

# College Counseling <sup>and</sup> Student Development

Theory, Practice, and Campus Collaboration

edited and written by Derrick A. Paladino, Laura M. Gonzalez, and Joshua C. Watson



American Counseling Association

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# College Counseling and Student Development

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To the best four-legged writing buddies in the universe: Ernie, Sammy, and Iggy Stardust. Your unconditional love always barks up the right tree.

—Derrick A. Paladino

To my children, future college students Julian, Javier, and Evelyn Gonzalez. You inspire me and give me abundant hope for a future in which every young person is honored, valued, and nurtured to the fullest expression of self.

—Laura M. Gonzalez

To my friends and colleagues whose infectious enthusiasm for helping others motivates and inspires me every day. Each of you help to make the world a better place for us all.

—Joshua C. Watson

We would also like to dedicate this text to young (and young-at-heart) adults who are striving to reach their goals as college students and also to the passionate college counselors and student affairs professionals whose mission is to nurture the development, safety, and success of college students.

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### Preface

The college counseling landscape has evolved quite a bit. Over the past decade, we have witnessed 2-year and 4-year colleges being shaped by increased attention to mental health issues, crisis response and triage procedures, and students coming to campus already taking prescribed psychotropic medication. In addition, social media and electronic communication have changed our society in important and indelible ways that we have only started to describe and respond to as scholars and practitioners. Also, greater access to college by a more diverse student population is an important gain that requires greater understanding of students working part-time or full-time while in school, having dependents themselves, being first-generation students, seeking online education, and being returning and/or nontraditional-age students. Indeed, in data drawn from 2016, the National Center for Education Statistics (2018) reflected that one in five college students is at least 30 years old, two in five attend a community college, and almost half attend college part-time at some juncture. Adding to this list of considerations is the context of community, national, global, and political events, which are experienced by students in ways that are both personal and career oriented. This list is by no means exhaustive but rather a dusting of the contemporary college student's ecology. We contend that these changes necessitate a greater understanding of college student mental health and well-being across campus support offices to facilitate the academic, social, and personal/emotional success of all students.

So, who are the key players in this important task of supporting college student development, well-being, and success? We have written this text for all individuals who are preparing themselves to serve students in the web of clinical and support services on a college campus. Thus, our audience could include graduate students in counseling programs who wish to work with college students and need perspective on what makes this clientele and this setting unique. Our audience could also include graduate students in student affairs who want to supplement their training with a greater understanding of mental health issues. We are also aware that some professional staff find their way to working on campus without a background in either of those training programs and thus find that they need some additional resources to fill in gaps in their preparation. We would like to speak with all of you, future and current professionals who care about and want to support today's college students. Too often, the work of college counselors occurs in silos and lacks perspective on how others on campus are approaching their work to promote college student wellness. In fact, we believe that promoting greater

#### Preface

understanding and exchange between the worlds of college counseling and student development will lead to greater teamwork and collaboration. We welcome all readers who want to promote college student development in a holistic way.

This is important because today's students need support in some critically important ways. In recent years, college counseling center staff have experienced increases in the following:

- counseling center provision of direct services over indirect services
- counseling center utilization (i.e., increased by an average of 30%–40%, whereas enrollment increased by only 5%)
- the frequency of students with a lifetime prevalence of threat-to-self (TTS) indicators (TTS includes nonsuicidal self-injury, serious suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts)
- students with TTS indicators using more services than students without TTS indicators (i.e., 20%–30% more services)
- depression, general anxiety, and social anxiety as clinical issues
- resources being diverted to crisis and triage appointments rather than traditional individual counseling services
- the student rate of prior counseling
- the percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college (i.e., 2- and 4-year colleges and universities)
- students graduating in 6 years (Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors [AUCCCD], 2017; Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2019; Musu-Gillette et al., 2017).

