HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

I am thankful for every day at work for my experiences at Clemson. I really felt like the entire division of Student Affairs was supporting my cohort’s education. My two years as a graduate student at Clemson was an immersive experience where my classroom work, time spent in my assistantship, and my experiences in internships all relied and tied into a single experience that really helped me prepare for life as a Student Affairs professional. Now being in my first job out of grad school, I can really see how what we learned in the classroom, and practiced in the field prepared me every day as I encounter new situations as a professional. The investment and love from the faculty, professionals, and my classmates gave me confidence to succeed, and I wouldn’t be where I am today without them.

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Be open to anything and everything. Be open to trying new types of assistantships and internships; it’s incredible what I learned by trying new things I never would have thought to try before grad school. Initially, I had no interest in pursuing an assistantship in residence life. But when I had the opportunity to be a Graduate Community Director in residence life at Clemson, it was those experiences that really helped shape me, explore different functional areas outside of my main focus of orientation, and help me develop and learn about different aspects of the university and gain a more holistic experience. Also be open to what you learn in the classroom, challenge yourself to think differently. When I was challenged most is when I learned.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

I am currently an active member of NODA: The Association for Orientation, Transition, and Retention in Higher Education. In 2014, I served on the annual conference planning committee and am currently a member of the 2016 Region II conference planning committee as well as a co-host of the 2017 Region II planning committee.
HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

Clemson (especially the graduate program) taught me the foundation for everything that I have done on a daily basis since leaving campus. We all dreaded Tony’s theory exams and I can remember reviewing all of that information for comps at the end of the process, but guess what? I actually use that information! No, I do not tell a student what vector they seem to be working on in Chickering nor do I call them a dualistic thinker to their face, but I have that knowledge to work with the students. Especially in my current position, I draw much from the counseling classes I took to empathize with the students, while also holding them accountable. Clemson also taught me to build relationships which leads me into your final question.

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Build relationships. Do not wait for people to do things for you, but go out and seek things out for yourself. Remember that the connections are ever present. I know that some of the connections that I had made while I was in housing probably helped me get my current position and it is amazing to have the connections back at Clemson even from my undergraduate years now again through the International Center of Academic Integrity.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INvolvement

My main involvement at this time is with the International Center for Academic Integrity. Coincidentally, this center is now housed at Clemson University in the Rutland Institute for Ethics. This organization organizes conferences throughout the year to promote discussion and dialogue about academic integrity concerns. I have had the pleasure of traveling to several of the international conferences (including Australia and Canada) to present on work we are doing at Kansas State.

Associate Director for the Honor and Integrity System
Kansas State.

In my current role I work with faculty as they report incidents of academic misconduct in their classes and I work with students as they face the consequences of such actions. I also assist with the adjudication process of these cases and the educational component through presentations and teaching 3 sections of a sanctioned class called “Development and Integrity.” My office reports to the Provost rather than the VP Student Life; however, we have a close connection with the Office of Student Life so that we can appropriately support the students who are having some major life changes due to their decisions (i.e. major grade sanction, suspension, expulsion, loss of visa status, etc.).
HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

I believe that my time at Clemson was critical in helping to prepare me for my career. At Clemson I really discovered my love for academic advising. I think my graduate assistantship was the best hands on experience of the two years. Seeing how an advising office functions day to day, learning how to address students' needs and concerns, working within a LLC, learning how to foster relationships with campus partners, learning how to address programming needs, all of these pieces were invaluable. At Clemson I was challenged to work hard in the classroom. I was challenged to push my personal growth. I was challenged to push myself to learn as much about the field to ensure professional development. At Clemson I was treated like I was a contributing member in the field, and that only encourage me further.

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Be open to what will come. Take advantage of the campus, the faculty, and the professionals in the division. Make sure you go into this program ready to learn and be challenged. Start building your network from day one in the program. The professionals you meet and interact with will become even more impactful when you begin your job search.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

Throughout my grad school experience and now I have been an active member of NACADA. I've been able to attend several conferences at the local, regional, and national level.
Assistant Director, University Housing North Carolina State University

Oversee a residential area with the responsibility of managing residential education initiatives including a residential curriculum. Collaborated with living-learning community partner to develop a sustainability-themed living-learning community including the creation of a living-learning class recognized by the City of Raleigh for leadership and teaching about the environment. Manage student-initiated facilities projects including renovations and equipment/furniture procurements. Plan, coordinate, and lead residence director training and development initiatives. Assists with the management and curriculum overhaul of the resident advisor class.

HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

Clemson University prepared me in more ways than I could ever articulate. I believe the faculty and supervisors of graduate assistants have created a linked experience where theory to practice is more than a discussion. Faculty and supervisors of graduate assistants model this and expect it from graduate students.

