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## About the Authors

### Michele Sandlin

Michele Sandlin is currently a Managing Consultant for AACRAO. She previously served as the Director of Admissions and the Campus Visitors Center at Oregon State University (OSU) for fifteen years, during which university enrollment grew by over sixty-seven percent, while achieving additional goals for diversity and academic preparedness of incoming students. Prior to OSU, Michele served at Pacific University, Portland State University, University of Oregon, and Western State College of Colorado now known as Western Colorado University.

During her more than thirty-nine years as a higher education professional, Ms. Sandlin has become well known for her industry-leading expertise in holistic admissions, admissions operations, staff and space management, 2yr/4yr campus partnerships, branch campus development, transfer policy and practices, accreditation compliance review, articulation process, policy and agreements, graduate admissions, graduate decentralized-centralized structural realignment, and international admissions. She has served in state, regional and national leadership with AACRAO and with the International Baccalaureate Program and has authored chapters on holistic admissions and admissions operations in previous AACRAO publications.

Ms. Sandlin completed her Master of Science degree in 1996 in Higher Education Policy Foundations and Administration at Portland State University. She is a native of the Colorado Rockies and earned

her Bachelor of Science degree in Human Sciences from Colorado State University in 1979.

### Dr. William Sedlacek

Dr. William Sedlacek (Sed) is a Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. He earned Bachelors' and Masters' degrees from Iowa State University and a Ph.D. from Kansas State University.

He is senior author of *Racism in American Education: A Model for Change* (with Brooks), and a measure of racial attitudes, *The Situational Attitude Scale (SAS)*. He authored *Beyond the Big Test: Noncognitive Assessment in Higher Education* and has published extensively in professional journals on a wide range of topics including racism, sexism, college admissions, advising, and employee selection.

He has served as editor of *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*. Also, he has consulted with more than 300 different organizations, colleges, and universities on interracial and intercultural issues, and has served as an expert witness in race and sex discrimination cases. In 1992, he received the Ralph F. Berdie Memorial Research Award "for research affecting directional changes in the field of counseling and college student personnel work" which was presented by the American Counseling Association (ACA). In 1993, he received the John B. Muir Editor's Award from the National Association

for College Admission Counseling for his article entitled “Employing noncognitive variables in the admission and retention of non-traditional students.” In 1997, he received the research award from ACA for his article entitled “An empirical method of determining non-traditional group status” published in *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*. In 1998, he was named a Senior Scholar by the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and became a Diplomate in 2003.

In 2002, he was recognized by ACPA as a Diamond Honoree, for his service and research in student affairs and in 2004 he received the Contribution to Knowledge Award from ACPA for “outstanding contributions to the profession’s body of knowledge through publications, films, speeches, instructions, tapes, and other forms of communication.” In 2005, he received the Campus Model of Excellence Award for “affecting the lives of African Americans”, from the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education at the University of Maryland. In 2010, he was made a Fellow of the American Counseling Association for “significant and unique contributions to scientific achievement in the counseling profession.” In 2011, he received the William R. “Bud” Thomas Mentoring Award, for excellence in sustained, developmental mentoring of graduate college student personnel students, from the College Student Personnel Program- College of Education at the University of Maryland.

His latest book is *Measuring Noncognitive Variables: Improving Admissions, Success, and Retention for Underrepresented Students*.

## Madonna University

### Dr. Connie Tingson Gatuz

Dr. Connie Tingson Gatuz developed a heightened awareness of the impact of leadership and mentorship while growing up in a struggling multigenerational

extended family, who emigrated from the Philippines. As Vice President for Student Affairs and Mission Integration for over a decade, she is the first Person of Color and currently the only woman to serve on the Executive Council at Madonna University. Under her leadership, she pioneered the university’s largest and longest running Study Abroad and Service-Learning program to-date. To advance student enrollment and retention, Dr. Gatuz conceptualized and executed a university Strategic Enrollment Plan priority through a multicultural student academy focused on leadership for an inclusive world; ushered a nationally awarded Black Male Initiative; and procured several international enrollment agreements abroad.

She co-engineered the university’s comprehensive Strategic Planning process; co-created the Madonna Higher Education Administration Master’s program, established in 2013; and crafted the mentorship elements of a student leadership program for North America including the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Previously, Dr. Gatuz championed several national and regionally-recognized student retention initiatives while at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor. For over a dozen years, she was a lead consultant for the Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholarship Program as well as a grassroots national college leadership program, based in Washington, DC. Spanning a twenty-eight-year career in higher education, she is a recipient of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators API Knowledge Community Outstanding Mentor Award, the National OCA Pioneer Community Educator Award, the International Mentoring Association Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award, and the Republic of the Philippines’ Outstanding Educator Recognition. In 2020, she mentored women aspiring to executive leadership at the national NASPA Alice Manicur Symposium.

