



Emotional Labor And Well-Being

By: **R. Jason Lynch** and Kerry L.B. Klima

Abstract

From *Creating Sustainable Careers in Student Affairs: What Ideal Worker Norms Get Wrong and How to Make it Right* editor: Margaret Sallee, First edition. Sterling, Virginia : Stylus Publishing. 2020.

This book argues that the current structure of student affairs work is not sustainable, as it depends on the notion that employees are available to work non-stop without any outside responsibilities, that is, the Ideal Worker Norm. The field places inordinate burdens on staff to respond to the needs of students, often at the expense of their own families and well-being. Student affairs professionals can meet the needs of their students without being overworked. The problem, however, is that ideal worker norms pervade higher education and student affairs work, thus providing little incentive for institutions to change. The authors in this book use ideal worker norms in conjunction with other theories to interrogate the impact on student affairs staff across functional areas, institutional types, career stage, and identity groups. The book is divided into three sections; chapters in the first section of the book examine various facets of the structure of work in student affairs, including the impact of institutional type and different functional areas on employees' work-lives. Chapters in the second section examine the personal toll that working in student affairs can take, including emotional labor's impact on well-being. The final section of the book narrows the focus to explore how different identity groups, including mothers, fathers, and people of color, navigate work/life issues. Challenging ideal worker norms, all chapters offer implications for practice for both individuals and institutions.

Lynch, R.J. & Klima, K. (2020). Emotional Labor and Well-Being (book chapter). Sallee M. (Ed.), *Creating Sustainable Careers in Student Affairs: What Ideal Worker Norms Get Wrong and How to Make It Right*. First edition. Stylus Publishing; 2020.

EMOTIONAL LABOR AND WELL-BEING

R. Jason Lynch and Kerry L. B. Klima

Student affairs work often requires the regular negotiation between felt and displayed emotions. Consider the residential life professional who attends an early morning meeting with only a few hours of sleep after responding to a student crisis. Although they may feel tired, drained, and irritable, they must project an attitude of caring, concern, and responsiveness. Also, consider the career services professional meeting with a senior student who has waited until a month before graduation to start their job search. This may engender feelings of frustration, but the staff member must put aside their frustration to meet organizational perceptions of professionalism. These two hypothetical cases could have been replaced with an endless list of examples of how student affairs professionals engage in *emotional labor*, defined as the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display (Hochschild, 1983), to meet the stated and unstated requirements of their job. But what is the impact of negotiating this type of labor on student affairs professionals?

In this chapter, we explore the emotional labor asked of student affairs professionals and link requirements of emotional labor to ideal worker standards that are reinforced in student affairs work. For the purposes of this chapter, the *ideal worker* may be conceived as an individual who has few personal distractions, such as health, family, and outside interests, that may detract from the work of the organization (Acker, 1990; Williams et al., 2012). To organizational leaders, ideal worker norms assume that professionals and staff are emotionless, unconcerned with personal well-being, and prioritize their job above all else. We argue that the perpetuation of ideal worker standards in student affairs organizations can negatively impact

the well-being of professionals. We explore the well-being of professionals through two perspectives: the experiences they bring with them as professionals and the demands placed on them by the student affairs work environment. Finally, we offer recommendations that practitioners, divisional leaders, and the profession at large can use to develop work environments that critically reflect on emotional labor requirements and actively facilitate the well-being of student affairs professionals.

We draw from two qualitative studies that illustrate the intersection of emotional labor and well-being within student affairs work. The first study explored the lived experiences of 30 student affairs practitioners who experienced significant personal impact as a result of supporting students through traumatic life events. Lynch (2017) conducted one-on-one interviews that focused on each participant's personal experience and perceived outcomes as a result of supporting students. Participants were also asked to engage in a visual representation exercise where they used visual art as a mechanism to communicate the emotion and meaning-making involved in their support of students. Participants represented 14 different student affairs functional areas (e.g., housing and residence life, health promotion, academic advising) as well as a broad spectrum of seniority from graduate assistants to senior student affairs administrators. Several practices were employed to ensure trustworthiness within the study, including engaging in triangulation of the data through multiple data collection mechanisms, conducting member checks throughout the data collection and analysis processes, and utilizing a licensed counselor to assist in data analysis as an independent coder.

