

BRIAN ARAO



June 25, 2018

San Francisco State University
Human Resources Department
Submitted electronically

Dear Search Committee Members:

In my eighteen years as a student affairs practitioner, I have cultivated a clear understanding of my professional purpose and passion: to facilitate transformative and empowering educational experiences for all students, with an emphasis on those who have been marginalized within and excluded from the academy. These values have grounded my work across a broad range of functional areas. I am now seeking opportunities to advance as a student affairs leader at a public institution that is driven by a mission that aligns with mine and where I can tackle new challenges in promoting student learning, retention, and academic success. As such, I submit this letter in application for the position of Associate Vice President for Student Life & Dean of Students at San Francisco State University. I believe my experience and qualifications are an excellent fit for this critical campus leadership position.

The SF State Division of Student Life creates and facilitates vitally important opportunities for students to take ownership of their college experiences through active cocurricular engagement. A wealth of research indicates such high-quality involvement supports students' growth as leaders, a sense of satisfaction with and meaningful connection to the institution, and high academic achievement. Thus, the Division is strongly positioned to advance the goals outlined in the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025, particularly those focused on high-quality first-year experiences, educational equity, and holistic health and well-being. I am ready to provide leadership for the Division's diverse portfolio of programs and services as demonstrated by my track record of excellent service and innovation in senior student affairs positions.

In my current position, I serve as the chief student affairs officer for two residential colleges at UC Santa Cruz, providing oversight and strategic direction for residential life, student activities, orientation, and student government. This role has provided me with exciting opportunities to build on my previous experiences leading teams in the development of residential curricula that promote students' active participation in the shared task of building caring and socially responsible communities. In partnership with the college provosts, I am now leading efforts to apply the curricular approach more expansively to our colleges, clarifying what we want our students to learn during their time with us and how to coordinate all of our academic and cocurricular offerings to best serve those goals. I would bring a similar approach to leading the Division of Student Life and strengthening collaboration with academic affairs.

The Dean of Students team also must work with students – and at times, their families – during difficult and emotionally charged moments in their lives: from struggling to meet their basic needs of food and housing, to navigating medical emergencies and bouts of acute mental illness, to coping

with the loss of a loved one. I am well-prepared for this aspect of the Dean of Students' responsibilities. I have served at progressively responsible levels of crisis management and response, from live-in first responder to high-level on-call duties, including coordination of response efforts with senior administrators and direct communication with students' emergency contacts during medical crises. Additionally, I was a founding member of the University of San Francisco's Crisis Management and Behavioral Intervention Team, an interdisciplinary group that collaborated to identify students of concern and provide well-coordinated support both in and out of the classroom. I regularly reference my learnings from this experience when working with colleagues to develop personalized strategies for assisting students in successfully moving through a wide range of challenges.

Student conduct is key among the Dean of Students' areas of responsibility. Misconduct, while often disruptive to individuals and groups within the university community, also represents an opportunity for learning. If I were to be selected as your new Dean, I would bring a depth of practical experience as a student conduct practitioner, ranging from one-on-one adjudication to chairing appeal boards for Title IX violations. I also would bring a strong command of the published scholarship on student conduct practice, cultivated through my dissertation study on the experiences of Black male collegians as student conduct respondents. Informed by my research, I would use the Spectrum of Resolution Options model to expand the toolkit for responding to misconduct. I am particularly interested in the use of restorative justice and restorative practices as a means to prevent misconduct, an alternative to adjudication where appropriate, and a sanction issued following adjudication. I am a trained restorative justice facilitator and infused this framework into the conduct processes and community development models at UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz.

All of my professional endeavors have been grounded in my commitment to social justice as both an approach to and essential outcome of higher education. Thus, my interest in the Dean of Students role is driven in large measure by Student Affairs and Enrollment Management's vision "to inspire and develop leaders who will promote social justice and transform communities." As a student affairs practitioner, I have sought to advance these same goals through educational initiatives and institutional change. Recent examples of such work include co-authoring a book chapter on how to create "brave spaces" for dialogue around issues of diversity and social justice; chairing ACPA's Commission for Social Justice Educators; serving on and facilitating meetings of the Chancellor's Diversity Advisory Council at UCSC; leading the implementation team for Trans-Inclusive Housing at UCSC and acting as the campus liaison for trans students' housing-related concerns; providing direction to cultural theme housing communities and intergroup dialogue courses at UC Berkeley; and attending and later interning for the Social Justice Training Institute.

