



WISCONSIN COLLEGE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

2025 Virtual Fall Conference Schedule

October 16 & 17, 2025

SCHEDULE LEGEND

CONFERENCE
SESSION

SPECIAL EVENT
SESSION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16TH

Time

Event

8:55 AM

Waiting Room Opens

9:00 AM

Welcome to WCPA Fall Conference 2025

WCPA Board

9:15 AM

Keynote

From Exhausted to Empowered: Avoiding Burnout with Empathy
Remarks followed by a short Q&A Session

Alison Jane Martingano, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin - Green Bay
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Director of the Social Research Lab

Moderator: Christopher Wagner
Zoom Host - WCPA

PROGRAM SESSION ONE 10:10 AM - 11:00 AM

1A

Follow-Up Session with Alison Jane Martingano, Ph.D.

Feeling drained doesn't have to be the norm. This session is about turning exhaustion into energy through the power of empathy — for yourself and others. Learn how to recognize burnout before it takes over, set healthy boundaries, and lead with compassion that fuels, not depletes.

Walk away inspired, recharged, and equipped with simple tools to stay grounded, connected, and empowered — no matter how demanding life gets.

Moderator: Christopher Wagner

1B	<p style="text-align: center;">Applying Critical Hope and Rest as Resistance</p> <p>Admittedly, critical hope is hard to enact as we experience racial battle fatigue, emotional labor, secondary traumatic stress, or any other set of challenges. Rest as resistance (Hersey, 2022) acknowledges that our individual and collective well-being are central to our ability to sustain critical hope. When we're down, we need more than encouragement to just remember "we're here for students." Practicing rest as resistance might help us build a more "caring university" (McClure, 2025), or at least attempt to do so from a foundation of wholeness rather than sacrifice. Join this session for conversations about how to sustain our work in higher education.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tori Svoboda, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: FranChesca Riley</p>
1C	<p style="text-align: center;">Financial Aid Foundations</p> <p>We'll demystify the core components of financial aid for higher education professionals who support students across academic, advising, and administrative roles. The presentation will cover the basics of federal, state, and institutional aid—including grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study—along with an overview of the FAFSA process, aid eligibility, and packaging strategies.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jorge Zuniga, University of Wisconsin-Madison</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Jorge Zuniga</p>
PROGRAM SESSION TWO 11:10 AM - 12:00 PM	
2A	<p style="text-align: center;">Navigating the Political Landscape of Higher Education: Understanding Public Policy and How to Influence It</p> <p>In an increasingly complex and politically charged environment, it is more critical than ever for higher education professionals to understand the public policy and governmental affairs landscape. This interactive session provides a foundational introduction to the policy process, explaining how federal and state decisions directly impact campuses, from student aid and Title IX to campus safety and funding. Attendees will demystify key concepts, identify key policy players, and learn practical strategies for engaging in advocacy and serving as informed campus leaders. Through a combination of engaging activities, case studies, and discussion, participants will leave with the knowledge and confidence to contribute to policy conversations and advocate for students, their institutions, and the future of higher education.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Terry Paape, University of Wisconsin-Madison</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Kayla Ross</p>
2B	<p style="text-align: center;">A Collaborative Approach to Pre-Transfer Advising: Building a Bridge from Admissions to Academics</p> <p>Research highlights the importance of pre-transfer advising; however, many institutions do not have the support or funding for standalone pre-transfer advising services. Our transfer admissions staff saw a need to provide earlier access to advising for students interested in transferring to our School of Business in order to help them understand the complexities involved. This session will cover the process that was developed to address this need with earlier access to advising, including insights from the transfer advisor who coordinated with our staff. And finally, takeaways from our first two years of piloting this program will be shared.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Katie Seibel, University of Wisconsin-Madison Anders Voss, University of Wisconsin-Madison</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Maddie Wiles</p>

