The College Student Personnel program at Western Illinois University prepares and graduates effective leaders and reflective practitioners doing socially and ethically responsible work in the field of student affairs. Students who graduate from the College Student Personnel program will be able to:

- Identify approaches to address contemporary issues facing higher education;
- Articulate histories, values, and philosophies of higher education;
- Study leadership (as a role and process) and demonstrate its application for creating learning environments that support the inclusion of all students and members of campus communities, (virtual or in-person) while attending to issues of privilege, power, and oppression;
- Define, observe, and identify the implications of organizational and human resources including, but not limited to policies, practices, procedures, and structures;
- Gather, apply, and deploy methods of research and assessment to improve, shape, and benefit student learning and higher education; and
- Describe the concepts and principles of student development and learning theories that advance intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive complexity.

Program Location: Macomb, Quad Cities

Program Distinctions

- Established in 1970, the program has graduated almost 900 alumni.
- The two-year Master of Science program meets requirements of the Council for the Advancement of Standards, the most comprehensive and rigorous preparation program standards established specifically for student affairs work.
- A holistic educational approach emphasizes the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners in the classroom and practical experiences.
- One hundred percent of graduates who choose to work in student affairs are typically able to secure positions within three months of graduation.
- Two tracks within the College Student Personnel (CSP) program offer educational opportunities for both emerging professionals and experienced professionals.
- The CSP program has a theory-to-practice orientation that includes coursework in the following areas:
  - Student development theory
  - Leadership development
  - Group dynamics
  - Philosophy and history of higher education
  - Organization and administration of student affairs
  - Multicultural competency
  - Counseling theory and techniques
  - Research methods

All of this preparation is aimed at helping students develop and grow as a leader and a reflective practitioner, performing socially responsible practice as a student affairs professional. Our graduates are prepared to begin and advance their student affairs careers in a variety of student settings, including residence life, student activities, Greek affairs, admissions and student recruitment, academic advising, orientation, multicultural student programs, study abroad, student retention, gender programming, career development, student union management, and experiential education.

The program offers a full-time track for emerging professionals who want to gain professional, hands-on field experience and a part-time track for professionals who are currently engaged in student affairs work.

College Student Personnel: Student Affairs Track

- The Student Affairs track provides students with the classroom and professional experiences needed to enter and advance in the field of student affairs.
- A theory-to-practice model means students have a space and place to apply classroom learning facilitated through a full-time assistantship and practica experiences—required components of this track.
- In small cohorts of 22 to 25, students learn, work, and support each other as students and student affairs professionals.
- Assistantships, practica, and summer internship opportunities provide up to five hands-on training experiences during the two years of the program.
- CSP: Student Affairs is a high-residency, full-time graduate school option, based at the WIU-Macomb campus.

College Student Personnel: Higher Education Leadership Track

- The Higher Education Leadership track serves the educational and logistical needs of professionals who are currently engaged in student affairs (or closely related) work in a professional capacity.
- The Higher Education Leadership track, beginning its inaugural year in Fall 2015, enrolls new students bi-annually (Fall 2015, Fall 2017, Fall 2019, etc.).
- A theory-to-practice model means the application of classroom concepts to real-world student affairs work is a critical part of classroom discussions and course assignments.
- In a small cohort of professionals, students learn and support each other as students and student affairs professionals.
- CSP: Higher Education Leadership courses are offered in a part-time, low-residency, weekend model that blends in-person and online learning environments based on the WIU-Quad Cities campus.

Career Opportunities

Through the CSP program, students develop their student affairs skills through academic inquiry and hands-on training (theory-to-practice) giving access to the practice, knowledge, and skills to be a student affairs practitioner in a wide range of settings.
Here are a few examples of where alumni are making a difference in their communities:

- Admission Counselor, University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
- Associate Director of Housing Administration, Baylor University (TX)
- Orientation and First-Year Experience Coordinator, University of California (Canada)
- Associate Director of Alumnae/i Relations, Dominican University (IL)
- Residential Life Coordinator, San Jose State University (CA)
- Student Organizations Advisor, Evergreen State University (WA)
- Associate Dean of Students, Eureka College (IL)
- Academic Advisor, Texas State University
- Director of Education, International Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta (KY)
- Resident Coordinator, State University of New York (SUNY Purchase)
- Greek Life Coordinator, Illinois Institute of Technology
- Assistant Director of Academic Programs, University of Iowa
- Women’s Center Program Coordinator, Virginia Tech
- Director of Student Activities and Orientation, Edgewood College (WI)
- Coordinator of New Student Programs, Mercer University (GA)
- Co-Executive Director, Students Today Leaders Forever (STLF) (MN)
- Director of First Year Experience and Transition Programs, University of Nebraska–Lincoln
- Assistant Director of Admissions, Beloit College (WI)
- Director of Housing and Residential Life, The College of The Bahamas
- Coordinator of Leadership Development and Programming, Missouri State University
- Associate Dean of Students, Luther Seminary (MN)
- Academic Advisor, St. Louis University (MO)
- Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Guilford College (NC)

**Degree Requirements**

The curriculum for the CSP program is rooted in the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies, Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) Graduate Preparation Program guidelines, feedback from the annual surveys conducted with recent alumni and their student affairs employer, as well as an advisory board, providing the most current information, tools, and techniques used in the field.

**College Student Personnel: Student Affairs Track**

The Student Affairs track consists of 48 semester hours (sh), including a specialization core of 36 sh, 2 sh of practicum, and 6 sh of internship. Four hours of electives from the behavioral sciences, counseling, and other related areas are selected in consultation with your advisor. Core courses are offered in a sequential fashion and have a high-residency approach—typically 16 in-person meetings per semester for 3 and 4 sh courses. Completion time for this track is four semesters.

**College Student Personnel: Higher Education Leadership**

The Higher Education Leadership track consists of 42 sh of credit, including a specialization core of 36 sh, 6 sh of application through hands-on student affairs work, a thesis or a mixture of one of these experiences with electives from the behavioral sciences, counseling, and other related areas. These would be selected in consultation with your advisor.

Core courses are offered in a sequential fashion (6-9 sh per semester), and have a low-residency approach—typically three-four in-person weekend course meetings per semester with the remaining coursework facilitated through WesternOnline, allowing students to continue in professional student affairs (or closely-related) work while pursuing a graduate degree. Completion time for this track is four semesters and three summer sessions.

Course descriptions and details about the core courses are available at wiu.edu/csp.

**Contact Information**

For admission process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb IL 61455, (309)298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact the CSP Program Office, Department of Educational Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb IL 61455, (309) 298-2848, csp@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/csp.