

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND PERSON-
ENVIRONMENT FIT AMONG STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS

by

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(Under the Direction of Merrily Dunn)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and to explore the relationships among their political ideology, person-environment fit, and demographic information. The researcher utilized a quantitative methodology to survey members of NASPA. This study included responses from 2,045 student affairs professionals from across the United States. The instrument included questions regarding how the participants self-labeled their political ideology, measures for person-organization fit, person-job fit, person-vocation fit, and person-group fit, as well as 10 demographic questions. ANOVA, MANOVA, and factorial ANOVAs were utilized to analyze the data collected. The findings of this study indicate the study sample largely identified as liberal or left of center. When taking account of participants that self-labeled their ideology as extremely liberal, liberal, conservative, and extremely conservative, an overall liberal to conservative ratio of 30.1:1 was revealed. Also, there is a significant relationship between the overall political ideology of participants and their perceived person-organization fit. Further, there are significant relationships between overall political ideology and the participants' age, functional area,

regional location, position level, gender, time in the field, and institution type. Evidence was also gathered that suggests an interaction between political ideology, person-organization fit, and functional area. Implications for student affairs practitioners in addition to future areas of research are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: Student Affairs, Political Ideology, Person-Environment Fit, Person-Organization Fit, Person-Job Fit, Person-Group Fit, Person-Vocation Fit

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DEDICATION

To Jackson. I got you while I was getting my masters and you were with me every step of my career. You were there for me after ever hard day, were my co-pilot for every move to a different state and brought joy (and sometimes frustration) to every situation. While coming home from work will never be same without you here, I will carry you in my heart wherever I go. Damn Good Dawg

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The University of Kentucky apologized following the publication of messages between student activities staff members mocking a conservative student organization.

Our Student Organizations office worked closely with the Young America's Foundation and soon after the appropriate documentation was finalized—documentation required of all student organizations—YAF was registered and approved as a registered student organization at the University of Kentucky.... we want to apologize for some of the conversations that occurred around this process. We have taken steps to ensure that it does not occur again. We are reinforcing with all of our staff the importance of using appropriate language that does not inadvertently create any misperceptions regarding the work we are doing and the seriousness with which all of our staff members do it. We expect everyone—regardless of who they are, where they are from, or what they believe—to be treated with respect. (University of Kentucky, 2019)

The Young America's Foundation (YAF) had sought recognition from the university as a student organization; however, the leaked messages between staff members showed a bias against the conservative student organization and an unwillingness to recognize them as a legitimate organization as a result. For example, the messages included the administrative assistant saying "oh jesus (sic) tap dancing christ (sic)" when reviewing the founding principles of the student organization, and the associate director for student activities saying, "they are going to be mad they waited forever and i (sic) denied them whoops." Following the publication of these

messages, the university approved the YAF and offered an apology to those impacted by the administrators' bias (Poff, 2019).

In this instance, the student affairs administrators used their power to deny students the ability to form an organization, based solely on ideological difference. This is antithetical to the foundations of the field of student affairs, which is rooted in the need to recognize the inherent worth of all students and to provide holistic development for students outside the classroom (American Council of Education, 1937). In addition, the two major associations for student affairs professionals, the ACPA and NASPA, openly promote diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect for everyone (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). In a joint document delineating 10 professional competencies of the field, ACPA and NASPA highlight the importance of social justice and inclusion (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). The document was revised in 2015 to be more inclusive of emerging literature surrounding social justice. The joint task force noted this change to also include the goal of “full and equal participation of all groups in society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs” (Bell, 2013, p. 21, as cited in ACPA & NASPA, 2015).

However, at the University of Kentucky, the student affairs administrators did not live up to this standard. The student activities staff chose to enforce their own political ideology by prohibiting students with opposing views from registering as a student organization. The denial of student organization status would have prevented the students from reserving space, receiving funding, and participating in campus events. Notably, this is not the only time that student affairs professionals' political ideology has influenced the execution of their duties on campus:

- In 2019, a jury found Oberlin College responsible for defaming Gibson's Bakery, a local establishment, following a shoplifting incident involving several Black Oberlin students. Students protested the bakery, citing racial bias, and members of

the Oberlin staff supported their protest. The dean of students, Meredith Raimondo, and other university officials provided the student protestors with pizza and gloves and assisted in passing out flyers urging a boycott of the establishment (Hartocollis, 2019).

- In 2019, the University of Iowa was successfully sued for a second time following the implementation of a “human rights policy” for student organizations. This policy restricted organizations’ ability to select their own leaders who represented their values. First, the University of Iowa denied recognition to the student organization Business Leaders in Christ due to their requirement for a “statement of faith” from any student who wished to serve in leadership. In the first lawsuit, filed by Business Leaders in Christ, the judge ruled in favor of the student organization. Following this lawsuit, the university again deregistered a student organization, Intervarsity, for not adhering to the “human rights policy,” and again, the university lost the case. While the university has since changed the policy in question, the judge ruled that several student affairs administrators could be held personally liable for their actions, including the vice president of student affairs, the associate dean of student organizations, and the coordinator for student organization development (Lederman, 2019).
- In 2019, Dr. Mike Mullen, vice chancellor and dean for academic and student affairs at North Carolina State University, abruptly resigned from his position after a Tweet came to light in which he compared Republicans to the KKK and Nazis. In a separate tweet, he described several people he observed on campus

discussing “democratic mobs and violence” as “rednecks” (Davis, Thomas, & Kaloyanov, 2019).

- In 2019, the University of Texas at Austin unveiled a new program entitled “MasculinUT,” designed to engage male students in discussions surrounding sexual assault. The program, housed within the counseling center, received widespread backlash from conservative media outlets and constituents suggesting the university was pathologizing masculinity and men. This prompted the university to release a statement saying that it did not believe masculinity was a “mental health issue.” The dean of students reconvened the same steering committee that developed the program to reassess the implementation and marketing of the program. Ultimately the program was moved to the dean of students’ office to “avoid any confusion or misinformation that might interfere with (the) program,” said Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of the Counseling and Mental Health Center, Christopher Brownson (Mangan, 2018).
- In 2018, Kennesaw State University was sued by Ratio Christi, a Christian student organization, after the university deemed their pro-life display “controversial” and moved it to an isolated part of campus, even though the organization’s preferred location was not reserved by anyone. The university administrator responsible for reservations also told the organization they could have their preferred location if they refrained from displaying certain posters that expressed their pro-life message. The university lost the lawsuit and was ordered to pay damages and legal fees for the student organization (Stirgus, 2018).

- In 2016, the College Republicans student organization at UC-Irvine lost their privileges to reserve space on campus after the group hosted the right-wing provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos. The university cited the organization for failing to produce a certificate of insurance for security used for the event. However, the university reversed their suspension after the College Republicans showed that another organization also failed to provide the same documentation but did not face the same punishment (Gockowski, 2016).

In the present state of political discourse within the United States, the partisan divide runs deep. In a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2017), participants reported holding more consistent views among liberal and conservative lines than mixed views. Since the survey's original administration in 1994, the political divide has continued to increase each time the survey was conducted. In a separate survey from 2016, members of the Republican and Democrat parties both saw the other as a threat to the country (Pew). According to Medina & Gebeloff (2020), even the response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been viewed through a political lens as the public compares infection rates, government responses, and death tolls between Republican- and Democrat-led states.

While the national conversation surrounding politics is tumultuous, this controversy is not new for campus administrators. Student affairs professionals regularly engage with controversial, political topics. Often, their roles on campus involve creating and executing policies and programs surrounding issues that some may view through a political lens. Social justice (Mac Donald, 2018; Murray, 2019; Rothman, 2019), safe spaces (Mac Donald 2018; Haidt & Lukianoff, 2019; Prager & Joseph, 2019; Soave, 2019), diversity initiatives (Mac Donald 2018, Murray, 2019), bias response teams (Snyder & Khalid, 2016; Mac Donald, 2018;

Soave, 2019), and freedom of speech on campus (Mac Donald 2018; Prager & Joseph, 2019; Soave, 2019; Ellis, 2020) have all been politicized and become topics of debate within the national discourse. Despite this politicization, the field is steadfast in its direction despite criticism, such as that the University of Texas at Austin received about their MasculinUT program, or the University of Iowa received for their “human rights policy.”

Amid political controversy, the field of student affairs claims to promote diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect for everyone (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). However, while student affairs seeks to create a place where all are welcomed to participate in the learning community, in practice, this is not the effect. Instead, diversity typically refers to raising awareness and consciousness around social identities that have been historically oppressed, such as people of color, women, disabled people, transgender people, gay men, and lesbians (Goodman, 2001). Understandably, issues relating to these identities are inherently political (Crenshaw, 1991) as these groups fight against the dominant structures that oppress them (hooks, 1994; DiAngelo, 2018; Kendi, 2018; see also Combahee River Collective, 1977). Within modern discourse, identity is not the only thing that has been deemed political. In recent years, teaching is a political act (Pitsoe & Mahlangu, 2017), emotions are a political act (Miller, 2011), going to work is a political act (Irving, 2018), and in the wake of COVID-19, even mourning is a political act (Yancy, 2020). Despite the politicized nature of all these conversations, political ideology is rarely discussed in relation to student affairs and the university’s work with students.

While there is a lack of research regarding political ideology within student affairs, other fields related to higher education have explored the topic more thoroughly. Specifically, there is a great amount of research into the political ideology of faculty members; such research provides significant direction for this study and future scholarship. Researchers have examined this issue

from several perspectives, including the numerical distribution of conservative and liberal professors (Gross & Fosse, 2012), the impact of professors' political ideology on their respective fields (Duarte et. al, 2014), and the lived experiences of conservative faculty members (Shields & Dunn, 2016). A recurring theme within these discussions is how conservatives fit into the environment of higher education. Often, researchers invoke the concept of self-selection, e.g., suggesting that conservatives do not want to go into higher education, which is why there are fewer conservative professors than liberal. It is true that conservative undergraduates typically major in professional fields, do not pursue post-bachelor education, and, in turn, do not enter the field of higher education (Woessner & Kelly-Woessner, 2009). However, the explanation that conservatives are simply not interested in higher education may prove too simple.

In their 2016 book, Shields and Dunn detailed their study, which included 153 interviews with professors from across the United States who identified as conservative. This study explored conservative professors' experiences in environments that are often perceived as hostile towards conservatives. In this study, Shields and Dunn attempted to explain the disparity between conservative and liberal representation among professors within institutional types. Specifically, they suggest that elite institutions are often more liberal due to an alignment of progressive values with the individual, as well as self-selection for conservative applicants (Shields & Dunn, 2016). Further, they hypothesized that conservative graduate students may seek out scholars they can identify with and, due to the lack of conservative representation at elite institutions, they attend less prestigious colleges and universities. Shields and Dunn (2016) go on to suggest this decision will have a long-lasting impact on these conservative graduate students' careers due to the lack of opportunities when job searching.

Shields and Dunn are not the only ones to address the ideological divide within higher education. In “Left Pipeline: Why Conservatives Don’t Get Doctorates,” Woessner and Kelly-Woessner (2009) explore the lack of conservative representation among faculty members. The authors suggest that faculty mentoring, which relies on shared values, is a key component in building a relationship with students and encouraging them to pursue a career in academia; thus, the lack of conservative representation among university professors is cyclical. Gross and Fosse (2012) posit the professoriate began to lean left at the beginning of the twentieth century; this growing perception served to encourage young liberal students, while discouraging conservative students. Beyond this cycle of self-selection, scholars have suggested several other reasons to explain the disparity between the number of liberals compared to conservative professors. When asking professors why there are so few conservatives in academia, Gross (2013) found that 40% of respondents believed that it was due to the open-mindedness of liberals and that open-mindedness was a requirement for the work. In the same study, 30% of respondents believed that the disparity could be attributed to greed and conservatives’ unwillingness to work for the low wages academia offers (Gross, 2013).

While self-selection may lead to a decrease in conservatives in the field, it is also possible that a hostile environment or discrimination would deter participation (Carl, 2017). Conservatives have reported feelings of hostility and animosity among their peers more than their liberal counterparts (Fisler, 2011; Honeycutt & Freberg, 2016). In addition, left-leaning faculty members have also expressed a willingness to discriminate against conservative applicants for positions (Inbar & Lammers, 2012). At the same time, it must be noted that the idea of discrimination or a hostile environment requires some scrutiny because of a lack of empirical evidence (Gross & Fosse, 2012).

Whether self-selection, hostility, and discrimination towards conservatives in higher education have an influence on the unequal representation of political ideologies in academia may be further debated for some time. However, the discussion warrants further examination to understand how the individual, liberal or conservative, views and interacts with the academic environment. A person-environment framework may help to better elucidate the divide between liberals and conservatives in deciding to work in higher education. Person-environment fit is an overarching concept that explores how an individual aligns with a particular aspect of their work environment (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Multiple levels of fit, including person-organization fit, person-job fit, person-vocation-fit, and person-group fit, may be used to better understand how an individual relates to a career or work environment. Examining person-environment fit in relation to political ideology within higher education, and more specifically within student affairs, may be the next step to understanding the political divide in the academy.

Problem

The intersection of political ideology and student affairs professionals is under-studied. While other fields, such as law and social psychology, have examined political ideology within their individual discipline (Cardiff & Klein, 2005; Carl, 2017; Inbar & Lammers, 2012; Klein, Stern, & Western, 2005; Klein & Stern, 2009), student affairs has not deeply explored the topic. A review of existing literature demonstrates that little empirical research exists that explores the role political ideology plays within the field. In her dissertation, Fisler (2011) explored the lived experiences of student affairs professionals who identify as conservative within an anecdotally “liberal” field. In an unpublished manuscript, Sneed and Dunn began to investigate how student affairs professionals self-labeled their political ideology and found an overall liberal to

conservative ratio of 11:1; however, the sample was limited to members of a professional association in the southeastern United States.

While student affairs professionals are often concerned with the holistic development of students, they must also acknowledge themselves as whole people. Examining how political ideology may influence and impact their work with students and other professionals presents new opportunities for understanding the field and building self-awareness surrounding political ideology's impact on student affairs. If it is known or believed that moderately or extremely liberal voices dominate in student affairs, the field may begin to examine how this dominant culture influences recruitment and retention of new professionals, as well as relationships with non-liberal students and student organizations, to consider how this political homogeneity may impact the profession, for better or worse. Further, if student affairs as a field is predominantly comprised of liberal professionals, it is worth investigating what factors contribute to this uneven distribution of political ideology, which may not be reflective of student populations or the United States as a whole. In addition, without a better understanding of political ideology within student affairs, professionals may be inhibited from best serving, communicating, and meeting the needs of students whose views and values may not align with their own political beliefs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and to explore the relationships among their political ideology, person-environment fit, and demographic information.

Research Questions

To address the purpose of this study, the following research questions were developed:

RQ1: How do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology?

RQ2: What relationship exists between student affairs professionals' self-labeled political ideology and perceived person-environment fit?

RQ3: What relationship exists between student affairs professionals' self-labeled political ideology and demographic information?

RQ4: What relationship exists between student affairs professionals' self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic information?

Significance of the Study

The United States currently faces a time of tumultuous, although significant, social change, marked by the nation's response to COVID-19, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the 2020 presidential election. Concurrently, the country is increasingly politically divided, and more people see "the other side" as an actual threat to the nation (Pew, 2016b). Given the prominent role of student affairs professionals in supporting and advocating for college students, many of whom are on the front lines of social change, it is imperative that practitioners are knowledgeable in political ideology. In my personal experience, student affairs professionals are vastly underprepared to handle discussions of political differences among students, much less colleagues.

This study seeks to address political ideology within the field in hopes of building a stronger foundation for research into the topic. This data may be used as a springboard into other studies of the relationship between political ideology and staffing, selection, attrition, and support of students and organizations. In addition, this research will be used to build self-awareness among professionals surrounding political differences that influence the field.

Delimitations

This study is limited to student affairs professionals who are members of NASPA and serve in student-facing roles. This is done to best ensure the participants are actively serving in a student-facing role and will provide an opportunity to collect data from a wide array of professionals from various institutional types and geographic regions. This is done to better explore the relationships that may exist between political ideology and the demographic information of participants.

Definitions

Conservatism: “a set of political, economic, religious, educational and other social beliefs characterized by emphasis on the status quo and social stability, religion and morality, liberty and freedom, the natural inequality of men, the uncertainty of progress, and the weakness of human reason. It is further characterized by distrust of popular democracy and majority rule and by support of individualism and individual initiative, the sanctity of private property, and the central importance of business and industry in the society” (Kerlinger, 1984, pp.16-17).

Liberalism: a “set of political, economic, religious, educational, and other social beliefs that emphasizes freedom of the individual, constitutional participatory government and democracy, the rule of law, free negotiation, discussion and tolerance of different views, constructive social progress and change, egalitarianism and the rights of minorities, secular rationality and rational approaches to social problems, and positive government action to remedy social deficiencies and to improve human welfare” (Kerlinger, 1984, p. 15).

Person-Environment (P-E) Fit: “the degree of compatibility or match between individuals and some aspect of their work environment (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011, p. 3).

Person-Group (P-G) Fit: the relationship between an individual and their coworkers with emphasis on interpersonal relationships and compatibility (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2005).

Person-Job (P-J) Fit: “compatibility of the individual with the specific job (expected tasks to accomplish, knowledge, skills, etc.)” (Kristoff, 1996, p. 7).

Person-Organization (P-O) Fit: “the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons” (Chatman, 1989, p. 339).

Person-Vocation (P-V) Fit: “the match between an individual’s needs, abilities, and interests with the demands and supplies of various vocations or career paths” (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011, p. 8).

Political ideology: “an interrelated set of moral and political attitudes that possesses cognitive, affective, and motivational components. That is ideology helps to explain why people do what they do; it organizes their beliefs and leads to political behavior” (Jost, 2006, p. 653).

Chapter Summary

Student affairs practitioners often encounter political issues while executing their duties on the job. In the current political climate, it is imperative the field takes an introspective look into political ideology and how it influences the work environment. While there is a significant amount of research regarding political ideology among faculty, little empirical data exists regarding political ideology among student affairs professionals. This study focuses on the relationship between political ideology and person-environment fit among student affairs professionals and includes a sample from across the United States representing a diverse range of institutions, functional areas, and position levels.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The intent of this research study was to learn how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and how it relates to their perceived feelings of person-environment fit and demographic information. This chapter explored the concepts necessary to understand the basis for this research study. These concepts are explored to provide foundational knowledge and to better understand where this study is centered within the context of the literature. The first section included an overview of political ideology including the historical and theoretical underpinnings of the study of political ideology, liberalism and conservatism, their distinguishing factors, and an exploration of how political ideology manifests in higher education within the United States. These topics were presented to provide a theoretical understanding of political ideology and how political ideology manifests within people and in higher education. This is done to provide a framework for understanding for this dissertation study. The second section of this chapter discussed the concept of person-environment fit and its theoretical foundations. Further, the multiple dimensions of person-environment fit were explored in relation to the importance of this research.

What is Political Ideology?

In 1964, Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart wrote in his opinion for *Jacobellis v. Ohio* that he would refrain from fully defining his threshold test for obscenity, and instead stated, “I know it when I see it.” Similarly, the definition of political ideology has been a point of

consternation and disagreement within the academic community for years, but one knows it when they see it. Gerring (1997) perhaps framed the debate best with this:

To some, ideology is dogmatic, while to others it carries connotations of political sophistication; to some it refers to dominant modes of thought, and to others it refers primarily to those most alienated by the status quo... to some it is based in the concrete interests of a social class, while to others it is characterized by an absence of economic self-interest. One would continue, but the point is... it also encompasses a good many definitional traits which are directly at odds with one another. (p. 957)

Freeden (2006) described this as an “interpretational tug-of-war” between political philosophers and theorists concerning the conceptualization of ideology. While differences exist between scholars regarding what “ideology” is and how it influences society, examining the historical underpinnings of the study of ideology and how it manifests in current scholarship may lead to a better understanding of the term.

Historically, within the Marxist tradition, ideology is seen more through an antagonistic and oppressive lens. The critical perspective of Marx & Engels (1846/1970) viewed ideology as a mechanism to exploit social relations between the bourgeoisie elites and the working-class proletariat. Mannheim (1936) expounded upon this idea, noting that ideologies were designed to hide what was really going on from those located at the bottom of the dominance hierarchy. In other words, ideology was a form of manipulation created by those who held societal power to control culture and the means of production. Ryan (1976) characterized Mannheim’s argument into three distinct concepts that make up ideology: a structured belief system, the distortion of reality, and the ruling class maintaining social dominance.

In contrast, contemporary scholars of ideology take a broader view of human nature. Rather than viewing ideology as a means to perpetuate the exploitation of those at the bottom of the social hierarchy, they view it as a system of beliefs meant to dictate how society is governed (Adams, 2001; Freedman, 1996). More explicitly, a political ideology is “an interrelated set of moral and political attitudes that possesses cognitive, affective, and motivational components. That is, ideology helps to explain why people do what they do; it organizes their beliefs and leads to political behavior” (Jost, 2006, p. 653). While this approach does not utilize the same critical examination of power as Marx or Engels, it is more comprehensive and enables more nuanced conversations about political ideology. Within a specific context, there may exist multiple ideologies that are important for the sustainability of a particular group (Denzau & North, 1994), but these ideologies might not be directly influenced by the need for power or to oppress. However, even within the contemporary understanding of political ideology, scholars disagree as to how it manifests within culture. Specifically, there is disagreement about whether political ideology exists as a single dimension or multiple dimensions (Knight, 1999).

Historically, scholars have conceived of political ideology as a unidimensional concept built on a single, bi-polar construct, with the left synonymous with the liberal position and the right synonymous with the conservative position (Jost, 2006). This construct is generally understood to mean that if a person identifies as being liberal, or on the left, then they are simultaneously not identifying as conservative, or on the right (Knight, 1999). The terms “left” and “right” used in a political context may be traced back to the French Revolution (Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). Originally, these terms did not connect to a particular political issue, but rather described where representatives in the French legislative assembly physically sat when discussing the revolution. During this time, the Montagnards who were in favor of the

revolution, e.g., social change, sat on the left, and the Feuillants who opposed the revolution, e.g., favored maintaining the current social order, sat on the right (Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). Within the American political discourse, the terms left and right have persisted and are often used interchangeably with liberal and conservative, respectively (Jost, 2006).