The second study examined the experiences of eight midlevel student affairs professionals who navigated a mental health condition as a new professional and persisted in the field. Klima (2018) conducted two interviews with nine participants; the first focused on the experiences of professionals navigating their mental health during their first year in the field, and the second explored connections between participant experiences with work–life quality related to their mental health. Interviews were supplemented with a journal exercise where participants were asked to identify five words that described their experience as a new professional who navigated a mental health condition as well as provide a written reflection as to why they chose those five words.

Understanding Emotional Labor

The term *emotional labor* was first coined by Arlie Russell Hochschild in 1983. In her work, she described the commodification of human emotion and defined emotional labor as the management of feeling to create a publicly

observable facial and bodily display (Hochschild, 1983). Contemporary scholarship on emotional labor has illustrated that this aspect of work may be performed in a variety of ways, including surface acting, deep acting, and natural expression. *Surface acting* involves adjusting one's outer emotional expressions without altering the internal experience of an emotion (Cheung & Lun, 2015; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). This may be exemplified when a student affairs staff member feels internally flustered by an exchange with an angry parent but makes a concerted effort to smile and appear calm despite their internal feelings. *Deep acting* refers to the process of altering one's inner feelings to outwardly display a certain emotion (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2000). Using the previous example, this staff member may access a recent happy or comforting memory or engage in deep breathing to conjure an authentically positive expression. Finally, *natural expression* takes place when an individual expresses their genuine emotion—in other words their outward expression matches their internal feeling (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

Although it may be necessary for staff to employ each of these emotional regulation techniques in various contexts for effective job performance, the use of emotional regulation techniques can impact personal well-being. Emotional labor requires individuals to expend energy on the self-control of their emotions (Cheung & Lun, 2015). Studies in both education (Cheung & Lun, 2015; Näring et al., 2006) and service industries (Cheung & Lun, 2015; Muraven & Baumeister, 2000) have demonstrated that surface acting is linked to increased rates of burnout and decreased reports of job satisfaction and psychological well-being. Researchers present mixed results on the impact of deep acting on well-being (Humphrey et al., 2015). Whether engaging in surface or deep acting, both concepts require a certain amount of energy to suppress authentic feelings. Conversely, Cheung and Tang (2010) demonstrated that employees who engage in natural expressions of emotion reported higher rates of job satisfaction and lower levels of psychological distress. However, the link between emotional labor and well-being is more nuanced than the ability to express, or requirement to suppress, what one is feeling.

A number of factors regulate the impact of emotional labor on an individual's well-being. For instance, Hülsheger and Schewe (2011) argued that an employee's desire to be emotionally authentic is directly related to the amount of emotional labor in which the individual engaged. Those wishing to be more authentic may expend more energy in their emotional regulation, thus depleting their emotional and cognitive energy to perform other tasks. However, not all emotions require the same degree of energy expenditure. Experiencing agitation (anger, frustration, anxiousness) had greater ties to reports of burnout and job dissatisfaction. Additionally, the intensity

or sustained duration of this feeling contributes to psychological distress (Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Gross, 1998). Interactions with coworkers often require more emotional labor than client or customer interactions (Pugliesi & Schook, 1997). The level of emotional labor involved in these interactions may also be regulated by the length of interactions, the level of familiarity between individuals, and various power dynamics among individuals (Gutek, 1995; Marks, 1994).

Emotional Labor and Higher Education

While much of the literature on emotional labor focuses on service industry professionals, recent research in emotional labor has explored this phenomenon within educational contexts (Constanti & Gibbs, 2004; Sutton, 2004; Yin et al., 2013). In K–12 education, teachers' management of their own emotional expression has been identified as an essential component of effectiveness in the classroom (Constanti & Gibbs, 2004; Näring et al., 2012; Sutton, 2004). In higher education, thought pieces and scholarship have explored the emotional labor performed by faculty members. In one essay, Shayne (2017) argued that faculty of color are often left to shoulder the work involved with providing emotional support of racially minoritized students. She stated,

Faculty members who perform emotional labor have open-door policies for our hurting students. When students show up clearly in need of support, even if we are buried in course prep, tomorrow's conference presentation, or article deadlines, we take them in, listen, and often offer tissues. (p. 1)

Yet, these faculty are often unrecognized for these efforts, as many consider emotional labor a natural part of supporting their community and not to be considered *work*. Emotional labor is also a gendered experience in the academy. While nontenured faculty report greater demands for emotional labor than tenured peers, woman-identified faculty members continue to report engaging in more emotional labor compared to men regardless of tenure status (Tunguz, 2016).

