

Hardy Cox, Donna and Strange, Carney. C. (Eds.) (2010). *Achieving Student Success: Effective Student Services in Canadian Higher Education*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Pages: 298. Price: 39.95 CAD (paper).

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*Achieving Student Success: Effective Student Services in Canadian Higher Education* is an edited collection of essays regarding student affairs and services practice across the country. This seminal text begins to address the gap in the field that Canadian student affairs and services practitioners have been waiting for - THEIR STORY. The editors, Dr. Hardy-Cox from Memorial University in Newfoundland and Dr. Carney Strange, Bowling Green State in Ohio, both have extensive experience in the field of student services in Canada and the U.S. respectively. In addition to their own expertise presented in the introduction, theory, and concluding chapters, they successfully bring together thirteen voices from across Canada who paint a picture of the mosaic of student services practices at Canadian universities and colleges.

The book is collection of narratives and research that discuss a range of student service portfolios from registrar and enrollment management, financial aid, first year services, residence life, student leadership, judicial affairs, counseling, health and wellness, career, and services for diverse students. The book also presents a chapter on what it means to be a leader within student services from an organizational and managerial perspective. In addition there are specific chapters on how student services vary within an institutional mission and across the context of colleges and universities, as well as those student services provided at a distance. The book concludes with the editors' reflections on the principles and strategies of good practices in the field.

The challenge in writing a seminal piece is that you are attempting to build the foundation of a field of scholarship and practice that in Canada that has not had a tradition of "writing" about what we do. As a result, it would be an unfair expectation that every aspect of student affairs and services be included in this text. In setting the first layer of the foundation this book provides an opportunity for the rest of Canada to engage in writing our own stories of our research, theories, and practices to the mosaic of Canadian student affairs and services practices literature. In addition, it is apparent that there is more work to be done to bring forward exemplary practices that are both research-based and theoretical. The conversations occurring within the chapters call for in some cases stronger connections between research and theory, pointing to an area that requires further development within the field. For example, each chapter could have referred back and tie into the theories presented in Chapter 2 (a few did do this). Such theoretical threads woven through the book would provide a story line within the texts illustrating that as practitioners we are embodying theory, research, and policy into our practices.

The chapters also highlight obvious gaps in the research literature available to student services practitioners. The challenge here is not that we are not engaged in research, simply attending the annual conference of the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) demonstrates that we are indeed researching our practices—this book reminds us that is now our collective responsibility to publish our work in multiple forms (e.g., professional journals, academic journals, books, and conference proceedings). The growing use of open source technology and online publishing will ultimately support this aspect of our work.

Each chapter addressed the challenges facing student affairs and services whether it was technology within the Registrar's office or Career Services. Other challenges are the financial constraints of wellness services and student diversity for housing and first-year services, given the shifting demographics of our campuses. The book also discussed the broader responses to market demands and aligning student services practices to meet institutional missions and student success. I would argue that each of these challenges presented in fact culminate to affect the wholistic service provision and multiple-mandates of student affairs and services at the broader institutional level. Policy is an important component of being a student affairs professional, consequently, the inherent connection between how our practice can inform policy within our units, divisions, or even how institutional policies impact on our practice, whether fiduciary, structural, or legal would strengthen the contributions of the book.

Another conversation that was absent but one that definitely fits is the role of ethics of the student affairs professional and administrator. Although some chapters lightly touched on the topic of professional ethics, an entire chapter could have discussed the complexities of ethics from policy to practice. The role of ethics across the profession would further strengthen the conversations within this book.

The strength of the volume however is that several chapters include sections relating to the "how to" of practice, addressing ways in which individuals become a professional within the field. Several authors make links to professional organizations and educational opportunities that would prepare one for a career in the field of student services. These connections to professionalism also provide a broader connection to networks that connect the practitioner to the history of student affairs and services in Canada.

This book is easily accessible with a blend of research and practice that will appeal to practitioners, administrators, faculty, and graduate students. Although this book has a Canadian focus, its applicability is in fact broader, and student services practitioners globally will find this book a welcome resource for informing, critiquing, comparing, and engaging with in their own contexts. Indeed, this book provides an impetus for international comparative research on the field of student affairs, at a time when these services are increasing on university campuses worldwide. *Achieving Student Success* is a must read for every Canadian student affairs and services professional. It is a text that we can all engage in and continue to elaborate upon to add our stories of our field from institutions across Canada. ♣