



Student Affairs and Student Services Management Course: Retention and Student Experience



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Introduction:

Student affairs and student services management, covering retention and student experience, is a 5-day course for student affairs leadership, student services and university administration teams that ends with a Retention and Student Experience Plan for a case university. Many universities run advising, housing, activities, conduct and accessibility units in isolation, so at-risk students are spotted late, first-year withdrawals rise and service spending cannot be linked to persistence. Nominees already manage student-facing units and work through case studies built on cohort, survey and service data. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this student affairs management course.

Course Objectives:

- Map the student affairs division against the student lifecycle and student development theory to show where each unit adds value
- Assess a student services unit against the CAS standards using a Self-Assessment Guide and set improvement priorities
- Design orientation, first-year transition, academic advising and early alert processes that route at-risk students to timely support
- Organise student engagement, clubs, residential life and disability accommodation services with clear policies, staffing and service levels
- Manage student conduct cases, grievances, appeals and wellbeing referrals through fair, documented procedures at unit level
- Analyse retention data and student voice evidence to build a Retention and Student Experience Plan with KPIs and a budget

Target Audience:

- Student affairs leadership teams responsible for the overall student support division and its results
 - Student services management teams that run advising, orientation, activities or housing units day to day
 - University administration teams that plan budgets, staffing and service levels for student-facing departments
 - Student conduct and grievance coordination teams that handle discipline cases, appeals and complaints
 - Accessibility and wellbeing coordination teams that manage accommodations and referral routes for students
 - Institutional research and student success teams that track persistence, withdrawals and satisfaction data
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Student Affairs Models, Development Theory and the Student Lifecycle

- Student Affairs Functional Area Map for a University Division
- Chickering's Seven Vectors Applied to Student Development Goals
- Astin's Theory of Involvement and Campus Engagement Design
- Student Lifecycle Map From Orientation to Graduation
- Student Services Current-State Scan Using Division Data

Day 2: CAS Standards, Retention Models and Service Architecture

- CAS Standards General Standards Across Student Services Units
- CAS Self-Assessment Guide Rating for One Functional Area
- Tinto Model of Student Departure and Integration Levers
- First-Year Experience Framework for Orientation and Transition
- Student Affairs Division Structure and Service Level Agreements

Day 3: Advising, Early Alert, Engagement, Housing and Accessibility Operations

- Academic Advising Caseload Model and Advising Session Records
- Early Alert System Triggers, Referral Routing and Case Closure
- Student Clubs and Activities Policy With Funding Rules
- Residential Life Staffing, Room Allocation and Community Standards
- Disability Services Accommodation Request Process and Accessibility Audit

Day 4: Conduct, Grievances, Wellbeing Referral, Retention Analytics and Student Voice

- Student Conduct Code, Hearing Panel and Sanction Matrix
- Student Grievance and Appeal Procedure With Response Times
- Wellbeing Referral Protocol and Counselling Service Capacity Planning
- Retention Dashboard With Cohort Persistence and Withdrawal Reasons
- Student Satisfaction Survey Design and Student Voice Action Loop

Day 5: Case Study: Retention and Student Experience Plan for a Case University

- Case University Data Pack of Persistence and Service Usage
 - Retention Intervention Portfolio Prioritised by Student Risk Segment
 - Student Services KPI Scorecard and Division Budget Allocation
 - Student Experience Improvement Calendar With Named Unit Owners
 - Retention and Student Experience Plan Completion and Panel Defence
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Skills You Will Gain:

- Student Lifecycle Mapping
- Student Development Theory Application
- CAS Standards Self-Assessment
- Early Alert System Design
- Residential Life Operations
- Student Conduct Case Handling
- Retention Data Analysis
- Student Services Budgeting

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver a Retention and Student Experience Plan for a case university to the dean of students and the university executive
- Decide which retention interventions, advising loads and service levels to fund first, using persistence and survey evidence
- Prevent late identification of at-risk students, inconsistent conduct decisions and accommodation requests left without an owner
- Share early alert criteria, conduct sanction matrices, survey instruments and KPI scorecards with colleagues across student services

Conclusion:

Once back at the university, the participant presents the Retention and Student Experience Plan to the dean of students, the university executive and the heads of each student services unit. Leaders use it to agree which first-year and at-risk cohorts receive priority interventions, how advising, housing, activities and accessibility budgets are allocated, and which KPIs each unit reports. After the first full term under the plan, the division should review persistence, early alert closure times, grievance outcomes and satisfaction results, then reallocate resources where gaps remain.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before a student affairs and student services management course?

Participants should already manage or coordinate a student-facing unit such as advising, housing, activities, conduct or accessibility. Bringing anonymised retention figures, a satisfaction survey or a unit organisation chart helps them apply the case study work to their own division.

How does student affairs and student services management differ from a school counselling or university quality assurance course?

It manages the whole out-of-class student support division: lifecycle, advising, early alert, housing, conduct, accessibility, retention data and service budgets. School counselling courses train individual counsellors, and quality assurance courses focus on programme learning outcomes and accreditation evidence.

Why does student affairs and student services management depend on an early alert system?

An early alert system turns signals such as missed classes, low early grades or housing concerns into a routed referral within days. Without it, student services learn about struggling students only after withdrawal, when retention interventions can no longer help.

What do participants take back from the student affairs and student services management course?

Participants take back a Retention and Student Experience Plan for a case university, plus a student lifecycle map, a CAS self-assessment worksheet, early alert criteria, a conduct sanction matrix, a satisfaction survey outline and a student services KPI scorecard.