2C	<p style="text-align: center;">Roundtable Discussion: Career Breaks</p> <p>After coming back from an 8.5 year Career Break as a Stay-at-home Parent, this facilitator would like to guide a discussion about why, when, and how-to-come-back after taking time off. No one can claim to be an expert on this tricky - and very individualized - topic. So, let's come together and share collective wisdom.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sheila Keaton, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Sheila Keaton</p>
WCPA LUNCH AND LEARN	
12:15 PM - 12:45 PM	<p style="text-align: center;">Five Ways to Get Involved WCPA Executive Board</p> <p>Involvement in quality, affordable, and accessible professional development shouldn't come with barriers and caveats. Join the WCPA Board as we share about five ways you can get involved in WCPA and other professional development opportunities at your level and on your own time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Hillary Vara & Sheila Keaton</p>
PROGRAM SESSION THREE 1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	
3A	<p style="text-align: center;">Advising for Inclusive Leadership: Supporting Student Success and Well-Being Beyond the Classroom</p> <p>Advising is a powerful tool for connecting students' academic, co-curricular, and personal experiences in ways that promote growth and prepare them for the future. This session highlights how advisors and student affairs professionals can intentionally support inclusive leadership development, student well-being, and professional readiness through meaningful advising conversations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bree Coffey, M.S. Ed., University of Wisconsin-Madison</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: FranChesca Riley</p>
3B	<p style="text-align: center;">All In for Our Rookies: How CHPS Sets Up First-Year Wins</p> <p>What happens when a college treats the first year like the foundation of a championship season? At UWM's College of Health Professions and Sciences (CHPS), we're not just chipping in—we're all in. From summer orientation through the first-year seminar course, we've built a proactive, people-centered model that blends intentional messaging, unique student spaces, and an in-house academic support team to help students thrive—especially those facing tough courses and competitive majors right out of the gate.</p> <p>In this interactive session, we'll walk through our first-year timeline, including New Student Orientation, the Panther Transition Experience, and CHPS 100, our first-year seminar course. Whether you're a coaching rookie or a seasoned advisor, we invite you to be curious: how might your unit create something similar?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ann Raddant, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Kenzie Kougl, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Connor Sampson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Hillary Vara</p>
3C	<p style="text-align: center;">Data Informed Recruitment Practices: A look at the UW-Madison PA Program</p> <p>Recruitment is an important part of growing any program, major, or institution. It can be difficult figuring out where to start and even more difficult figuring out where to go from there. Using data is a great place to figure out how to use recruitment to your advantage and figure out your next steps. From looking at recruitment locations, types of opportunities, and student numbers to examining it with advising and admissions numbers,</p>

	<p>we can see how these three areas can tell a story of a program and the work they are doing to grow into the program they want to be. Looking at the UW-Madison Physician Assistant Program, we will explore how they grew their recruitment initiatives through data-informed practices and examine how those initiatives are paying off.</p> <p>Emma Hinker, University of Wisconsin-Madison</p> <p>Moderator: Kendra Kalscheur</p>
PROGRAM SESSION FOUR 2:10 PM - 3:00 PM	
4A	<p>From Data to Decisions: Leveraging Assessment to Shape the WCPA Experience</p> <p>Ever wonder what to do with all that survey data—or how to even get started collecting it? In this session, we'll walk through WCPA's recent membership survey as a real-world example of how assessment can help us better understand our communities and make informed decisions. Whether you're new to assessment or just looking for ways to make your data more actionable, this session will break down the process in a way that's approachable and useful. We'll talk about how to design meaningful surveys, interpret results, and use what you learn to shape programs, policies, and priorities. This is a great session for early-career professionals who want to build confidence in using data to support their work and advocate for their students.</p> <p>Katie Lesperance, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay</p> <p>Moderator: Maddie Wiles</p>
4B	<p>We Read the ICA Binder So You Don't Have To</p> <p>The <i>Institute on the Curricular Approach</i> focuses on the learning college students do outside of the classroom. It is a formula for helping staff develop intentional learning structures and opportunities. While designed with the intention of being used in student affairs divisions or departments, the formula can be applied to any interested campus partner. The curricular approach is built through learning outcomes and assessment. Come follow UW-Green Bay through their first effort to define, refine, and grow a residential curriculum model in the Department of Housing & Residential Education.</p> <p>Christopher Wagner, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay</p> <p>Moderator: Christopher Wagner</p>
4C	<p>Research and Practice Reflections on the Implementation Processes to Achieve Institutional Goals for Improved Retention and Completion</p> <p>On average, fewer than half of first-time college students complete a degree at a 2-year institution within six years (NSC, 2023). Gateway Technical College set goals to increase graduation rates, with a particular focus on students of color, through a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant awarded in 2020. This presentation addresses the benefits of collaboration between the program implementation team and the data and evaluation team to build on successes and identify areas for improvement throughout the grant. Goals for the grant included improved retention rates as well as improved three-year completion rates. There were five key components to the program: a First Year Experience Course known as Gateway to Success; Faculty and Peer Advising; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workshops and professional development; database development and data governance; and Work-Based Learning.</p> <p>The session will examine the mixed-methods evaluation design and logic model development for the program. The evaluation offered a structured system to integrate and update the large number of individuals responsible for different implementation components. In addition, the session will address practitioner strategies for achieving goals in the community college setting through program implementation, with particular attention to work-based learning components. Finally, the team will share specific data and outcomes gathered throughout the five-year evaluation on successful completion of the first year experience course, graduation rates, and retention.</p> <p>Cat Warner-Griffin, AnLar, LLC Mary Xiong, Gateway Technical College Ayaka Okawa, AnLar, LLC</p>