While the unidimensional construct may be useful in providing a basic understanding of political ideology, it does not allow for the possibility of multiple dimensions of ideology (Kandler, Bleidorn, & Riemann, 2012). Holding a conservative position on one issue does not automatically exclude someone from holding liberal views on other issues (Knight, 1999). To solve this oversight, Kerlinger (1984) suggested a dualistic model should be orthogonal, rather than solely possess bipolar outcomes (e.g., liberal or conservative positions). Kerlinger posits that a dualistic model can only be fully employed when one person agrees with an issue and another person fervently disagrees; it is in such instances that Kerlinger deems the issue “polarized” (1984). Instead, a multidimensional construct of political ideology may better address the nuances and complexities that arise when discussing issues (Knight, 1999). For example, Jost et al. (2009) utilized a two-dimensional structure to capture different dimensions of participants’ political ideology regarding economic issues, situated on the x-axis, and social issues, situated on the y-axis. Rather than having to choose between a bipolar option, as with the unidimensional model, such a multidimensional model provides a broader range of options to represent political ideology.

What Does Liberal and Conservative Mean?

To better understand the meaning of liberal and conservative, it is best to begin with the context in which both ideologies occur. The modern interpretation of liberalism and conservatism is heavily influenced by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal program of

the 1930s (Adams, 2001). The New Deal saw the creation of several social welfare, infrastructure, and work programs in the United States to benefit people after the stock market crash of 1929 (Newman & Jacobs, 2007). This program encouraged the growth of the federal government and forever changed the country, notably the political system of the United States (Fandetti & Betcher, 2007).

Prior to the New Deal, liberalism in America aligned more closely with the classical form of liberalism which emphasizes individual liberty, free markets, small government, and individual responsibility (Adams, 2001; Williams, 1997). However, the expansion of government and social spending under President Roosevelt realigned the political landscape. Conservatives shifted away from traditional conservatism to align more closely with classical liberalism, which became known as American conservatism (Tait, 2020). Simultaneously, liberals moved away from classical liberalism towards social liberalism (Adams, 2001).

Conservatism in the United States looks different from that in other countries because of its close alignment to classical liberalism (Adams, 2001). Kerlinger (1984) defined the modern form of American conservatism as:

a set of political, economic, religious, educational and other social beliefs characterized by emphasis on the status quo and social stability, religion and morality, liberty and freedom, the natural inequality of men, the uncertainty of progress, and the weakness of human reason. It is further characterized by distrust of popular democracy and majority rule and by support of individualism and individual initiative, the sanctity of private property, and the central importance of business and industry in the society. (pp. 16-17)

The post-New Deal conservatives were concerned with the amount of government spending and foresaw uncontrolled government growth and oversight over individual rights and liberties

(Fandetti & Belcher, 2007; Tait, 2020). These conservatives sought to return to the pre-New Deal form of government that emphasized individual freedom, small government, respect for authority, and controlled spending (Adler, 2004; Dunn & Woodard, 2003; McClosky & Zaller, 1984), and these values extend to modern conservatives. Conservatives also place a high emphasis on traditions and societal institutions that maintain structure and order, such as the family unit (Kirk, 1954; Muller, 1997). Among modern conservatives, the redistribution of wealth is also discouraged, while free markets are encouraged to determine success (Kettle & Salerno, 2017).

Conversely, modern-day liberalism emphasizes a strong central government to oversee economic and social welfare systems (Adams, 2001). Kerlinger (1984) defines liberalism as a: set of political, economic, religious, educational, and other social beliefs that emphasizes freedom of the individual, constitutional participatory government and democracy, the rule of law, free negotiation, discussion and tolerance of different views, constructive social progress and change, egalitarianism and the rights of minorities, secular rationality and rational approaches to social problems, and positive government action to remedy social deficiencies and to improve human welfare. (p. 15)

Also referred to as progressive liberalism or New Deal liberalism (Williams, 1977), modern liberalism views the role of government as a means of enacting positive social change (Gaus, Courtland, & Schmitz, 2018). Liberals are concerned with the environment, social justice, and economic controls to ensure the egalitarian spread of wealth (Jost, 2006; Kettle & Salerno, 2017).

Distinguishing Factors. An extensive review of the literature reveals a significant amount of research exploring differences among liberals and conservatives. While many studies

examine these distinguishing factors, there is no adequate way to represent all of them in this study. This section is meant to highlight some significant differences between liberals and conservatives. Specifically, this section illustrates that what it means to be liberal or conservative goes further than simple differences in political values. These differences include personality types (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, & Dowling, 2014), cognitive styles (Cools, De Pauw, & Vanderheyden, 2011), biological attributes (Johnston & Wronski, 2015), and moral foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2007).

Researchers have used the Big Five personality traits to measure various aspects of personality for over 20 years, including in several studies to examine the relationship between participants' personality and their political ideology (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, & Dowling, 2014). The Big Five personality traits include a person's openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Ackerman, 2017). In one study, researchers found the relationship between political ideology and two of the Big Five personality traits to be significant (Carney, Jost, Gosling, & Potter, 2008). This study found that conservative respondents scored higher in the trait conscientiousness, or the trait associated with orderliness, duty, and hard work, while liberals scored higher in the trait openness to experience, which is associated with feelings, intellectualism, and philosophical thinking (Carney, Jost, Gosling, and Potter, 2008).

While much of the research surrounding political ideology points to socialization as the cause of one's political ideology, there is a growing body of knowledge surrounding the role of evolutionary biology and genetics (Hatemi and McDermott, 2011), cognitive functions (Feldman, Huddy, Wronski, & Lowns, 2014; Hibbing, Smith, & Alford, 2014), and biological conditions that impact political ideology decision making (McDermott, 2008). As one example,

Martin and colleagues (1986) studied twins, identical and fraternal, and discovered that additive genetic factors could account for almost half ($r = .40$) of the contribution to social attitudes.

As technology has advanced, so has researchers' ability to examine how evolutionary factors such as biology and genetics influence political discourse (McDermott & Hatemi, 2018). In a 2013 study, Schreiber and his colleagues discovered that by analyzing MRI brain images while participants were gambling, they were able to discover differences within the cognitive functions of liberals and conservatives. Liberals showed greater use of the left insula, the region of the brain associated with feelings of disgust and emotion, while conservatives showed greater activity within the right amygdala, the region of the brain associated with fear. This study was able to predict participants' political ideology with 83% accuracy based on their MRI brain scans (Schreiber et al., 2013). In a similar study, researchers utilized physiological measures, such as skin conductance, eye tracking, and blinking response, to examine how liberal and conservative participants reacted to various stimuli. The participants were shown photographs of threatening stimuli, such as a spider crawling on someone's face, and non-threatening stimuli, such as a rabbit in a field, and their physiological responses were recorded. This study found that lower responses to stimuli correlated to liberal beliefs such as gun control and pacifism, while higher responses to the same stimuli correlated to conservative beliefs such as patriotism, capital punishment, and defense spending (Oxley et al., 2008).

With these studies in mind, researchers have explored the genetic transferability of political ideology. In one particularly interesting study that examined the role of smell in assortative mating (e.g., mate selection) among heterosexuals, participants were given gauze that had been worn by other participants and asked to predict if the gauze belonged to a liberal or conservative. The study found that participants could not accurately predict the political ideology

of the gauze-wearer, but they could predict political ideology based on whom they found attractive; for example, liberals preferred the smell of liberals and conservatives preferred the smell of conservatives, while conversely, liberals did not prefer the smell of conservatives and conservatives did not prefer the smell of liberals (McDermott, Tingley, & Hatemi, 2014).

Lastly, liberals and conservatives have shown significant differences in moral foundations. Haidt & Joseph (2004) developed moral foundations theory to explore moral reasoning across cultures and groups; however, researchers have often used it to study political groups. The results of using moral foundations theory to explore political ideology reveal that liberals tend to utilize the moral foundations of care and fairness more than the other foundations, while conservatives tend to use all five (care, fairness, authority, loyalty, and sanctity) of the moral foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2006). Additional studies have shown that moral foundations theory can be used to accurately predict people's political ideology (Hirsh, DeYoung, Xu, & Peterson, 2010).

Political Ideology in Higher Education

A 2018 study completed by WGBH News in Boston found that 72% of Republicans and 48% of Democrats believed that colleges leaned towards one particular viewpoint. Of those who saw a particular leaning, 67% of Republicans saw this as a major issue, while only 26% of Democrats said the same (WGBH, 2018). Similarly, a study done by the Pew Research Center in 2019 found that 59% of Republicans reported higher education as having a negative effect on the United States. This response is drastically different from that of Democrats, as only 18% reported having a negative view of the impact of college (Pew, 2019). These studies highlight differences in perceptions among Democrats and Republicans (e.g., liberals and conservatives)

regarding higher education. While these studies are not causal, they do provide a window into the perception of the political landscape within higher education.

The discussion of political ideology in higher education is not new. In 1951, conservative author William F. Buckley wrote *God and Man at Yale*, detailing his experiences as a conservative student at Yale University. Buckley criticized the university as a space that was critical of religion, conservative ideals, and free thought, and instead focused more on the promulgation of secularist and liberal thought (1951). In more modern terms, Buckley was indicating that universities were unsafe spaces for those who did not align with the liberal ideals of the university (Shields & Dunn, 2016). Buckley's interpretation of his lived experience permeated the American political discourse around higher education and is echoed by modern conservative leaders such as Dinesh D'Souza (1998), Ben Shapiro (2004), David Horowitz (2010), and Dennis Prager (2019). For some conservatives, the university seems to serve as a refuge for liberals, while they consider administrators and professors to assume more adversarial roles through which they seek to stifle the expression of conservative ideas and indoctrinate students in the left-wing agenda (Binder & Kidder, 2013). In his 2016 book *Turning Point USA*, founder Charlie Kirk describes universities as the battlefields where professors and administrators seek to marginalize conservative students and force them to assimilate to the radical leftist ideology. While there is little evidence that college students significantly change their political views by the time they graduate (Zipp & Fenwick, 2006; Woessner & Kelly-Woessner, 2009), the narrative of higher education as an unsafe space for conservatives persists.

Scholars have suggested the creation and implementation of safe spaces and bias response teams has been weaponized and used to silence conservative students who dissent from the mainstream, left-leaning views of the university (Snyder & Khalid, 2016; Mac Donald, 2018;

Prager & Joseph, 2019; Soave, 2019). While conservative students and media outlets may point to instances of bias on campus, there is little empirical evidence to suggest ideological discrimination is an issue (Parsons, 2020). Fosse, Gross, and Ma (2014) found no statistical significance when exploring the responsiveness of faculty to liberal or conservative applicants. However, in a recent study, Parsons (2020) found that faculty in the social sciences and humanities demonstrated a statistically significant bias against conservative students. It must also be noted that in the same study, Parsons examined political bias among administrators, specifically administrators who were responsible for approving student organizations, and found no evidence of political bias (Parsons, 2020).

Whether anti-conservative bias is real or only perceived by students, many have internalized the politically charged narrative. Binder and Kidder (2013) developed a study to examine the role of conservative student activism on college campuses. The comparative case study analysis revealed that some conservative students felt that professors and administrators viewed them with contempt and as adversaries. Thus, some conservative students view their relationship with the university, and its officials, through an adversarial lens, leading them to use more provocative forms of activism (Binder & Kinder, 2013). Further, the authors discuss the role of sponsored conservatism, referring to the roles of outside organizations such as Turning Point USA or YAF that support student activism on campus by supplying talking points, materials, and funding. This sponsored conservatism often occurs because conservative students are not supported in the same manner as liberal student organizations on campus (Binder & Kinder, 2013). As a result, students may seek out the assistance of external organizations to get involved in conservative student activism on their campus. However, the outside organizations also have a vested interest in increasing college student involvement in

their movement (Kirk, 2016). Binder and Kidder (2019) posit that the need for and growth of sponsored conservatism may be rooted in the alignment of liberal student activism with university programs or initiatives, which are often seen as left leaning, while conservative students do not share that alignment. In other words, liberal students may find support easily among faculty and staff, whereas conservative students may have a harder time finding support among faculty and staff.

It is important to note that the anti-conservative bias and polarization of higher education is not confined to the campus experience for students alone, but also plays out on larger stages. In some instances, differences in political ideology have led to the removal of some faculty and administrators (Ellis, Stripling, & Bauman, 2020). States with majority-Republican legislatures have made more drastic cuts to funding for higher education in recent years (Li, 2017). Similarly, many states with Republican-majority legislatures have moved to make laws to define and protect the freedom of speech on college campuses (Levitz, 2018), an issue that has become more politicized as conservatives have felt or experienced marginalization on campus (Mac Donald, 2018; Prager & Joseph, 2019; Soave, 2019). In response, in March of 2019, President Donald J. Trump signed an executive order promoting the freedom of speech on college campuses and threatening institutions with the loss of funding if they do not protect the First Amendment (Kreighbaum, 2019).

Clearly, the conservative narrative of higher education is one that centers on bias, discrimination, or marginalization of conservative students and ideas (Kirk, 2016), and this narrative is not entirely unfounded. Seven years after Buckley published *God and Man at Yale*, Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens published *The Academic Mind* (1958) which was the first published study to specifically examine the political ideology of the academy. The study found

that 46% of respondents identified as Democrats, 36% as independents, and 16% as Republicans. These findings were significant for the time, but even more impactful was the authors' attempt to determine the reason behind the disparity in political representation among professors (Gross, 2013; Shields & Dunn, 2016). Lazarsfeld and Thielens sought to defend academia, specifically the social sciences, during the era of McCarthyism. Thus, the authors tied "intellectualism" with liberalism to advance innovation and move towards a more just society, while tying conservatism to McCarthyism and the tyrannical overreach of government at the time. Further, to explain the large difference between the political representation among faculty, Lazarsfeld and Theilens posited that intellectuals, e.g., liberals, were more adept and open-minded to solve the societal issues they were facing at the time (1958). These ideas laid the groundwork for the myth that conservatives were not cut out to serve in faculty roles, or, in other words, that conservatives were not intellectuals, and have influenced the representation of differing political ideologies among faculty ever since (Shields & Dunn, 2016).

Since *The Academic Mind* (Lazarsfeld & Theilens, 1958), many researchers have looked into the political ideology of faculty. Ladd and Lipset (1975) further examined political ideology among faculty members; their study included more than 60,000 respondents from over 300 institutions and included multiple disciplines, rather than solely social sciences. Their study revealed that 46% of professors identified as liberal/Democrat, 27% as independent, and 27% as conservative; notably, it indicated significant differences across disciplines (Ladd & Lipset, 1975). More modern studies have shown significant disparities between liberal representation within faculty and their conservative counterparts (Rothman, Lichter, & Nevitte, 2005; Cardiff & Klein, 2005; Inbar & Lammers, 2012; Klein et al., 2005; Klein & Stern, 2009; Carl, 2017).

Langbert, Quain, & Klein (2016) suggest the overall ratio of liberal to conservative professors is 11:1.

Political Ideology in Student Affairs

The extant literature surrounding political ideology among student affairs professionals is limited. A thorough review of the existing body of knowledge revealed only four studies that examined the topic. While few, however, these studies provide a springboard into better understanding the intersection of political ideology with the field of student affairs.

Fisler (2011) first studied political ideology in student affairs by examining the lived experiences of conservative student affairs professionals. Fisler (2011) utilized Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony as a lens to better understand how political ideology operates within the field of student affairs. Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony assumes that culture is dominated by a ruling class that influences the societal beliefs, values, and norms of society (Williams, 1977). Fisler (2011) adapted this theory for her study to also include the concept of "nested hegemonies" or that hegemonic cultures may exist within a larger context (e.g., cultures within cultures). Fisler assumed student affairs was dominated by professionals that held predominately left-leaning or liberal political views and thus would hold societal power within the context of student affairs. This critical phenomenological study used semi-structured interviews to uncover how the participants often felt marginalized or silenced within their roles in student affairs due, in part, to holding minority political views when compared to their mostly liberal colleagues. The findings of this study suggest conservative student affairs professionals may not feel as strongly connected with their roles when compared to their liberal peers. In addition, some participants discussed how they actively worked to "pass" as liberal in the workplace to avoid any repercussions of being perceived as a conservative.

In a similar study, Davis, Birnbaum, and Law (2020) used narrative inquiry to better understand how conservative student affairs professionals navigated the field of student affairs and engaged with coworkers. The authors utilized Noelle-Neumann's spiral of silence theory (1974) to further understand the lived experiences of conservative professionals. This theory suggests that individuals who hold views that are contrary to the majority-held perspective will be less willing to voice their opposition to ideas (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). The findings of Davis, Birnbaum, and Law's study mirrored Fisler's. Participants in the study reported choosing to stay silent about their conservative beliefs for fear of potential or perceived backlash among their coworkers. Further, the participants pointed to a double standard of working in a field that promotes inclusivity, while simultaneously not feeling they are included because of their conservative beliefs (Davis, Birnbaum, & Law, 2020).

In 2018, Dr. Samuel Abrams, professor of politics at Sarah Lawrence College, posted an opinion piece in the *New York Times* titled "Think Professors Are Liberal? Try School Administrators." This article discussed the ideological leanings of college administrators who are "student facing" or work directly with students. His own research showed that a survey of 900 participants revealed a liberal to conservative ratio of 12:1 among "student facing administrators" (Abrams, 2018a). Abrams did not go in depth into the methodology of his study for the opinion piece, including how he classified "student facing administrators." However, presumably student-facing administrators would include the field of student affairs. While this study has yet to be peer reviewed or published in his forthcoming book, Abrams' article provides brief insight into the current political landscape within higher education. It must also be noted that following the opinion article's publication, Abrams received tremendous backlash from students at Sarah Lawrence College. Students taped signs to his office door imploring the

professor to “Quit,” to “Go teach somewhere else you racist asshat (maybe Charlottesville?),” and to apologize to the campus community (Soave, 2018). University administration was hesitant in their response to these acts of vandalism and did not send out an email to students addressing the issue until three weeks later (Abrams, 2018b).

The final study that explored political ideology among student affairs professionals was a quantitative study that examined how participants self-labeled their political ideology. In an unpublished manuscript, Sneed and Dunn surveyed 146 members of the Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA), a generalist student affairs professional organization located in the southeast United States. Their study revealed a liberal to conservative ratio of 11:1, like the findings of the Abrams study. Further, Sneed and Dunn also examined the relationships between political ideology and participants’ job related and demographic information. The study found statistically significant relationships between political ideology and the respondents’ gender, age, functional area, and job role (e.g., new professional, mid-level professional, or senior administrator). As a result of this study, Sneed and Dunn posit the prevalence of women in the field (Pritchard & McChesney, 2018) may influence the liberal leanings of student affairs (Barnes & Cassese, 2016; Eagly, Diekmann, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Koenig, 2004; Shorrock & Grasso, 2020).

Person-Environment Fit

There is a large body of knowledge that explores how individuals connect with and impact their work environment. Since Lewin (1935) first presented his field theory and explored the idea that behavior is a function of the person and of the environment, $B = f(P, E)$, researchers have expounded on his original concept to understand how people choose, connect, and leave their workplaces. One expansion of this original concept is person-environment (P-E)

fit, which is defined as “the degree of compatibility or match between individuals and some aspect of their work environment” (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011, p. 3). P-E fit has been closely linked to critical employment outcomes such as job performance (Gerguras & Diedendorff, 2009), job satisfaction (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010), and commitment to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

P-E fit is not a singular construct, but rather a set of interconnected theories to understand various aspect of the workplace. Due to the varying lenses through which an individual or organization may be viewed, P-E fit is often used as an umbrella term, and then researchers employ more specific manifestations of fit to best address the research question at hand (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). The most common dimensions of P-E fit include person-vocation (P-V) fit, person-organization (P-O) fit, person-group (P-G) fit, and person-job (P-J) fit. Additional constructs that researchers have explored include person-supervisor fit, person-team fit (Van Vianen, 2018), person-people fit (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010), and even person-goal fit (Horner, 2018), but these domains will not be discussed within the context of this study.

In addition to Lewin’s work (1935), P-E fit draws from several other theoretical foundations that influence the study of individuals within organizational environments. Holland’s Theory of Vocational Choice (1959, 1997) is strongly related to P-E fit, more specifically to P-V fit, which will be discussed later. Holland sought to explain vocational choice, or in other words, why people choose the careers that they do (1997). By exploring the role of interests, beliefs, and behaviors among individuals, Holland developed six personality types that were combined to form a singular profile intended to measure one’s interests. These types include realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional, and are often referred to by their abbreviation, RIASEC (Holland, 1997). Holland’s theory has been used to inform P-E fit

literature, and it is also worth noting that it is often used within student affairs as a tool to inform a student's career choice or academic major (Lester, 2012).

An additional theory that undergirds much of the P-E fit literature is Schneider's attraction-selection-attrition (A-S-A) framework (1987). This theoretical framework was originally developed to explain why organizations operate in the manner that they do (Billsberry, 2007). More specifically, the framework examines how organizations go about recruiting and retaining staff. From this research, Schneider (1987) suggests that organizations will naturally gravitate towards attracting, selecting, and retaining individuals who reflect the values of the organization and the people who inhabit it. Conversely, the A-S-A framework is also useful in exploring attrition of individuals from the organization (Schneider, 1987). Schneider et al. would later expound on this concept by suggesting that, over time, organizations would become more homogeneous due to the preference to self-select people that were more like the organization and its members (1995). This theory is best utilized to understand lower levels of P-E fit, such as P-O fit, rather than P-V fit (Billsberry, 2007).

When exploring P-E fit, additional frameworks may be applied to the type of fit being studied to better understand how a person connects to their work environment. These conceptual frameworks include complementary fit and supplementary fit (Kristof, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Complementary fit is characterized by the unique characteristics that a person brings to the dynamics of a group (Muchinsky & Monohan, 1987) and may be best viewed as pieces of a puzzle, where one complements the other (Harrison, 2007). Together, the person and the group create new dynamics that did not exist previously (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). While complementary fit identifies ways the individual and group connect across differences, supplementary fit identifies ways the group and individual are similar. Supplementary fit is

concerned with the congruence of the values and interests of the individual with the values and interests of the environment (Muchinsky & Monhahan, 1987). After acknowledging the constructs of supplementary and complementary fit, fit may be further examined by utilizing a needs-supplies perspective or a demands-abilities perspective (Kristof, 1996). A needs-supplies perspective focuses on how the environment can meet the needs of the individual, whereas a demands-abilities perspective serves to determine if an individual may meet the demands of the environment (Kristof, 1996).