Dr. Gatuz is a contributing author in *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Higher Education: Research*

*and Perspectives on Identity, Leadership, and Success* and *A Mission Officer Handbook: Collaborating with Partners*. She received a doctorate in Higher Education Administration, a master's degree in College and University Administration, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science, all from Michigan State University. She and her husband, Ryan, reside in Livonia, Michigan.

## Simon Fraser University

### Daniela Abasi

Daniela Abasi is a Student Affairs professional with more than fourteen years' experience in the post-secondary sector. Daniela manages the Student Affairs Unit (SAU) within the Faculty of Applied Sciences at Simon Fraser University (SFU) and is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives designed to engage, recruit, and retain students. In her previous role as Outreach Program Manager, Daniela created a diverse mix of outreach programming, developed the Faculty's first outreach and community engagement plan, and significantly expanded the reach of the Faculty's outreach programming. Her work with the outreach program played a pivotal role in increasing awareness of the Faculty's programs amongst under-represented groups and in contributing to increased diversity within the Faculty's student population. Daniela has also worked as a Student Affairs Coordinator with a focus on developing initiatives to increase student engagement and retention.

Daniela holds a B.A. in Psychology from SFU and is currently working towards completion of a PBD in Counselling and Human Development.

### Sean McKenna

Sean McKenna has been working in higher education since 2007, leading several diverse teams and

has taught critical thinking and business writing. He is currently the Director of Business Analysis and Assessment within Student Services at Simon Fraser University. Mr. McKenna has worked in several areas across the Registrar's office (recruitment, admissions, records, financial aid, and SIS support), in addition to two academic faculties: Applied Sciences, and the Beedie School of Business.

Mr. McKenna has been involved with several admissions based projects during his career, including: implementation of holistic admission for business transfer students, transforming the entrance scholarship adjudication process, implementation of a new admissions model that utilizes indicators of student success, as well as the holistic admission process for the School of Sustainable Energy Engineering outlined in this book. He graduated with a M.A. in Leadership Studies from Royal Roads University in 2017.

### Dr. Kevin Oldknow

Dr. Kevin Oldknow is a Senior Lecturer at Simon Fraser University, and inaugural Director of its School of Sustainable Energy Engineering in the Faculty of Applied Sciences. Dr. Oldknow has previously held the appointments of Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies and Faculty Teaching Fellow. He was a recipient of SFU's 2018 Excellence in Teaching Award and has taught a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses in areas such as advanced dynamics, manufacturing systems, modeling and simulation, engineering economics, technology entrepreneurship, and technology and society. He has also been involved in a leadership capacity in the development of several academic programs including the Sustainable Energy Engineering undergraduate (B.A.Sc) and graduate (M.A.Sc, Ph.D.) programs, the Professional Masters in Mechatronic Product Realization, and Technology Entrepreneurship at SFU.

Kevin also has twenty years of industrial experience, primarily in transportation systems. This has included an array of domestic and international projects on passenger and freight rail systems. He has held technical, strategic and senior management roles at Procter & Gamble, Cameleon Controls, Kelsan Technologies, Portec Rail Products, and LB Foster Rail Technologies.

Oldknow holds a B.A.Sc in Engineering Physics from the University of British Columbia, as well as an M.A.Sc and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering (also from UBC). He has published in the areas of dynamics and controls, wheel-rail and vehicle-track interaction, tribology and friction control, and engineering education.

### Kathryn Verkerk

Kathryn Verkerk has twenty years of experience working in higher education and is currently the Associate Registrar, Student Recruitment and Admissions at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Over twelve years, Mrs. Verkerk has worked in numerous areas at SFU including admissions, student recruitment, financial aid and awards, strategic enrollment management, academic and faculty advising, research services, and co-operative education. Highlights of her time at SFU include developing an institution wide, undergraduate, strategic enrollment management plan; supporting the review and leading the implementation of a new undergraduate admission model, including holistic admission for the new Sustainable Energy Engineering program; and integrating the offices of undergraduate admissions and student recruitment into one department. Prior to SFU, Kathryn worked at The University of British Columbia (UBC) for eight years in Student Recruitment and Advising managing national recruitment in Eastern Canada.

Kathryn is currently completing her Doctor of Education degree in Higher Education Leadership at

Western University and graduated with a Master of Education degree in Higher Education from UBC in 2016. Her undergraduate degree in Criminology was awarded in 2004 from Simon Fraser University.