These changes are important to reflect on as they bring light to the experiences that shape a student's development, academic success, and campus climate. In addition, when thinking about the college as an ecological system, one must recognize the implications of this environment for clients with the abovementioned experiences who have just visited the counseling center and are now walking back to their residence halls and classes. The interaction of clinical issues, personal and social development, and academic progress makes for a very interesting community of which college counselors and student affairs professionals must gain a stronger understanding.

Research does inform us that college counseling services are working for students in some spaces. There are reports of counseling having a positive impact on academic performance and retention of students who take advantage of the services (e.g., counseling services have helped students stay in school; AUCCCD, 2017). In addition, college counseling was shown to be effective in reducing mental health distress (Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2019). With the knowledge that clients utilizing services overall has increased approximately 46% from the 2010–2011 (82, 611) to the 2017–2018 (179, 964) academic years, it is great to see that the passion and work are helping student wellness (Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2019). However, we, as counselors, must not lose sight of the students for whom utilization of counseling centers calls up stigma and shame or students who fear they will be misunderstood by counselors who "don't look like me" or "don't share my lived experience." Where will these students go to seek assistance? Each campus needs to keep a careful eye on the data that reflect students for whom counseling is working, students for whom it is less effective, and students who are not opting to engage with the counseling center. In some ways, these data can also encourage us to think outside the box as we consider the best ways to deliver services to today's college population. Counseling centers need to partner with student affairs in our common goal to support students, now more than ever.

The International Association of Counseling Services (IACS), the accrediting body for university, 4-year college, and 2-year community college counseling services, suggests four essential roles in serving the university and college community:

1) provide counseling to students experiencing personal adjustment, vocational, developmental and/or psychological problems that require professional attention; 2) play a preventive role assisting students in identifying and learning skills which will assist them to effectively meet their educational and life goals; 3) support and enhance the healthy growth and development of students through consultation and outreach to the campus community; and 4) play a role in contributing to campus safety. (IACS, 2016, p. 4)

More than ever, we find these roles increasingly important. There have been several college counseling scholars before us (Archer & Cooper, 1998; Davis & Humphrey, 2000; Sharkin, 2012) who have done wonderful work in these areas. Their accomplishments provide a platform of knowledge that inspired us to focus our work on better serving the campus community. We also hope that you, the reader, will continue to consider innovative ways that all campus service providers can work together to address new and emerging health and wellness issues in contemporary college students. Recent developments such as behavioral intervention teams and satellite counseling are examples of how college counseling and student affairs will need to adapt and respond to changing needs.

Throughout this text you will see the professional terms: college counselor, counselor, therapist, mental health professional, student affairs professional, and student development professional. These terms are used throughout the literature and across campuses nationwide when referencing the individuals often tasked with addressing student mental health and wellness. Although there are some similarities among terms, they are not completely interchangeable. First, college counselor, counselor, therapist, and mental health professional will refer to those professionals who are providing mental health services through direct service in the counseling center or outreach and prevention from the center. Second, student affairs professional, student support services, and student development professional refer to college staff who work in functional units on a college campus (e.g., the office of multicultural affairs, career services, accessibility services, residential life, Title IX, community standards, community engagement). This interchange and mention of both college counseling and student affairs is an important aspect of the intersecting audience of this text. We want readers to fully understand that college work should emerge from a rich collaboration between both mental health and student development camps. It's wise to combine efforts for the betterment of campus climate and student experience.

Thus, our purpose is to add college counseling and student development perspective to what you are learning in existing training programs; we are not trying to replicate or replace core courses (e.g., diagnosis and treatment) in preprofessional master's programs.

All chapters in this book begin with a personal reflection exercise. These exercises are included to provide readers with a way to deepen their experience of each topic.