Person-Vocation Fit

Kristof-Brown & Guay (2011) defined P-V fit as “the match between an individual’s needs, abilities, and interests with the demands and supplies of various vocations or career paths” (p. 8). Closely aligned with the work of Holland (1985), Kristof-Brown & Guay’s study (2011) seeks to examine the relationship between the individual and vocational choice. When seeking to understand vocational choice, P-V fit is the broadest view of P-E fit that researchers can take (Badger, 2014). While there are extensive bodies of knowledge in other domains related to P-E fit, P-V fit has been understudied by comparison (Hiller, 2018). However, several studies have found significant results in examining the relationship of P-V fit to other levels of P-E fit, such as P-O fit and P-J fit (Feij et al., 1999; Vogel & Feldman, 2009). P-V fit is most often examined through a supplementary fit lens (Badger, 2014). Within the context of this study, the field of student affairs is viewed as a vocation.

Person-Organization Fit

Kristof (1996) defined P-O fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (pp. 4-5). P-O fit provides multiple opportunities to

examine the relationship between a person and the organization. In one instance, the relationship may be examined from the individual's point of view, and in another from the point of view of the organization (Lombardi, 2018). However, while studying P-O fit from the organizational point of view, there may be dangers in anthropomorphizing the organization with human characteristics (Kristoff-Brown & Guay, 2011). Both complementary and supplementary fit are used in exploring P-O fit (Badger, 2014). This study uses the organizational lens to reflect the participant's institution.

Person-Group Fit

P-G fit may also be referred to as person-team fit and examines the relationship between an individual and their coworkers, with emphasis on interpersonal relationships and compatibility (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2005). P-G fit research often centers compatibility between team members based on psychology, personality, values, and attitudes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This dimension of P-E fit is often subjective and in a constant state of change as new challenges to team socialization and development present themselves (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). Complementary and supplementary fit are used in exploring P-O fit (Badger, 2014); however, P-O fit is most often assessed using values-based measures (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012).

Person-Job Fit

Defined as "the tasks a person is expected to accomplish in exchange for employment, as well as characteristics of those tasks" (Kristoff, 1996, p. 8), P-J fit relates strongly to how employees experience job satisfaction, assimilation, and intention to leave (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Within this construct, supplementary and complementary fit are most used to measure fit, due to the need for the employee to possess the skills and abilities to perform the duties of the role (Edwards, 1991). Kristof (1996) also suggests that P-J fit should not solely be based on the

ability for a person to complete the required task. Within the context of this study, job will be most closely related to functional area.

Person-Environment Fit in Student Affairs Literature

The review of existing literature revealed several studies that have examined the relationship between an employee and their work environment. While a considerable number of studies include concepts such as job satisfaction (Lombardi, 2015), a construct that is often used in relation to P-E fit measure (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011), few studies have utilized P-E fit theory to better understand the connection between the individual professional and their environment. In one such study, Burgess (2012) utilized P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-O fit to better understand new professionals working in housing. This study surveyed 213 new professionals about the selection process, e.g. obtaining a job in the functional area of housing and residence life. The findings of this study indicated there was a significant relationship between the measure of P-J fit and P-O fit on the selection process; however, the measure of P-G fit was not significant (Burgess, 2012). In another study P-E fit theory was used to examine the relationship between P-O fit and P-J fit on job satisfaction among mid-level managers in student affairs (Lombardi, 2015). This quantitative study found a significant relationship between the measure of P-E fit and job satisfaction for the participants (Lombardi, 2015). Lastly, Lozupone (2020) utilized a P-O fit framework for her qualitative study that explored culture surrounding ethics at an institution and how it influences employee and student success. Using qualitative questionnaires, focus groups, and individual interviews Lozupone was able to uncover several themes that could be employed to improve organizational fit among employees (2020).

Notably, some of the most thorough literature regarding the connection between an individual and their work environment does not explicitly use a P-E fit framework. In *Where You*

Work Matters, Joan Hirt (2006) completed several studies to understand the role of the institution on the overall experience of its employees. Inspired by the need to better inform new professionals entering the field, Hirt (2006) chose the Carnegie Classification system as framework to understand institutional type and identified significant differences in the experiences of professionals based on the institution type. Hirt (2016) indicated there are differences among religious institutions, historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, comprehensive, research, and community colleges. Hirt's contribution to the literature sheds light on the complexities of institution type and how it shapes the culture, and by extension, the connection between the professional and the organization.

Summary

This review provided a strong framework for understanding the theoretical and practical underpinnings of this study. This research seeks to explore how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and how their political ideology relates to their perceived fit with their organization, group, job, and vocation. While there have been many studies examining political ideology among faculty (Cardiff & Klein, 2005; Carl, 2017; Inbar & Lammers, 2012; Klein et. al., 2005; Klein & Stern, 2009; Langbert, Quain, & Klein, 2016), few studies have addressed the topic among student affairs professionals. During politically polarizing times such as the current state of public discourse within the United States (Medina & Gebeloff, 2020), there is a tremendous need for student affairs professionals to build self-awareness around political ideology, specifically around how political ideology manifests in the workplace. The information gathered regarding political ideology supports the purpose of this study by providing foundational knowledge of what political ideology is, what it means to be a liberal or

conservative, how political ideology has been studied in higher education, and how political ideology has been examined within the field of student affairs.

In addition, this chapter discussed the concept of Person-Environment (P-E) fit, its theoretical foundations, and the many ways that it may be utilized in analyzing the relationship between an employee and their workplace (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Rooted in the works of Lewin (1935) and Holland (1959, 1997) on field theory and vocational choice, respectively, Person-Environment (P-E) fit is overarching theory that includes multiple theories that describe the relationship between the employee and individual aspects of their working environment that include Person-Organization (P-O) fit, Person-Job (P-J) fit, Person-Vocation (P-V) fit, and Person-Group (P-G) fit (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). By using these multiple theories in this study, a wide range of information may be collected from participants regarding their connectedness to their work environment. While typically studies focus on one theory, such as Person-Organization(P-O) fit, this study utilized multiple constructs to explore the relationship between political ideology and Person-Environment (P-E) fit.

Notably, Bermiss and McDonald (2018) conducted a study examining the role of political affiliation and employee departure within the private sector and discovered there was a relationship between the two. Employees whose political values did not align with their organization often found employment with an organization that more closely reflected their political values. While not explicitly related to higher education, this study does raise questions and may provide insight into how political ideology and P-E fit interact with one another to influence career choices among workers.

The purpose of the present study did not include intent to leave a position or organization; however, this does examine the relationship between the individual, their political

ideology, and how they perceive their connection to their work environment. There have been some studies in student affairs scholarship that include different levels of Person-Environment(P-E) fit (Lombardi, 2015; Lozupone, 2020), but none have examined the relationship between political ideology and P-E fit. This exploratory study sought to add a considerable amount to the body of knowledge within student affairs regarding political ideology within the workplace. The following chapter delineates the methodology used to explore the stated research questions for the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines this empirical study that explored the relationship between the political ideology of student affairs professionals and their perceived person-environment fit (P-E Fit). This study examined how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and explored the relationships among their political ideology, person-environment fit, and demographic information. Due to the emphasis in understanding relationships between the subjects, a quantitative methodological approach is ideal for this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2015; Mertens, 2005).

Participants and Sampling

The target population for this study was current student affairs professionals working on college campuses within the United States. To solicit participants for this study, large professional organizations that represented a wide range of functional areas and regions were explored as possible sites for recruitment. This was done to ensure participants in the study were actively serving in administrative roles and identified as student affairs professionals. In addition, choosing a professional organization as the population for this study allowed for a large sample to be taken that may more representative of the field of student affairs and as a nation. However, it must be acknowledged that being a member to a professional organization is not tenable for all student affairs professionals or institutions. Barriers, such as cost, may limit the ability of professionals to join those organizations, and in effect influence the variety of institution type and professionals represented in the sample. Despite this possibility, the benefits of choosing of

national organization that include of a large sample size, regional reach, and variety of participants positions, outweighed the potential risks.

NASPA was ultimately chosen as the population for this study since it offered the broadest reach when considering sample size, range of functional areas and professionals. NASPA was founded in 1919 as a small organization for deans and advisers of men but has since grown to include a membership of over 15,000 professionals and 1,200 institutions around the world (NASPA, n.d.). This organization is dedicated to “evidence-based, student centered practice throughout higher education, nationally, and globally (NASPA, n.d.). To recruit participants from NASPA, approval was obtained from the organization to utilize the membership list, and a random sample (Creswell, 2018) was requested.

A statistical power analysis was conducted using the computer application G*Power 3 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buckner, 2007) to determine the sample size that was requested from NASPA to address the planned analysis. The analysis revealed that a sample size of approximately 378 participants was needed to achieve a medium effect size for the study. Expecting a 10% response rate among the sample, 6,000 members were requested from NASPA. However, a list of 7,789 members was provided from the organization. Further, NASPA does not provide the email address for the members, so the list was then searched in the NASPA member directory to obtain the email addresses of the members. Some NASPA members elected to not have their contact information listed in the directory and were eliminated from the sample, so a final list of 7,564 member emails was compiled and used in this study. For the purposes of this study and to adequately address the stated research questions, only members that are actively serving in professional roles within the United States were included. This sample did not include members that serve solely in faculty roles or corporate partners of the organization.

Research Design

To best address the research questions, a non-experimental quantitative study was employed (Johnson & Christensen, 2015; Mertens, 2005). This study was based on an exploratory study (Sneeden & Dunn, unpublished) conducted using a quantitative methodology with the Southern Association of College Student Administrators (SACSA) as the site of their study. The findings of that study led the researcher to expand the population and scope of the study to include person-environment fit. Further, the research questions of this study were best addressed using a quantitative design.

Research Questions

RQ1: How do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology?

RQ2: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology and perceived person-environment fit?

RQ3: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology and demographic variables?

RQ4: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic variables?

Instrument

The instrument designed for the questionnaire for this study consisted of previously validated and reliability-tested measures and a series of demographic questions. This approach was chosen to effectively explore the research topic while tailoring the questionnaire to a student affairs audience. The instrument is divided into four sections that include: political ideology, person-environment fit, workplace attributes, and demographic information.

Measuring Political Ideology

Participants were asked to rank themselves overall on a 7-point Likert scale question to measure how they view their overall political ideology. This includes (1) very liberal, (2) liberal, (3) somewhat liberal, (4) moderate, (5) somewhat conservative, (6) conservative, and (7) very conservative as selection variables. The single item of self-labeled political ideology has been widely used as a valid measure of political ideology (Jost, 2007; Hirsh et al., 2010; Nosek, Sriram, & Umansky, 2012). The direct self-reporting of the participants' political ideology has become a widely accepted way to validate indirect measures of ideology (Knight, 1999) and provides the instrument with greater reliability and validity (Kroh, 2007, Lewis & Bates, 2011). Participants were also asked two single-item self-placement 7-point Likert scale questions centering on their political views on economic and social issues to provide additional variation among respondents. Using the 7-point Likert scale to measure political ideology has been used in similar studies that explore political ideology among faculty members (Inbar & Lammers, 2012).

Measuring Person-Environment Fit

Person-environment fit is an interrelated set of theories meant to describe the alignment between an individual and the work environment (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). To best address the research questions in this study, multiple measures were used to capture Person-Vocation fit (P-V fit), Person-Organization fit (P-O fit), Person-Job fit (P-J fit), and Person-Group fit (P-G fit), respectively.

P-V fit was measured using a questionnaire developed by Vogel and Feldman (2009). This scale consists of three questions that ask participants to frame their responses through the occupation in which they are trained. These questions include a) is there a good fit between the personal interests and the occupation, b) the perceived fit surrounding the skills and abilities

being aligned with the vocation, and c) the perception of if the personal interests may be better suited in another field. The third question, question c), is reverse scored (See APPENDIX C). Vogel and Feldman found a coefficient α of 0.65 for this scale indicating a strong efficacy rate for the instrument (2009). This scale provided tremendous insight to the perceived fit between the respondents and student affairs as a vocation. All items for this scale were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Permission was received from Vogel and Feldman (see APPENDIX D) as well as Cable and DeRue (see APPENDIX E). Cable and Derue originated the measures for Person-Organization and Person-Job fit but were adapted in the Vogel and Feldman's 2009 study.

P-G fit was measured using a scale also developed by Vogel and Feldman (2009). This scale consists of five items that focus on the coworkers of the participants in the study. These items include questions regarding a) the working relationships between the participant and their coworkers being the best parts of their job, b) getting along with coworkers, c) conflict among coworkers, d) spending time with coworkers outside of work, e) avoiding certain coworkers when possible (See APPENDIX C). The question regarding avoiding certain coworkers is reverse scored. Vogel and Feldman constructed the measure due to a lack of a widely accepted and validated scale. They found this scale had a coefficient α of 0.76. All items for this scale are measured on a seven-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. When asking for permission to use this measure, Vogel suggested using an instrument developed by Li, Kristof-Brown, & Nielsen (2019) that included multiple dimensions of P-G fit and provided stronger validity and reliability. While this is true regarding the Li, Kristof-Brown, & Nielsen instrument, the researcher chose not to use it due to the length of the instrument including 28 items, and thus being significantly longer than the current questionnaire utilized for

this study. Further, the focus of this study is not solely P-G fit but fit across multiple measures. If this dissertation study was only on P-G fit then the Li, Kristof-Brown, and Nielsen would be ideal.

To measure P-O fit, a scale was selected that was originally developed by Cable and DeRue (2002) but was later adapted by Vogel and Feldman (2009). This scale includes questions including a) how the participant identifies with the goals of their organization, b) the alignment of personal goals with the goals of the organization, c) not caring about the goals of the organization as much as their coworkers, d) participants' life values aligning with the institution, e) personal values aligning with the organization values, and f) the perception of the organization values and culture being a good fit for the participant (See APPENDIX C). This measure is subdivided into two categories that include values congruence (questions a through c) and goal congruence (questions d through f). The values subscale had a coefficient α of 0.89, while the goal congruence subscale had a coefficient α of 0.81. of 0.82 ($p < .001$). All items for this scale are measured on a seven-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

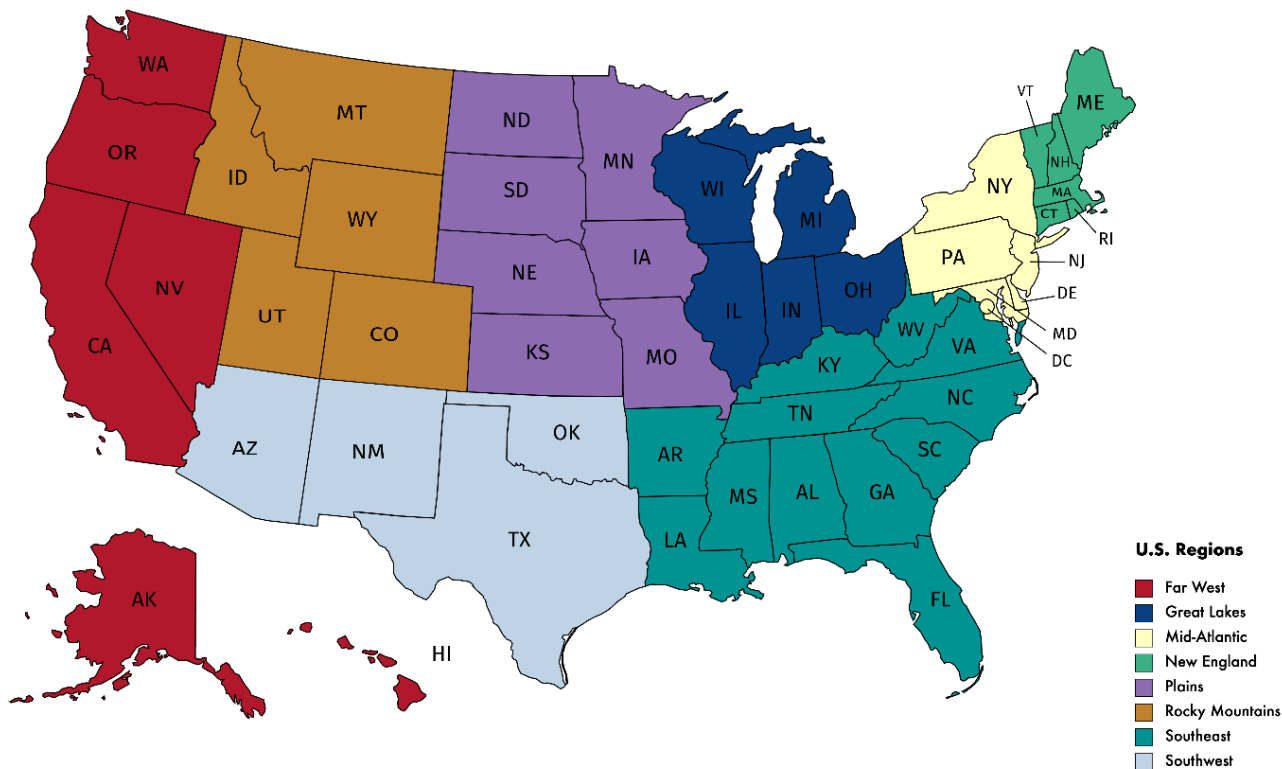
The P-J fit measure was developed by Cable and DeRue (2002) and was also adapted by Vogel and Feldman for the same study (2009). Like the P-O fit measure, this scale consists of a total of six items that can be subdivided into two categories that include needs-supplies and abilities-demand. These questions include a) the perceived fit between the participant and what the job offers them, b) alignment between what the participant is looking for in a job and their current role, c) does the job give the participant what they are looking for, d) the match between the demands of the job and participants skills, e) alignment between abilities and training with the requirements of the job, and f) the match between abilities and education with the demands

of the job (See APPENDIX C). Cable and Derue found the three item needs-supplies subcategory possessed a coefficient α of 0.90, while the abilities-demand subcategory has a coefficient α of 0.84. Cable and DeRue found these two subcategories had a correlation of 0.67 ($p < .001$) (2002). All items for this scale are measured on a seven-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Demographic Information

Demographic data were collected to adequately answer the stated research questions. Participants were asked 11 questions related to their personal and workplace attributes. Gender was measured as male, female, transgender, non-binary, not listed, or prefer not to answer. Racial identity was measured as African American or Black (non-Hispanic), Asian Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latinx, Native American or Indigenous, Multiracial or Multiethnic, White, Not Listed, and Prefer not to answer. Age was measured using the age ranges of 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, and 66 or older. Participants were asked to provide information regarding their current position and personal attributes that include years of work in the field and role description. In addition, participants were asked to report their institution type, institution size, institution setting, and institution religious affiliation. The regional location of the institution was also collected and a map of the states within each region can be found in Figure 1. The specific wording of the Regional Location question was informed by the Graduate School Search tool on the NASPA website (n.d.) to use language common to student affairs professionals.

Lastly, participants were asked to report what functional area they currently work in. The items within this question reflect the functional areas represented in the latest edition of CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education (Council for the Advancement of Standards, 2019).

Figure 1*Regions Included in This Study*

Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaire was administered during the fall semester of 2020. An initial recruitment email was sent on November 16, 2020. Reminder emails were sent on November 30 and December 7, 2020. The recruitment email consisted of a request to participate in the study and a link to the questionnaire (see APPENDIX A). After clicking on the link to the questionnaire, participants reviewed the Informed Consent information prior beginning the study (see APPENDIX B).

The web-based software Qualtrics, licensed by the University of Georgia, was used to build and disseminate the questionnaire to potential participants. Using Qualtrics provided

additional security for respondents through encryption and firewalls. In addition, Qualtrics is accessible via the Internet on computers as well as on mobile phones. Participants in this study responded voluntarily. They were not forced to answer any question and could withdraw from the study at any time. At the end of the questionnaire, participants were given the opportunity to enter their email address in a separate form for the opportunity to win one of six \$20 Amazon gift cards. In accordance with the State of Georgia's laws related to games of chance, potential participants are not required to complete the questionnaire to enter this opportunity and were able to email the researcher with their entry. Lastly, steps were taken to maintain the confidentiality of participants. While the Qualtrics software does capture IP addresses of respondents, this information is password protected and will be discarded once permitted by IRB. The average completion time for the questionnaire was approximately 10 minutes.

Analysis Procedures

The following section details statistical procedures used for data analysis. After data collection, data was cleaned and analyzed using the statistical software package software, SPSS 27 for Windows. Missing data was primarily excluded using pairwise deletion; however, when necessary maximum likelihood estimation was used to strengthen statistical power (Peugh & Enders, 2004).

RQ1: How do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology?

The purpose of this research question was to examine how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology. The three measures of political ideology include a 7-point Likert scale question asking the participants' views on social issues, economic issues, and how they rate their overall political ideology. These questions were scored from (1) very liberal, (2) liberal, (3) somewhat liberal, (4) moderate, (5) somewhat conservative, (6) conservative, and (7)

very conservative. To best answer this research question, descriptive statistics that include means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies were reported for each of the items within the political ideology section of the instrument (See Table 3, Chapter Four).

RQ2: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology and person-environment fit?

For this research question, the measures for P-O fit, P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-V fit were first individually summed (e.g., the P-O fit scores were summed into a Total P-O fit score, P-J fit scores were summed into a Total P-J fit score, P-G fit scores were summed into a Total P-G fit score, P-V fit scores were summed into a Total P-V fit score). These total scores were the dependent variables in a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the 7-point Likert scale responses to how participants rate their overall political ideology serving as the independent variable.

MANOVA was chosen as the analysis because it is like an analysis of variance (ANOVA) but allows for multiple dependent variables to be present at the same time (Fields, 2013). This approach enables the researcher to perform a single analysis rather than a series of one-way ANOVAS, thereby reducing the risk of error (Rencher & Christensen, 2012). In event of a significant finding from the MANOVA, further testing is conducted on significant variables through one-way ANOVAs (Rencher & Christensen, 2012). The additional testing of the one-way ANOVAs between the independent variables (e.g., P-O fit, P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-V fit total scores) and dependent variable of overall political ideology also included post hoc testing. Post hoc testing enabled the pairwise comparison among levels of each independent variable (Green & Salkind, 2017). The post hoc test that was executed was Tukey's HSD (honestly significant difference) due to its ability to control for type I errors and to better understand differences

between pairs of groups (Salkind, 2010). The descriptive statistics that include means, standard deviations, percentages and frequencies are reported.