### Amanda Woodhall

Amanda Woodhall has over twenty years of experience in higher education administration. She is currently the Executive Director for the Faculty of Applied Sciences at Simon Fraser University (SFU), British Columbia, Canada. In this role she provides executive management in the areas of human resources, financial, capital, policy, risk mitigation, enrolment management, and student affairs in support of the academic goals of the Faculty. A leader in the area of strategic planning, effective implementation planning and operations management in a post-secondary environment, Amanda has extensive experience in executing on academic priorities to deliver successful and sustainable implementation strategies. She has been a leader in the development of many SFU business unit and academic program start-ups including establishment of the current Faculty of Applied Sciences, the School of Sustainable Energy Engineering, the School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering, the School of Computing Science at SFU Surrey Campus, and the Applied Sciences Continuing Studies unit at SFU Vancouver. Amanda has provided leadership in the design and development of multiple dual degree programs, including the design and implementation of admission models that successfully map to program goals and degree completion. Through her twenty plus years in higher education, she has spearheaded a number of efforts, including new approaches to admissions, advising, enrollment, international liaison strategies, English-language testing tools and the development and implementation of agile domestic and international strategies to recruit and retain students, staff, and faculty.

# University of Nebraska Medical Center

## Dr. Sarah McBrien

Sarah B. McBrien, Ph.D., is Director of Curriculum and Assessment for the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).

She earned her Ph.D. and Master of Science degree in education from the University of Nebraska and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Dayton.

Dr. McBrien holds numerous roles pertaining to curriculum development and assessment, including serving as chair of the UNMC Interprofessional Academy of Educators Committee on Curricular Design, Instructional Methods, Assessment, and Evaluation, and chair of the CAHP Assessment and Outcomes Committee. An expert in ExamSoft applications, she also served as the inaugural chair of the ExamSoft Worldwide Steering Committee. Dr. McBrien is active in the American Educational Research Association where she serves as the web liaison for Division I, Education in the Professions.

Dr. McBrien has served a key role in implementing the CAHP holistic admissions initiative, developing and overseeing the data collection and analysis plan. She led the development of the evaluation rubric for the non-cognitive variable AdMISSION Bio, as well as the training program for evaluators.

## Dr. Kyle Meyer

Kyle P. Meyer, Ph.D., M.S., P.T., FASAHP is the Founding Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). His career in higher education administration spans almost thirty years.

He began his career in health care, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in physical therapy and a Master of Science degree in anatomy, both from the UNMC. He practiced in pediatric physical therapy for over twenty years. He holds a Ph.D. in Public Administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Dr. Meyer began his academic career as the Director of Clinical Education in the Division of Physical Therapy Education at UNMC and subsequently served as Associate Dean and Senior Associate Dean in the School of Allied Health Professions, before assuming his current position.

He was elected as a Fellow in the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions (ASAHP) in 2016, in recognition of his record of leadership and significant contributions in allied health.

Dr. Meyer provided the vision and initial planning guidance for the College of Allied Health Professions' holistic admissions initiative, which began in 2015.

## Maggie Winnicki

Maggie J. Winnicki, MPH is currently Director of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs in the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).

Her twenty-year career in higher education spans roles in distance education, academic counseling, student services and affairs, and admissions. She holds a Master of Public Health degree from UNMC, with an emphasis in administration, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from Knox College (IL).

She has extensive experience in student services for military personnel, including coordinating the student service functions for the U.S. military Inter-service Physician Assistant Program (IPAP) at Joint Base San Antonio in Texas. Ms. Winnicki directs admissions and recruitment for the fourteen health professions programs in the College of Allied Health

Professions. In this role, she was instrumental in developing marketing, recruitment and admission best practices for the college's holistic admissions initiative.

Ms. Winnicki is a member of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and the Nebraska Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (NACRAO).

## Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

### Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane

Dr. Beane has eighteen years of experience working with students from pre-K to doctoral education. Her research focuses on advocacy for underrepresented and marginalized students including special focus on the Movement for Black Lives and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients. Dr. Beane is a licensed school counselor and published author on career development, mentoring, self-care, and advocacy.

In her current role, she serves as the Director of Operations and Recruitment for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech. During her time at Virginia Tech she has also served as an academic advisor, director of recruitment and diversity, inclusion coordinator, and adjunct professor in the School of Education. Her service to the university includes advising student groups like Queer People of Color, the Graduate Student Assembly Professional Development committee, and serving on the Hispanic/Latinx Faculty and Staff Caucus. Prior to Virginia Tech, Dr. Beane worked for AmeriCorps College Summit, Total Action for Progress, Roanoke City Public Schools, and Hollins University.