This text is organized through four sections: Part I: The College Counseling Profession; Part II: Collaborative Services in College Counseling; Part III: Student Development Theory, Student Learning, and Developmental Considerations; and Part IV: Clinical Issues in the College Context. Part I of the book begins with Chapter 1, which provides an understanding of how the history and evolution of college counseling have influenced the landscape of this profession, including student populations. Chapter 2 invites readers to learn about the roles college counselors hold at the counseling center and in the greater campus community. Next, Chapter 3 discusses how culture, social location, and campus climate affect the student population. A multicultural orientation is introduced that gives the reader a sociocultural and social justice perspective with which to explore the remainder of the text. Finally, in Chapter 4, legal and ethical issues round out this part of the book with a discussion of relevant ethical issues (e.g., considerations that arise when college students are minors or when counselors hold multiple campus roles).

Part II begins with an understanding of the student affairs context in which we as counselors all work. In Chapter 5 readers will learn about the functions of student affairs on campus and how they support the student and campus. The important connection and collaborative functions that can happen among the counseling center and student affairs units are discussed in Chapter 6. Outreach is the focus of Chapter 7. The discussion of the importance and need for campus services over and above direct client service are discussed with examples from around the nation. Finally, in Chapter 8 we discuss emergency services on campus with a focus on crisis issues and the evolution of campus models of emergency response.

Part III moves readers to an understanding of how student development and student development theory impact and inform practice across all student support services on campus. Chapter 9 provides the reader with a broad understanding of the development of theory as well as how to use it in practice. In addition, the reader will be introduced to "The Case of Lina Miller" (see pages 186–187). Lina is examined in this chapter and through every theory in the remaining five chapters in this section. This will assist readers to consider how each theoretical vantage point has utility and limits. Neuro-informed college counseling is the focus of Chapter 10. Considering advances in understanding brain development, this chapter provides insight on the integration of neuroscience and college counseling along with an overview of the brain and neural networks. Chapters 11 through 14 introduce the reader to major student development theories that are used in conceptualizing college students. In addition, these theories also provide a blueprint for creating and delivering student services. Readers will learn about the following main areas in student development theory: psychosocial, cognitive/moral, experiential, and social constructivist. Applications to Lina as well as other cases will encourage readers to make the theory-to-practice connection in each chapter.

Part IV focuses on clinical issues connected to the college student population. These issues are discussed through a multicultural, sociocultural, and social justice lens using case studies with diverse student populations. It is our hope that the reflection exercises in these chapters will help the reader to (a) build empathy for the population and deepen awareness of the issue, (b) look at any preconceived notions about the population/ issue, and (c) explore what the reader already knows. Chapters in this section have been handpicked to allow the novice and practiced college counselor and student affairs professional to develop additional awareness, knowledge, and skills to understand and attend to these student populations. The following chapters examine adjustment and clinical issues from a college student and campus perspective: Chapter 15, "Family and Relationships"; Chapter 16, "Academic and Career Issues"; Chapter 17, "Substance Use and Addiction"; Chapter 18, "Stress and Anxiety"; Chapter 19, "Depression and Suicide"; Chapter 20, "Continuum of Disordered Eating in College"; Chapter 21, "Understanding and Responding to Self-Injury"; Chapter 22, "Sexual Issues and Concerns"; and Chapter 23, "Sexual Victimization."

We hope you enjoy reading and referencing *College Counseling and Student Development: Theory, Practice, and Campus Collaboration* as you begin or continue your career in college counseling. We welcome you to this magnificent profession and thank those who are already assisting college students.