	Moderator: Sheila Keaton
LATE AFTERNOON SESSIONS 3:10 PM - 4:00 PM	
LAS1	Past Presidents Meeting and Group Photo
LAS2	WCPA Fall Conference Virtual Social- ALL WELCOME!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17TH	
Time	Event
8:55 AM	Waiting Room Opens
9:00 AM	Board Welcome Day Two: Updates & Reminders WCPA Exec Board
9:10 AM	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Endnote</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Embracing/Facilitating Change and Change Management in Higher Education: “it’s going to be SO much better than okay”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bryan Lewis, PH.D. University of Wisconsin-Parkside Coordinator of Allied Health Partnerships Director of Pre-Health Programs Director of the Center for Health Sciences Faculty, Department of Health, Kinesiology, and Sport Management</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Hillary Vara Zoom Host - WCPA</p>
PROGRAM SESSION FIVE 10:10 AM - 11:00 AM	
5A	From Data to Dialogue: Using Surveys to Personalize Orientation Experiences At the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay, orientation is more than a welcome—it’s a launchpad for meaningful connection. This session explores how UWGB leverages a robust pre-orientation survey to design intentional, personalized experiences for incoming students and their guests. By analyzing survey responses prior to orientation, our team identifies individual needs, interests, and concerns, allowing us to tailor 1:1 advising appointments and curated touchpoints that foster a sense of belonging from day one.

	<p>Katie Lesperance, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Maddie Wiles, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay</p> <p>Moderator: Maddie Wiles</p>
5B	<p>From Scholars to Leaders: Civic Learning Pathways at UW Green Bay</p> <p>Helping first-generation students find their voice and place in the community has been at the heart of our civic engagement work at UW Green Bay. Over time, this commitment has grown from the Civic Scholars Leadership Program into an evolving pathway for civic learning that now includes the Newman Civic Fellowship, the new Civic & Community Engagement Certificate, and the student-led Civic Leaders Association. Together, these opportunities give students layered ways to build confidence, civic identity, and leadership skills in and beyond the classroom.</p> <p>In this session, we will highlight the practices that have been most impactful in shaping this work, from community site visits and alumni panels to peer mentoring and student-led reflection. We will also share how student input and community feedback helped shape new offerings.</p> <p>Ashley Heath, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Katia Levintova, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Blai Yang, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Moises Bahena-Martinez, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay</p> <p>Moderator: Michaela Smith</p>
5C	<p>Fund for Wisconsin Scholars-An Overview & Your Role</p> <p>Attend this session for an overview of the Fund for Wisconsin Scholars (FFWS) program that partners with UW-System campuses to provide need-based grants and a peer mentoring program to students meeting the FFWS eligibility requirements. This session will cover a brief history of the FFWS program and key information to be aware of when working with students receiving the FFWS grant. This session is designed for anyone who supports students on a UW campus to help increase awareness about FFWS and the impact common student decisions can have on their FFWS aid, but those not on a UW campus are still welcome if they would like to attend.</p> <p>Angie Swenson-Holzinger, Fund for Wisconsin Scholars</p> <p>Moderator: Sheila Keaton</p>