Dr. Beane completed her doctorate in Counselor Education from Virginia Tech where she also completed her Master of Counselor Education and a

certificate in Higher Education Administration. Her undergraduate degree in Communication Studies and Spanish from Hollins University.

### Juan Espinoza

Juan P. Espinoza is the Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment and Degree Management and Director of Admissions at Virginia Tech.

Juan and his team have reinvented the admissions model at Virginia Tech with the introduction of various transformational changes. These innovative changes have included the introduction of two new shared application platforms (Coalition and the Common Application), self-reported academic records, a new holistic application review process, and an early action option for applicants. These changes have eliminated barriers and have made the application process more accessible and easier to navigate. It has also led to a record number of applications and a historic high enrollment of underrepresented and underserved students.

In previous roles at Virginia Tech, he has led efforts in diversity and international recruitment. In 2016, the governor of Virginia, Terry McAuliffe, appointed Juan to serve on the Virginia Latino Advisory board to help advise him on issues and advocacy opportunities for Latino constituents. Juan also currently serves as President of VALHEN, the largest non-profit in the Commonwealth of Virginia that focuses on higher education for Latinx students with over 1000 members across various colleges, universities, and community groups. Its flagship program, the Hispanic College Institute was recognized by the Obama Administration as a bright spot in Latino education. In 2018, Juan was elected by his peers to the Board of Directors for the Coalition for College, a group of more than 140 distinguished colleges and universities across the U.S. that joined together to focus on college access, afford-

ability, and student success. Juan is an avid traveler and has visited over eighty-five different countries.

### **Dr. Luisa Havens Gerardo**

Dr. Luisa M. Havens Gerardo became Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at Virginia Tech in August 2017. Prior to Tech, she served as the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Services at Florida International University (FIU) and Executive Director for Enrollment Services at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She began her career as an admissions recruiter at her Alma Mater, the University of Idaho. She has served in leadership roles in the areas of admissions, recruitment, registration, international admissions, graduate admissions, financial aid, and enrollment services. She served as the AACRAO Vice President for Access and Equity from 2010 to 2013, President Elect in 2018, President in 2019 and the immediate Past President in 2020.

Originally from Honduras, she holds a BS degree in Radio and TV production, a master's degree in Resource Recreation and Tourism and a Ph.D. in

Education with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration from the University of Idaho.

Throughout her career, Dr. Havens Gerardo has worked with diverse, underrepresented and/or at-risk populations. Such experiences contributed to her doctoral research focus culminating in her doctoral dissertation titled “Academic integration and self-efficacy: An exploratory study of at-risk student persistence.” Throughout her career, her commitment to access, equity and student success has provided a strong foundation for the success of initiatives aimed at serving transfer students, military veterans, international students, low SES, underrepresented minorities, and first-generation college students. She frequently presents at local, regional and national forums on varied topics such as: effective use of data and analytics in strategic enrollment management; applying strategic enrollment management practices at urban universities; transfer issues and best practices; using financial aid leveraging to facilitate access and equity in higher education; process reengineering in enrollment services; staff development and training and leadership/management development.



# Foreword

Dr. Tom Green

ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONSULTING AND SEM

~ AACRAO ~

Like many topics in higher education—competency-based degrees, degree completion for working adults, etc.—holistic admission is not a new topic but has taken on new energy in the last few years. These concepts have been around for a few decades, but as forces (accountability for completion outcomes, rising costs and perception of value, racial equality, to name just a few) press upon higher education, we look to past practices as a way to examine which of those may help us respond to those pressures. And when this occurs, we often see them as “silver bullets” with magical properties to improve practices. Like all practices in Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), their application requires considerable thought about mission and values, how they relate to a college or university’s enrollment goals, and how they will be applied in the context of each specific institutional culture. It is the combination of “why” with “how” that makes them so effective in creating real change. It is why this book is so needed today. We must understand the “why” of its purpose and relationship to mission, values and enrollment goals before we can understand the “how” of its application within a specific institutional context. The authors have written it in a way, combining theory with case studies, that allows the reader to see the complete picture of holistic admissions in a specific application of noncognitive variables.

Admissions practices are based upon admissions policies. Admissions criteria are the centerpiece of those policies and it is worthwhile to unpack them as a concept before moving ahead to consider changing them. Historically, admissions criteria were used as a screening device to keep out certain undesirable groups and allow access to those people considered to be “worthy” of entering the academy. Exclusions have been based on gender, religion, nationality, and/or skin color. As higher education evolved to be less exclusive and more open in the 20th century, criteria were based upon new concepts of grade point average (GPA), class rank, and new standardized tests designed to identify talented individuals from areas (especially rural America) that had not been in the higher education pipeline. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 broke open the doors of American higher education to religious and ethnic groups that had been largely excluded from many institutions or relegated to specialized, segregated institutions that included those established for Jewish, Catholic, or Black students. When higher education applied these same admissions criteria to those students, it highlighted the educational disparities in America, especially that poor students and students of color were less likely to qualify for admission.