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## About the Editors

#### Derrick A. Paladino, PhD

After growing up in a small town in Connecticut, I followed my parents to Florida for no other reason than to attend college because "that's what people did." I entered the University of Florida in the spring semester of 1995 as an adrift out-ofstate and first-generation student with the desire to become an aerospace engineer. I was dropped off on campus (student population close to 50,000 around that time) with a less than novice understanding of what the college experience should be like. I entered with the reality that since my parents did not attend college, I was somewhat on my own to navigate this experience. I struggled academically early on and went through five different majors, finally resting on psychology with an education minor. Socially, I had left all my high school friends in Connecticut and had to figure out how to make new connections, which did happen, and I entered into some incredible friendships that last to this day. Another significant struggle was with my racial identity. Growing up half Latino and half White, but with darker skin, in a majority-White town invited much explicit and covert discrimination. It was the opposite in Florida, where I physically fit in but did not speak Spanish, therefore feeling isolated for a different reason. Racial identity was a consistent struggle for me during these 4 years until I entered my graduate work. It was a combination of my multicultural class and the 2000 U.S. Census (i.e., the first time individuals could check more than one racial category) that allowed me to begin to safely explore my identity. In all, acclimating to college was a struggle in some areas. I did not know how to reach nor utilize resources for most of my undergraduate years. I essentially hoped for the best and discovered which classes would grant me a decent grade. As I reflect on all that colleges offer in terms of assistance and development, there was much rich support available to me. I wish I had the awareness to tap into it. I look back on my time fondly and admire how it has shaped me. It was an enormous growth experience—one of emerging into adulthood, creating wonderful connections with people, learning about who I am, and figuring out the world one semester at a time.

I am currently a professor at Rollins College in the Graduate Studies in Counseling Program, where I oversee the Certificate in College and University Counseling.

#### Laura M. Gonzalez, PhD

I started my undergraduate career at Penn State University, on that enormous main campus with more than 40,000 other students. For a small-town youth like me, that was pretty overwhelming, and I never found a sense of belonging. Upon transferring to the small liberal arts campus of Colgate University, however, my inner scholar started to bloom. I was thrilled to be pushed by my peers and professors to bring forth all of my hidden talents, and to feel valued and accepted as one "smart girl" among many. I think the word transformation is used quite appropriately to describe the changes I felt as an undergraduate student, and the seed for my graduate degrees was definitely planted there. As a human being, I found the social milieu of Colgate to be challenging to me, but thankfully there were corners where I could find "my people"-in the Women's Studies House; the Peace Studies House; and many student organizations related to culture, identity, and inclusion. Although I didn't belong everywhere, I belonged somewhere, and that was enough. Later, I received my PhD in counselor education from North Carolina State University. Those experiences formed the basis for my lifelong interest in working with college students to promote holistic and healthy development, attainment of goals and aspirations, and personal transformation. Whether working on the college counseling or student affairs side of the house, I have always attempted to listen carefully to students' experiences and help them find their way forward. Even as a faculty member now, this central task remains the same.

I am currently an associate professor in the Teacher Education and Higher Education Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG).

#### Joshua C. Watson, PhD

In 1997 I was about to graduate with a degree in psychology from the University of Connecticut. At the time, future career plans were "hazy" at best, as I figured an interesting opportunity eventually would come my way. About a month or so before graduation I was asked to meet with our associate director of residence life. I had been involved with student government and residence life throughout my time as an undergraduate, and I naturally figured he had called the meeting to offer me a job at the university. Long story short, that was not the case at all. Instead, he talked to me about advancing my education. He believed I would be a good candidate for student affairs positions and encouraged me to look at programs where I could get the training needed to work on campus. Inspired by his confidence in my potential, and without any promising job prospects, I decided to continue my education and enrolled in the counseling master's program at Clemson University for the upcoming semester. As a graduate counseling student, I completed my internship experiences at the university's Counseling and Psychological Services. Working with college students was a tremendous experience and ignited my passion for this specialized field. Throughout my doctoral training and into my career as a counselor educator, an emphasis on college students and their unique needs has directed my scholarly work and service to the profession. I currently work as a counselor educator at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, a federally designated Hispanic-serving institution where most students identify as being members of an underrepresented population and/or the first in their families to attend college. Researching the first-year college adjustment experience and working with these students has helped me appreciate the importance of a college education to individuals and their families. Further, I have come to see the many issues and challenges students face today, and I believe the services college counselors and student affairs personnel are providing to be vitally important to student success. I am glad you have chosen to work in this field and believe you will enjoy working with college students as much as I have. Best of luck in your journey!