The skills and experiences I have outlined in this letter would be useful in myriad leadership roles in higher education. Yet, since my earliest days in this field, I have envisioned myself one day serving as a dean of students. This vision persists today even though I understand the work is considerably more challenging and emotionally charged than it was when I first embarked on my student affairs journey. Today's college students are a more diverse group than ever before. While this diversity helps address various forms of social inequity and brings critically important educational benefits, it is also naturally accompanied by disagreement. Our students more regularly find themselves at odds with one another at a historical moment when our most powerful leaders fail to model respectful and compassionate approaches to conflict. Moreover, our students are often – and rightly – upset by the academy's slowness to change in ways that reflect the needs and concerns of marginalized and minoritized communities. When students voice these frustrations and demand changes,

administrative leaders often struggle to hear, understand, and respond, which can further compound tensions.

As the top student advocates on their campuses, deans of students sit at the intersection of such challenges. They must listen deeply to multiple perspectives, including those with which they may disagree. They must facilitate good communication among and between campus constituencies with divergent ideas. In community with students, staff, and faculty, they must critically examine and effectively challenge conventional wisdom about what kinds of change are possible within the academy. In so doing, they have a special role to play in helping their campuses generate the new approaches needed to assure higher education fulfills its promise for all students.

I harbor no illusions that these duties are easy. Indeed, in these divided and tumultuous times, I am sometimes fearful of assuming them. Yet in the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, “courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear.” For me, that “something else” is my belief in higher education’s power to change the world for the better, and my capacity to help lead such efforts. Thus, I am excited about the possibility of joining you as your next Associate Vice President for Student Life & Dean of Students.

I have enclosed a curriculum vitae for your review. I would welcome an opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you. Thank you for considering me for this important leadership position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Arao".

Brian Arao, Ed.D.

Encl.

BRIAN ARAO



EDUCATION

Doctor of Education, International and Multicultural Education December 2017
The University of San Francisco | School of Education

Master of Education, Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration May 2004
The University of Vermont | College of Education and Social Services

Bachelor of Arts, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology June 2000
The University of California at Santa Cruz | Oakes College

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

College Administrative Officer August 2017 – present
The University of California at Santa Cruz | Oakes and Rachel Carson Colleges

- Serve as the chief student affairs officer for two residential colleges at a public research university with an enrollment of 16,328 undergraduate students and 1,735 graduate students
- Report to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Colleges, Housing, and Educational Services
- Directly supervise and evaluate one Associate College Administrative Officer, two College Programs Coordinators, one Budget Analyst, and three full-time administrative support staff members
- Provide leadership and direction for the colleges' student activities, student government, residential programs and services, co-curricular program development, preventative education programs, student orientation, student conduct, and other academic support services that build community and enhance student success
- Partner with the College Provost at each of the two colleges to develop a living-learning environment that integrates academic and cocurricular experiences
- Participate in planning of major maintenance and new construction within the colleges
- Chair search committee for the Rachel Carson Provost
- Serve as a member of the Student Success Steering Committee, which provides campuswide leadership and guidance to improve academic and cocurricular outcomes for undergraduate and graduate students
- Act as designated liaison for transgender and gender nonbinary students with questions and concerns regarding on-campus housing at UC Santa Cruz
- Serve as a member of and facilitate meetings for the Chancellor's Diversity Advisory Council
- Co-chair the campus's Coordinated Community Response Team for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Misconduct
- Participate as needed as a member of the UC Santa Cruz Demonstration Operations Team
- Act as chairperson for student conduct hearing boards, including for cases wherein Title IX violations have been alleged
- Serve as the principal coordinator for responding to student crises in concert with UCSC Police, counseling and psychological services, and other campus administrators
- Develop, administer, and monitor multi-funded annual budgets totaling \$1,600,000.00.