RQ3: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology and demographic variables?

The aim of this question is to examine the relationships between self-labeled political ideology and the demographic information reported by participants. This demographic information includes how long the participants have worked in the field, their current position level, functional area, institution type, institution size, institution religious affiliation, institution location, gender, race, and age. The 7-point Likert scale overall political ideology score was used as the dependent variable, and the demographic variables served as the independent variables. To best address this research question, one-way ANOVAs were performed between the overall political ideology score and the demographic variables. The post hoc test that was executed was Tukey's HSD due to its ability to control for type I errors and to better understand differences between groups (Salkind, 2010).

For questionnaire items that lacked sufficient numbers within groups, some responses were collapsed into larger categories such as functional area to provide greater viability for statistical analysis (Grimbeek, Bryer, & Beamish, 2005). This was also done for the institution type when collapsing "public 4-year," "private 4-year," "public 2-year," and "private 2-year" into the categories of "public" and "private." This was done to explore potential differences between four-year institutions and community or junior colleges. In this instance, the comparison of institution type was conducted using a t-test (See Chapter Four) (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Descriptive statistics that include means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies are reported.

RQ4: What relationship exists between participant's self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic information?

The aim of this question is to examine the relationships between self-labeled political ideology, the perceived person-environment fit score, and demographic information. While all measures of person-environment fit, including P-O fit, P-J fit, P-V fit, and P-G fit were tested alongside overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables, only one presented a significant interaction. To best address this research question, a factorial ANOVA was chosen to analyze the potential interaction between each of the three key variables (political ideology, person-environment fit, and demographics). A factorial ANOVA is ideal for examining more than one independent variable in a single test while also examining the combined influence of those variables on the dependent variable (Burhman et. al, 2015). For this study, it is used to determine the impact of overall political ideology and the demographic variable on the person-environment fit score.

However, this approach also presented a significant challenge related to unequal group sizes. The analysis for Research Question 4 presented a significant challenge that included unequal group sizes within the multiple variables, specifically among overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables. Unequal group sizes add additional complexity to factorial ANOVAs by influencing how the means of main effects are calculated and may be easily misinterpreted to show an interaction where there may not be an interaction (Green & Salkind, 2017; Keppel, 1982). Researchers may utilize the unweighted means rather than the weighted means to analyze the relationship between factors to better account for the unequal group sizes (Beavers et. al., 2013). However, it is also possible for the researcher to collapse data and utilize random sampling and delete data to create equal group sizes within variables (Grimbeek, Bryer,

Beamish, 2005). The latter approach was attempted; however, a significant amount of variance among responses was lost. Further, the data were collapsed to a point where it no longer resembled the data collected due to the number of variables that needed to be collapsed. Doing this would do a disservice to the participants' lived experiences. For example, responses other than male or female for the demographic question for gender would need to be dropped from the variable to provide greater statistical significance. It is for this reason that unweighted means were used to evaluate the analysis. To assist in controlling for Type I errors during this analysis, an alpha value of .001 was utilized (Green & Salkind, 2017; Keselman Games, & Rogan, 1979). Post hoc testing was executed using Tukey's HSD to control for Type I errors and to better understand differences using pairwise comparisons (Salkind, 2010). Descriptive statistics that include means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies are reported.

Limitations

This study has several potential limitations on the scope and reach of the inquiry. The success of this study hinges on the ability to draw a representative sample of the field. To draw conclusions from this study based on data that is not representative of the population would provide an incomplete picture of political ideology in the field of student affairs, as represented by membership in NASPA. However, an accurate, or even approximate, count of demographic information of student affairs professionals does not exist and would be difficult to account for the complexities of roles, titles, student affairs in academic units, or organizational nuances in structure. While the methodological approach used in this study is designed to cast a wide net across the largest professional association in student affairs, it still may not accurately reflect the field.

Another limitation to this study was the willingness for participants to share their political ideology alongside demographic information that may be sensitive to their position. In creating this study, I recognize that a potential respondent may feel the environment is so hostile towards expressing political opinions they may not want to participate in a study that may connect their political ideology to attributes of their roles. While this study is anonymous and does not collect sensitive information that would be identifiable, the fear felt by potential participants may have felt prohibitive to some.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

As discussed in chapter 1, this study examined how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and explored relationships among their political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic information of the participants. This chapter addresses each of the four stated research questions posed in chapter one. A summary of demographic information of the sample is presented first, followed by outcomes of the data analysis addressing the research questions. Descriptive statistics, Spearman's correlation analysis, ANOVA, MANOVA, and post-hoc testing results are presented.

Survey Population and Response Rate

The quantitative questionnaire was sent to 7,564 NASPA members. There were 2,311 responses to the invitation to participate in the study. However, 266 participants failed to complete the questionnaire or withdrew from the study and were removed from the sample. This resulted in 2,045 participants remaining in the sample of the study. The response rate overall was approximately 30.5%; however, due to the responses that were removed the response rate was approximately 27%.

Summaries of Demographic Information of the Sample

The distribution of the survey responses by demographic groups is listed in Table 1. The demographic information presented includes length of time working in the field of student affairs, position level, institution type, institution size, institution setting, religious affiliation of the institution, institution location, race, gender, and age.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants, n, Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviation

Variable	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Time in the Field				
Master's Graduate Student	113	5.5	2.29	1.107
1-5 years	476	23.3	2.16	1.156
6-10 years	479	23.5	2.35	1.140
11 or more years	977	47.8	2.57	1.156
Position Level				
Master's Graduate Student	128	6.3	2.29	1.109
Full time Doctoral Student/Terminal Degree Student	31	1.5	2.47	1.479
New Professional	417	20.4	2.08	1.099
Mid-level Professional	1064	52.0	2.44	1.151
Senior-Level Professional	369	18.0	2.73	1.164
Chief Student Affairs Officer	35	1.7	2.51	1.067
Institution Type				
Public 2-year	106	5.2	2.55	1.212
Public 4-year	1309	64.0	2.00	0.943
Private 2-year	10	0.5	2.44	1.179
Private 4-year	619	30.3	2.33	1.114
Institution Size				
Small - less than 5,000 students	364	17.8	2.45	1.167
Medium - 5,001- 10,000 students	382	18.7	2.40	1.156
Large - more than 10,000 students	1299	63.5	2.40	1.162
Institution Setting				
Urban	946	46.2	2.34	1.13
Rural	345	16.9	2.59	1.287
Suburban	727	35.5	2.39	1.129
Online	22	1.1	2.73	1.202
Institution Religious Affiliation				
No Affiliation	1703	83.4	2.40	1.160
Loose Affiliation	156	7.6	2.32	1.127
Strong Affiliation	183	8.9	2.55	1.184
Functional Area				
Academic Services	187	9.1	2.42	1.116
Admissions	24	1.2	2.17	1.007
Assessment	28	1.4	2.18	1.090
Athletics	3	0.1	2.00	1.000
Campus Safety	2	0.1	4.50	2.121
Career Development	70	3.1	2.61	1.365
Case Management	25	1.2	2.56	1.417
Community Service	37	1.8	2.16	1.118
Counseling Services	22	1.1	2.55	1.224

Dean of Students	149	7.3	2.62	1.287
Dining Services	0	0.0	0.00	0.000
Disability Services	22	1.1	2.77	1.066
Enrollment Management	27	1.3	3.15	1.262
Financial Aid	6	0.3	3.33	0.816
Fraternity and Sorority Life	43	2.1	2.47	1.008
Fundraising	5	0.2	2.80	0.447
Graduate Student Services	46	2.2	2.04	0.988
Health Services	47	2.3	2.11	1.220
International Student Services	14	0.7	1.86	0.864
Leadership Programs	61	3.0	2.56	1.204
LGBT Student Services	15	0.7	1.33	0.488
Multicultural Student Services	93	4.5	2.05	0.948
Orientation Programs	47	2.3	2.38	1.153
Recreation Programs	19	0.9	3.05	1.224
Registration Services	8	0.4	1.63	0.518
Religious Programs	2	0.1	3.00	2.828
Residence Life and Housing	220	10.8	2.34	1.137
Student Activities	189	9.2	2.32	1.069
Student Affairs Administration	265	13.0	2.62	1.118
Student Conduct	46	2.2	2.57	1.276
Student Unions	33	1.6	2.88	1.244
Veterans Services	27	1.3	3.56	1.528
Women's and Gender Programs	20	1.0	1.70	0.865
Other	241	11.8	2.12	0.996
Institution Location				
Far West	312	15.2	2.15	1.005
Great Lakes	254	12.4	2.26	1.02
Mid-Atlantic	331	16.2	2.33	1.061
New England	189	9.2	2.14	0.908
Plains	134	6.5	2.53	1.181
Rocky Mountains	86	4.2	2.42	1.251
Southeast	500	24.4	2.71	1.332
Southwest	235	11.5	2.51	1.231
Online	5	0.2	2.6	0.894
U.S. Territory	0	0.0	0.00	0.000
Race				
African American/Black	288	14.1	2.57	1.104
Asian/Pacific Islander	121	5.9	2.13	1.032
Latino/Hispanic	203	9.9	2.22	1.105
Native American/Aluet	14	0.7	2.43	1.205
Biracial/Multiracial	64	3.1	2.23	0.955
White	1341	65.6	2.43	1.222
Prefer not to answer	14	0.7	2.57	1.399
Gender				
Male	630	30.8	2.65	1.239

Female	1362	66.6	2.32	1.101
Transgender	4	0.2	1.00	0.000
Non-binary	26	1.3	1.38	0.496
Gender not listed	2	0.1	1.50	0.707
Prefer not to answer	12	0.6	2.85	1.772
Selected Multiple Items*	9	0.3	1.33	0.500
Age				
18-25	185	9.1	2.14	0.977
26-35	730	35.7	2.19	1.102
36-45	617	30.2	2.48	1.127
46-55	360	17.6	2.69	1.263
56-65	143	7.0	2.82	1.268
66 or older	9	0.4	2.67	0.866

*Participants were asked to "select all that apply" when asked their gender

Participant background

The quantitative questionnaire solicited information from participants regarding personal attributes including gender, age, and race/ethnicity. Of the 2,045 participants, 630 (30.8%) identified as male, 1,362 (66.6%) as female, four as transgender (0.2%), 26 (1.3%) as nonbinary, while two (0.1%) selected gender not listed, and 12 (0.3%) chose not to answer. Regarding gender, participants were able to select multiple responses for this question, for which nine (0.3%) participants chose to select multiple items. For the category of age, most participants fell within the age ranges of 26-35 (35.7%, $n = 730$) and 36-45 (30.2%, $n = 617$). Many participants in this study identified as White (65.6%, $n = 1341$), while African American or Black (14.1%, $n = 288$), Asian/Pacific Islander (5.9%, $n = 121$), and Latino/Hispanic (9.9%, $n = 203$) participants were more closely distributed.

Participants were also asked a series of questions regarding their work history related to student affairs, including length of time worked in the field, current position level, and current functional area. Most participants (47.8%, $n = 977$) in this study have worked in student affairs for 11 or more years, while master's graduate level students represented only 5.5% ($n = 113$) of

the sample. Professionals with 1-5 years work experience (23.3%, $n = 476$) and 6-10 years work experience (23.5%, $n = 480$) made up similar proportions of the sample. Master's level graduate students made up the least number of participants in the study (5.5%, $n = 113$). Regarding the position level of the participants, 1,064 participants (52%) identified as mid-level professionals, representing most respondents in the study. The remaining categories within the position levels present in the study include new professionals (20.4%, $n = 417$), senior level professionals (18.0%, $n = 369$), master's level graduate students (6.3%, $n = 128$), chief student affairs officers (1.7%, $n = 35$), and full-time doctoral students (1.5%, $n = 31$).

Regarding functional area, most participants represented Residence Life and Housing (10.8%, $n = 220$), Student Activities (9.2%, $n = 189$), Academic Services (9.1%, $n = 187$), and Dean of Students (7.3%, $n = 149$). The categories of Student Affairs Administration (13.0%, $n = 265$), a generalist category that also encompasses professionals that may work in or oversee multiple functional areas, and the category of Other (11.8%, $n = 241$), were also highly represented in the study. Given the number of items within the functional area variable, the researcher deemed it necessary to collapse the items to produce categories with viable numbers of participants for analysis. This first required recoding the responses that were typed into the text box connected to the item listed as "Other" where possible. Some responses coincided with existing categories; for example, on participant selected "Other" then wrote "University Chaplain" which was recoded into the "Religious Programs" category. The functional areas were then collapsed into 13 categories based primarily on similar functional duties, such as leadership programs and community service (See APPENDIX F).

For categories to have a viable number of participants for analysis, those with a smaller number of participants were collapsed into other categories. For example, Campus safety ($n =$

2) and Financial Aid ($n = 6$) were collapsed into the “Other” category, while items with larger amounts of responses were not collapsed, such as residence life and housing ($n = 220$) or student affairs administration ($n = 265$). The process of collapsing is described next and the collapsed functional area responses are presented in Table 2.

The process of collapsing the items resulted in 13 categories that include academic services, residence life & housing, student activities, student affairs administration, health & wellness, multicultural identity centers, student conduct, student needs, enrollment management, leadership & community service, dean of students, career services, and other. Residence life & housing, student affairs administration, career services, and academic services were not collapsed into any new categories and remained unchanged. The functional areas of Registration Services, Admissions, Financial Aid, Graduate Student Services, and Orientation were collapsed into the Enrollment Management category. Fraternity and sorority life and student unions were collapsed into the student activities functional area. Health services, wellness programs, and recreation programs were collapsed into the health & wellness category. Multicultural student services were collapsed alongside lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender student services, women’s and gender programs, and international student services to form the multicultural & identity center category. Title IX programs was collapsed into student conduct. Counseling services, disability services, and case management were combined to form a new category of student needs. Leadership programs was combined with community service to form the leadership and community service category. Finally, the functional areas of athletics, campus safety, fundraising, religious programs, veterans’ services, and assessment were collapsed into the other category. The collapsed categories are represented in Figure 2.

Table 2*Collapsed Functional Area Responses N, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations*

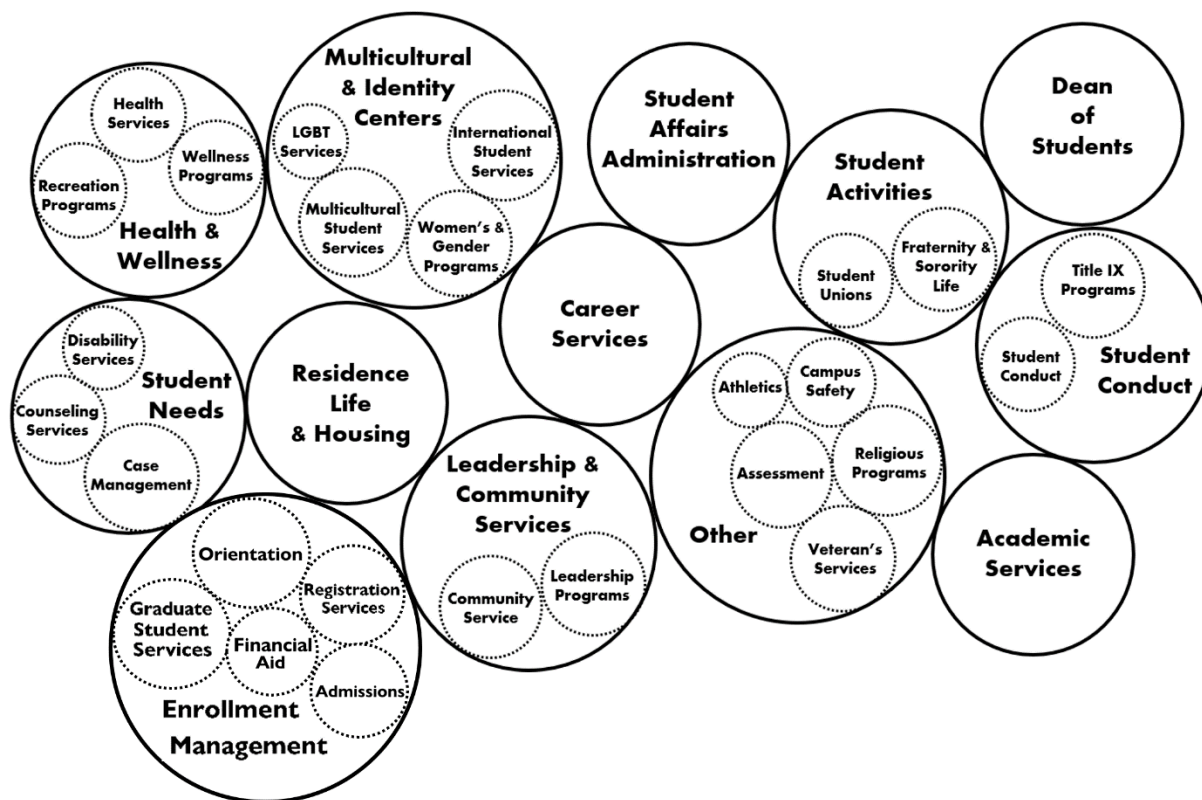
Variable	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Academic Services	211	10.3	2.41	1.092
Residence Life & Housing	221	10.8	2.33	1.135
Student Activities	274	13.4	2.35	1.072
Student Affairs Administration	278	13.6	2.64	1.115
Health & Wellness	105	5.1	2.29	1.238
Multicultural and Identity Centers	157	7.7	1.90	0.907
Student Conduct	72	3.5	2.35	1.224
Student Needs	73	3.6	2.59	1.223
Enrollment Management	199	9.7	2.32	1.112
Leadership and Community Service	103	5.0	2.39	1.165
Dean of Students	151	7.4	2.62	1.290
Career Services	71	3.5	2.61	1.357
Other	127	6.2	2.55	1.273

Participant Work Environment

As part of the quantitative questionnaire, participants were asked a series of questions related to the institution where they currently work. These questions included the type, size, setting, religious affiliation, and location of their current institution. Most participants (64.0%, $n = 1309$) identified as working at a public 4-year institution. The remaining categories showed that participants worked at a private 4-year institution (30.3%, $n = 619$), public 2-year institutions (5.2%, $n = 106$), and private 2-year institutions (0.5%, $n = 10$). Most participants (63.5%, $n = 1299$) worked at an institution with more than 10,000 students. The remaining categories showed that 18.7% ($n = 382$) worked at an institution with 5,000-10,000 students, and 17.9% ($n = 364$) at an institution with less than 5,000 students. Regarding the setting of the institution of the participants, 46.2% ($n = 946$) reported their institution was in an urban area,

Figure 2

Representation of Collapsed Functional Areas



Note: Circles with dotted lines were collapsed into larger functional areas shown as circles with solid lines. The size of circles does not reflect the group sizes.

while the remaining categories showed 35.5% ($n = 727$) was in a suburban setting, 16.9% ($n = 345$) was in a rural setting, and 1.1% ($n = 22$) reported as an online setting. The question regarding the religious affiliation of the participants' institution revealed that most participants 83.4% ($n = 1703$) worked at an institution that had no religious affiliation. The remaining categories revealed that 7.6% ($n = 156$) of participants worked at institutions with a loose religious affiliation and 8.9% ($n = 183$) with a strong religious affiliation. When asked about the location of their current institution, most participants (24.4%, $n = 500$) reported they worked at

an institution in the Southeast region of the United States. The remaining categories showed that participants worked in the Mid-Atlantic (16.2%, $n = 331$), Far West (15.2%, $n = 312$), Great Lakes (12.4%, $n = 254$), Southwest (11.5%, $n = 235$), New England (9.2%, $n = 189$), Plains (6.5%, $n = 134$), and Rocky Mountains (4.2%, $n = 86$) regions. Further, five participants (0.2%) reported the location of their institution was online, and no participants reported their institution was located within a territory of the United States.

Findings

Research Question 1

The first research question asked, “How do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology?” Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each of the three categories of political ideology addressed in the questionnaire. Participants in this study were asked to self-label their political ideology regarding social issues, economic issues, and overall political ideology using a 7-point Likert scale. Responses included extremely liberal (1), liberal (2), somewhat liberal (3), moderate (4), somewhat conservative (5), conservative (6), and extremely conservative (7). Table 3 provides the descriptive statistics for the reported scores for the social, economic, and overall political ideology of the participants which includes the N , percentages, means, and standard deviations for each question.

Regarding how participants rate their political ideology surrounding social issues, nearly half of the respondents (46.2%, $n = 944$) rated their views as “liberal.” Other responses to the questions included “extremely liberal” (30.9%, $n = 632$), “somewhat liberal” (10.4%, $n = 212$), “moderate” (7.9%, $n = 161$), “somewhat conservative” (2.5%, $n = 52$), and “conservative” (1.9%, $n = 38$). Only six participants (0.3%) self-labeled their political ideology regarding social issues as “extremely conservative.”

Table 3*Factor Description, N, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations*

Factor Information	<i>N</i>	Percent	M	SD
Overall Political Ideology	2045		2.41*	1.161
Extremely Liberal	381	18.6		
Liberal	983	48.1		
Somewhat Liberal	308	15.1		
Moderate	262	12.8		
Somewhat Conservative	66	3.2		
Conservative	40	2.0		
Extremely Conservative	5	0.2		
Social Political Ideology	2045		2.12*	1.146
Extremely Liberal	632	30.9		
Liberal	944	46.2		
Somewhat Liberal	212	10.4		
Moderate	161	7.9		
Somewhat Conservative	52	2.5		
Conservative	38	1.9		
Extremely Conservative	6	0.3		
Economic Political Ideology	2045		2.84*	1.363
Extremely Liberal	286	14.0		
Liberal	757	37.0		
Somewhat Liberal	355	17.4		
Moderate	392	19.2		
Somewhat Conservative	159	7.8		
Conservative	88	4.3		
Extremely Conservative	8	0.4		

Note: *Range: [1,7], ^Range: [3,21] Lower means indicate more liberal responses, Higher means indicate more conservative

For participants' political ideology regarding economic issues, the largest group of participants (37.0%, $n = 757$) rated their views as "liberal." Other responses to the questions included "extremely liberal" (14.0%, $n = 286$), "somewhat liberal" (17.4%, $n = 355$), "moderate" (19.2%, $n = 392$), "somewhat conservative" (7.8%, $n = 159$), and "conservative"

(4.3%, $n = 88$). Eight participants (0.4%) self-labeled their political ideology regarding economic issues as “extremely conservative.”