## About the Contributors

- Kathryn P. (Tina) Alessandria, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Counselor Education at West Chester University in Pennsylvania, where she serves as coordinator of the Higher Education Counseling/Student Affairs Program. She served as member-at-large for the American College Counseling Association (ACCA) from 2006 to 2009 and has represented ACCA on the Higher Education Mental Health Alliance since its inception in 2008. Dr. Alessandria has been recognized by the ACCA with the College Counseling Advocacy Award (2013) and Professional Leadership Award (2018).
- Kristin Bruns, PhD, is an assistant professor at Youngstown State University in the Counseling program. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Ohio. Her professional counseling experiences have been in college counseling centers, as well as community agencies and a private practice. Her research interests include college student mental health, suicidality, and protective factors.
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- **Dana Burnett, PhD,** is professor of practice emeritus, Department of Foundations and Leadership, at Old Dominion University. His research focus is in the area of student affairs, especially leadership for future leaders of postsecondary institutions and leadership development programs for undergraduates. Professor Burnett has served as a department chair and in several administrative positions, including vice president for student affairs and dean of students.
- Lesley Casarez, PhD, is associate professor at Angelo State University, where she oversees the master's degrees in Professional School Counseling and Guidance and Counseling. She has previous experience as a graduate programs adviser and public school counselor and educator. She is actively involved in the Texas Counseling Association, Texas School Counseling Association, Three Rivers Counseling Association, and Phi Kappa Phi. Her accomplishments include numerous scholarly presentations and publications, with specific interests in school counseling issues, mental health, online learning, accessibility, and leadership.

- **David J. Denino**, **PhD**, is director emeritus of Counseling Services and adjunct professor in the Clinical Mental Health program at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU). He served as secretary and treasurer for the American College Counseling Association for several years and is an emeritus member of the Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors. David has been a recipient of the Connecticut Counseling Association's Distinguished Professional Award, Outstanding Teaching Award/SCSU, and the American Red Cross Hero's Award for his work as a disaster mental health responder.
- **Amanda Faucher, MA,** is a licensed professional and a current doctoral student at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. She graduated Capella University with a master's degree in psychology and, later, Walden University with a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. She formerly had a private practice where she specialized in transcranial magnetic stimulation. She has worked in various settings, including inpatient psychiatric facilities, outpatient rehabilitation, and community agencies. Her professional research interests include holistic approaches and mind-body work.
- **Perry C. Francis**, PhD, is a professor of counseling and the coordinator of the Counseling Training Clinic at Eastern Michigan University. He has been an active leader in the American College Counseling Association for over 25 years, serving in various roles including president and governing council representative to the American Counseling Association. Additionally, Professor Francis chaired the Ethics Revision Task Force that produced the American Counseling Association's 2014 *ACA Code of Ethics*. He has written numerous articles and book chapters on ethics in the profession and presented on college counseling ethics nationally and internationally.
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- **Brianna Kane, MA,** is currently a counselor education doctoral student at the University of Florida. She graduated from Jacksonville University with a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. Ms. Kane has been a counselor and instructor within university settings and appreciates the diversity and complexities of students' lives. She takes a holistic approach with her students, seeking to understand the unique meaning systems that they each possess. Her professional and research interests include emerging adulthood and college students' wellness and success.
- Michael M. Kocet, PhD, is professor and department chair of counselor education at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Professor Kocet earned his PhD in counselor education and is a licensed mental health counselor, a board-certified counselor, and an Approved Clinical Supervisor. His professional areas of interest include ethics; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning issues; and grief counseling. He is the editor of the book *Counseling Gay Men, Adolescents, and Boys: A Strengths-Based Guide for Helping Professionals and Educators*, published by Routledge, and is coauthor of the text *Ethical Decision Making for the 21st Century Counselor*, published by Sage. He is past president of the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling.