Associate College Administrative Officer

August 2014 – July 2017

The University of California at Santa Cruz | Crown and Merrill Colleges

- Oversaw and provided direction to all aspects of residence hall and apartment life in two residential college at a public research university with an enrollment of 15,645 undergraduate students and 1,555 graduate students
- Reported to and acted in the absence of the College Administrative Officer
- Directly supervised and evaluated four full-time professional live-in Coordinators for Residential Education and two full-time administrative support staff members
- Lead and directed efforts to develop a curriculum model of residential education rooted in the mission and values of the institution, driven by clearly articulated and measurable learning outcomes, informed by student development theory, and evaluated with practicable assessment strategies
- Collaborated with Crown and Merrill Provosts to develop an undergraduate leadership development program with closely integrated academic and cocurricular components
- Served on search committee for the Crown Provost
- Served on the reappointment review committee for the Merrill Provost
- Led implementation team for UCSC's Trans-Inclusive Housing option
- Provided high-level after-hours crisis response support to first-responders
- Oversaw and provided direction to all aspects of residence hall cocurricular life for UCSC Summer Session in 2015 and 2016
- Adjudicated high-level cases of alleged student misconduct, hold students accountable for adherence to university and residential policies, and utilize educational sanctioning to promote learning through the student conduct process
- Managed annual budgets totaling \$200,000.00.

Director of Residential Education

January 2013 – August 2014

The University of California at Berkeley | Residential and Student Service Programs

- Oversaw and provided direction to all aspects of residence hall cocurricular life at a public research university with an enrollment of 25,800 undergraduate students and 10,100 graduate and professional students
- Reported to and acted in the absence of the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Residential and Student Service Programs
- Directly supervised and evaluated four Assistant Directors for Residential Education and one Manager for Community Development and Inclusion
- Oversaw management of and develop programmatic priorities for seven residence hall-based academic centers, designed to promote academic success and enrich the intellectual experience of resident students
- Determined strategy, goals, and objectives for the Community Development and Inclusion portfolio within Residential Education, which included a classroom-based intergroup dialogue program and a set of seven living-learning communities administered in partnership with colleagues in academic affairs and multicultural student development
- Provided direction to the Resident Faculty program and other initiatives designed to promote out-of-classroom interaction between students and faculty members
- Directed efforts to infuse restorative practices and restorative justice frameworks into community development and student conduct practices in the residence halls, and

participated in similar efforts undertaken by campus partners in the division of student affairs and multicultural student development

- Provided high-level after-hours crisis response as a member of the departmental administrator on-call rotation, with duties including consulting with first responders, coordinating response efforts with senior administrators, and communicating directly with students' emergency contacts during medical crises
- Responded to frequent requests for information about residential education and housing operations from students, parents, campus neighbors, community leaders, campus partners, faculty, and the media
- Developed, administered, and monitored multi-funded annual budgets of \$1,700,000.00.

Associate Director for Staff and Programs

June 2008 – January 2013

The University of San Francisco | Student Housing and Residential Education (SHaRE)

- Oversaw and provided direction to all aspects of residence hall cocurricular life at a Jesuit Catholic university with an enrollment of 5,800 undergraduate students and 3,700 graduate and professional students
- Reported to and acted in the absence of the Director of Student Housing and Residential Education
- Directly supervised and evaluated seven full-time professional live-in Residence Directors
- Coordinated all aspects of recruitment, selection, training, and team and leadership development for professional and paraprofessional staff members, graduate assistants, and summer interns
- Utilized wiki and Blackboard technologies to transition traditional hard copy employee handbooks to a dynamic and engaging online format
- Conducted benchmarking study of live-in staff compensation packages and used findings to successfully lobby for salary increases and living space improvements
- Served as one of two Campus Coordinators overseeing all aspects of the implementation of the MAP-Works student retention tool, designed to provide new students with personalized feedback and comprehensive and coordinated support from a network of staff and faculty
- Partnered with faculty, academic support services, and SHaRE staff to administer living-learning communities and provide holistic support to residents
- Collaborated with academic support services to create a hybrid resident advisor and academic support peer educator position, with the goal of better integrating the curricular and residential cocurricular experiences
- Served on the leadership team that developed and implemented an International House-style residential community, in which U.S. domestic and international students live and engage with one another around a wide range of global issues and intercultural experiences
- Served as an actively contributing member of the steering committee that revamped and relaunched the Allies Training Program, designed to facilitate increased inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender members of the university community
- Convened the planning team for division-wide collaborative efforts to engage male-identified students in dialogue around issues of gender, masculinity, violence, and privilege
- Co-chaired the committee that planned and coordinated all aspects of residence hall move-in, ensuring a smooth and welcoming experience for new students and families in an urban setting that provides unique challenges

