

S. Mark Sikes, Ph.D.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dynamic higher education leader with 20+ years of progressive student affairs experience at both public and private liberal arts institutions. A proven champion for student success, engagement & wellbeing, with expertise in fostering inclusive, student-centered environments. Skilled in strategic planning, crisis management, and cultivating partnerships with academic affairs, community stakeholders, and advancement teams. A visionary leader who aligns institutional priorities with student needs to enhance persistence, enhance retention, academic success, and holistic development. Passionate about the land grant mission and committed to creating transformative student experiences while empowering individuals and teams.

CORE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

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| ♦ Strategic Planning & Change Management | ♦ Student Development & Retention Strategies |
| ♦ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Leadership | ♦ Crisis Management & Behavioral Intervention |
| ♦ Budget Oversight & Resource Allocation | ♦ Staff Development & Team Empowerment |
| ♦ Cross-Campus Collaboration & Academic Leadership | ♦ Community Partnerships & Town-Gown Relations |
| ♦ Enrollment Management & Graduation Initiatives | ♦ Stakeholder Engagement & Capital Fundraising Success |
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Dean of Students

Virginia Tech – Blacksburg, VA (2023 – Present)

Senior administrative leader reporting to the Vice President for Student Affairs at a major public research institution (37,000+ students).

- Chief Student Advocate: Oversee holistic support, policy development, and equitable practices for 37,000+ undergraduate and graduate students.
- Co-Author Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan and serve as champion for ongoing review and implementation.
- Strategic Unit Oversight: Provide vision and budgetary management for multiple units including, Dean of Students Office, New Students & Family Programs, Services for Students with Disabilities, and Student Conduct.
- Empower and Inspire Student Affairs teams to live authentically and share lived experiences for holistic student success.
- Crisis & Case Management: Chair the Care Team and serve on the Threat Assessment Team, collaborating with law enforcement and academic deans for proactive student interventions.

- **Fostering Inclusion & Belonging:** Spearhead interfaith dialogues, First Generation Forward, First Gen Living/Learning programs, cultural and accessibility initiatives, and student support frameworks, promoting a campus culture of mutual respect.
- **Cross-Campus Collaboration:** Strengthen relationships with academic colleges, major donors, and external partners, aligning resources with strategic student affairs priorities.
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Improved retention and graduation rates by implementing targeted outreach with academic deans while strengthening faculty partnerships.
 - Enhanced diversity and inclusion efforts through new frameworks for interfaith and cultural dialogues.
 - Promoted an engaging wellbeing model for on campus and off campus student populations.

Interim Dean of Students & Vice Dean for Student Success

William & Mary – Williamsburg, VA (2006 – 2023)

Progressively responsible roles at a selective public liberal arts institution (~8,800 students).

- **Strategic Leadership & Budget Management:** Oversaw a multimillion budget and directed multiple units (Academic Wellbeing, Care Support Services, Center for Student Diversity, Accountability and Restorative Practices, Parent & Family Programs, The Haven, Academic Tutoring Center, & Student Accessibility Services).
- **Comprehensive Student Support:** Created wrap around services team for students living in residence halls, Chaired the Care Team and served on the Threat Assessment Team, ensuring coordinated crisis responses and proactive student interventions.
- **DEI & Community Engagement:** Launched a flourishing model for student success, including academic & living-learning communities for first-generation students, and partnered with local government to enhance off-campus student experiences.
- **Enrollment & Retention Initiatives:** Responsible for academic review and continuance process, academic interventions, and care support services to bolster persistence and graduation rates.
- **Lead Team with Dean of the Faculty** for creation of the Joint Degree Programme with the University of St Andrews (Scotland).
- **Member of President's Cabinet Plus team;** coordinate with Executive Leadership Team, Dean of Arts & Sciences, Deans of Graduate and Professional Schools.
- **Technology Integration:** Served as divisional lead on Banner ERP and other critical IT projects (Symplicity Advocate, Salesforce CRM, StarRez, Blackbaud, EAB Navigate), improving service delivery and user experience.
- **Key Achievements:**
 - Drove a significant increase in parent philanthropic giving through strategic collaborations with Advancement.
 - Elevated campus inclusivity with robust DEI programming and policy reforms, embedding inclusive excellence into student life.

- Generated excitement with all students regarding the Student Affairs' mission of flourishing and authentic excellence
- Served on the executive team for the Sadler Student Center renovation

**Assistant Dean of College Life & Director of Student Activities & First-Year Programs
Gettysburg College – Gettysburg, PA (1999 – 2006)**

Led student life programming at a private liberal arts institution (~2,800 students).

- As a member of the student affairs senior staff team, oversaw administration and implementation of College Life programming; supported professional staff through the development of new programs, traditions, offices, and facilities; collaborated with staff and faculty across campus in delivering high-quality experiences for the community
- Served on president's management team addressing recruitment, retention, marketing and communications, and alumni affairs
- Participated and led programming through the College's Diversity Task Force
- Developed new traditions connected to the Gettysburg Address, Responsible for First Year Experience for all new students from time of admissions deposit through the entire first year.
- Managed operations, staffing and capital improvements projects and oversight for college union building
- Responsible for advising Student Government, Programming Board, all Clubs and Organizations
- Collaborated closely with Residence Life, Office of Greek Life; managed student leadership and organizational support programs
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Created new traditions celebrating the rich history of time and place of the Gettysburg Address
 - Built nightclub for student programming and renovated the College Union Building
 - Enhanced Belonging through student development best practices

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, & Leadership (Higher Education Emphasis)

William & Mary – Williamsburg, VA

M.A.Ed. in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Virginia Tech – Blacksburg, VA

B.A. in Political Science

University of South Carolina – Columbia, SC

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & PRESENTATIONS

- **Co-Creator, Joint Degree Programme** between William & Mary and the University of St. Andrews (Scotland)
- **Featured Speaker**, William & Mary Chinese Parent Association Annual Conference (Jinan & Nanjing, China)
- **National Conference Presenter**, *Elevating Family Engagement through Student Affairs & Advancement Collaboration*, AHEPPP National Conference
- **Board of Visitors** Presenter on student success, collaboration, and campus engagement initiatives
- **Guest Lecturer**, Higher Education Administration & Multicultural Counseling (William & Mary)
- **Blacksburg Police Citizen Advisory Board** member

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- **NASPA** (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education)
 - **AHEAD** (Association for Higher Education and Disability)
 - **NODA** (Association for Orientation, Transition, & Retention in Higher Education)
 - **AHEPPP** (Association of Higher Education Parent/Family Program Professionals)
 - **Educause for Higher Education**
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