Although it might sound simple, this practice has shaped me as a professional. Throughout my career I have found great success when I have the ability to apply the newest trends, latest research, and guiding principles and theories to current practices and opportunities to enhance students’ experiences.

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Have fun and be you. You’ll be learning about the Clemson Family very soon. As you learn about the Clemson Family, you’ll quickly understand this is a caring community aiming for excellence in exceptionally supportive environment. With this support, you can learn everything Clemson University has to offer and how the program will best support your educational and professional goals.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

Southeastern Association of Housing Officers – Member of the Governing Council serving as the Chair for Marketing and Organizational Promotions.
HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

Clemson’s program is a tight-knit group of supportive and caring faculty, professionals, and peers which was incredibly important as I navigated coursework, plugged in professionally, and through each of my subsequent job searches. No matter how far away I move, I am always connected to this special group of people. I utilized the skills learned in my courses on a daily basis, particularly the counseling skills.

continually reach out to peers for professional advice, gained the best mentors through Clemson, and keep close contact with the faculty. In fact, I am presenting with Tony and Pam at the NASPA annual conference this year! How many students have that type of opportunity 14 years after graduating from the program?

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Volunteer for everything that interests you. Student Affairs is such a large and diverse field—you need to experience as much as you can to help determine what areas you may be interested in working (or not) and to begin building your network. Take advantage of workshops, brown-bag lunches, webinars, internships, local drive-in conferences and big, national conferences. Apply for funding to travel regionally and nationally. Conduct informational interviews with professionals you want to know better. Just jump right in.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

I quickly found my professional home in NASPA and attend the national conference annually. Within the larger organization, I have been involved with our region as a member of the advisory board and co-chaired our 2014 regional conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Depending on my positions over the years, I have been involved with various knowledge communities, which is a wonderful way to connect with professionals who are doing similar work on other campuses.
Assistant Director for Fraternity and Sorority Life, Virginia Tech

I currently serve as the Assistant Director for Fraternity and Sorority Life at Virginia Tech. In my role, I oversee all community development initiatives, which include planning and executing an annual overnight retreat for executive council leaders, coordinating council travel to an annual leadership conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, and developing curriculum for a seven-week dialogue group for members of fraternities and sororities. I also coordinate the Fraternity and Sorority Life Awards process, manage all major office assessment projects, and serve as the advisor for the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

When I graduated from Elon, I was convinced that I knew all that there was to know about myself. Then, I got to Clemson and was challenged in ways that I could never have imagined. I spent two years learning the intricacies and politics of higher education, writing the longest papers (that lit review was miserable!), building relationships, learning to respectfully challenge the viewpoints of others, asking questions (lots and lots of questions, all the time), challenging incongruent behaviors (both my own and others), and developing as a professional.

My time at Clemson prepared me academically, professionally, and emotionally. In just two short years, I learned to be a more courageous and authentic leader and a well-equipped professional. These lessons were truly invaluable.

ADVICE TO CURRENT GRADS

Ask good questions. So much of what I learned at Clemson was due to my inquisitive nature and asking the "right" questions to the "right" people. As a first year, I never thought that inquiring about internship opportunities abroad would have resulted in me spending six weeks in England at the University of Sheffield! Asking good questions can greatly impact your experience.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

I'm currently a member of NASPA, AFA, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. From 2014-2015, I served as a volunteer for AFA on the Membership Marketing & Recruitment Team for Region 2. I'm also a board member of the Southeastern Panhellenic Association.
HOW HAS CLEMSON PREPARED YOU?

Without a doubt, I would not be the professional I am today without the time I spent at Clemson. The preparation was truly two-fold. First, the faculty ensure that we have a solid foundation upon which we build and guide our work in higher education and with students. The counseling aspects of Clemson’s program also come to my aid on more occasions than I could count. Additionally, Clemson does a great job ensuring that you graduate with tangible practical experience.

My time in University Housing allowed (perhaps even forced) me to grow into the professional I am today. Additionally, our program and the campus truly support grads getting experience in more than one area. So as you think about internships and practicums, be bold and branch out. When serving on searches now, I know that there is a certain caliber of professional I can expect when I see they are coming out of the Clemson program.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVEMENT

I am a member of ACPA, SACSA, and SEAHO. My professional involvement has really been focused on the regional organizations. There is huge opportunity for graduate students and new professionals to get engaged in ways in these associations in a variety of ways.

Within SACSA, I currently serve as the webmaster, managing the organization’s website. In the past I have served on the 2014 and 2015 Conference Planning Committees. SACSA is a great professional association and unique because it brings individuals from varied functional areas together.

While I enjoy my involvement in SACSA, I would claim SEAHO as my professional home. This is both because of its focus on my functional area and also because of the support and mentorship I’ve received from other members. In SEAHO, I have served as a member of the website management team and am currently serving as the registration chair for SEAHO 2016. SEAHO is a great organization for anyone considering any functional area related to student’s on-campus living.