- Provided high-level after-hours crisis response as a member of the divisional on-duty rotation
- Served on the university's Crisis Management and Behavioral Intervention Team, supporting students and their families through challenges including mental illness, sexual assault, and student death
- Adjudicated high-level cases of alleged student misconduct, hold students accountable for adherence to university and residential policies, and utilize educational sanctioning to promote learning through the student conduct process, with sanctioning authority up to and including university-level suspension
- Managed annual budgets totaling \$40,000.00.

Coordinator for Residential Education

July 2006 – June 2008

The University of California at Santa Cruz | College Eight

- Oversaw and directly administered student development services and programs for first-year students in a residential college at a public research university with an enrollment of 14,800 undergraduate students and 1,400 graduate students
- Recruited, selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated undergraduate Resident Assistants
- Instructed a section of "Peer Leadership in Higher Education," a course for Resident Assistants and College Program Assistants
- Partnered with faculty and academic support staff to ensure a seamless living and learning experience in service of College Eight's interdisciplinary theme of environment and society
- Developed and implemented the rape prevention program for fall orientation, which addressed the relationships between sexual assault and the use of alcohol and other drugs
- Charged, selected, and supervised a graduate intern focused on enhancing proactive educational interventions for first-year students regarding alcohol and other drugs
- Developed curriculum for and instructed "Justice on Earth," an undergraduate course exploring the connections between diversity, social justice, and environmental sustainability
- Provided first responder crisis management and on-duty coverage for residential students
- Acted as lead facilitator at a leadership retreat focused on diversity and social justice issues for full-time professional staff members
- Adjudicated cases of alleged student misconduct, held students accountable for adherence to university and residential policies, and utilized educational sanctioning to promote learning through the student conduct process, with sanctioning authority including cancellation of housing contracts.

Community Development Educator

June 2004 – June 2006

New York University | Department of Residential Education

- Oversaw and directly administered a broad range of student development services and programs at a private university with an enrollment of 20,800 undergraduate students and 17,000 graduate and professional students
- Recruited, selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated graduate assistants, Resident Assistants, and Peer Educators in Residence
- Instructed a section of the "Resident Assistant Leadership Institute," a course for prospective student leaders

- Advised and trained the executive board and general assembly of the residence hall student government
- Planned, implemented, and assessed a leadership retreat for students interested in deepening their established understanding of and commitment to social justice work
- Planned, implemented, and assessed “QJIMA,” a program in which a musical theatre production helped to open dialogue amongst first-year students about racism, homophobia, heterosexism, hunger, and homelessness
- Planned rally and speak-out for Take Back the Night 2005
- Planned, implemented, and assessed Diversity and Social Justice “Programming for Professionals” (PFP) Series for staff in the Department of Residential Education
- Served on committee charged with creating transgender-inclusive housing policies
- Provided first responder crisis management and on-duty coverage for all first-year residence halls
- Adjudicated cases of alleged student misconduct, held students accountable for adherence to university and residential policies, and utilized educational sanctioning to promote learning through the student conduct process.

