

Student personnel programs continue to innovate under new program coordinator

BY JO ANN DEASY

Student personnel continue to play a significant role in the formation of theological school students at ATS schools. They were on the front lines during the pandemic—providing care and support, continuing to recruit and admit new students, and negotiating hybrid learning and safe housing conditions. ATS supported these professionals through webinars and community conversations to equip, connect, and support them in their work, and is committed to continue providing innovative programming to meet the needs of these professionals during the 2021–2022 academic year.

With the expanded programming for student personnel, ATS has contracted with Lillian Lammers to serve as program coordinator for this work. Lammers brings more than two decades of experience in student affairs, hospital chaplaincy, and pastoral ministry. From 2014 to 2020, she served her alma mater as the director of stewardship and vocational planning, managing work for the [Economic Challenges Facing Future Ministers initiative](#) while in that role. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, she currently serves as an associate pastor at First Congregational Church in Memphis, Tennessee. Lammers earned a Master of Science degree in college student personnel from the University of Tennessee, a Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University Divinity School, and her Doctor of Ministry degree from Andover Newton. Her doctoral project focused on vocational discernment in theological education.



Lillian Lammers

While serving at Vanderbilt, Lammers was involved in the ATS Student Personnel Administrators Network (SPAN). “I am so excited to be partnering with ATS for this coming academic year to support ATS student personnel. SPAN was vital to my success as a theological school professional, and I continue to value the professional relationships and friendships that I developed through the SPAN community,” she said.

In October, the Association will be hosting its first enrollment management capacity building event titled “All Hands on Deck.” This virtual event, to be held October 5–7, will feature online plenaries and workshop modules focused on defining enrollment management, exploring key job responsibilities, developing communication plans, integrating with student services, making strategic decisions, and collaborating on work. [Register for the event](#) on the ATS website.

For the second year, ATS will continue to offer monthly webinars focused on equipping student personnel, quarterly community conversations, and peer led gatherings

focused on various job responsibilities. Current community conversation groups include alumni/ae relations, career services, continuing education/lifelong learning, and housing. For more information on the community conversations, please contact Meghan Niskach, ATS coordinator for student personnel and questionnaires.

“The events of the last year and a half have changed us all personally and professionally,” said Lammers. “During a global pandemic, we have all learned to pivot quickly, tap into our creativity, and develop new models for supporting theological students. I predict that the events since March 2020 have forever changed how our institutions think about student success and the delivery of a

challenging and enriching education. I see the academic year ahead as offering meaningful opportunities for professionals in SPAN to process what has changed, what we have learned, and how we will utilize the innovation and creativity we have honed going forward.”

Lammers views student personnel as “the heart of any school. They have the unique ability to see the entire institutional picture—the vision of administration, the priorities and gifts of the faculty, and the passions and struggles of the students.” Please feel free to email her at span@ats.edu with any questions.



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