In asking participants to rate their overall political ideology, nearly half of participants (48.1%, $n = 983$) rated their views as “liberal.” Other responses to the questions included “extremely liberal” (18.6%, $n = 381$), “somewhat liberal” (15.1%, $n = 308$), “moderate” (12.8%, $n = 262$), “somewhat conservative” (3.2%, $n = 66$), and “conservative” (2.0%, $n = 40$). Five participants (0.2%) self-labeled their overall political ideology as “extremely conservative.”

Spearman’s rank order correlation analyses revealed relationships among the three political ideology variables (e.g., social, economic, and overall political ideology). There was a strong, positive correlation between overall and social political ideology, which was statistically significant ($r_s(2,043) = .821, p < .001$). Similarly, there was strong, positive correlation between overall and economic political ideology, which was statistically significant ($r_s(2,043) = .807, p < .001$). Social and economic political ideology variables were also strongly correlated, and it was statistically significant ($r_s(2,043) = .665, p = < .001$).

By taking the 2,045 participant responses into account, the analysis also reveals additional findings regarding the ratio of liberal to conservative student affairs professionals. When counting the categories of “extremely liberal,” “liberal,” and “somewhat liberal” as liberal, and “extremely conservative,” “conservative,” and “somewhat conservative” as conservative, an overall liberal to conservative ratio of 15:1 is revealed. However, if the categories of “extremely liberal” and “liberal” are considered as “liberal”, and “extremely conservative” and “conservative” are considered as “conservative,” the overall liberal to conservative ratio is 30.2:1.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked, “What relationship exists between participant’s self-labeled political ideology and perceived person-environment fit?” This study utilized four measures of person-environment fit that included P-O fit, P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-V fit. To address this research question, a one-way MANOVA examined possible differences among groups of self-reported overall political ideology in the measures for P-O fit, P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-V fit. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, and standard deviations are for the measure for P-O fit, P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-V fit are presented in Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7, respectively. The results of the one-way MANOVA reveal that the four combined dependent variables representing P-O fit were affected by overall political ideology score. This analysis found there were significant difference among the independent and dependent variables, Pillai’s Trace = .03, $F(6,2038) = 2.241, p = .03$. The multivariate η^2 based on Pillai’s Trace was not strong.

Following the MANOVA, one-way ANOVAs were performed with each of the dependent variables. These analyses revealed that the one-way ANOVA for overall political ideology and P-O fit was significant, $F(6,2038) = 3.831, p = < .001$, but the ANOVAs on the other dependent variables, P-F fit, P-G fit, and P-V fit, were not significant.

Following the significant effect of overall political ideology on P-O fit, a Tukey test examined differences between groups of participants with different self-identified political ideologies. Post hoc analyses revealed several significant relationships. Participants who rated their political ideology as extremely liberal had higher P-O fit scores as compared to those who rated their ideology as liberal, ($p = .02, 95\% CI[.11, 2.27]$) and those who rated their ideology as somewhat liberal ($p = < .05, 95\% CI[.36, 3.10]$).

Table 4

Frequencies, Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviations for Person-Organization Fit Scale

	<i>N</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. I identify strongly with the goals of my organization.	2045	3 0.1%	31 1.5%	83 4.1%	82 4.0%	521 25.5%	994 48.6%	331 16.2%	2.36	1.044
2. My personal goals and the goals of my organization are very similar.	2045	12 0.6%	48 2.3%	151 7.4%	126 6.2%	656 32.1%	848 41.5%	204 10.0%	2.69	1.175
3. I don't care about the goals of this organization as much as many of my co-workers do.	2044	205 10.0%	607 29.7%	378 18.5%	453 22.2%	227 11.1%	133 6.5%	41 2.0%	4.78	1.491
4. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values.	2044	21 1.0%	76 3.7%	196 9.6%	176 8.6%	697 34.1%	742 36.3%	136 6.7%	2.93	1.263
5. My personal values match my organization's values and culture.	2044	24 1.2%	92 4.5%	209 10.2%	147 7.2%	707 34.6%	705 34.5%	160 7.8%	2.96	1.316
6. My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.	2044	28 1.4%	73 3.6%	180 8.8%	158 7.7%	616 30.1%	807 39.5%	182 8.9%	2.84	1.303

Table 5*Frequencies, Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviations for Person-Group Fit Scale*

	<i>N</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Working with the other people in my group is one of the best parts of this job.	2045	20 1.0%	47 2.3%	75 3.7%	95 4.6%	362 17.7%	759 37.1%	687 33.6%	2.18	1.268
2. I get along well with the people I work with on a day-to-day basis.	2045	7 0.3%	11 0.5%	24 1.2%	38 1.9%	221 10.8%	972 47.5%	772 37.8%	1.84	0.901
3. There is not much conflict among the members of my group.	2045	29 1.4%	62 3.0%	158 7.7%	95 4.6%	408 20.0%	885 43.3%	408 20.0%	3.27	1.361
4. If I had more free time, I would enjoy spending more time with my co-workers socially.	2045	68 3.3%	158 7.7%	195 9.5%	244 11.9%	506 24.7%	577 28.2%	297 14.5%	3.1	1.607
5. There are some people I work with I try to avoid when possible	2045	124 6.1%	391 19.1%	267 13.1%	180 8.8%	472 23.1%	394 19.3%	217 10.6%	3.76	1.828

Table 6*Frequencies, Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviations for Person-Job Fit Scale*

	<i>N</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job	2045	16 0.8%	77 3.8%	144 7.0%	52 2.5%	468 22.9%	908 44.4%	380 18.8%	2.49	1.305
2. The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by my present job.	2045	34 1.7%	88 4.3%	156 7.6%	87 4.3%	553 27.0%	810 39.6%	317 15.5%	2.68	1.385
3. The job that I currently hold gives me just about everything that I want from a job.	2045	77 3.8%	182 8.9%	280 13.7%	114 5.6%	610 29.8%	579 28.3%	203 9.9%	3.27	1.618
4. The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills.	2045	28 1.4%	55 2.7%	97 4.7%	70 3.4%	367 17.9%	901 44.1%	527 25.8%	2.31	1.296
5. My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of my job.	2045	18 0.9%	18 0.9%	50 2.4%	46 2.2%	242 11.8%	928 45.4%	743 36.3%	1.95	1.073
6. My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my job places on me.	2045	18 0.9%	25 1.2%	52 2.5%	37 1.8%	220 10.8%	908 44.4%	785 38.4%	1.93	1.097

Table 7

Frequencies, Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviations for Person-Vocation Fit Scale

	<i>N</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. There is a good fit between my personal interests and the kind of work I perform in my occupation.	2045	3 0.1%	20 1.0%	54 2.6%	47 2.3%	324 15.8%	999 48.9%	598 29.2%	2.04	0.986
2. My skills and abilities are well suited for the vocation (profession/trade) that I am currently in.	2045	3 0.1%	6 0.3%	17 0.8%	16 0.8%	168 8.2%	961 47.0%	874 42.7%	1.71	0.786
3. When I think about my interests, I sometimes wonder whether I chose the right occupation after all	2045	223 10.9%	511 25.0%	319 15.6%	141 6.9%	390 19.1%	279 13.6%	182 8.9%	4.25	1.901

Research Question 3

The third research question asked, “What relationship exists between participant’s self-labeled political ideology and demographics variables?” This study asked participants to respond to 11 questions concerning their demographics that included aspects of their current job, career, and their person. These variables included how long they have worked in the field, their current position level, functional area, institution type, institution size, institution religious affiliation, institution location, race, gender, and age. A one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine the relationship between overall political ideology and each of the 10 demographic variables. These variables included gender, age, functional area, position level, length of time in the field, and location. Separate one-way ANOVAs for each demographic variable determined any group differences in overall political ideology. Below the findings of the follow up one-way ANOVA’s and t-test are presented. Table 8 presents the significant findings of the ANOVA analysis.

Gender

To further explore if a relationship existed between overall political ideology and gender, several categories were collapsed to provide greater statistical significance. The categories of “nonbinary,” “transgender,” “transman,” “transwoman,” and “selected multiple choices” were collapsed into the “Transgender and Nongender Conforming” (2%, $n = 41$). A one-way ANOVA evaluating gender differences in political ideology was significant, $F(3, 2041) = 25.079, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. However, Levene’s test revealed a significance of $p = < .001$.

Follow up testing was conducted using Tukey’s HSD to examine pairwise relationships within the dependent variable. This testing revealed there were significant differences between participants that identified as male and those that identified as female, ($p = < .001$, 95% $CI[.17, .49]$) and those that identified as transgender or nongender conforming, ($p = <$

Table 8*Significant Variables t-Test and One-Way Analyses of Variance Test Results*

Variable	M (SD)	sig	df	Value	ES
Age		**	5, 85.12	15.48	-
18-25	2.14 (0.98)				
26-35	2.19 (1.20)				
36-45	2.48 (1.13)				
46-55	2.69 (1.26)				
56-65	2.82 (1.27)				
66 or older	2.67 (0.87)				
Functional Area		**	12, 605.14	5.86	-
Academic Services	2.41 (1.10)				
Residence Life & Housing	2.33 (1.14)				
Student Activities	2.41 (1.10)				
Student Affairs Administration	2.64 (1.12)				
Health & Wellness	2.29 (1.24)				
Multicultural and Identity Centers	1.90 (0.91)				
Student Conduct	2.35 (1.22)				
Student Needs	2.59 (1.22)				
Enrollment Management	2.32 (1.11)				
Leadership and Community Service	2.39 (1.17)				
Dean of Students	2.62 (1.29)				
Career Services	2.61 (1.36)				
Other	2.47 (1.28)				
Institution Location		**	8, 94.65	8.14	-
Far West	2.15 (1.01)				
Great Lakes	2.26 (1.02)				
Mid-Atlantic	2.33 (1.06)				
New England	2.14 (0.91)				
Plains	2.53 (1.18)				
Rocky Mountains	2.42 (1.25)				
Southeast	2.71 (1.33)				
Southwest	2.51 (1.23)				
Online	2.60 (0.89)				
Position Level		**	5, 160.78	13.34	-
Master's Graduate Student	2.29 (1.11)				
Full time Doctoral	2.47 (1.48)				
New Professional	2.08 (1.10)				
Mid-level Professional	2.44 (1.15)				
Senior-Level Professional	2.73 (1.16)				
Chief Student Affairs Officer	2.41 (1.16)				

Gender		**	3, 44.81	70.06	-
Male	2.65 (1.24)				
Female	2.32 (1.10)				
Transgender & Nongender Conforming	1.34 (0.48)				
Prefer not to answer	3.00 (1.76)				
Time in the Field		**	3, 469.67	14.82	-
Master's Graduate Student	2.29 (1.11)				
1-5 years	2.16 (1.16)				
6-10 years	2.35 (1.14)				
11 or more years	2.41 (1.16)				
Type		*	2042	2.145	+
Public	7.05 (2.74)				
Private	7.86 (3.04)				

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$; Range: [1,7] Lower means indicate more liberal responses, Higher means indicate more conservative; "-" indicates small to medium effect size, "+" indicates small effect size

.001, 95% CI [.84, 1.78]). In addition, participants that identified as female were different from those that identified as transgender or nongender conforming, ($p = < .001$, 95% CI [.52, 1.45]). These findings indicate that male participants typically self-labeled their overall political ideology as more moderate or conservative than their female peers. Similarly, female respondents self-labeled their political ideology as more to the right of transgender or nongender conforming participants.

Position Level

A one-way ANOVA examining position level's relationship to Overall Political Ideology (OPI) was significant $F(5, 2027) = 13.18, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. However, Levene's test revealed a significance of $p = < .001$ indicating there was significant variance difference between some groups and violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Due to this violation, Welch's adjusted F ratio was used instead to account for the unequal variances

between groups (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This analysis was also significant, $F(5,160.78) = 13.34, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. The strength of the relationships was small, with overall political ideology accounting for 3.1% of the variance of the dependent variable. Table 8 presents the significant findings of this analysis.

Follow up testing was conducted using Tukey's HSD to examine pairwise differences between groups within the independent variable of position level. This testing revealed there were significant differences between master's level graduate students and senior level professionals, ($p = .003, 95\% CI[-.77, -.11]$). There were also significant differences between new professionals and mid-level professionals, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-.55, -.17]$) as well as senior level professionals, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-.88, -.42]$). Lastly, mid-level professionals were significantly different from senior level administrators, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-.10, -.49]$). In other words, these findings indicate that new professionals often self-labeled their political ideology as being further to the left of the mid-level and senior-level counterparts. Similarly, mid-level professional self-labeled their ideology as slightly more liberal than senior-level professionals.

Time in the Field

A one-way ANOVA examining the relationship of length of time in the field with overall political ideology was significant, $F(3, 2041) = 14.98, p = < .001$. However, Levene's test revealed a significance of $p = < .001$ indicating there was significant variance difference between some groups and violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Due to this violation, Welch's adjusted F ratio was used instead to account for the unequal variances between groups (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This analysis was also significant, $F(3,469.67) = 14.82, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. The strength of the relationships was small, with

length of time in the field accounting for 3.4% of the variance in overall political ideology. Table 8 presents the significant findings of this analysis.

Follow up testing was conducted using Tukey's HSD to examine pairwise relationships within the dependent variable. This testing revealed there were significant differences between student affairs professionals with 1-5 years working in the field and those who have worked 6-10 years in the field, ($p = .05$, 95% $CI[-.38, .001]$), as well as professionals with 10 or more years, ($p = < .001$, 95% $CI[-.58, -.25]$). In addition, there was a significant difference between professionals with 6-10 years in the field and professionals that have more than 10 years in the field, ($p = .003$, 95% $CI[.06, .39]$). In other words, professionals with 1-5 years in the field identify as being more liberal than professionals with 6-10 years' experience and participants with 11 or more years. Similarly, professionals with 6-10 years' experience identify as being more liberal than those with 11 or more years' experience in student affairs.

Location

A one-way analysis of ANOVA on differences in overall political orientation as a function of the location of the institution was significant $F(8, 2036) = 8.75, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. However, Levene's test revealed a significance of $p = < .001$ indicating there was significant variance difference between some groups and violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Due to this violation, Welch's adjusted F ratio was used instead to account for the unequal variances between groups (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This analysis was also significant, $F(8, 94.65) = 8.14, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .04$. The strength of the relationships was small, with overall political ideology accounting for 4.6% of the variance of the dependent variable. Table 8 presents the significant findings of this analysis.

Follow up testing using Tukey's HSD revealed differences in student affairs professionals working at an institution in the southeast United States and professionals working in the Far West region, ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.31, .82]), Great Lakes region, ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.17, .72]), Mid-Atlantic region ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.13, .63]), and New England region ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.26, .87]). There were also significant differences between the Southwest region and the Far West ($p = .009$, 95% CI [.05, .67]), as well as the New England region, ($p = .032$, 95% CI [.02, .71]). Lastly, there was also a significant difference between the Plains region and the Far West region, ($p = .034$, 95% CI [.01, .75]). Put differently, participants located the Far West region was significantly more liberal than professionals located in the Southeast, Southwest, and plains regions of the United States. Finally, the Southeast region was less liberal than the Great Lakes, Mid-Atlantic, and New England regions of the United States.

Functional Area

A one-way ANOVA revealed that overall political ideology differs based on the functional area in which the participant works, $F(12, 2029) = 4.585, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. However, Levene's test revealed a significance of $p < .001$ indicating there was significant variance difference between some groups and violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Due to this violation, Welch's adjusted F ratio was used instead to account for the unequal variances between groups (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This analysis was also significant, $F(12, 605.14) = 5.86, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$. The strength of the relationships was small, with overall political ideology accounting for 3.6% of the variance of the dependent variable. Table 8 presents the significant findings of this analysis.

Post hoc test using Tukey's HSD revealed there were significant differences between the functional area of Multicultural and Identity Centers and other functional areas. The

Multicultural and Identity Centers category was created by collapsing Multicultural Centers, Women's and Gender Identity Centers, International Student services, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Student Services. The Tukey HSD post hoc test revealed significant differences between Multicultural Identity Centers and the functional areas of Academic Services, Residence Life and Housing, Student Activities, Student Affairs Administration, Student Needs, Enrollment Management, Leadership and Community Services, Dean of Students, Career Services, and the category of other. Multicultural and Identity Centers were significantly more liberal than their colleagues in other functional areas. These findings are presented in Table 9.

Age

A one-way ANOVA of participants' age-related differences in overall political ideology was significant, $F(5, 2037) = 16.58, p = < .001$. However, Levene's test revealed a significance of $p = < .001$ indicating there was significant variance difference between some groups and violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Due to this violation, Welch's adjusted F ratio was used instead to account for the unequal variances between groups (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This analysis was also significant, $F(5, 85.12) = 15.48, p = < .001, \eta_p^2 = .06$. The strength of the relationships was small, with overall political ideology accounting for 5.5% of the variance of the dependent variable. These findings are presented in Table 8.

Post hoc testing using Tukey's HSD revealed there were significant differences between student affairs professionals between the age range of 18-25 and those that are between 36-45, ($p = < .004, 95\% CI[-.62, -.08]$), 46-55, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-.85, -.26]$), and 56-65, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-1.05, -.33]$). Similarly, there were significant differences between the age ranges of 26-35 and 36-45, ($p = < .001, 95\% CI[-.48, -.12]$), 46-55, ($p = < .001,$

95% $CI[-.71, -.30]$), and 56-65, ($p = < .001$, 95% $CI[-.94, -.34]$). Lastly, there is significant relationship between the age ranges of 36-45 and 46-55, ($p = .018$, 95% $CI[.04, .64]$). These findings suggest that younger professionals are more likely to identify as more liberal than their older counterparts.

Institution Type

To further explore if a relationship existed between overall political ideology and institution type, the categories were collapsed to provide greater statistically significant. The categories of “private 2 year” and “public 2 year” were collapsed into the “private 4 year” and “public 4 year” categories, respectively. These categories were recoded as “public” (69.1%, $n = 1414$) and “private” (20.8%, $n = 629$).

An independent-samples t-test revealed a significant difference in overall political identity scores between participants at public ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.17$) institutions as compared to those at private institutions ($M = 2.32$, $SD = 1.1$) institutions, $t(2041) = 2.145$, $p = .035$. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means was .009 to .226. Tests of the effects size indication the magnitude of difference as small ($d = .103$). In other words, professionals that work for private institutions more strongly identify as liberal than their public institution peers. Results of the independent-sample t-test is presented in Table 8.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question asked, “What relationship exists between participant’s self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographics variables?” This study sought to explore what relationships may exist between the three key components asked on the quantitative questionnaire. These variables include the measures for overall political ideology, multiple aspects of person-environment fit (e.g., P-O fit, P-J fit, P-V fit, and P-G fit),

and the 10 demographic variables that included how long they have worked in the field, their current position level, functional area, institution type, institution size, institution size, institution religious affiliation, institution location, gender, and age.

A factorial ANOVA was performed to examine the relationship between overall political ideology, person-environment fit score and demographic variables. For this analysis, the person-environment fit score was the dependent variable while overall political ideology and the demographic variable served as the independent variables. This was done to explore impact of overall political ideology and the demographic variables on how the participant perceives their connection to their work environment (e.g., person-environment fit measures). While all measures of person-environment fit, including P-O fit, P-J fit, P-V fit, and P-G fit were tested alongside overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables, only one presented a significant interaction with a p value less than .001. This p value was selected to account for the unbalanced sample sizes between groups, specifically between the dependent variables of overall political ideology and demographic variables, which can increase Type I error rate (Howell & McConaughy, 1982; Keselman, Games, & Rogan, 1979). Post hoc testing was executed using Tukey's HSD to control for Type I errors and to better understand differences using pairwise comparisons (Salkind, 2010).

The factorial ANOVA analysis was conducted to evaluate the influence of overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables on the P-J fit of the participants. For this analysis, the P-J fit score acted as the dependent variable while overall political ideology and the demographic variable served as the independent variables. This analysis found that there was an interaction between overall political ideology and institution type $F(6, 2029) = 2.155, p = .045$. While typically a p value of .05 would indicate statistical significance, this study utilized a

p value of .001 to ascertain if an interaction is significant due to the unbalanced sample sizes in the analysis. Other interactions between overall political ideology and demographic variables on P-J fit are presented in Table 9.

The factorial ANOVA analysis was conducted to evaluate the influence of overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables on the P-G fit of the participants. For this analysis, the P-G fit score acted as the dependent variable while overall political ideology and the demographic variable served as the independent variables. This analysis found that there was an interaction between overall political ideology and gender $F(14, 2014) = 1.797, p = .034$. While typically a p value of .05 would indicate statistical significance, this study utilized a p value of .001 to ascertain if an interaction is significant due to the unbalanced sample sizes in the analysis. Other interactions between overall political ideology and demographic variables on P-G fit are presented in Table 10.

The factorial ANOVA analysis was conducted to evaluate the influence of overall political ideology and the 10 demographic variables on the P-V fit of the participants. For this analysis, the P-V fit score acted as the dependent variable while overall political ideology and the demographic variable served as the independent variables. This analysis found that there was an interaction between overall political ideology and race $F(28, 2003) = 1.878, p = .004$ as well as an interaction between overall political ideology and gender $F(14, 2014) = 1.893, p = .023$ on the P-V fit of the participants. While typically a p value of .05 would indicate statistical significance, this study utilized a p value of .001 to ascertain if an interaction is significant due to the unbalanced sample sizes in the analysis. Other interactions between overall political ideology and demographic variables on P-V fit are presented in Table 11.