Although faculty certainly engage in emotional labor in a variety of areas of their work, student affairs professionals are considered to have the most sustained student contact (Lynch, 2017; Reynolds, 2010), and they also expend a great deal of energy on emotional labor. Hochschild (1983) suggested that emotional labor requirements are constructed, in part, by the organization for employees. Since these student affairs professionals have direct and frequent contact with students, there is an assumption from the organization (i.e., university or

department) about how they conduct emotionally laborious work. For example, within the context of the ideal worker norm, student affairs professionals should put aside, or turn off, their emotion in order to meet the emotional needs or expectations of students. To date there has been little scholarly discussion of how these acts of emotional labor impact student affairs professionals. In the next section, we highlight the lived experiences of student affairs professionals to illustrate how professionals engage in emotional labor and the subsequent impacts on their well-being.

Negotiating Emotional Labor in Student Affairs

As noted, student affairs staff work within the context of ideal worker norms in college and university settings, particularly in regard to emotional labor demands required when working with students, parents, and colleagues. Within this context, staff are often called to mask their authentic emotions in order to meet explicit or implicit emotional display rules within their organization. Hochschild (1983) described emotional labor acting as managed or situated by the organization and accomplished by the professional and the organization in tandem. As discussed previously, several factors affect how this emotional policing impacts the well-being of staff; yet ideal worker norms assume staff members will sacrifice their well-being for the good of the organization. Drawing on Lynch (2017) and Klima (2018), we illustrate experiences of student affairs professionals who have been negatively impacted by emotional labor through their interactions with students, coworkers, supervisors, institutional leaders, and organizations. Quotes from professionals in this chapter have been masked using pseudonyms in order to protect the anonymity of study participants.

Students

Student support and development is the foundation of the student affairs profession and is often the source of inspiration and purpose for professionals. Yet the participants in our studies reveal that this level of support frequently requires a significant investment of emotional labor and may sometimes come at a cost to the professional. For example, Anna, a residence life staff member in Klima's study, shared how ignoring her mental health to focus on job demands collided with her ability to manage a student staff meeting. She stated

There were times when I would get super frustrated with little things. You know, leading a staff meeting and having students doing side chatter, and

I would just explode and start yelling at them, and I am a very calm and patient person in general. And so, you know, that is when I realized, “Oh, maybe I need to do something about this,” because I was not performing to the best of my abilities.

Given that the ideal worker norm assumes the person is emotionless, Anna’s experience of ignoring her internal emotions and well-being demonstrates how continued levels of surface or deep acting can build to the point of eruption: in this case, risking the trust and cohesion of her team, impacting her ability to function in her work, and undermining her sense of self.

In both studies, student affairs professionals described the emotional labor experienced when negotiating professional boundaries with students. They shared how balancing expectations of professionalism and offering authentic student support created a sense of emotional dissonance. Matt, a senior service-learning and leadership professional from Lynch’s study, described the emotional labor of supporting students experiencing poverty and not understanding how much of his own personal reaction would be appropriate to share with students. His experience exemplifies the negotiation between surface acting and natural expression when reacting to stories of student trauma. He described his internal struggle, stating,

What I’ve learned about myself is I don’t have a really good perspective on where these boundaries are for me being emotionally available, compassionate, empathetic, and allowing myself to take on too much responsibility or too much contagion from this trauma. . . . I don’t know if it’s good when I’m hearing a student tell me their life story, and they’re doing it in a dispassionate way, [and I] tear up and a tear run[s] down my cheek. I don’t know if that’s appropriate or inappropriate. I don’t know how much time is an appropriate amount of time to help a student solve their own problem. I don’t know how much of my family to neglect and my marriage to neglect, or other aspects of my job to neglect to help the student navigate their trauma. So I’ve learned that I don’t have a good bearing on that. . . . They have a very real cost, a very real cost, and I don’t know what to do with that I guess.

