

## The Case for Scholarship

Bonita C. Jacobs

The National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) has struggled through a series of growing pains, all positive signs of a maturing professional association. We have debated our mission statement, our strategic plan, our method of selecting Board Members, and how we should finance our conferences and our association. However, one of the longest debates has been on the question of scholarship and what NODA's role should be toward that effort.

NODA's journal has had a sporadic history with varying levels of support for the endeavor. With a shaky financial structure and a lack of submissions, it was logical to put our publication efforts on hold in 1986. There were discussions that we as practitioners and the quality of submitted manuscripts would not be high. There were concerns that we were "preaching to the choir" and that the orientation profession would be better served by publications in broad-based student affairs journals, thereby reaching a greater audience.

Yet, it was clear in our strategic planning efforts that the NODA Board of Directors felt that we are a *professional* association and scholastic endeavors are a requisite. If our members have not, in fact, learned to publish, is it not a responsibility of the association to make training available? In addition, we had outstanding success with *Designing Successful Transitions: A Guide to Orienting Students to College*, an orientation monograph cosponsored by NODA and The Freshman Year Experience, and skillfully co-edited by Lee Upcraft, Dick Mullendore, Betsy Barefoot, and Dorothy Fidler. It was obvious that we had both the need for scholarship and the membership capable of producing state-of-the-art professional articles.

The re-establishment of the NODA Journal, retitled *The Journal of College Orientation and Transition*, is a hallmark of the growth, struggles, and success of the National Orientation Directors Association. It won't be easy. We will have to educate our membership, not only on the need to publish, but also on how to write and become publishable. The nature of an orientation position requires an enormous amount of time on the job. Orientation directors simply don't have extra hours to spend writing manuscripts and it will be important for us to stress the need to immortalize our knowledge and to help each other to educate our student affairs and academic affairs counterparts through our writing efforts.

Editing a journal is, in many ways, like nurturing a child. Those of us who are parents understand the joys, frustrations, worries, care, relief, doubt, anxieties, and thrills of watching a personality emerge and a child become its own being, no longer an infant, but forever seeking guidance and direction. Reconfirming NODA's commitment to scholar-

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ship via the journal publication has been a similar experience. All of the editors have planned how to achieve this task and fretted over the quality and quantity of manuscripts. Each editor has, in his or her own unique way, contributed talents and heartfelt concern toward this endeavor.

All historical endeavors are accomplished through partnership and coalitions. I am grateful to a number of individuals who served our need for scholarship and have come forward to support that effort. Dan Robb and Victor Wilson have been supportive throughout their presidencies and have put agendas in motion to make this happen. The Associate Editors have been brilliant cohorts and have gone beyond expectations to ensure that this venture comes full fold. NODA owes a debt of gratitude to them: Harrison Greenlaw, Cathie Hatch, Dr. Walter Kimbrough, Dr. Gary Morgan, Dr. Dan Nadler, and Dr. Denise Rode, for they saw the importance of scholarship and approached this effort with vision and determination.

In addition, Dr. Dick Mullendore set the tone for professionalism in the association with his emphasis on strategic planning and scholastic review. The monograph was an important step in our seeing ourselves as educators, scholars, and visionaries.

This is our first edition in the new series of journal editions. It is now up to our membership to support this effort, submit manuscripts, and encourage faculty, staff, and students to submit their efforts.

Will the journal make a difference? Absolutely! It *will* succeed and we will be able to point to our efforts as the "new NODA" determined to take our rightful place in all areas of higher education, whether student affairs or academic affairs. We can hold our heads high; we have matured to a new level of credibility.

## ARTICLE

### Student Satisfaction with Orientation: A Program Assessment and Cultural Stratification

Daniel P. Nadler and Michael T. Miller

*The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) provides a valuable benchmark for orientation effectiveness, and this case study was subsequently conducted to develop an understanding of how a relatively traditional four-day orientation program addresses the 20 CAS purposes for an orientation program. Making use of the 1996 entering class at Tulane University, the case study provides an heuristic and useful method for evaluating an orientation program.*

The transition to the college campus can be traumatic and terrifying to new students. Whether first time or transfer students, developing a feeling of familiarity and hospitality with the campus environment is a factor which can produce the attitudes and viewpoints which remain a part of students for the remainder of their academic careers (Mullendore, 1993). The response by divisions of student affairs has been an ever-increasing attention to orientation and transitional programs. Gardner and Hansen (1993) noted that these programs produce the much needed feelings of closeness among students while they are acculturated to their new environment, a concept reinforced by Twale (1989) who referred to the process as building an "esprit de corps" among students. Gardner and Hansen also described the importance of orientation programs in conveying the institution's expectations of new students, a foundation necessary for future student success.

In response to the need for efficient and functional orientation programs, the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) (1988) developed a comprehensive set of purpose statement for orientation programs. These Standards for New Student Orientation programs, developed by senior student affairs officers and leading members of student affairs professional associations, contains 20 statements related to the goals and functions of an orientation program. Miller and Nadler (1995) found that senior student affairs officer generally support the intent of these standards, and agree that they should be representative benchmarks for developing transitional programs. As a result of the importance of these standards, they were employed as the guiding framework for the current study.

#### Defining the College Student Population

College students comprise a diverse, occasionally disparate group of individuals who have matriculated through lower levels of formal schooling to enroll in some form

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