there are many conceptions of social justice and inclusion in various contexts, for the purposes of this competency area, it is defined here as both a process and a goal which includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups while seeking to address and acknowledge 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. Student affairs educators may incorporate social justice and inclusion competencies into their practice through seeking to meet the needs of all groups, equitably distributing resources, raising social consciousness, and repairing past and current harms on campus communities.		
Student Learning and Development (SLD) Addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs and teaching practice.		
Technology (TECH) Focuses on the use of digital tools, resources, and technologies for the advancement of student learning, development, and success as well as the improved performance of student affairs professionals. Included within this area are knowledge, skills, and dispositions that lead to the generation of digital literacy and digital citizenship within communities of students, student affairs professionals, faculty members, and colleges and universities as a whole.		

Advising and Supporting (A/S) Addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals and groups through direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance. Through developing advising and supporting strategies that take into account self-knowledge and the needs of others, we play critical roles in advancing the holistic wellness of ourselves, our students, and our colleagues.		

Vita

M. Shannon Williamson is a native New Orleanian. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in 2008 and a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology in 2010, both from Abilene Christian University. Currently, Shannon serves as the Director of First-Year Student Academic Success at the University of New Orleans where she oversees first-year academic advising, tutoring and supplemental instruction, success coaching, early intervention efforts, and co-requisite remediation. Prior to her work at UNO, Shannon worked at Dillard University in the Academic Center for Excellence. Shannon's research interests include emotional intelligence and student success, and the success of students who have been historically marginalized in higher education.