The late 20th century and early 21st century have had a much greater focus on access and student suc-

cess than at any point in higher education history. While some institutions are extremely selective and need to carefully screen applications from huge pools of high-qualified students, most colleges and universities admit the vast majority of their applicants. They have a new use for admissions standards. *They exist to identify those students who are likely to thrive in their educational programs.* Admissions criteria are inseparable from student success once a student is enrolled, and therefore must utilize measures that have some relationship to demonstrated levels of success or clear lack thereof to be meaningful in practice. It is also important to note that admissions criteria are inexact and that they “miss” at times by both admitting students who will not be successful and rejecting those who will thrive.

How, then, can we establish more precise instruments and measures that allow us to identify those students who are likely to thrive at our institutions? We can certainly look at other information beyond GPA and test scores (class rank has all but disappeared from most secondary transcripts); many institutions require some additional information, including essays and personal statements. For decades (and sometimes centuries), some elite institutions required interviews. The overall intention of these practices was to learn more about the student’s motivation for studies and to hear about their personal life circumstances. It sought to identify the elusive “fit” between the student and the institution. Some institutions, especially the most selective ones, have well-worn rubrics for evaluating these additional interactions and materials. Most, however, do not. Because many, if not most, admissions offices do not have a standard way of evaluating student writing and lack a sense of what it is they are actually seeking from them, it devolves into looking for students who write well (and this makes a huge assumption that it is an authentic writing sample from the student) and those who tell the most compelling life stories. In many cases, these writing

samples are simply not used at all and serve only to make the institution appear to be more selective.

The term “holistic admission” has come to cover a very wide range of practices. Generally speaking, it means that the applicant is evaluated on more than traditional measures, such as GPA and test score. It can mean writing samples, interviews, assessment of the level of challenge the student exhibited against the available curriculum, the strength of other applicants from the same school over time, or whether the student was involved in activities outside of school that are valued by the college or university, such as service or leadership, athletics, etc. It can mean any of these and more. Well-intentioned admissions officers are seeking that combination of information that helps them identify the best “fit” students from among the applicant pool.

Admissions policies and practices should signal to potential applicants what is required by and valued by the institution, but many times these new “holistic” review processes lack the clarity to help prospective students understand exactly what the institution seeks in them. The adoption of test optional and test blind policies has accelerated. To be certain, the relaxation of testing requirements has been a relief to many applicants and there are many colleges and universities that have seen increased applications as a result. The resulting obscurity about what else is examined, however, has created a haphazard patchwork of practices and greater confusion among students about their candidacy.

Holistic practices have also been rejected by admissions officers. There are two main arguments against the practice. First, these officers believe that any additional requirements or materials beyond official transcripts and test scores will result in fewer applications, meaning fewer new students. This threatens their job security and they are highly skeptical about any steps that threaten institutional health or their job status. Second, the issue of scalability of reading additional

materials and conducting additional reviews, including interviews, with large numbers of applicants, keeps institutions with sizeable applicant pools from considering these measures, even if they conceptually support them. These are valid concerns. Admissions directors are regularly tossed from their jobs for missing a single target, even if past years were successful. Admissions offices are operating on thin budgets and don't have extra resources to expend on hiring staff to conduct interviews or read application files.

This book will help admissions officers struggling with both of these issues. It reveals the false dichotomy of quality versus access. It is possible to have more diverse and more successful students. However, we must re-evaluate our definition of quality to include progression and completion (without any change in rigor), not test scores, as the main metrics for it. Every admissions officer recognizes that higher retention, persistence, and completion rates mean less pressure on the number of new students required to achieve

and sustain institutional health. The case studies in this book show that institutions are able to implement these measures, even where the application volume is very high, by utilizing proven methods and leveraging existing technologies.

Is there risk? Yes. Does it take effort? Yes. As stated earlier, there are no silver bullets. Like any initiative in SEM, there is always some risk and some effort to achieve results. It will not work for everyone. However, as we work to create a more equal higher education landscape and to focus our efforts on student success, these practices have demonstrated results, as told by those who have implemented them. It provides the methods and structure that are largely lacking when institutions move toward holistic admissions practices today. Individual readers of this book may have many reasons *why* they want to implement holistic admissions practices; for the first time, they have solid examples of *how* to implement consistent, legal, manageable methods.