Graduate Assistant for Orientation and Parent Relations

August 2002 – June 2004

The University of Vermont | Department of Student Life

- Participated in all aspects of the planning and implementation of university-wide orientation programs for new students and their families at a public research university with an enrollment of 10,400 undergraduates, 1,400 graduate students, and 450 medical students
- Recruited, selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated undergraduate Orientation Leaders and Student Orientation Coordinators
- Produced and edited national award-winning online and print publications
- Managed staffing and event logistics for orientation programs and Homecoming weekend
- Compiled and analyzed assessment data provided by program attendees
- Developed and instructed “The College Experience,” a first-year seminar course in which students explored issues related to their transition to college, including leadership and involvement, ethical decision making, academic preparedness, alcohol and other drug use, and diversity and social justice in the academy.

Student Life and Housing Coordinator

September 2000 – July 2002

The University of California at Santa Cruz | Colleges Nine and Ten

- Oversaw service operations and acted as first point of contact in the student life and housing office for two residential colleges at a public research university with an enrollment of 14,800 undergraduate students and 1,400 graduate students
- Created and implemented new student room assignment and continuing student room selection processes, developed move-in and move-out procedures, managed vacancies, addressed requests for room changes and contract cancellations, and assessed cleaning/damage billing for a 1,200-bed facility
- Founded and advised Cloud Nine, UC Santa Cruz’s first contemporary a cappella group.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Arao, B. & Simms, S. (2018, March). *Trans*itioning your campus: From best practices to praxis*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Philadelphia, PA.
- Arao, B. (2018, February). *Creating brave spaces for challenging dialogues*. Keynote speech presented at the Program in Infant and Toddler Care Graduate Symposium, Berkeley, CA.
- Arao, B., Belisario, A., Sandoval, E., & Slatkin, D. (2017, July). *GeekED VI: Nerdentify*. Educational session presented at Comic-Con International, San Diego, CA.
- Arao, B. (2015, March). *Restorative practices and restorative justice in residential life*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of the Western Association of College and University Housing Officers, Monterey, CA.
- Arao, B., Chang, G., Hutson, M., Muhajid, M., Nasir, N., Padilla, G., & Padilla, M. (2014, March). *Resident faculty: First-year student engagement, advising, and mentoring*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of NACADA Region 9, Berkeley, CA.
- Arao, B., Landreman, L. Obear, K., routenberg, r., & Waterberg, R. (2013, March). *Social justice facilitation institute: Program design and techniques for optimal learning*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of ACPA College Student Educators International, Las Vegas, NV.
- Arao, B. (2012, December). *Student affairs practitioners as cultural workers*. Featured speech presented at the ACPA Institute on Social Justice, Berkeley, CA.
- Arao, B. & Johnson, Z. (2011, March). *Social justice education institute: Case studies in contemporary issues in social justice education*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of ACPA College Student Educators International, Baltimore, MD.
- Arao, B. & Clemens, K. (2006, March). *Confronting the paradox of safety in social justice education*. Educational session presented at the annual meeting of ACPA College Student Educators International, Indianapolis, IN.
- Guram, A. & Arao, B. (2005, September). *Intrapreneurship: Expanding our spheres of influence for greater student impact*. Educational session presented at College Student Personnel Association of New York State Conference, Rochester, NY.
- Arao, B. (2003, October). *Setting the tone: Educating first-year students about social justice issues*. Educational session presented at the National Orientation Directors' Association National Conference, Seattle, WA.

SELECTED WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS FACILITATED

- Arao, B., Becker, T.S., Joy, J., Simms, S., & Welch, T. (2016, September). *Cultivating intentional foundations for our community*. Orientation program facilitated for residents of the UC Santa Cruz Trans-Inclusive Housing communities, Santa Cruz, CA.
- Arao, B. (2016, May). *Diversity café*. World Café facilitated to assist members of the UC Santa Cruz Chancellor's Diversity Advisory Committee in reflecting on inclusion problems facing the campus and identifying potential solutions, Santa Cruz, CA.
- Arao, B. (2015, September). *Transgender inclusion in the residential community*. Educational session presented during the UC Santa Cruz Residential Assistant Training, Santa Cruz, CA.
- Arao, N. & Obear, K. (2013, October). *Engaging in authentic dialogues about issues of equity and inclusion: Choosing bravery, compassion, and courage*. Educational workshop presented as part of the diversity professional development series in the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Vermont, Burlington, VT.