Table 9

Significance of Interactions between Overall Political Ideology and Demographic Variables in Factorial ANOVA with Person-Job Fit as the Dependent Variable

Interaction	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
OPI x Length of time	17, 2018	0.677	0.828
OPI x Position level	26, 2005	1.195	0.228
OPI x Institution type	6, 2029	2.155	0.045 *
OPI x Size	12, 2023	1.815	0.041
OPI x Setting	15, 2014	0.793	0.686
OPI x Religious affiliation	11, 2021	0.545	0.873
OPI x Location	36, 1994	1.104	0.309
OPI x Race	28, 2003	1.889	0.003
OPI x Gender	14, 2014	0.48	0.945
OPI x Age	24, 2007	1.043	0.405
OPI x Functional Area	61, 1962	1.173	0.171

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Significance of $p < 0.001$ was used in the analysis due to unbalanced sample sizes. OPI refers to Overall Political Ideology*

Table 10

Significance of Interactions between Overall Political Ideology and Demographic Variables in Factorial ANOVA with Person-Group Fit as the Dependent Variable

Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
OPI x Length of time	17, 2018	1.072	0.376
OPI x Position level	26, 2005	1.037	0.412
OPI x Institution type	6, 2029	2.155	0.901
OPI x Size	12, 2023	0.837	0.612
OPI x Setting	15, 2014	1.621	0.061
OPI x Religious affiliation	11, 2021	0.454	0.931
OPI x Location	36, 1994	0.705	0.905
OPI x Race	28, 2003	1.282	0.147
OPI x Gender	14, 2014	1.797	0.034 *
OPI x Age	24, 2007	0.522	0.973
OPI x Functional Area	61, 1962	1.101	0.278

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Significance of $p < 0.001$ was used in the analysis due to unbalanced sample sizes. OPI refers to Overall Political Ideology*

Table 11

Significance of Interactions between Overall Political Ideology and Demographic Variables in Factorial ANOVA with Person-Vocation Fit as the Dependent Variable

Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
OPI x Length of time	17, 2018	0.820	0.671
OPI x Position level	26, 2005	0.827	0.715
OPI x Institution type	6, 2029	0.636	0.701
OPI x Size	12, 2023	1.015	0.432
OPI x Setting	15, 2014	1.199	0.265
OPI x Religious affiliation	11, 2021	0.690	0.749
OPI x Location	36, 1994	0.692	0.916
OPI x Race	28, 2003	1.878	0.004 **
OPI x Gender	14, 2014	1.893	0.023 *
OPI x Age	24, 2007	1.274	0.168
OPI x Functional Area	61, 1962	1.029	0.416

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Significance of $p < 0.001$ was used in the analysis due to unbalanced sample sizes. OPI refers to Overall Political Ideology*

The factorial ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the influence of overall political ideology and the collapsed functional area on P-O fit. For this analysis, the P-O fit score of the participants acted as the dependent variable while overall political ideology and functional area acted as the independent variables. This analysis revealed a significant relationship between P-O fit and overall political ideology, $F(6, 196) = 2.699, p = .013, \eta_p^2 = .05$, as well as between P-O fit and functional area, $F(12, 1962) = 3.652, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .02$. The analysis also revealed a significant interaction between overall political ideology and functional area on the P-O fit of participants, $F(61, 1962) = 1.767, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$. The strength of the relationships was small, with interaction between overall political ideology and functional areas accounting for 5.2% of the variance of the participants perceived P-O fit. This finding indicates overall political ideology and functional area influences how participants perceive their fit with their institution.

While the primary focus of this study was on the political ideology of student affairs professionals, follow up testing was conducted using Tukey's HSD to examine pairwise relationships between the collapsed functional area and the dependent variable of P-O fit. This testing revealed there were significant differences between several functional areas and the perceived P-O fit of participants. Student affairs administration, a generalist category that includes participants that may supervise multiple functional areas, such as residence life and housing ($p = .002$, 95% CI [.49, 4.03]), student activities, ($p = .002$, 95% CI [.45, 3.79]), health and wellness ($p = .028$, 95% CI [-4.62, -.49]), multicultural and identity centers ($p = < .001$, 95% CI [-4.88, -.96]), and student conduct ($p = .033$, 95% CI [= 5.30, -.10]). Similarly, participants that work in the dean of students functional area shown significant differences with the functional areas of residence life and housing ($p = < .001$, 95% CI [-4.88, -.73]), student activities, ($p = < .001$, 95% CI [-4.66, -.67]), health and wellness ($p = .007$, 95% CI [-5.41, -.42]), multicultural and identity centers ($p = < .001$, 95% CI [-5.71, -1.22]), and student conduct ($p = .009$, 95% CI [= -6.06, -.43]). These findings indicate that those that work in the dean of students and student affairs administration experience greater levels of P-O fit than some of their counterparts.

Further, Tukey's HSD post hoc testing was used to explore the significant relationship of overall political ideology and the dependent variable of P-O fit. This analysis revealed significant differences between participants that reported their overall political ideology as extremely liberal and those that self-label themselves liberal ($p = .016$, 95% CI [.13, 2.24]), and somewhat liberal, ($p = .002$, 95% CI [.42, 3.11]). These findings suggest that participants that self-label their political ideology as extremely liberal report lower levels of P-O fit.

The factorial ANOVA analysis for P-O fit also include several variables that showed but did not meet the p values of .001 threshold. For this analysis, the P-O fit score acted as the dependent variable while overall political ideology and the demographic variable served as the independent variables. This analysis found that there was an interaction between overall political ideology and positional level $F(26, 2005) = 1.586, p = .031$ on P-O fit, political ideology and institution type $F(6, 2029) = 2.828, p = .010$, political ideology and institution size $F(12, 2023) = 2.652, p = .002$, political ideology and institutional religious affiliation $F(11, 2021) = 1.586, p = .031$, and political ideology and location of the institution $F(36, 1994) = 1.711, p = .005$ on P-O fit. While typically a p value of .05 would indicate statistical significance, this study utilized a p value of .001 to ascertain if an interaction is significant due to the unbalanced sample sizes in the analysis. Other interactions between overall political ideology and demographic variables on P-O fit are presented in Table 12.

Summary of Results

This study examined how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and explored the relationships among their political ideology, person-environment fit, and demographic information. The researcher collected data using a quantitative questionnaire that addressed three primary areas that included political ideology, P-E fit, and demographic information. The response rate for this study was approximately 27% ($N=2,045$). This study employed the use of descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, MANOVA, one-way ANOVA, and factorial ANOVA to address the four research questions. The analysis of the findings revealed most participants identified as either extremely liberal, liberal, or slightly liberal. Also, the overall political ideology of participants only showed significance to the measure of P-O fit, while the measures for P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-V fit were not significant.

Table 12

Significance of Interactions between Overall Political Ideology and Demographic Variables in Factorial ANOVA with Person-Organization Fit as the Dependent Variable

Interaction	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
OPI x Length of time	17, 2018	1.285	0.192
OPI x Position level	26, 2005	1.586	0.031 *
OPI x Institution type	6, 2029	2.828	0.010 *
OPI x Size	12, 2023	2.652	0.002 **
OPI x Setting	15, 2014	1.728	0.040 *
OPI x Religious affiliation	11, 2021	1.942	0.030 *
OPI x Location	36, 1994	1.711	0.005 **
OPI x Race	28, 2003	0.936	0.562
OPI x Gender	14, 2014	0.918	0.538
OPI x Age	24, 2007	1.041	0.408
OPI x Functional Area	61, 1962	1.767	<.001 ***

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Significance of $p < 0.001$ was used in the analysis due to unbalanced sample sizes*

Further, there were significant relationships between the overall political ideology of participants and several demographic variables that include gender, age, functional area, region, position level, length of time in the field, and institution type. Lastly, the analysis suggested that overall political ideology and functional area influenced participants' perceived P-O fit.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The final chapter of this study includes a summary of the research, additional limitations that were uncovered while collecting and analyzing data, a discussion of findings, implications for practitioners and scholars, as well as recommendations for future areas of research.

Summary of Research Study

This exploratory research study aimed to examine how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and to explore the relationship between participants' political ideology, perceived P-E fit, and demographic information. This aim was achieved by asking the core research questions: a) how do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology, b) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology and perceived person-environment fit, c) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology and demographic variables, and d) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic variables? This study utilized a quantitative methodological approach to explore these research questions through a quantitative questionnaire, which solicited information regarding political ideology, perceived fit on multiple measures, and demographic information from student affairs professionals across the country.

Data regarding political ideology were collected using three questions about the participants' views regarding social issues, economic issues, and how they view their overall political ideology. Perceived fit with their environment was collected using four separate

measures to assess the participants' fit with their organization, job, coworkers, and vocation. Lastly, demographic information was collected across 10 categories that included length of time working in the field of student affairs, position level, race, gender, age, institution type, institution size, institution setting, religious affiliation of the institution, and institution location.

This study utilized the membership list from the student affairs professional organization NASPA to solicit potential participants. This organization is a generalist professional organization that represents a wide array of functional areas and geographic regions. The initial recruitment email was sent to 7,564 potential respondents. Reminder emails were sent after a period of one week and three weeks from the initial request. The final response rate was approximately 27% ($n = 2,045$).

The data analysis for this study consisted of several statistical methods to examine the four stated research questions. To address the first research question, descriptive statistics that include frequency, means, standard deviation, and percentages were presented regarding the participants' self-labeled social, economic, and overall political ideology. The second research question was addressed by analyzing data using a one-way MANOVA to explore the relationship between the overall political ideology of respondents and their perceived fit across the environmental measures (e.g., P-O fit, P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-V fit). For the third research question, one-way ANOVAs were utilized to explore the relationship between the reported overall political ideology and the demographic variables. For the last research question, a factorial ANOVA analysis was conducted to explore the potential influence of overall political ideology and demographic variables on the multiple measures of P-E fit.

Limitations Uncovered During Study & Context

Over the course of data collection and analysis for this study, the researcher encountered several limitations that were not discussed in Chapter 3. These limitations include issues surrounding recruitment as well as in the analysis.

First, student affairs nomenclature played a role in data collection. Specifically, the recruitment email sought to recruit “student affairs administrator[s]” (See APPENDIX A). While the term “administrator” was intended to be an all-encompassing term for student affairs professionals, some potential participants did not believe the term applied to their current role. Multiple potential participants, primarily from institutions in the western United States, emailed the researcher, declining to participate in the study because they were “staff” and not an “administrator.” In one instance, the email signature of the person declining to participate in this study included their title, “Associate Dean of Students.” This example indicates that the use of the term “administrator,” rather than a more general term such as “student affairs professional,” may have inhibited some potential respondents from taking part in the study.

Similarly, the recruitment email did not make it clear that the study criteria included student affairs professionals who worked in academic units, such as advising. While some participants who worked in academic units emailed the researcher to garner clarification about their participation, some emailed stating they were declining to participate because they were not in the division of student affairs. Explicit inclusion criteria denoting academic advising as an eligible functional area within the recruitment email may have prevented this and potentially increased the response rate. Despite the issues that arose surrounding the recruitment email, this study received a strong response and completion rate. However, future studies should provide additional clarification within the recruitment email that would make explicit the inclusion of

those who do work related to student affairs, even though their positions may not be within student affairs units.

Additional limitations arose in the analysis of the data regarding Research Question 4, “What relationship exists between participants’ self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographics variables?” Specifically, the number of variables within the study presented an issue in determining potential interactions while performing the factorial ANOVA between overall political ideology and demographic information on the measures of P-E fit. This study included a wide array of demographic variables, such as functional area and geographic region; however, the variety in responses led to significantly unbalanced sample sizes. The disparities in responses led the researcher to collapse categories based on statistical significance, which influenced the analysis. In future studies, researchers may choose to focus on more specific variables that would ensure more balanced sample sizes. This issue may also be mitigated by including more questions that would provide numerical data rather than categorical.

Lastly, data collection for this study took place following the presidential election of 2020. This election season saw historic voter turnout levels, approximately 66%, which surpassed the previous record set in 1908 (Schaul, Rabinowitz, & Mellnik, 2020). Simultaneously, the American electorate was sharply divided across issues that influenced greater attention to the election. To illustrate this division, in one poll, 89% percent of supporters of President Donald Trump believed candidate Joe Biden would cause irreparable harm to the country, while 90% of Biden supporters believed the same about President Donald Trump (Pew, 2020). This contentious election may have had an impact on this study regarding the response rate and in how participants responded. During presidential election seasons, increased attention is paid to politics. Further, presidential election cycles have been shown to significantly increase

the salience one may feel to their political identity (Abramowitz & Saunders, 1998). It is possible the subject of the study may have been more relevant to the participants, increasing interest in participating in the study. Further, there may have also been an increase of salience between the participant and how strongly they connect to their political ideology. However, there is no way to fully control for how, if at all, the timing of this study influenced the data collection or findings of this study; however, the contextual factor of the study's timing in relation to the presidential election must be acknowledged.

Discussion of Findings

This exploratory study set out to better understand the relationship between political ideology and perceived levels of Person-Environment (P-E) fit among student affairs professionals. This discussion will address how the results of the study relate to the stated research questions. Connections with existing literature are explored and potential explanations with results will be reviewed.

Political Ideology

This study aimed to better understand how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology, a key question rooted in the significant lack of research on the topic within the field. This study was able to obtain a large sample of student affairs professionals by using the membership list of a large professional association, NASPA. While Abrams (2018) provided a study on the political ideology of student-facing administrators, he gathered his sample through the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AAUP and NASPA are both large organizations related to higher education, but they differ greatly in their missions and in the populations they attract. This researcher contends that organizations such as NASPA or ACPA are more representative of the field of student affairs than the AAUP since they are comprised of

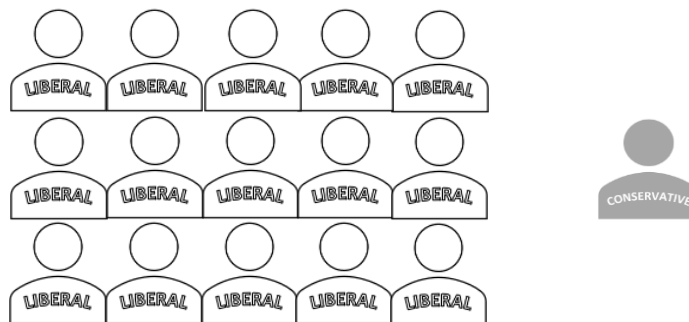
more professionals that are engaged in the day to day with students. This study also provided a larger sample, including a wider array of institutions, professionals, and functional areas, thereby suggesting a more inclusive and accurate perspective of political ideology in student affairs.

The results of this study indicated that most participants self-labeled their overall political ideology as at least somewhat liberal ($n = 1,672$, 81.7%). When considering the categories of “extremely liberal,” “liberal,” and “somewhat liberal” as liberal, and “extremely conservative,” “conservative,” and “somewhat conservative” as conservative, this study reveals an overall liberal to conservative ratio of 15:1 (See Figure 3). This finding would be similar to, albeit slightly higher than, the 12:1 liberal to conservative ratio found among student affairs administrators by Abrams (2018). Further, Sneed and Dunn found a liberal to conservative ratio of 11:1 in their unpublished study among SACSA members. However, if the categories of “extremely liberal” and “liberal” are considered as “liberal,” and “extremely conservative” and “conservative” are considered as “conservative,” the overall liberal to conservative ratio is 30.2:1, (See Figure 4). This ratio highlights the significant differences among the liberal and conservative populations within the sample.

Additionally, the study found some differences among participants’ political ideology when participants were asked about their views on economic and social issues. When asked to label their position on social issues, respondents typically answered further to the left or more liberal, where possible, compared to their overall political ideology ($n = 1,788$, $M = 2.12$). This may be attributed to an alignment of the values of inclusivity and equity that are often associated with the field of student affairs and its practitioners (ACPA, 2020; NASPA, 2020). Conversely, when asked to consider their views on economic issues, some participants shifted slightly right

Figure 3

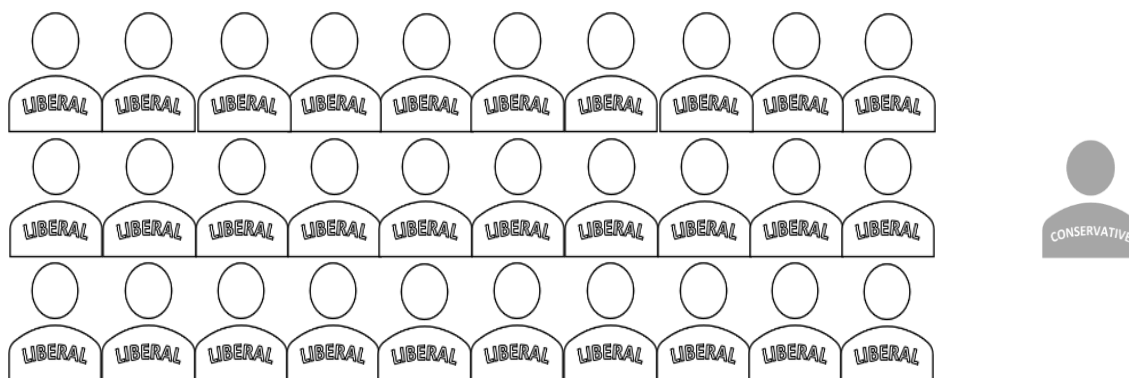
15:1 Liberal to Conservative Ratio Among Student Affairs Professionals



Note: The criteria for this ratio includes “extremely liberal,” “liberal,” “somewhat liberal,” “somewhat conservative,” “conservative,” and “extremely conservative.”

Figure 4

30:1 Liberal to Conservative Ratio Among Student Affairs Professionals



Note: The criteria for this ratio includes “extremely liberal,” “liberal,” “conservative,” and “extremely conservative.”

or more conservative ($M = 2.84$). While most participants still self-label their political ideology as at least somewhat liberal ($n = 1,398$, 68.4%), the moderate category showed nearly a 5% increase when participants were asked about economic issues. Sneed and Dunn (unpublished) reported similar shifts among their participants when asked about social vs. economic views.

Person-Environment Fit

The analysis of the relationship between participants' self-labeled political ideology and the measure for Person-Organization (P-O) fit indicated a significant relationship. Post-hoc testing also indicated significant differences in participants' P-O fit among the three liberal categories, including "extremely liberal," "liberal," and "somewhat liberal." This study found the more liberal the participant was the lower they reported their perceived fit with the organization. These findings demonstrate a strong relationship between the political ideology of the participants and the perceived values and goals of the institution they work for. Bermiss & McDonald (2018) came to a similar conclusion when exploring political affiliation and employee departure in the private sector. While they did not specifically measure P-O fit, they found that political affiliation strongly impacts which employees stay and which leave the organization. Their study indicated that conservatives, more than liberals, were more likely to leave the organization due to ideological misfit and that both liberals and conservatives tend to join organizations that more closely align with their values (Bermiss & McDonald, 2018).

Somewhat surprisingly, however, no other measures of Person-Environment (P-E) fit presented significant findings. While the measure of Person-Organization (P-O) fit held great significance ($p = <.001$), none of the other measures were significant when considering the role of political ideology. Interestingly, in her study examining P-E fit among new housing and residence life professionals, Burgess (2012) found the measure of P-O fit not significant, while

Person-Group (P-G) fit and Person-Job (P-J) fit both offered significant findings. Burgess suggested this lack of significance may be attributed to several factors: the cultural expectation that professionals will only remain in their first role for 3-5 years, a lack of a strong institutional culture, or viewing the term “organization” as the employee’s residence hall or department rather than the institution itself. For this study, the researcher made it explicit in the instrument that the term “organization” referred to the institution at which the participant currently works.

While explicit delineation between the institution being the organization in question may be a potential reason why Person-Organization(P-O) fit was more significant for this study, it does not explain why the measures for Person-Vocation fit (P-V), Person-Job (P-J) fit, or Person-Group (P-G) fit were not significant when considering political ideology. The researcher suggests there may be several explanations for why these measures were not significant. Notably, the content of each measure may not be related to the political ideology of the participants. The measure for person-job fit asks participants to rate their perceived fit based on needs (e.g. what they are looking to get from the position) and abilities (e.g. their own skills and training) that best align with their role. For person-vocation fit, participants were asked about their own skills, abilities, and interests and how closely they align with the field. For person-group fit, the measure asks participants about their relationships with coworkers. Student affairs professionals often possess post-secondary and graduate training to prepare them for their roles in working with college students. Thus, they would be prepared with the skills necessary to meet the demands of their roles. Similarly, since they are working in the field of student affairs they would already be aligned, to some degree, with the values and interests of their vocation. Regarding their relationships with co-workers, it is possible the participants have already found a group

where they feel a sense of belonging and feel welcomed. Political ideology in these instances does not appear to play a significant role for the participants in this study.

It may also be possible that the measures may not adequately address the research question. For example, the measure of Person-Group (P-G) fit may be better addressed by using the instrument created by Li, Kristof-Brown, & Nielsen (2019), as Vogel suggested originally. Alternatively, perhaps the measure of Person-Vocation (P-V) fit is not fully developed, as the dimension of Person-Environment (P-E) fit is still in its theoretical infancy. Finally, one factor may be the broad sample size of this study. In her study, Burgess (2012) studied a small population of new housing and residence life professionals, whereas this study examines professionals from many functional areas, regions of the country, and age groups. Further work should be done to determine if Person-Vocation fit, Person-Group fit, and Person-Job fit to further examine the experiences of professionals and their political ideology.

Political Ideology and Demographics

The third research question sought to explore the relationships between the participants' political ideology and their reported demographic variables. In total, 10 demographic variables were analyzed alongside participants' overall political ideology using one-way ANOVAs to determine if there were significant relationships between these variables. The findings of this study show that the overall political ideology of respondents has a significant relationship with seven of the 10 demographic variables. The significant demographic variables include age, length of time in the field, position level, gender, functional area, institution type, and geographic region.

Age, Length of Time in the Field, and Position Level

The relationship between age and overall political ideology is unsurprising. Roberts, Walton, and Viechtbauer (2014) conducted a meta-analysis that consisted of 92 studies and concluded that age does impact views on political issues; specifically, their analysis concluded that over time individuals grow more conservative. Further, Peltzman (2019) examined data ranging from 1974 to 2018 that indicated similar findings of an increase in conservative attitudes over the course of a person's life span. This study's findings were similar: while older professionals did not necessarily identify as explicitly conservative, though some did, older professionals consistently identified more to the right than their younger colleagues.

Interestingly, the findings of this study indicate a strong relationship between the variables of age, length of time in the field, and position level when considering the overall political ideology of the respondents. This analysis revealed that the older a participant was, the more moderate to conservative the participant identified their political ideology. Similarly, the longer a person had worked in student affairs, the more moderate to conservative they scored on the political ideology scale. The same can be said for position level; participants who were in positions of greater authority tended to lean more moderate to conservative.