These experiences demonstrate how student affairs professionals struggle to negotiate surface acting, deep acting, and authentic expression of how they are feeling. While the ideal worker norm views staff as emotionless, Matt’s story illuminates how socialization of student affairs professionals may result in the suppression of their own emotional reactions. This can be harmful for

both the professional, as they disregard their true feelings, and for students, who may be looking for overt displays of empathy.

Coworkers

As discussed earlier, emotional labor requirements may occur most often when navigating relationships with coworkers (Pugliesi & Schook, 1997). As a highly social profession, student affairs professionals are expected to build relationships with coworkers within and across departments in order to provide seamless support systems for students. Yet, these efforts may often require frequent and sustained amounts of emotional labor. In Lynch's (2017) study, a number of professionals described the emotional labor that coworkers performed in providing support. Jane, a new professional in residential life, exemplified this as she described her reliance on coworkers after a particularly stressful student crisis:

I just felt like that sometimes the only people I'll go to, to process in the moment, because they can get it, and they can understand what I'm going through, and know why I'm not giving all the details. I think that's another piece. I can't talk to my mom about it, about a lot of this stuff. . . . I'd rather talk to people who can either find out for themselves, because they get sneaky and start looking at reports . . . or looking at duty logs, or they just know. They're like, "Yeah, I know you can't tell me. That's fine. What's coming up for you though?"

Krista, a career services professional, had a different point of view. She pointed out a need for a structured distribution of emotional labor within student affairs departments. She reflected,

[At my current institution], we are so good at supporting our students and getting our students connected [to resources], but there was never a time for the staff to talk about it. And even, as [resident directors at my old institution], there was never a time for the staff to talk about it, unless we went out for drinks on our own time or went out for coffee or something like that. But there was never a time where we would sit down and actually discuss it and actually really sit there and let people feel, which is such bullshit for a profession that's supposed to be supporting. But who are we supporting? I guess we're supporting the students, right? Okay, yeah, supporting the students at the cost of the staff.

While not a part of most job descriptions, there is some level of expectation that employees are providing emotional support to one another,

which can come at a cost. Whether listening to a coworker's struggle to support a student or listening to a coworker's complaint of their peers or supervisors, this emotional labor often goes unacknowledged, despite the energy it consumes.

Leadership and Organizations

Colleges and universities are managed by leaders who adopt policies and practices that intentionally and unintentionally perpetuate ideal worker norms, including stated or implied requirements for emotional labor. For example, an employee may be experiencing a personal hardship at home, but is required to dissociate from their feelings in order to create an amicable work environment for coworkers, students, and other stakeholders. Within the context of college student affairs, these explicit and implicit practices fail to adequately consider the emotionally laborious work of staff or their well-being. One professional in Klima's (2018) study described situations where she negotiated how leave policies would affect her work and her well-being.

I thought about taking the family medical leave because it was so much turmoil for me. I couldn't concentrate at work. I was constantly agitated. I wanted things to be over quickly. I had no attention span at work. I still struggle with my attention at work. And so that's been really hard.

She continued to question how her decision would be perceived by peers and supervisors, highlighting how merely considering taking time off work induces more mental health concerns.

But then again that paralyzing fear of what does that look like? What does that mean for my job if I do take that [leave]? What if I need it again, like scared of the unknown like having, nobody talked to us about this.

She struggled to understand how the policies would work, but also knew it may help her with her well-being in the long term.

In Lynch's (2017) study, Luke, a new professional in campus activities, expressed how external norms and expectations within his university conflicted with his own expectations of student support as well as how these norms had a negative impact on him.

The one thing that I noticed in dealing with those traumatic incidences was I didn't like how much I worried about what the administration was going to do after I handled the situation. That entered into the pattern of feelings that I would feel. I didn't realize how there was something wrong there for me until—I would say until about a year before I left. . . . There seems to be this culture of protecting the university.

