

Law, Policy, and Governance: A Reflective Self-Assessment

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The ACPA&NASPA Professional Competency Rubrics explains Law, Policy, and Governance as understanding the knowledge, skills, and composition of governance structures and their impact on individuals' professional work (2015). This competency is categorized into four components: law and legal systems, governance, ethical and inclusive application of policy, and civic engagement (ACPA&NASPA, 2015). Learning law and legal systems help higher education professionals understand the impact that these policies and systems have on both students and higher education. In addition, individuals' ability to differentiate between internal and external stakeholders' enables them to put these policies into practice and act following the country, state and province in terms of discrimination, liability, negligence, and the practice of free speech (ACPA&NASPA, 2015, P.17). I believe that I built a foundational knowledge and understanding of the country and state's law, policy, and system through taking the ELPS 879 Higher Education Law and Policy. In addition, the ELPS 789: Introduction to Higher Education Administration course and my assistantship experience with the international support services office have enhanced my knowledge of the higher education organizational structure, governance, and immigration law and policies in the U.S.

Reflection on Experience and Growth in Laws and Legal System

My foundational development in understanding law and policy in the U.S. has been shaped by my experiences as an international student and by working with different functional areas within higher education. The laws and legal systems section of the law, policy, and governance competencies focus on the individuals' ability to apply these policies in their work as well as to see the “big picture” and act in response to external regulations (ACPA&NASPA, 2015, P.17). Based on my experiences working with the international support services office, this

past year I have seen how law and policy influences colleges and higher education. For instance, early in 2024 and 2025, the Trump Administration has issued several executive orders that affects international student enrollment. On December 16th, 2025, Trump administration issued a new order_ *Restricting and Limiting the Entry of Foreign Nationals to Protect the Security of the United States*. This proclamation expanded travel ban that prohibits students from 39 countries to enter in the U.S. At the University of Kansas, the International Support Services office directly contacted impacted students and offered instructions to compliance with the new rules. This shows how country and state law shape college practice and influence the work of higher education professionals, as emphasized in the ACPA&NASPA Professional Competencies Rubrics (2015).

Beyond the federal immigration restrictions on who can enter the U.S. other policy changes have also shaped the status of international students already enrolled in the U.S. institutions. For example, the Department of Homeland and Security (DHS) issued a new statement that limit the period that international students can stay in the U.S. These federal law and regulations can significantly decrease the number of international students who enroll in the U.S. institutions annually. Working with the International Support Services office has helped me learn about immigration law and policies that directly impact our international student population on campus. It also helped me apply my knowledge in supporting international students as well as recruiting them for on-campus jobs. International students' hiring process requires documents that are different from domestic students. Those international students who are enrolled full-time are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week. Having this knowledge and understanding different types of visas and documents helped me to explain this immigration limitation to my other colleagues who were not familiar with this.

As part of the higher education law and policy class, I have interviewed the director of ISS office to not only learn about immigration laws and policies affecting international students but also enhance my knowledge of the legal consideration when hiring, maintaining student confidentiality, issues of freedom of speech, and handling student misconduct. This interview was a great opportunity to learn more about the broader legal aspects of working with students. In addition, it strengthens my awareness of the legal and ethical responsibilities of student affairs professional in supporting students.

Beyond that, the higher education law and policy class also was beneficial in helping me learn the concepts of liability, negligence, due process and student misconduct, student privacy act, and the U.S constitutions as focused on the ACPA& NASPA Professional Competencies Rubrics (2015). Each week in the higher education law and policy class, I was assigned to work with a group of other students to discuss case studies related to the federal role in higher education. As an international student passionate about working in higher education in the U.S. I initially have limited knowledge of the U.S constitutions and legal concepts related to supporting students and working within the U.S higher education system. Taking this class has equipped me with the knowledge and insight to better understand these legal foundations and apply them intentionally in my future professional career within higher education.