To the researcher, these variables appear to measure similar constructs of time. Further analysis confirmed as much. A Spearman's rank order correlation analysis was conducted and revealed that these three variables were significantly related. The participant's age was correlated to length of time in the field ($r_s = .728, p < .001$) and position level ($r_s = .646, p < .001$), while length of time in the field was also correlated with position level ($r_s = .742, p < .001$). The connection between these three variables indicates a strong relationship with one another and, ultimately, a strong relationship with participants' location on the political ideology

spectrum. Specifically, older professionals are more likely to occupy positions of power, such as chief student affairs officers or assistant/associate vice president positions. Differences in political ideology, and by extension personality and temperament (Haidt, 2012), may support that moderate or more conservative leaning professionals. In addition, due to their age, they also have more work experience than younger professionals, which would enable them to serve in those roles. Surprisingly, Sneed & Dunn (unpublished) also found the position level and age variables to be significant but did not find the length of time variable significant. This may be attributed to the differences in sample sizes between the two studies.

Gender

The analysis of the data in this study shows a significant relationship between the gender of the participants and the overall political ideology they reported, which is particularly notable, given the fact that the field of student affairs is predominantly female (Pritchard & McChesney, 2018). The findings indicate that male respondents ($M = 2.65$) typically rated themselves more moderately on the 7-point Likert scale for political ideology than female respondents ($M = 2.35$). Further, transgender ($M = 1.00$) and nonbinary ($M = 1.38$) participants held significantly lower scores on the scale, indicating more liberal views. Interestingly, 12 individuals chose not to identify their gender but responded more moderately than the males overall ($M = 3.00$). In their study, Sneed & Dunn (unpublished) also found that gender was statistically significant when considering political ideology. However, it must be noted that the transgender population was dropped from their final analysis due to lacking statistical power. This study, on the other hand, had a large enough sample to include gender nonconforming and transgender populations, thereby indicating a more robust finding.

The significance of gender in relation to political ideology is unsurprising. The construct of gender is often used to delineate differences in political views among populations (Andersen, 1999). These differences often center on social welfare issues such as equal rights and more equitable distribution of resources (Eagly et al., 2004; Shorrock & Grasso, 2020). Even women who identify as conservative tend to have more moderate views than their conservative male peers (Barnes & Cassese, 2016). Regarding this current study, then, it is not surprising that gender would be significant due to overarching political differences between women and men. Studies regarding the political ideology of gender nonconforming and transgender populations are still emerging, but one researcher has begun to examine these populations more closely. Worthen (2020) found that nonbinary individuals often identify as more liberal than trans men and trans women, while participants in her study who identified as transgender were often less liberal than other members of the LGBT community and cisgender men. Although Worthen admits this area of research is still new, her work provides some additional perspectives into the findings of this study.

Functional Area

The findings of this study show a significant relationship between the functional area of the participants and their overall political ideology. Participants were originally asked to select their functional area out of more than 36 items; those items were later collapsed into 13 categories to increase statistical power. This analysis indicated that Multicultural and Identity Centers, which includes Multicultural Centers; Women's and Gender Identity Centers; International Student Services; and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Services, were significantly different than nine of the 12 other categories. This shows that professionals who worked in Multicultural and Identity Centers were statistically more liberal than most of the

other functional areas assessed in the study. The only functional areas that did not show a significant difference from Multicultural and Identity Centers were Health & Wellness and Student Conduct.

Sneed & Dunn (unpublished) also found that functional area was significant when analyzed with overall political ideology. However, in their study, they collapsed functional area into five categories due to the sample size. As a result, this study offers a broader view of the interconnectedness of function and political ideology. It is notable that no other functional areas in this study showed significant differences from each other unless they were compared to the multicultural units. Notably, this functional area may be seen as having a stronger emphasis on social justice, with work specifically centering on equity, diversity, and inclusion. In a dissertation study of counselor and counselor educators regarding social justice and political orientation, Steele (2010) found that more liberal professionals aligned more closely with social justice discussion and behaviors than their conservative colleagues. Similar results have been found among graduate-level psychology students (Linnemeyer, 2009) and school counselors (Parikh, 2008). Thus, it is possible there is a relationship between direct social justice work/advocacy and political ideology. As that was not the focus of this study, more research will be needed to explore this topic further.

Geographic Region

This study showed, unsurprisingly, that there were regional differences between student affairs professionals when it comes to political ideology. The findings indicate that the Southeast region of the United States is less liberal than the Mid-Atlantic, Great Lakes, Far West, and New England regions. In addition, the Southwest is less liberal than the Far West and New England. Lastly, the Plains region is less liberal than the Far West. Regional differences in political

ideology are to be expected since geography is a significant contributing factor to individual lives and values (Feinberg, Tullett, Mensch, Hart & Gottlieb, 2017). While the Southeast is typically seen as more conservative than the rest of the country, within the context of student affairs and this study, it is more accurate to use the term “less liberal.” With a mean of 2.71, the Southeast region is closer to somewhat liberal than to any measure of conservative. It is also true that a large portion of participants who identified themselves as conservatives within this study were located in the Southeast, and Southwest as well; however, to classify student affairs professionals in those regions as conservatives would be a misnomer. Conversely, it would be accurate to suggest that the Far West ($M = 2.15$) and New England ($M = 2.14$) regions were the most liberal regions due to their low mean scores for overall political ideology.

Institution Type

The findings of this study showed a significant difference between institution type and political ideology. Specifically, the data reflected that student affairs professionals at private schools were slightly more liberal than their public-school colleagues. Sneed & Dunn (unpublished) found a similar finding in their study of schools within the Southeast region. This finding is not surprising since previous research has shown the importance of institution type on the experiences of student affairs professionals, particularly as it relates to the overall job satisfaction of the professional (Anderson, 1998; Blakney, 2015; Hirt, 2006; Lombardi, 2013).

Within the context of political ideology, it is possible that the mission of some private institutions may align more closely with liberal leaning professionals than conservative leaning professionals. Private institutions are not held accountable by state legislatures in the same way that public institutions are and have private sources of funding (Weisbrod, 2010). This may allow for greater flexibility in terms of programming, specifically around social justice topics, that

would more closely align with the liberal values (Kettle & Salerno, 2017; Rothman, 2019) and attract more liberal professionals. Conversely, public institutions are held to different standards such as upholding the constitution of the United States and being under the purview of state legislatures, many of which are majority conservative (Mutnick & Rodriguez, 2020). While other factors, such as self-selection (Shields & Dunn, 2016), may be at play, it is possible that differences in institutional mission may influence the number of liberal professionals at public and private institutions.

Institution Religious Affiliation

While institution type was significant, somewhat surprisingly, the relationship between the religious affiliation of an institution and the political ideology of the respondent was not significant. In Sneed & Dunn's (unpublished) study, they also found that religious affiliation was not significant, which may contradict assumptions, as one might expect that an institution with a strong religious affiliation would attract more conservative student affairs professionals. Anecdotally, the sentiment of "conservative student affairs professionals probably mostly work at religious institutions" was frequently expressed to the researcher by student affairs professionals; however, this study does not provide any evidence to support this assertion. It is true that 10 participants, or 11.1% of conservative leaning professionals in the study, who selected at least "somewhat conservative," with one identifying as "extremely conservative," also reported working at an institution with a strong religious affiliation; however, that amount did not outweigh the number of liberals who worked at similar institutions. By contrast, 24 participants who worked at institutions with a strong religious affiliation identified as "extremely liberal."

One possible explanation for the lack of significance of the institution's religious affiliation may be the low number of conservative participants in the sample. It may also be possible that religious institutions are not strongly represented within the NASPA membership (e.g., professionals at religious institutions may be involved in other organizations instead of NASPA). Lastly, this finding may also suggest that the societal view of religious institutions, specifically society's understanding of what it means to be religious, is too narrow to allow for more progressive interpretations of faith. For example, Franciscan University of Steubenville and Fordham University are both Catholic institutions, e.g., religious, however Fordham is also a Jesuit institution which are known for being more socially liberal than other catholic institutions (Peck & Stick, 2008). While this study did not find a significant relationship between the religious affiliation of universities and student affairs professionals' political ideology, more work should be done to explore this area.

Race

The demographic variable of race did not show any statistical significance when accounting for political ideology. While the sample was predominately white at approximately 65.5%, this did not impact the outcome of the initial analysis. This finding coincided with what Sneed & Dunn (unpublished) found in their previous study. This finding is somewhat surprising considering national data, such as a 2020 Pew poll that indicates a close relationship between race and political ideology. However, this lack of significance may be attributed to the low number of participants who identify as at least "somewhat conservative." However, further examination of the data did reveal some small differences in the means between different racial groups. African American or Black participants both had the same mean for their score of overall political ideology ($M = 2.57$), indicating an overall more moderate view. Meanwhile, the White

and Native American respondents held a similar mean ($M = 2.43$), indicating a more liberal tilt than their African American or Black peers. Asian and Pacific Islanders held the lowest mean ($M = 2.13$), indicating that these populations were more liberal than the other racial groups included in the study. While these differences were not significant overall, further study into this area may be beneficial in understanding the relationship between race and political ideology within student affairs.

Institution Size & Setting

Lastly, this study showed that institution size and institution setting were not significant factors when analyzing political ideology. This is somewhat surprising since the institution type and regional location of the institution were significant in this study. The researcher expected to find a stronger relationship between institution size, institution setting, and political ideology than what was present. Existing research indicates that both type and setting influence the overall culture of an institution (Hirt, 2006); however, this was not reflected when considering political ideology. More research is needed to explore causes for these variables not being significant.

Interactions

The last research question of this study sought to explore the relationships between the measures of P-E fit, participants' political ideology, and their reported demographic variables. This was to examine what, if any, meaningful interactions were measured between P-E fit and overall political ideology. In other words, the research asked what effect political ideology and demographic variables have on P-E fit. The analysis presented some challenges regarding unequal group sizes within the variables, as discussed in Chapter 4. Due to these challenges, a more conservative (no pun intended) p value was selected to show significance. Using this p value illuminated one significant interaction between P-O fit, overall political ideology, and

functional area. This interaction accounted for 5.2% of the variance in how the participant perceived their organizational fit.

There are several additional key takeaways from this analysis. The first is that individuals who work as the dean of students and in the student affairs administration functional area show higher levels of Person-Organization (P-O) fit. These two functional areas typically house professionals who have worked in the field longer and hold more responsibilities at their respective institutions. The second key takeaway is that participants who identified as extremely liberal reported lower levels of P-O fit. While not specifically addressed in this study, lower levels of P-O fit may lead to decreased engagement within the institution and inferior work outcomes (Kristof-Brown, 1996). Further, the misalignment of P-O fit and political ideology has been shown to increase departure from the organization (Bermiss & McDonald, 2018).

While the interaction between political ideology and functional area on P-O fit was significant, other interactions showed pronounced trends that did not meet the $p = .001$ threshold. Some interactions, such as with overall political ideology and institution size ($p = .002$) or political ideology and institution region ($p = .005$) on P-O fit showed significant promise, but ultimately did not rise to the appropriate level. More research should be conducted to fully explore these potential interactions.

Discussion Summary

The first research question asked in this study sought to understand how participants self-labeled their political ideology. To examine this research question, participants were asked how they would rate their political ideology concerning social issues, economic issues, and how they perceive their overall political ideology. The results of this study show that most participants identify as at least “somewhat liberal” across all three domains. However, there is some nuance

when considering differences in participants social and political ideology. On social issues, participants generally skewed more liberal than the overall political ideology. While when asked about economic issues, most participants were more towards the center (e.g. moderate) than their overall political ideology. The analysis of the overall political ideology of participants revealed an overall liberal ratio of 15:1 when including those that reported themselves as “somewhat liberal” and “somewhat conservative.” This was slightly higher than what was found by Abrams (2018) of 12:1 in his study of study facing administrators that were members of the AAUP. When excluding those that marked “somewhat liberal” or “somewhat conservative” the overall ratio of liberal to conservatives among the sample rises that 30.1:1. This finding was not surprising and aligns with similar studies completed among faculty (Cardiff & Klein, 2005; Carl, 2017; Inbar & Lammers, 2012; Langbert, Quain, & Klein, 2016; Klein et. al., 2005; Klein & Stern, 2009). However, the lack of conservative, or right-leaning, participants in the study would present issues when conducting further analysis in the study.

The second research question sought to understand the relationship between political ideology and the perceived fit between the participant and their work environment. This was measured through the lens of the perceived fit between the participant and their job, organization, coworkers, and vocation. The analysis of the data showed there was a strong relationship between the participant’s political ideology and their perceived fit with their organization (e.g. institution). The results indicated that the more liberal a participant was the lower their perceived fit between them and their organization. Bermiss & McDonald (2018) presented similar findings that highlighted the importance political ideology and fit within an organization. The other measures of fit (e.g. job, group, and vocation) included in this study were not significant when analyzed alongside political ideology.

The third research question included in this study sought to understand the relationship between political ideology and the demographic information of the participants. The study found that age, length of time working in student affairs, and position level were significant when analyzed alongside political ideology. These variables are closely correlated within this study and all measure some aspect of time (e.g. older professionals have more work experience and work in roles with more responsibilities). Age specifically has been shown to be a strong indicator of political ideology (Roberts, Walton, and Viechtbauer, 2014). Participants that were older and held more senior roles were usually less liberal than their younger colleagues that were new professionals. Notably, they did not typically rate themselves as “conservative,” but closer to moderate than other participants in the study. The gender of the participants was also significant in this study, which has been shown in other studies to be related to political ideology (Andersen, 1999). This study also showed that the functional area participants worked in was significant in the analysis with political ideology. While the functional areas were collapsed in the analysis, this study showed that participants that worked in Multicultural and Identity Centers were typically more liberal. The researcher suggests that this functional area typically focuses more on social justice advocacy which has been shown to attract more liberal leaning professionals in other fields (Linnemeyer, 2009; Parikh, 2008). The geographic region of the institution the participant worked at was also significant in the analysis. This study indicated that participants in the Southeast, Southwest, and Plains states were less liberal, while the regions of New England and the Far West was more liberal than other participants. The significance of geographic region was unsurprising to the researcher since regional differences have been shown to be a predictor in political attitudes and values (Feinberg, Tullett, Mensch, Hart & Gottlieb, 2017). Finally, institution type was a significant variable in this study. Specifically, participants that worked at

private schools were more liberal than those that worked at public institutions. This was not surprising to the researcher since previous studies on institution type indicate type plays an important role in the experiences of employees (Anderson, 1998; Blakney, 2015; Hirt, 2006; Lombardi, 2013).

While the previous variables were significant, this study also noted several variables were not. For instance, the race of participants was not significant in this analysis. Notably, the sample was made of majority White participants, however most of the participants rated themselves as at least “somewhat liberal.” While race has been shown to predict political ideology (Pew, 2020), race was not a good indicator in this study. There were some smaller differences that were noted by the researcher such as White and Native American/Aluet participants being slightly more liberal than Black or African American participants. Asian and Pacific Islanders were the most moderate leaning of the racial categories within this study. Lastly, despite institution type being significant in the analysis, the size and setting (e.g. urban, suburban, or rural) of the institution was not significant.

The final research question sought to understand how the political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and demographic variables of participants interact with one another. This analysis presented some challenges to the researcher since there were unequal groups sizes within response. However, the analysis did present one strongly significant relationship between the three factors. Specifically, this study found that more liberal professionals reported lower levels of organizational fit than their moderate or conservative colleagues. Further, professionals working in the Dean of Students Office and Student Affairs Administration showed higher levels of fit within their organization. Notably, older and more seasoned professionals typically work in those functional areas within student affairs divisions.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study offer several implications for the field of student affairs, particularly as it relates to two important populations. As politics remains a hot topic of national discourse, it is essential to consider how student affairs, as a field, approaches and incorporates an understanding of political ideology into their work. One potential challenge for student affairs is a lack of political diversity, which increases the risk of ideological groupthink when it comes to research and problem solving (Duarte et. al., 2015). This study revealed a large disparity between the number of liberals and conservatives in the field. Simply pointing out this disparity is an implication in and of itself, in the hope that this finding will inspire others to examine and research into the topic. This study has contributed a significant amount of data that may be used to further build upon an underdeveloped area of research.

Further, this study highlights the importance of Person-Organization (P-O) fit and political ideology in many ways that may be used when a professional is searching for a new position. For example, regions such as the Southeast, Southwest, and Plains may be ideal for conservative-leaning professionals, while the Far West and New England may provide a better fit for those who lean more liberal. Similar decisions may be made with institution type or functional area to better align a person's political ideology with their professional's life choices. While this may seem beneficial for the individual to seek out spaces of ideological conformity, using the findings of this study in that manner may have detrimental effects on field of student affairs. Political hegemony within the field may manifest through groupthink (Janis, 1971), motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990), and confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998) when making decisions leading to potentially worse outcomes. In research, evidence that supports the groups shared belief is accepted without question, while contrary evidence is treated more critically

potentially leading towards poorer quality scholarship (Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979). In practice, this may resemble implementing practices that may be discriminatory towards a particular ideological group, as was the case at the University of Kentucky. Rather than retreating to ideological silos, this research should be used to cross political divides, foster discussions, and build relationships within the field.

To that end, supervisors may use the findings of this study to start conversations with their employees related to political ideology and, more specifically, how political ideology relates to the employee's perceptions of their own fit with the organization. It may be important for supervisors to understand how political ideology may influence the motivations of current employees and how they may best support them in their personal growth and model how to have conversations across political differences. Further, this information may be used in the recruitment and selection of potential new hires within the organization. This study highlights the lack of conservative student affairs professionals, but it also illuminated that professionals who identified as extremely liberal showed lower levels of Person-Organization (P-O) fit. Professionals that do not have a significant level of fit to their organization possess an increased likelihood of departure from the organization (Bermiss & McDonald, 2018). For an inclusive field like student affairs, neither extreme should be acceptable. This concept may also extend to the relationships student affairs builds with undergraduate students. Specifically, the findings of this study may demonstrate the value of mentoring conservative students and encouraging them to go into the field of student affairs. While there is evidence of self-selection, as discussed in Chapter 1, student affairs professionals can still work to build bridges across ideological divides regarding the recruitment of new professionals.

Areas of Future Research

The results of this study provided many answers to the research questions; however, from those answers, more questions have arisen. This research focused on political ideology and Person-Environment (P-E) fit within the field of student affairs and provides substantive backing to support new avenues of research. The findings of this study encourage several recommendations for future research into the topic area.

First, this study showed that functional area, both in its relationship with political ideology and in its interaction with political ideology and perceived Person-Organization(P-O) fit, were significant. These findings suggest there may be more information to glean related to the role of the person in the functional area alongside other factors. Specifically, further examination into factors, such as political ideology, that attract individuals to a particular functional area, or to the field in general, may be beneficial to better understanding career choices among student affairs professionals. These choices may include why professionals elect to work in a particular area, or in other instances, why they leave a particular functional area. Understanding the motivations of staff may prove beneficial in recruitment, supervision, or creating engaging work environments.

Secondly, the population surveyed for this study represented a wide array of functional areas; as a result, additional research that would hone the scope of the study may provide important information to better support student affairs professionals. For example, in this study, comparison between groups found that Multicultural & Identity Centers differed significantly from 9 of the 12 other functional areas when considering political ideology. Applying a methodology like the one presented in this study to a smaller population, such as a particular functional area, may provide a deeper understanding of the role of political ideology within the

field. Similarly, the significance of factors such as age, length of time in the field, and position level creates the opportunity for a longitudinal study examining the role of political ideology in student affairs over time. Specifically, future research might investigate how, if at all, political ideology influences attrition from the field or attraction to positions with greater authority. Additional studies should be done to examine if political ideology influences who leaves the field, who chooses to pursue careers in upper administration, and who is promoted within their organization.

An additional recommendation for future research is to utilize the instrument used for this study or one like it to explore other professional organizations. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this study used NASPA to elicit its sample, which provided the opportunity to garner a large group of participants from across the country. However, using different professional organizations may yield significantly different results based on the specific region or focus of the professional organization in question. This study found significant differences for demographic variables based on institution location and functional area, so it may prove worthwhile to dig further into those differences. Exploring professional organizations based on functional area, such as the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) or the Association of College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO-I), would provide additional opportunities for understanding political ideology and P-E fit within student affairs. Further, comparing professional organizations that center a specific type of institution, such as religious institutions, community colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, or tribal colleges, may yield better insight into the relationship between political ideology and student affairs. This information may be used to identify potential areas of growth and representation among

ideological groups as well as create new avenues for communicating across ideological differences professionally.

The final recommendation is to further investigate the disparity in the number of conservative professionals when compared to the number of liberals. While this study shows a large difference between the number of liberals and conservatives in the field, this study does not address the reasons for this disparity. Additional research is needed to identify potential barriers or explanations for why fewer conservatives choose to go into student affairs. This information may be used to better recruit and retain conservative individuals into student affairs preparatory programs or into new professional positions. In addition, future research may investigate the potential for anti-conservative bias in hiring practices or in mentoring and relationship building between student affairs professionals and undergraduate students. Possible studies might focus solely on the experiences of conservatives in student affairs, which might necessitate specific marketing campaigns to recruit more conservative participants. This may include snowball sampling or the use of conservative student affairs professional networks such as the Conservatives in Student Affairs Facebook group.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the relationship between political ideology and P-E fit among student affairs professionals. To achieve this goal, a quantitative methodology was used to collect data to answer core research questions, including a) how do student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology, b) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology and person-environment fit, c) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology and personal identifiers, and d) what relationship exists between participants' self-labeled political ideology, perceived person-environment fit, and

demographic information? For this study, participants were recruited from the membership list of NASPA, a student affairs professional organization. Approximately 2,045 student affairs professionals from across the nation completed the quantitative questionnaire. Data resulting from this questionnaire included information regarding the participants' political ideology, perceived fit on multiple measures (e.g., P-O fit, P-V fit, P-J fit, and P-G fit), and demographic information.

Findings from this study included significant relationships between political ideology, perceived P-O fit, and demographic variables. This study found that the liberal to conservative ratio of student affairs professionals is 30.1:1. Based on the data, political ideology had a significant relationship with P-O fit, but no other measure of P-E fit. Additionally, extremely liberal professionals reported lower levels of P-O fit when considering functional area. Other findings indicate significance between political ideology and region, race, gender, age, position level, and length of time in the field.