Colleges and universities have long valued the holistic well-being of students, as many campuses offer health services, family day care centers, and mental health counseling. Yet this support is rarely extended to the staff of the institutions to the same degree. In Klima's (2018) study, one participant talked about how professionals encourage students to attend counseling appointments for their mental health but may consider keeping their own counseling experiences hidden for fear of judgment or being perceived as taking personal time during the workday. This perceived need to obscure aspects of oneself that contradicts ideal worker standards was also exemplified in Victoria's experience. In Klima's study, Victoria shared,

When I was going through depression and at the height of my anxiety I wouldn't go [to conference sessions]. I was supposed to attend a conference that was [nearby] and so I would have been able to drive up there and I, I didn't, I didn't want to go. I told my supervisor that, I think I told her like, "Oh I don't think these sessions are going to be helpful for me," when it was really like I didn't want to go there by myself. I'm really overwhelmed. I don't want to have to drive in traffic to get up there, like, I don't want to have to like sit by myself and like be aware of everything that's going on around me. I pretty much removed myself from that realm for about 7 or 8 months.

While obscuring personal appointments or glossing over the truth of their own health are but two examples, many professionals find themselves engaging in emotional labor to be perceived as a strong worker by their supervisors or organizations.

Further complicating matters, student affairs professionals consistently receive mixed messages about managing aspects of their own well-being, such as boundary setting. Although the literature reflects a need for healthy boundaries (Linder, 2011), the lived experiences of professionals exemplifies how departmental and divisional cultures do not allow for this. In Lynch's (2017) study, Rene described the experience of balancing her role as professional helper with a myriad of other responsibilities. During her interview, she exemplified many of the gendered experiences associated with emotional labor, as she consistently found herself providing more than her share of emotional support for an almost constant flow of students in crisis while also balancing the tasks specific to her job. Rene shared,

It just keeps coming. It's a constant deluge. It's never—it will never end, and there's no such thing as a non-busy period for us. I have a list of projects and things that I'm supposed to be doing that I don't even have time to do, and I'm worried that I'm going to be half-assing a lot of it because there's just not time, and I refuse to do this stuff on weekends. I didn't used to be like that, but now that I'm working this full-time job, I am hoarding my personal time because I would probably go insane if I tried to do extra work outside of my job for the job.

Rene actively undermined ideal worker norms and disengaged from the emotional labor of pretending she can continually manage an unreasonable workload. Yet, for many professionals, this act of subversion through self-care may not be an option due to potential job loss or other retaliatory actions.

Our studies illustrate experiences of student affairs professionals who have been negatively impacted by ideal worker standards and the emotional labor required of them by interactions with students, coworkers, and within the organizations. When considering the emotional labor necessitated by ideal worker norms, staff struggled to negotiate what their well-being meant within the organization and as they worked with others.

Recommendations for Practice

Ideal worker standards in student affairs result in staff potentially engaging in high levels of emotional labor, sometimes to the detriment of their personal well-being. Staff can easily find themselves negotiating their authentic emotional responses and the expression of emotions that are deemed acceptable to students, coworkers, and institutional leaders. Drawing on the discussions in this chapter, we provide a series of recommendations for practice to challenge ideal worker norms and emphasize well-being that are tailored to graduate students and new professionals, midcareer professionals, supervisors, senior student affairs officers (SSAOs), organizations, and the greater student affairs profession.

Graduate Students and New Professionals

Through the narratives explored in our research, we recognized how negotiating personal boundaries, self-advocacy, and explicit conversations about wellness and emotional labor were rarely discussed in graduate preparation programs or trainings. Building these skills as a part of early-career development

may produce long-term outcomes for building and maintaining wellness for student affairs professionals. Using Guthrie et al.'s (2005) model for professional balance (self-knowledge, intentionality, commitment to self-care, and reflection), new professional and graduate supervisors may provide intentional opportunities, whether in staff meetings or one-on-one settings, to offer space to develop these components of balance and encourage positive well-being. However, if this support is not being provided, new professionals and graduate students may consider building reflective practices, such as journaling or meeting with mentors, to assess their personal values, their own self-knowledge, and their ability to identify and manage their emotions.

