COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

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Degree: Master of Science

Introduction

The CSPA master’s program (whose name will soon be changing to Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration) at Canisius College is a full time cohort-based course of study that prepares graduates for careers in student affairs administration in both private and public institutions of higher education. The program is grounded in a theory-to-practice philosophy based in Jesuit pedagogy and student affairs professional competencies.

The course of study consists of 36 credit hours taken over two academic years. The CSPA program combines the in-class education of graduate coursework with the experiential learning of required internships to achieve its mission. Graduate assistantships are also available, which provide additional experience.

CSPA students are charged a single program fee, which includes tuition, books, membership in a national professional association and the cost of attendance at one national professional conference (College Student Educators International [ACPA] or Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education [NASPA]) during each year of the program. This experience will enhance the student’s understanding of the importance of life-long professional development and the value of professional relationships. CSPA students progress through the academic program together, taking all of their coursework as a cohesive group, thus developing strong team building skills and effective work groups. More information can be found at the program website (https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/college-student-personnel-administration).

Admission

Application for admission to the program is open to any qualified holder of a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, regardless of undergraduate field of study, who meets the requirements for admission to graduate study in the School of Education and Human Resources. To be eligible to participate in interviews for graduate assistantships, students should complete the admission process and be accepted by February 1. However, admission is on a rolling basis until the cohort is filled.

Mission Statement

The master’s program in College Student Personnel Administration (CSPA) at Canisius College prepares student affairs practitioners to work in all sectors of higher education administration while emphasizing the unique context of private, independent colleges and universities. The CSPA program combines the in-class education of graduate coursework with the experiential learning of required internships to achieve its mission. Graduate assistantships are also available, which provide additional experience.

Graduates of the College Student Personnel Administration master’s degree program will:

1. be prepared to enter the student affairs profession as practitioners in multiple administrative sub-fields (residence life, student activities, career services, etc.).
2. be able to use the foundations of theory and practical experience to make sound and ethical professional decisions.
3. be prepared to participate as professionals in the education of the whole student, consistent with the Jesuit value of cura personalis (“care for the person”), regardless of the institutional context of their work.
4. understand the value of contributing to their profession through participation in professional associations, and through activities such as presentations and publications and serving in leadership positions.

Program Details

The CSPA master’s program at Canisius College is a full time cohort based course of study that prepares graduates for careers in student affairs administration at both private and public institutions of higher education. The course of study consists of 36 credit hours taken over two academic years. The program is grounded in a theory-to-practice philosophy based in Jesuit pedagogy and student affairs professional competencies. The CSPA program is compliant with the standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

CAS standards require all master’s students to complete two different internships. The CSPA program requires each internship to be at least 225 clock hours. Graduate assistantships do not count as internships. Typically, CSPA students complete the hours for their first internship during the summer between their first and second year of study, although they complete the reflection paper and receive course credit in the fall semester of their second year. This allows students to accept internships at institutions across the United States and around the world. The second internship is typically done during the students’ second year of coursework at Canisius and other institutions around the Western New York region.

CSPA students have a choice of two possible ways to demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize their master’s coursework during their second year of study. Students may choose to do an independent research project (i.e., master’s thesis). For students who do not choose this option, there is the option to take a comprehensive examination (written and oral) and an elective course.

One feature of the CSPA program is unique to Canisius College. Embedded in the graduate tuition full time students pay is the cost of attending one of the two national conferences (ACPA or NASPA) as a group each year of the students’ program. This includes the cost of association membership, conference registration, hotel, and travel. Meals are not included. First year students attend conference sessions and volunteer at conference events and activities. They write reflective papers on their experience, connecting it to their coursework. This paper is an element of the assessment process. Second year students participate in job placement activities as well as attend conference sessions and activities.
First Year
Fall and Spring Courses
CSP 501
CSP 510
CSP 530
CSP 560
CSP 570
CSP 660
Second Year
Fall and Spring Courses
CSP 540
CSP 665
CSP 677
CSP 680
CSP 681
CSP 699

LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Learning Goal 1
Candidates in the CSPA program will demonstrate content knowledge, pedagogical, and professional knowledge necessary for successful performance in their field.

Students will:
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply relevant student development theories to professional situations and student activities.
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply relevant counseling theories and techniques in working with individuals and groups.
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply laws relevant to American higher education to policies and programs.
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply relevant leadership theories to professional situations and student activities.
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply the lessons of the history of higher education and student affairs in the United States to professional situations.
• Know and demonstrate the ability to apply the principles of multicultural competence.
• Know and apply Jesuit educational values in multiple institutional settings.

Learning Goal 2
Candidates in the CSPA program will demonstrate professional skills and dispositions necessary for successful performance in their field.

