



continuing the centuries-old tradition – with today's technology – of sharing the latest information in the marketplace of ideas

[Home](#) | [Program Highlights](#) | [Leadership Corner](#) | [Board Update](#) | [NASPA News](#) | [Events](#) | [On Campus](#) | [Forum Archives](#)



35 Years of the NASPA Hardee Dissertation-of-the-Year Award

Simone Himbeault Taylor



Integration matters. It informed my dissertation, interweaving cognitive, psycho-social, and sociological theories to explain development of tolerance for diversity. Today, it informs my inquiry about how students learn and how educators facilitate growth. Integrative learning is comprehensive meaning-making grounded in life-long, life-wide education that requires students to learn how to identify what they know and how they know it across multiple domains within and beyond the formal curriculum. Like Strauss's *Capriccio*, where it's argued that opera is not simply a mixing of words, music, and theatre but a melding that creates something unique, integrative learning creates new meaning. I believe facilitating students' integrative learning establishes student affairs' unique role in the learning agenda.

Integrative learning approaches can inform students about who they are and want to be, their relation to others in a diverse and complex society, and actions they aspire to as global citizens promoting public good and social justice. Employing intentional pedagogy, educators provide the experiences and prompts for students to engage in their own active learning, surfacing explicit and tacit knowledge and adaptive expertise (formal and unconscious knowledge and capacities acquired and translatable across multiple experiences).

My interest in integrative learning derives from my choice to pursue a textured career as a practitioner-scholar. I value intersect and interstice, living within common space and the space in-between, to bridge boundaries. This, too, is space where student affairs resides. Student affairs is uniquely situated to serve as educators to facilitate students' reflection and meta-reflection and guide this confluence of learning. To do this will require asking:

- ◆ How may we transcend structures of *where* learning occurs and *who* guides learning to ensure that learning actually occurs and may be demonstrated?
- ◆ How can institutions create learning cohesion across individual classroom, co-curricular, and community experiences?
- ◆ How can students understand the *what* of their experiences and the *so what* of leveraging experiences toward larger personal goals, the public good, and a more socially just world?

I live at the intersection and in the interstitial. NASPA has played a special role in recognizing my life in these spaces. As a part-time Ph.D. student while full-time administrator, the dissertation award communicated that scholarly contributions of an older, part-time student mattered. As a current full-time associate VPSA while adjunct assistant professor, the recent NASPA IV-East Outstanding Contribution to Student Affairs through Teaching Award communicated that pedagogical contributions of a nontraditional faculty member matter. There is symmetry in NASPA's reinforcement about my choice to lead an integrated life: for this I am grateful and affirmed. Throughout it all, I am not confused about *the work*: to facilitate students' capacity to engage and harvest their learning and development writ large and to invest in the next generation while concurrently learning from them. Intentional reflection about my multiple roles and learning sites across life brings richness—indeed integration—to my understanding of my work and of myself. I aim to facilitate students' pursuit of lives of learning, reflection, and action, as well.

Simone Himbeault Taylor is associate vice president for student affairs at the University of Michigan. She also serves as adjunct assistant professor at the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at U of M. Her degrees in botany, counseling, and higher education were all awarded from the U of M. She co-leads the Michigan integrative learning initiative, MPortfolio. She has published, presented, and consulted on strategic planning, change management, issues of student learning and development, and integrative learning.

NASPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, gender identity, gender expression, affectional or sexual orientation, or disability in any of its policies, programs, and services. *Read NASPA's [Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity](#).* NASPA is committed to meeting the needs of our diverse community. We recognize that not all individuals access information in the same ways and strive to ensure that resources shared through our web space are accessible and usable to all. If web accessibility problems are encountered on the NASPA website, please contact the office at (202) 265-7500 or office@naspa.org, and an alternate format will be made available.

[Home](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Admin Login](#)
© 2010 NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education