- **Elizabeth Likis-Werle, PhD,** is an assistant professor of counseling at Western Carolina University. Previously, she taught counseling at East Tennessee State University and directed the Community Counseling Clinic. She earned her PhD in counseling and counselor education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her master's in community counseling from Western Carolina University. Her work experience includes working in university counseling centers, mental health centers, school-based therapy, foster/adoption services, intensive outpatient programs, and wilderness therapy. Her specialties are college student identity, addiction, sexual trauma, and mood issues.
- Steven Mencarini, PhD, is the dean of students at Guilford College and has served in various capacities within higher education institutions over the past 18 years. He received his PhD in higher education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, his master's in college student personnel from the University of Maryland, College Park, and his bachelor's degree in biology from the College of William & Mary. His research interests involve college student development and leadership development theories, as well as understanding the impact of college environments.
- **Amy Murphy, PhD,** is assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Angelo State University and program adviser for the MEd in student development and leadership in higher education as well as an academic advising certificate. She was formerly the dean of students at Texas Tech University and has more than 20 years of student affairs administrative experiences, including work related to behavioral intervention, student transitions, student activities, parent programming, and prevention and wellness. She is president of the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association, has authored two books, and writes and presents regularly on current issues in education related to safety and wellness.
- **Carolyn Rifkin, MA**, graduated with her master's in college counseling and student development from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2015. She has additional training in eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing and in motivational interviewing. Her work experiences include campus-based service-learning programming and community-based work as a therapist/addictions specialist.
- **Benjamin Robertson, MA,** is currently a counselor education doctoral student at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. He graduated from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley with a master's degree in counseling and guidance. Mr. Robertson has worked in various roles as a youth care worker, case manager, and counselor serving diverse populations in different settings. He emphasizes the importance of a humanistic approach in his work with individuals and invites persons to embrace a collaborative stance in making meaningful, positive changes. His professional and research interests include emotional intelligence and burnout in mental health workers.
- Meghan K. Root, MA, has earned degrees from St. John Fisher College (NY), Lesley University (MA), and Widener University (PA). She specializes in sexual violence trauma and response and has experience in mobile crisis and sexual addictions and has worked at a small public college psychological health clinic. Since 2014, she has worked for the U.S. Air Force (AF) in the Washington, DC, area providing advocacy for survivors of sexual violence. She currently serves in the AF Integrated Resilience office as the education and training manager.
- **Samuel Sanabria**, **PhD**, is an associate professor of counseling at Rollins College and specializes in multicultural, social justice, and sexuality issues in counseling with a focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. He began his career working as a clinician in substance abuse, anger management, and domestic violence programs. Since then, he has provided counseling and clinical evaluations for Wellstar Health System, Atlanta's largest not-for-profit health care provider, and dedicated 8

years to private practice, providing therapeutic and psychological assessment services for sexual minority, ethnic, and Latinx immigrant populations. He currently teaches a course on neuroscience for counselors.

- **Mark B. Scholl, PhD**, is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling at Wake Forest University. He is an active member of several American Counseling Association (ACA) divisions, including the Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC), the National Career Development Association, and the American College Counseling Association. He is a past president of AHC, past two-term editor of *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, and former chair of the ACA Council of Journal Editors. He is a member of the ACA Governing Council, representing the AHC division. His research interests include culturally responsive counseling and constructivist approaches to career counseling.
- Alan M. Schwitzer, PhD, is a licensed psychologist and professor of counseling at Old Dominion University, where he is a faculty member in college counseling, higher education administration, and community college leadership. Prior to faculty work, he was involved in residence life, academic advising, and psychological services at Virginia Commonwealth University, The University of Texas at Austin, Tulane University, and James Madison University. He is a past editor of the *Journal of College Counseling* and currently works with the *Journal of American College Health*, the *Journal of College Student Development*, and *About Campus Magazine*.
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