- Arao, B. (2013, July). *Restorative practices and restorative justice in residential education*. Three-day educational workshop presented during the UC Berkeley Residential Education professional staff training program, Berkeley, CA.
- Arao, B. (2010, September). *The importance of bravery in discussions on social justice*. Educational session presented during the University of San Francisco Advocates for Community Engagement training, San Francisco, CA.
- Arao, B., Beaumont, A., Grajales, F., Hara, S., Nygaard, S., & Zook, M. (2009, October). *USF Allies train-the-trainer*. Training series presented at the University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA.
- Arao, B., Mills, K., Wardell, M., & Wolcott, G. (2008, October). *Senior leadership institute*. One-day educational workshop presented during the University of San Francisco Fall Leadership Institute, San Francisco, CA.

PUBLICATIONS

- Arao, B. (2017). *Exploring the experiences of Black men as respondents in university student conduct processes* (Published doctoral dissertation). University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA.
- Arao, B. (2015). Roles of Black women and girls in education: A historical reflection. In Taylor, B. (Ed.), *Listening to the voices: Multi-ethnic women in education* (pp.137-142). San Francisco, CA: USF Department of International and Multicultural Education.
- Arao, B. & Clemens, K.L. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces: A new way to frame dialogue around diversity and social justice. In Landreman, L. (Ed.), *The art of effective facilitation: Stories and reflections from social justice educators* (pp. 135-150). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Arao, B. (2012, November 20). Where are the human rights in social justice education? [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://acpacsje.wordpress.com/2012/11/20/where-are-the-human-rights-in-social-justice-education-by-brian-arao/>
- Arao, B. (2010). Naming the elephant in the room: Intersections of identity and positionality in the workplace. *Voices: A Publication of the Commission for Social Justice Educators, Winter 2010*. Retrieved October 2, 2011 from <http://www2.myacpa.org/social-newsletter/past-newsletters/1984-winter-2010-5>

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- ACPA – College Student Educators International** March 2003 – present
- Serve as Program Review and Development Coordinator for the 2019 Convention Planning Team, developing education and resources to support members in creating and evaluating program proposals
 - Served as Chair for the Commission for Social Justice Educators, providing leadership for all of the Commission’s efforts in the areas of professional development, programming, scholarship, advocacy, and member services
 - Served as a member of the ACPA Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, co-chairing a subcommittee charged with developing a bias incident prevention and response protocol for the association
 - Served as a member of the ACPA Equity and Inclusion work group, charged with assisting the Association in ensuring its professional development offerings are congruent in process and in product with its commitment to diversity and social justice
 - Participated in the 2016 Institute for Aspiring Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAOs), designed to promote advanced leadership development for members of groups that are historically underrepresented among SSAOs.

Social Justice Training Institute (SJTI)

June 2005 – present

- Attended the June 2005 Institute, a five-day workshop designed to foster professional development of social justice educators through personal work focused on dynamics of race and racism
- Attended the January 2008 SJTI II Renewal Experience, a four-day workshop building on the content of the first Institute and expanding the scope of work to include focus on a wider array of forms of oppression
- Served as an intern for the June 2010 Institute, managing event logistics, consulting with the faculty before and throughout the workshop, and facilitating a session on post-Institute re-entry to home and workplace
- Coordinated the host committee for the 2012 SJTI Student Experience, held at the University of San Francisco.

AWARDS

- ACPA College Student Educators International: *Commitment to the Commission of Social Justice Educators, March 2013*
- The University of California at Santa Cruz, College Eight: *Distinguished Service Award, June 2008*
- New York University: *Hallmark Award for Diversity, May 2006*
- New York University: *Spotlight of the Year Award, National Residence Hall Honorary – Torch Chapter, May 2006*
- New York University: *Violet Award for Distinguished Administrator, April 2006*
- New York University: *Award for Community Engagement, Office of LGBT Student Services, Spring 2005*
- Japanese American Citizens League: *First Place, National Oratorical Contest, July 2000*