Governance, Ethical and Application of Policy

The ACPA&NASPA Professional Competencies Rubrics outlines understanding the governance structure and legal resources at universities and colleges as an essential part of the law, policy, and governance competencies. I believe the ELPS 780: Introduction to Higher Education Administration coursework has been very effective in helping me learn about the governance structure at the University of Kansas. The readings and lectures about the role of

board of regents and university governance made me understand the governance, structure, policies and decision-making process in higher education. For instance, I learned that the board of regents play an important role in setting broad policies, approving budgets, and ensuring that universities stay accountable to the public, while the university governance involves faculty, administrators, and other campus stakeholders working together in academic and institutional matters. In addition, the course focused on the governance and organizational structure of the higher education institutions which enabled me to develop a deep understanding of institutional leadership, decision making and the importance of working collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.

Understanding different models of organizational functioning such as Birnbaum's model that includes collegial, political, bureaucratic, and anarchical was useful in helping me think more critically in identifying the type of institutions I'll be involved in and how it will influence my leadership style in the future. In addition, in terms of the institutions' decision making and governance, the Garbage Can model was especially valuable in helping me learn how institutional structure shape various campus environments leadership, communication, and decision-making processes.

Law, Policy, and Governance Artifacts

Artifact #1: Interview with a Higher Education Professional

One of the artifacts that I would like to submit with this competency is my paper assignment for the ELPS 879: Higher Education Law and Policy class. In this paper, I discussed how I learned about immigration and advising aspect of work in the international support services office. In addition, this paper shows the impact that federal law and immigration policies have on the colleges, particularly on the international student population on campus. Throughout

this interview and overall, this class structures and readings, I gained a deep understanding of the U.S constitutions, Title IX, FERBA, and other relevant legal frameworks that I can apply to serve students while following university procedures in my future career.

Artifact#2: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts and Sunapsis

The other artifact I submitted with this competency is the usage of Sunapsis for managing international students' immigration compliance (SEVIS) and visa requests. During my assistantship with the international support services office, I used Sunapsis to update international students' addresses and communicate with international students to maintain confidentiality of sensitive information and messages. Sunapsis is a software that institutions use to manage international students' SEVIS records, keep track of immigration-related requests, and maintain correct documentation for international students. My knowledge of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA) has helped me use this system in a way that protects students' data and ensures that sensitive information is kept secure. This understanding was especially helpful when updating students' records and communicating with international students throughout this online platform.

Artifact #3: Higher Education Presentation on Higher Education Governance

This artifact consists of the presentation I presented as part of the ELPS 780: Introduction to Higher Education Administration class final project. In this presentation, I studied the University of South Carolina's governance and organizational structure. In addition, I interviewed the director of employee relations at the University of South Carolina to discuss the executive order aimed at ending DEI programs within institutions. Her insight helped deepen my understanding of how external political and legal pressures can influence higher education institutions.

Artifact # 4: FERPA and Grad Dispute Case Study Presentation

This artifact is a presentation for the Higher Education Law and Policy class. In this presentation, I worked with a group of other students to review a case study related to higher education law and policy. We also analyzed the key legal issues in the case and offered an action plan on how institutions can effectively respond to the FERPA and dispute related concerns. Working alongside my team, I was able to apply the class concepts to a realistic higher education scenario. The ACPA&NASPA Professional Competency Rubrics highlights that theories related to legal concepts such as liability, negligence is important in student affairs professionals because it prepares us to respond to complex situations with ethical responsibility and make thoughtful decisions.

Conclusion

The law, policy, and governance of competency focus on the knowledge and understanding of the legal framework and its impact on higher education. My work experience with the international support services office and my master's degree coursework has helped me build a strong foundation in law, policy, and governance competency. The higher education law and policy class materials, and the organizational structure of the higher education institutions have enabled me to better understand how law, policies, and governance systems influences institutional operations and decision-making processes. Together, these experiences have prepared me to continue working in higher education and supporting students.

References

American College Personnel Association& National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. (2015). *ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas for student affairs educators*.

https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/ACPA_NASPA_Professional_Competency_Rubrics_Full.pdf

The White House. (2025, December 16). *Restricting and limiting the entry of foreign nationals to protect the security of the United States.*