Students will:
• Demonstrate the ability to write effectively
• Demonstrate the ability to give professional presentations.
• Demonstrate the ability to find, read, and evaluate scholarly research on professional topics.
• Demonstrate the ability to construct, plan, and assess out-of-class experiences.

Learning Goal 3
Candidates in the CSPA program will demonstrate willingness to use their skills to benefit and serve society. Within the contexts of their work, candidates promote authentic learning, social and emotional development, and a commitment to social justice in environments that foster respect for diversity and the dignity of all.

Students will:
• Demonstrate the ability to understand and work with diverse students and staff.
• Demonstrate the ability to model cura personalis in professional interactions.

Learning Goal 4
Candidates will demonstrate self-reflection as a habit of mind, continuously assessing and refining their professional practice as they construct a rich repertoire of research-based knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective performance ensuring that all students and/or clients have optimal opportunities to learn and grow.

Students will:
• Demonstrate the ability to make responsible and ethical professional decisions.
• Demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research.

Learning Goal 5
Candidates will become adept at applying their acquired knowledge in the process of evaluating their own professional performance and decision-making with respect to its impact on students and/or clients, organizations, and the wider community.

Students will:
• Demonstrate the capacity for self-reflection and professional development.

CSP 501 Introduction to College Student Personnel Administration
3 Credits
An Introduction to the development of student affairs as a profession, specific job responsibilities within student affairs, and professional ethics. Introduction to higher education research and other professional sources.
Offered: every fall.

CSP 510 History and Organization of Higher Education in the United States
3 Credits
Students will examine the development and organization of colleges and universities, including the faculty role and the rise of student affairs, institutional culture, and current issues within their historical context.
Offered: every fall.

CSP 530 Methods of Research and Assessment
3 Credits
The nature of social science inquiry with specific implications for both research and assessment in higher education. Review of both quantitative and qualitative methods of research and assessment.
Offered: every spring.

CSP 540 Diversity in Higher Education
3 Credits
This class is designed to increase students’ knowledge of diverse populations and diversity-related issues and their impact on college communities. Students will explore how they can work to build inclusive communities within institutions of higher education and develop the competencies needed when addressing a diverse population.
Offered: every fall.
CSP 560 Theories of Leadership 3 Credits
Introduction to the topic of leadership in the student affairs context. Introduction to leadership theories, styles, practices and applications. Development of an individual philosophy of leadership and reflection on how the course content may be incorporated into professional practice. 
Offered: every spring.

CSP 570 Foundations of Counseling in Student Affairs 3 Credits
Provides a working knowledge of counseling issues and techniques to address the needs of the student within the realm of higher education. Introduction to mental health disorders and exposure to preventative and communication strategies to assist college-aged students. 
Offered: every spring.

CSP 599 Independent Study 3 Credits
Independent studies require an application and approval by the associate dean. 
Prerequisite: permission of the instructor, department chair, & associate dean.

CSP 660 The American College Student 3 Credits
Provides an introduction to student development theory and a profile of the contemporary college student. Theories of identity development, involvement and learning will be considered. In addition, the relationship of theory to practice in student affairs will be explored along with issues related to diversity. 
Offered: every fall.

CSP 665 Legal Issues in Higher Education 3 Credits
An examination of the many ways federal, state, and local laws impact higher education administration. Issues include differences between public and private higher education, first amendment issues, affirmative action, the requirements of laws such as FERPA, Clery, and Title IX, and other relevant case law. 
Offered: every fall.

CSP 677 Capstone Seminar 3 Credits
Designed to provide graduating CSPA students with the opportunity to discuss current issues in student affairs practice with a goal toward making the transition from being graduate students to becoming full time student affairs professionals. 
Offered: every spring.

CSP 680 Internship I 3 Credits
The first of two required internship experiences intended to broaden the student’s understanding of the profession. Each internship requires 225 hours of supervised experience. Permission of the program director is required. 
Prerequisite: successful completion of first year coursework. Restriction: permission of program director. 
Offered: every fall.

CSP 681 Internship II 3 Credits
The second of two required internship experiences intended to broaden the student’s understanding of the profession. Each internship requires 225 hours of supervised experience. Permission of the program director is required. 
Prerequisite: CSP 680. Restriction: permission of program director. 
Offered: every spring.

CSP 699 Independent Research 3 Credits
A thesis, research paper, or major project which provides the opportunity to investigate a topic or act of student personnel administration of particular interest to the student. Note: Students may also choose to fulfill the CSP 699 requirement through a comprehensive examination (written and oral) and by successfully completing a three-credit graduate elective course at Canisius College, chosen by the student and approved by the CSP director. 
Prerequisite: successful completion of first year coursework. Restriction: permission of program director based on successful presentation of proposal. 
Offered: every spring.