Additionally, organizations may consider creating professional development opportunities for graduate students and new professionals in which panels of seasoned professionals share practical examples of caring for their well-being and negotiating emotional labor. Various assessments related to emotional labor and well-being also exist for group or individual use, including the secondary trauma in student affairs professionals (STSAP) scale (Lynch & Glass, 2018) or Diefendorff's et al. (2014) emotional demands-abilities fit assessment. Both measure various outcomes of emotional labor and may be used to provide early intervention for new professionals and graduate students.

Midcareer Professionals and Supervisors

Midcareer professionals and supervisors often work directly with entry-level professionals and graduate students while balancing expectations of senior level officials. These professionals may be required to exercise a greater degree of emotional labor as they engage in interactions with a wider range of stakeholders in student affairs. To that end, it is important that these professionals reflect on boundary setting and practice self-reflection and self-awareness. This may take the form of required regular group meetings where midcareer or middle-management staff can define boundaries through self-reflection and group discussion.

As they manage their own well-being, managers and midcareer professionals can also craft job descriptions and expectations that acknowledge the influence of emotional labor and center the concept of well-being for their employees. For example, a housing and residence life entry-level job description could include a percentage of workload expected for on-call tasks/activities, which does not include more emotional labor work than necessary to continue the organization's functions while considering the professional's labor. Supervisors can also be intentional about processes that encourage holistic development of the professional. For example, in functional areas

that commonly engage in late-night and weekend work, providing time off or schedule flexibility for the days following overnight shifts or late and weekend events may help in providing space for the professionals to employ self-care strategies that encourage balance and prevent burnout. By having established policies, staff may be spared the worry of how asking for personal time may be perceived by supervisors or coworkers.

SSAOs

SSAOs are asked to provide vision, communication, and accountability for their divisions. Like midlevel supervisors, SSAOs should understand the emotional labor requirements they ask of their staff as well as establish strategies to center the well-being of staff. This may be done by establishing task forces or ad hoc assessment committees to understand the nature of emotional labor within their organizations as well as how emotional labor factors into cultures of well-being within the organization. SSAOs might also extend a well-being assessment to staff, such as those mentioned earlier, which will provide information to leaders in divisions of student affairs on how to best support staff development in relation to well-being. They may also encourage the formation of division-wide committees where professionals can take ownership of well-being initiatives or implement recommendations for well-being assessments.

Lastly, SSAOs should be transparent in their vision of staff well-being and expectations or organizational norms regarding management of emotional labor. Communicating an explicit vision and organizational norms allows staff within the organization to better balance their own well-being, make more informed decisions about fit, and have firm grounding in which to discuss their needs in regard to balancing wellness. Professionals should always center services on the student experience, learning, growth, and development. However, this can be done without compromising the role and well-being of the staff. SSAOs and supervisors should demonstrate how this negotiation can occur to embody well-being, self-reflection, and care, while keeping the student at the center and a priority.

Recommendations for Organizations

Organizational leaders may adjust practices to ensure that staff well-being is a part of the organizational culture and structure. Human resources along with diversity and inclusion offices should review their institutional policies and practices to identify ways to encourage an acknowledgement of well-being and emotional labor. For example, review job descriptions for functions that

may require emotional labor and ensure there are other functions within the position that do not require as much emotional labor. Another example involves the free physical health classes and workout spaces some campuses offer. Campuses could consider offering weekly sessions that support mental and spiritual well-being such as meditation hours, yoga classes, and other reflection activities. However, attention must be given to when employees are encouraged and allowed to participate in activities that attend to the personal self. Some institutions are situated in unionized environments and have strict state laws which regulate time for breaks, lunches, and types of activities that can be performed during the scheduled work time. Human resources can work with external agencies to identify ways to craft policies that are compliant with these organizations and structures but still center the well-being of the employee.

Finally, organizational leaders should seek to actively develop cultures of authenticity in which staff are able to fully share concerns with each other and with leadership. Without constructive avenues for sharing, staff may hold on to emotions over time, resulting in unnecessary emotional labor. Simple check-ins with individual staff members or regular small group debriefs offer opportunities for staff to express emotion in a directed and productive context. These meetings may be focused on dealing with well-being, unpacking recent events that required heavy emotional labor, or offering space to introduce emerging issues within the staff.