Prior to this study, little research had been conducted regarding the political ideology of student affairs professionals. While there is much work still to do in the area, this study serves as a large stepping-stone on the path to better understand how student affairs and politics collide. It is the hope of the researcher that this study will be used to further understanding and discussion, ultimately leading to more meaningful experiences for the students we serve.

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APPENDIX A

Recruitment Email

Dear Colleague,

My name is Eric Sneed and I am a doctoral student in the College Student Affairs Administration, Ph.D. program in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia under the direction of Dr. Merrily Dunn (merrily@uga.edu).

In partial fulfillment for my Ph.D. program, I am conducting a quantitative research study to explore the political ideology among student affairs professionals. Specifically, I am examining the relationship between political ideology and person-environment fit among student affairs professionals. The results of this study will be used to explore political ideology within the field of student affairs and inform future research topics.

You have been selected as part of a national sample of student affairs professionals from the NASPA membership to take part in this brief survey. This online survey will take **approximately 10 minutes**. Your responses are anonymous, and all answers will be compiled using quantitative survey techniques.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you must meet the following criteria:

*Currently working in a student affairs administrator role

The link below will take you to a Qualtrics survey. The survey will include the informed consent for the study and will fully explain the study. It will cover risks, benefits, privacy, and your ability withdraw without penalty at any time. Responses to the survey are anonymous.

Upon completion of the survey, participants will be provided a link to submit their email address for an opportunity to win one of four \$25 Amazon Gift Cards. If you do not wish to complete the survey but would still like to enter the drawing you may email me directly at eric.sneed@uga.edu.

The survey can be access via Qualtrics at < Insert survey link here >

Should you have any questions or concerns about this study please feel free to contact me via email or phone. Thanks for your time and participation.

Appreciatively,
Eric Sneed
eric.sneed@uga.edu

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

Political Ideology and Person-Environment Fit Among Student Affairs Professionals

Dear Participant,

My name is Eric Sneed and I am a doctoral student in the Counseling and Human Development Department at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. Merrily Dunn. I am inviting you to take part in a research study.

STUDY PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to examine how student affairs professionals self-label their political ideology and to explore the relationships among their political ideology, person-environment fit, and various demographic information of participants.

ELIGIBILITY: To participate in this study, you must be a current administrator and serve in a student facing role that does not have sole faculty responsibilities.

PARTICIPATION: This study will ask you a series of questions regarding your stances on various political issues, person-environment fit within your current role, and ask for your demographic information. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. In addition, you may skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable responding. The average completion time for the survey is less than ten minutes.

RISKS: There are no foreseeable risks or discomfort associated with this research study.

BENEFITS: As part of your participation in this study, you will be eligible to enter to win one of four \$25 Amazon Gift Cards. In addition, your responses to this study will help the researchers better understand the political ideology of student affairs professionals. If you do not wish to complete the study, but would like to enter to win one of the gift cards, please email eric.sneed@uga.edu

PRIVACY/SECURITY: Your privacy and security are of the utmost importance. Some demographic information will be gathered; however no identifiable information will be collected. The web site and its associated server have been secured for privacy. However, internet

communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the Internet technology.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: If you have any questions regarding this research, please do not hesitate to ask. You may contact me at (910) 470-6955 or eric.sneeden@uga.edu or my major advisor at merrily@uga.edu.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to: The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706)542-3199; E-mail Address IRB@uga.edu. Thank you for your participation in this research study.

By proceeding with this study, you agree to the terms listed above.

APPENDIX C

Instrument

Part 1

The following questions will ask you to self-label your own political ideology for several issues.

***Note:** Liberal is intended to mean “left/progressive” and conservative is intended to mean “right/traditionalist.”*

1. When it comes to social issues, I would rate my political ideology as:
 - Very Liberal (1)
 - Liberal (2)
 - Somewhat Liberal (3)
 - Moderate (4)
 - Somewhat Conservative (5)
 - Conservative (6)
 - Very Conservative (7)

2. When it comes to economic issues, I would rate my political ideology as:
 - Very Liberal (1)
 - Liberal (2)
 - Somewhat Liberal (3)
 - Moderate (4)
 - Somewhat Conservative (5)
 - Conservative (6)
 - Very Conservative (7)

3. Overall, I would rate my political ideology as:
 - Very Liberal (1)
 - Liberal (2)
 - Somewhat Liberal (3)
 - Moderate (4)
 - Somewhat Conservative (5)
 - Conservative (6)
 - Very Conservative (7)

Part 2**Perceived P-O Fit items**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your current institution of employment.

1. I identify strongly with the goals of my organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

2. My personal goals and the goals of my organization are very similar.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

3. I don't care about the goals of this organization as much as many of my co-workers do. (reverse-scored).

- Strongly Disagree (7)
- Disagree (6)
- Somewhat Disagree (5)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (3)
- Agree (2)
- Strongly Agree (1)

4. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

5. My personal values match my organization's values and culture.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

6. My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Perceived P-J fit items

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your current role.

Needs-supplies fit (adapted from Cable & DeRue, 2002)

1. There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

2. The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by my present job.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

3. The job that I currently hold gives me just about everything that I want from a job.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)

- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

4. The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

5. My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of my job.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

6. My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my job places on me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Perceived P-G fit items

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your current co-workers.

1. Working with the other people in my group is one of the best parts of this job.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)

- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

2. I get along well with the people I work with on a day-to-day basis.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

3. There is not much conflict among the members of my group.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

4. If I had more free time, I would enjoy spending more time with my co-workers socially.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

5. There are some people I work with I try to avoid when possible (reverse-scored).

- Strongly Disagree (7)
- Disagree (6)
- Somewhat Disagree (5)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (3)
- Agree (2)
- Strongly Agree (1)

Perceived P-V fit items

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your decision to work in the field of student affairs.

1. There is a good fit between my personal interests and the kind of work I perform in my occupation (or profession/trade).

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

2. My skills and abilities are well suited for the vocation (profession/trade) that I am currently in.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat Disagree (3)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

3. When I think about my interests, I sometimes wonder whether I chose the right occupation (profession/trade) after all (reverse-scored).

- Strongly Disagree (7)
- Disagree (6)
- Somewhat Disagree (5)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)
- Somewhat Agree (3)
- Agree (2)
- Strongly Agree (1)

Part 3

The following questions will ask for information regarding your current position and institution:

1. How long have you worked in the field?
 - Master's graduate student (1)
 - 1 -5 years (2)
 - 6 – 10 years (3)
 - 11 or more years (4)

2. What best describes your role?
 - Master's graduate student (1)
 - Full time doctoral/terminal degree student (2)
 - New professional (3)
 - Mid-level (4)
 - Senior-level (supervise multiple departments) (5)
 - Chief student Affairs Officer (6)

3. What is the institution type?
 - Public (1)
 - Private (2)

4. What is the institution size?
 - Small – less than 5,000 students (1)
 - Medium – 5,001 – 10,000 students (2)
 - Large – more than 10,000 students (3)

5. What is the institution setting?
 - Urban (1)
 - Rural (2)
 - Suburban (3)
 - Online (4)

6. What best describes your institution’s religious affiliation?
 - No affiliation (1)
 - Loose affiliation (2)
 - Strong Affiliation (3)

7. Which functional area best describes your current role?
 - Academic Services (1)
 - Admissions (2)
 - Assessment (3)
 - Athletics (4)
 - Auxiliary Services (5)
 - Campus Safety (6)
 - Career Development (7)
 - Case Management Services (8)
 - Civic Engagement and Service-Learning (9)
 - Commuter Services (10)
 - Counseling Services (11)
 - Dean of Students (12)
 - Dining Services (13)
 - Disability Services (14)
 - Enrollment Management (15)
 - Financial Aid (16)
 - Fraternity and Sorority Life (17)
 - Fundraising (18)
 - Graduate Student Services (19)
 - Health Promotion Services (20)
 - International Student Services (21)
 - Leadership Programs (22)
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Student Services (23)

- Multicultural Student Services (24)
 - Orientation Programs (25)
 - Parent and Family Programs (26)
 - Recreation Programs (27)
 - Religious Programs (28)
 - Registration Services (29)
 - Residence Life and Housing (30)
 - Sexual Violence-Related Programs (31)
 - Student Activities (32)
 - Student Affairs Administration (33)
 - Student Conduct/Judicial Affairs (34)
 - Student Unions (35)
 - Transfer Student Programs (36)
 - TRIO and College Access Programs (37)
 - Veterans Services (38)
 - Women's Centers (39)
 - Other [text box] (40)
8. Where is your institution located?
- Far West (AK, CA, HI, NV, OR, WA)
 - Great Lakes (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)
 - Mid-Atlantic (DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA)
 - New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)
 - Plains (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)
 - Rocky Mountains (CO, ID, MT, UT, WY)
 - Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)
 - Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, TX)
 - Online (any location)

Part 4 Demographics

The follow questions will ask for your demographic information:

1. What is your gender? Select all that apply.
- Agender
 - Genderqueer or non-binary
 - Man
 - Transgender
 - Transman or Transmaculine
 - Transwoman or Transfeminine
 - Woman
 - Prefer not to answer

2. To which racial or ethnic group(s) do you most identify? Select all that apply.
- African American or Black (non-Hispanic)
 - Asian Pacific Islander
 - Hispanic or Latinx
 - Native American or Indigenous
 - Multiracial or Multiethnic
 - White
 - Not Listed [Text Box]
 - Prefer not to answer
3. What is your age?
- 18-25 (1)
 - 26-35 (2)
 - 36-45 (3)
 - 46-55 (4)
 - 56-65 (5)
 - 66 or older (6)

APPENDIX D


Person-Environment Fit Instrument Approval (Vogel and Feldman, 2009)

Re: [External] Person-Environment Fit Instrument - Message (HTML)

File Message Help Tell me what you want to do

Mark Unread Find Zoom

Re: [External] Person-Environment Fit Instrument

 Ryan Vogel <tuh42545@temple.edu>
To Eric Keith Sneeden

Reply Reply All Forward

Tue 6/30/2020 7:02 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER - PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY]

Hi Eric,

Great to hear of your interest in fit!

You may, of course, use that instrument -- nothing about it is proprietary. I would caution you about using the P-G fit measure, though. There has been much more rigorous measure development in the P-G fit realm since then - Amy Kristof-Brown published something in PPsych, I believe, a few years ago.

Good luck with your dissertation!

Ryan

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 1:15 AM Eric Keith Sneeden <eric.sneeden@uga.edu> wrote:

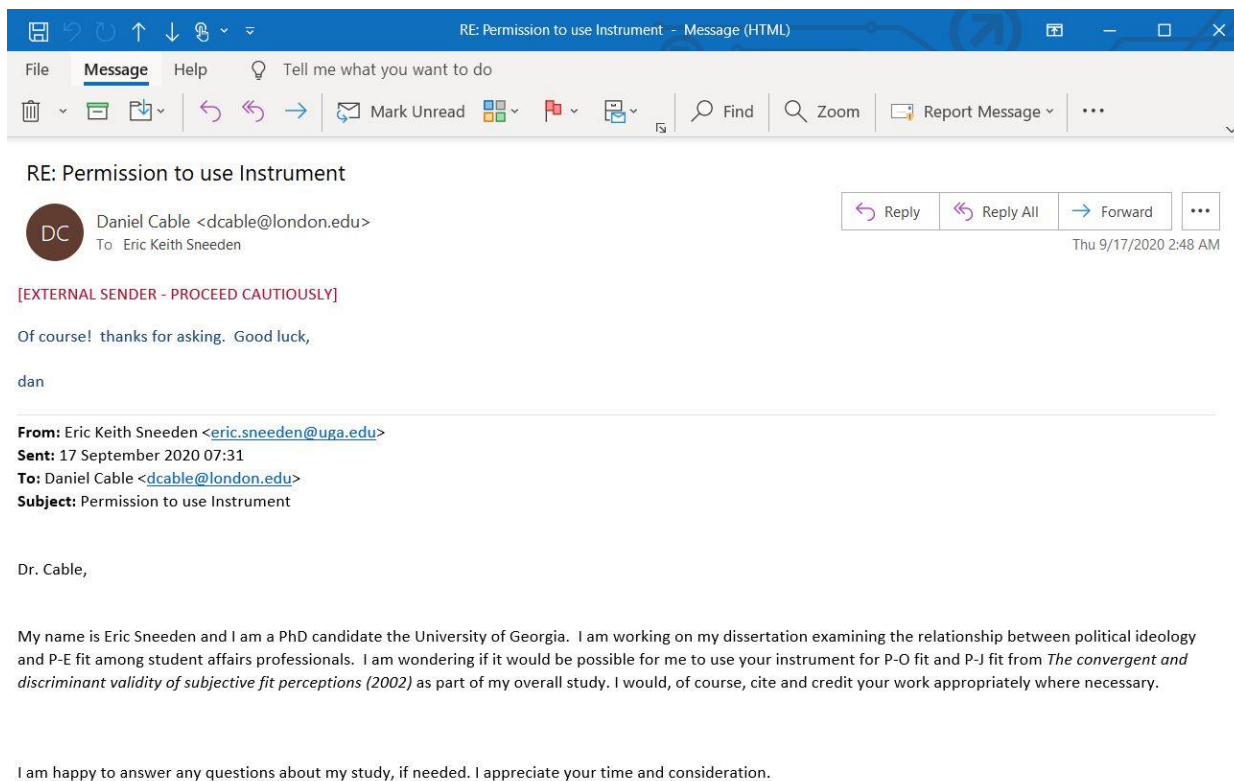
Dr. Vogel,

My name is Eric Sneeden and I am a 4th year PhD student at the University of Georgia. I am working on my dissertation examining the relationship between political ideology and P-E fit among student affairs professionals. I am wondering if it would be possible for me to use your instrument from *Integrating the levels of person-environment fit: The roles of vocational fit and group fit* (2009) as part of my overall study. I would, of course, cite and credit your work appropriately where necessary.

I am happy to answer any questions about my study, if needed. I appreciate your time and consideration.

APPENDIX E

Person-Environment Fit Instrument Approval (Cable and DeRue, 2002)



RE: Permission to use Instrument

DC Daniel Cable <dcable@london.edu>
To: Eric Keith Sneeden

[EXTERNAL SENDER - PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY]

Of course! thanks for asking. Good luck,

dan

From: Eric Keith Sneeden <eric.sneeden@uga.edu>
Sent: 17 September 2020 07:31
To: Daniel Cable <dcable@london.edu>
Subject: Permission to use Instrument

Dr. Cable,

My name is Eric Sneeden and I am a PhD candidate the University of Georgia. I am working on my dissertation examining the relationship between political ideology and P-E fit among student affairs professionals. I am wondering if it would be possible for me to use your instrument for P-O fit and P-J fit from *The convergent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions (2002)* as part of my overall study. I would, of course, cite and credit your work appropriately where necessary.

I am happy to answer any questions about my study, if needed. I appreciate your time and consideration.

APPENDIX F

Optional Text Entered as “Other” Response to Functional Area

Number	Functional Area
1	Academic & Student Affairs
2	Academic Advisement
3	Academic Advising
4	Academic Advising
5	Academic Advising
6	Academic Advising
7	Academic Advising and registration
8	Academic advisor
9	Academic Program
10	Academic Support
11	Administrative Advising Services
12	Advancement & Assessment
13	Advising, Summer Bridge
14	Advising/First-Year Experience
15	Advocacy/Title IX support
16	All listed...we are so small there is a small group of staff who do provide all these functions
17	All student affairs not considered academic, I am the only student affairs person at my school.
18	Allied health/clinical
19	Alumni/Mentorship Programs
20	Associated Students
21	Associated Students, Inc. non-profit corporation CEO: student government is board of directors and we oversee campus recreation, student union and activities, children's center, and many support services for clubs and organizations (very unique structure, worthy of it's own dissertation)
22	Auxiliary
23	AVC over several of these areas
24	Basic Needs
25	basic needs
26	Basic Needs
27	Basic Needs Services
28	Both dean of students , international , and multicultural student affairs
29	Broadly Student Life + Fraternity & Sorority and Violence Prevention, its complicated
30	Business Services
31	Campus Diversity Initiatives
32	Campus events and Diversity
33	Campus Vice President (Instruction, Student Affairs, Facilities)
34	Career Development and Retention

35	Civic and community engagement
36	Civic Engagement and Leadership
37	Co-curricular Learning / Project
38	College Access
39	College Readiness & Testing Services
40	Combination of Leadership Development, Orientation and Activities
41	Combined Advising, Academic Service and Career Center
42	Communication
43	Communications and Social Media
44	Community Development
45	Community/Civic Engagement
46	Commuter Student Services
47	Commuter Student Services
48	Commuter Students
49	Consortium
50	Dean of Students type work in a professional school
51	DEI
52	Department of Education
53	Diversity & Inclusion
54	Diversity and Inclusion
55	Diversity and Inclusion
56	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
57	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
58	Diversity, Inclusion & Equity
59	Entrepreneurship Programs
60	Equal Opportunity Programs
61	Equity and Title IX
62	Ethnic Affinity Department
63	Experiential Learning
64	Faculty
65	Family Engagement
66	Federally funded/advising support services TRIO
67	Federally funded/advising support services TRIO
68	Fellowships and Awards
69	Finance
70	First Generation Support Services
71	First Year Experience
72	First Year Students
73	First-generation and low-income student program
74	First-generation college students
75	First-Year Program
76	Global Experience/Study Abroad
77	Global programs

78	Graduate School Preparation- Trio
79	Graduation Coordination
80	Health & Wellbeing
81	Health and Wellness
82	Health and wellness promotion, which I would categorize differently than "health services"
83	Health Education/Promotion
84	Health Prevention, Promotion & Wellness
85	Health Profession Preparation
86	Health Promotion
87	Health Promotion
88	Health Promotion
89	Health Promotion
90	Health Promotion
91	Health Promotion
92	Health Promotion
93	Health Promotion
94	Health Promotion
95	Health Promotion
96	Health Promotion (housed in Student Life, not Health Center)
97	Health Promotion and Education
98	Health Promotion and Wellbeing
99	Health Promotion/Health Education
100	Health Services and COVID management/response
101	Higher Education Opportunity Program
102	Honors Education
103	Housing & Residential Life
104	I have Academic Services (Advising), Career Services, Disability Services and Veteran Services that I work with and supervise
105	Institutional Advancement & Title IX
106	Instructor for undergraduate leadership courses and research in leadership education.
107	Interpersonal Violence Advocacy and Prevention
108	large and complex student union that incorporates many of these areas
109	Marketing
110	Mental Health & Well-being
111	mix of first-year, transitions, success and retention
112	Multicultural Education but also specialize in LGBTQIA+ services & First Generation Student Services
113	multiple
114	My role is oversight of Academic Services, Admissions, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Compliance, Course Creation, Faculty Credentialing, etc.
115	New Student & Family Programs (orientatoin not in office)
116	new student/family transition
117	Nontraditional Student Services

118	Non-traditional student services
119	Off Campus Commuter Student Services
120	Off Campus Housing and Commuter Support Services
121	Off Campus Living
122	Ombuds
123	One Stop Services
124	Online student success
125	Operations Support
126	Opportunity Program
127	Opportunity Programs
128	Orientation, Student Activities, and Student Union
129	Outreach
130	Oversee all of Health and Wellness
131	Parent & Family Engagement
132	Parent & Family Services
133	Parent and family programming
134	Parent and Family Programs
135	Parent and Family Programs
136	Parent and Family Programs
137	policy
138	Pre-College Programs - K-12 Pipeline
139	Pre-college services
140	Pre-Health Pipeline Programming
141	President's Office
142	Prevention
143	Prevention and wellness
144	Provost Office
145	Recreation and Wellness
146	Research
147	research
148	Retention
149	Retention/TRIO
150	Scholarship Programming
151	Scholarships
152	Second year success
153	Service Learning and Civic Engagement
154	Sexual and Domestic violence prevention and intervention
155	Sexual and Intimate-Partner Violence Prevention
156	Sexual Assault Prevention
157	Sexual Violence Prevention
158	Sexual/Relationship Violence Prevention
159	Social Justice Education
160	Special populations: Transfer, Veteran and Adult, Readmit, as well as orientation

161	Strategic Initiatives
162	Student Activities, Orientation, Leadership & Volunteerism
163	Student Activities, Orientation, Student Conduct, Leadership
164	student advocacy
165	Student Affairs Communication
166	Student Affairs marketing
167	Student Engagement
168	Student Engagement
169	Student Engagement (Campus Life, Academic Support, Academic Enrichment)
170	Student Government Student Media
171	Student Retention
172	Student Retention, Success, and Orientation
173	Student Services
174	Student Services/Advising/Counseling
175	Student success
176	Student Success
177	Student Success
178	Student Success and Retention
179	Student Success Programs
180	Student Success Programs
181	Student Success Programs
182	Student Success/Transitional Programming
183	Student support for undergrads
184	Student Support Services
185	Student Support Services
186	Student Support Services
187	Student well-being
188	Student-Athlete Academic Support
189	Study Abroad
190	Study Abroad
191	Study Abroad
192	Study Abroad Programs
193	Substance Abuse Prevention
194	Supervise Multiple Functional Areas
195	Support Services
196	Sustainability
197	Technology
198	Technology
199	Title IX
200	Title IX
201	Title IX & Disability Services
202	Title IX & Sexual Misconduct
203	Title IX Administration

204	Title IX and Compliance
205	Title IX and Compliance
206	Title IX and Violence Prevention
207	Title IX Investigation
208	Title IX Office
209	Title IX/Civil Rights
210	Transfer Student Programming
211	Transfer Student Services
212	Transfer student support
213	TRIO
214	Trio
215	Trio sss
216	TRIO Talent Search
217	TRiO/ student support services
218	University Chaplain
219	Victim advocate
220	Violence Prevention
221	Violence Prevention & Advocacy
222	violence prevention and response
223	Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance
224	Violence Prevention Programming
225	Virtual Services-Advising, Coaching, Enrollment Management, and Call Center
226	We are a diversity center that serves students that are LGBTQIA+ Multicultural Indigenous Disabled and Neurodiverse, Adult Learners and Women
227	Wellbeing and Health Promotion
228	Wellness
229	Wellness
230	Wellness
231	Wellness
232	Wellness and Recreation
233	Wellness Promotion
234	Wellness/Health Promotion
235	Women's and Gender and Multicultural Affairs