Recommendations for the Profession

Although the 2015 joint ACPA & NASPA professional competencies mention personal wellness, these competencies need to be expanded and more explicit. Additionally, the profession needs to provide mechanisms for organizational and personal accountability regarding well-being. This may include a clearer ethics statement on the importance of and processes to encourage self-care and well-being. These may be modeled after other helping profession ethics statements such as the American Counseling Association (2014) code of ethics statement which states,

Counselors are alert to the signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment. (p. 9)

The field can draw from their ethics of care and standards to further emphasize the importance of student affairs professionals' well-being, which in turn increases capacity to engage in the emotional labor necessary to support students.

Student affairs practitioners often apply developmental theories to their work with students. For example, fixed and growth mindset work is a strategy to use with students, but can also be applied for the development of staff. Dweck (2008) defined *fixed mindset* as a belief that a person's abilities, intelligence, and talents are fixed and cannot be changed, while a *growth mindset* recognizes a person's ability to develop and grow their abilities, intelligence, and talents. It is important for professionals to reflect on ways they can manage their well-being, because it emphasizes the opportunity for change and growth instead of accepting their status quo. Student affairs national organizations may prioritize professional development that encourages their constituents to think about their well-being from a growth perspective. The emphasis on continuous improvement aligns with the perspective that balance as professionals is a developmental journey.

National organizations frequently offer institutes on assessment and well-being, but these are often primarily focused on students. These events could be expanded to include how to apply similar tenets of support of well-being to staff and professionals. Lastly, professional associations should provide grants for research to better understand professional experiences and interventions regarding well-being and emotional labor. Such funding may encourage and support the examination of professional well-being to provide enhanced understanding of the role of emotional labor in student affairs work.

Conclusion

Emotional labor is often an implicit and undervalued work requirement of human-centered professions such as student affairs. When considered through the lens of ideal worker norms (e.g., emotionless and unconcerned with personal well-being), it becomes clear how emotional labor contributes to attrition rates (Marshall et al., 2016) and reports of professional burnout (Mullen et al., 2018) for staff within student affairs. Using our research to illustrate the impact of the connection between emotional labor and ideal worker norms, we underscored the need for professionals to name emotional labor requirements, create space for emotional authenticity, and further develop policies and practices that allow for balance of student and staff well-being. Collectively, we must encourage all stakeholders within the student affairs profession to critically reflect on the nature and impact of emotional labor within student affairs.

References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4(2), 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>
- ACPA & NASPA. (2015). *Professional competency areas for student affairs*. ACPA, College Student Educators International & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.
- American Counseling Association. (2014). 2014 ACA code of ethics. <https://www.counseling.org/Resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>
- Brotheridge, C. M., & Lee, R. T. (2002). Testing a conservation of resources model of the dynamics of emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 7(1), 57–67. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.7.1.57>
- Cheung, F., & Lun, V. M. (2015). Emotional labor and occupational well-being: A latent profile analytic approach. *Journal of Individual Differences*, 36(1), 30–37. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1614-0001/a000152>
- Cheung, F., & Tang, C. (2010). Effects of age, gender, and emotional labor strategies on job outcomes: Moderated mediation analyses. *Applied Psychology: Health and Wellbeing*, 2, 323–339. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-0854.2010.01037.x>
- Constanti, P., & Gibbs, P. (2004). Higher education teachers and emotional labor. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 18, 243–249. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540410538822>
- Diefendorff, J. M., Croyle, M. H., & Gosserand, R. H. (2005). The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66(2), 339–359. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2004.02.001>
- Diefendorff, J. M., Greguras, G. J., & Fleenor, J. (2014). Perceived emotional demands–abilities fit. *Applied Psychology*, 65(1), 2–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12034>
- Dweck, C. S. (2008). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Ballantine Books.
- Erickson, R. J., & Ritter, C. (2001). Emotional labor, burnout, and inauthenticity: Does gender matter? *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 64(2), 146–163. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3090130>
- Grandey, A. A. (2000). Emotion regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(1), 95–110. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.5.1.95>
- Gross, J. J. (1998). Antecedent and response-focused emotion regulation: Divergent consequences for experience, expression, and physiology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(1), 224–237. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.1.224>
- Gutek, B. A. (1995). *The dynamics of service: Reflections on the changing nature of customer/provider interactions*. Jossey-Bass.
- Guthrie, V. L., Woods, E., Cusker, C., & Gregory, M. (2005). A portrait of balance: Personal and professional balance among student affairs educators. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 24(2), 110–127.

- Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.
- Hülshager, U. R., & Schewe, A. F. (2011). On the costs and benefits of emotional labor: A meta-analysis of three decades of research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 16*(3), 361–389. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022876>
- Humphrey, R. H., Ashforth, B. E., & Diefendorff, J. M. (2015). The bright side of emotional labor. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 36*(6), 749–769. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2019>
- Klima, K. L. B. (2018). *Hidden, supported, and stressful: A phenomenological study of midlevel student affairs professionals' entry-level experiences with a mental health condition* (Publication No. 10871510) [Doctoral dissertation, Bowling Green State University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Linder, K. (2011). Why do student affairs educators struggle to set professional boundaries? Establishing and maintaining healthy professional and personal boundaries. In P. Magolda & M. B. Baxter Magolda (Eds.), *Contested issues in student affairs: Diverse perspectives and respectful dialogue* (pp. 434–452). Stylus.
- Lynch, R. J. (2017). *Breaking the silence: A phenomenological exploration of secondary traumatic stress in U.S. college student affairs professionals* (Publication No. 9780355348958) [Doctoral dissertation, Old Dominion University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Lynch, R. J., & Glass, C. R. (2018). The development of the secondary trauma in student affairs professionals scale. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 56*(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2018.1474757>
- Marks, S. R. (1994). Intimacy in the public realm: The case of co-workers. *Social Forces, 72*(3), 843–858. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2579783>
- Marshall, S. M., Gardner, M. M., Hughes, C., & Lowery, U. (2016). Attrition from student affairs: Perspectives from those who exited the profession. *Journal of Student Affairs Research & Practice, 53*(2), 146–159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2016.1147359>
- Mullen, P. R., Malone, A., Denney, A., & Dietz, S. S. (2018). Job stress, burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among student affairs professionals. *College Student Affairs Journal, 6*(1), 94–108. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csaj.2018.0006>
- Muraven, M., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). Self-regulation and depletion of limited resources: Does self-control resemble a muscle? *Psychological Bulletin, 126*(2), 247–259. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.126.2.247>
- Näring, G., Briët, M., & Brouwers, A. (2006). Beyond demand–control: Emotional labour and symptoms of burnout in teachers. *Work and Stress, 20*(4), 303–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370601065182>
- Näring, G., Vlerick, P., & Van de Ven, B. (2012). Emotional work and emotional exhaustion in teachers: The job and individual perspective. *Educational Studies, 38*(1), 63–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2011.567026>
- Pugliesi, K., & Schook, S. L. (1997). Gender, jobs, and emotional labor in a complex organization. In R. J. Erikson & B. Cuthbertson-Johnson (Eds.), *Social Perspective on Emotion* (4th ed., 283–316). JAI.

- Reynolds, A. L. (2010). Counseling and helping skills. In S. R. Jones & J. H. Schuh (Eds.), *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (pp. 399–412). Jossey-Bass.
- Shayne, J. (2017). Recognizing emotional labor in academe. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2017/09/15/importance-recognizing-faculty-their-emotional-support-students-essay>
- Sutton, R. E. (2004). Emotional regulation goals and strategies of teachers. *Social Psychology of Education*, 7(4), 379–398. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-004-4229-y>
- Tunguz, S. (2016). In the eye of the beholder: Emotional labor in academia varies with tenure and gender. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.914919>
- Williams, C. L., Muller, C., & Kilanski, K. (2012). Gendered organizations in the new economy. *Gender & Society*, 26(4), 549–573. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243212445466>
- Yin, H., Lee, J., Zhang, Z., & Jin, Y. (2013). Exploring the relationship among teachers' emotional intelligence, emotional labor strategies and teaching satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 35, 137–145. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.06.006>