



2026 SOCHE Student Affairs Summit

Friday, March 6, 2026 | 8:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m. ET

Sinclair College Centerville (5800 Clyo Rd., Centerville, Ohio)

“Leading Through Change: Empowering the Future of Student Success”

Event Program

Time	Session	Location
8:15 a.m.	Event check-in and networking time	Room 124
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Opening Comments – Cassie Barlow, SOCHE President • Conference Host: Stacey Bean, Edison State Community College	Room 124
9:15 a.m.	KEYNOTE – Leading Change & Changing Leaders Dr. Jo Alice Blondin, President, Clark State College Dr. Blondin has been a “change leader for student success” for more than three decades, but as she also prepares for retirement in June 2026, her focus also has been on “changing leaders for student success.” Transitions in positions are part of change leadership, and managing transitions -- whether personal, professional, or institutional -- is a hallmark of effective leadership and a way to ensure sustainability and growth of student success initiatives. Dr. Blondin will touch on characteristics of effective leadership in the context of instilling a student success focus and drive in future leaders through mentorship.	Room 124
9:45 a.m.	Break	
10:00 a.m.	PANEL - Navigating AI in Student Affairs: Benefits, Barriers, and Blind Spots The use of AI is pervasive in higher education and can invoke both challenges and opportunities within student affairs units. Join us for a panel discussion that will highlight some creative uses of AI and learn how these professionals embraced new paradigms and collaborated with campus partners for successful implementation. Moderator: Jennifer Radt, University of Cincinnati Panelists: TBD	Room 124
10:45 a.m.	Break and transition to morning concurrent sessions	
11:00 a.m.	Morning Concurrent Sessions (choose one at registration) • Session 1 – Navigating Student Success – the OHIO Centric Way [repeats in afternoon] A discussion of how Ohio University's Housing and Residence Life department leverages campus partnerships and collaborations to support residential students in their holistic success. Innovative programs and strategic partnerships will be explored to demonstrate how HRL uses innovation, emerging trends, and student data to create procedures and programs that focus on student well-being and sense of belonging. Presenters: Jneanne Hacker, Jacob Hesse, Jen Maskiell, Johnna Matulja, and Chris Owens, Ohio University Facilitator: Natalie Johnson, Clark State College • Session 2 – Practical Applications of AI in Student Affairs: Scenario-Based Practice [repeats in afternoon] This interactive workshop focuses on how student affairs professionals can use artificial intelligence to design professional development role-playing scenarios, simulations, and training	Classroom TBD Classroom TBD

	<p>tools for use with students and staff. Participants will select a common student affairs situation, clarify the learning objective, and use an AI tool to role-play specific student affairs scenarios. The session concludes with sharing and discussion to identify practical approaches, use cases, and guardrails for responsible AI use.</p> <p>Presenters: Scott Markland and Lindsay Tate, Sinclair College Facilitator: Chris Tyner, Franklin University</p> <p>• Session 3 – Change Management: Helping Others Through the Change Process [morning only]</p> <p>My name is Claire, and I hate change, even when it's good for me. This presentation will walk you through some of the psychology behind why change is often hard, the stages of change, and will give you techniques to help students (and yourself) better manage the change process. After all, the only thing constant is change...</p> <p>Presenter: Claire Ruberg, Miami University Facilitator: Amber Lohrey, Miami University</p>	Classroom TBD
11:45 a.m.	Break and return to plenary space	
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Networking Time	Room 124
12:30 p.m.	<p>Higher Education Policy Updates</p> <p>Dr. Cheryl Rice, Ohio Department of Higher Education</p> <p>Session information TBD</p>	Room 124
1:00 p.m.	Break and transition to afternoon concurrent sessions	
1:15 p.m.	<p>Afternoon Concurrent Sessions (choose one at registration)</p> <p>• Session 1 – Navigating Student Success – the OHIO Centric Way [repeat from morning]</p> <p>A discussion of how Ohio University's Housing and Residence Life department leverages campus partnerships and collaborations to support residential students in their holistic success. Innovative programs and strategic partnerships will be explored to demonstrate how HRL uses innovation, emerging trends, and student data to create procedures and programs that focus on student well-being and sense of belonging.</p> <p>Presenters: Jneanne Hacker, Jacob Hesse, Jen Maskiell, Johnna Matulja, and Chris Owens, Ohio University Facilitator: Chris Tyner, Franklin University</p> <p>• Session 2 – Practical Applications of AI in Student Affairs: Scenario-Based Practice [repeat from morning]</p> <p>This interactive workshop focuses on how student affairs professionals can use artificial intelligence to design professional development role-playing scenarios, simulations, and training tools for use with students and staff. Participants will select a common student affairs situation, clarify the learning objective, and use an AI tool to role-play specific student affairs scenarios. The session concludes with sharing and discussion to identify practical approaches, use cases, and guardrails for responsible AI use.</p> <p>Presenters: Scott Markland and Lindsay Tate, Sinclair College Facilitator: Christopher Hogan, Wright State University</p> <p>• Session 3 – Creating a Culture of Care to Promote Student Retention [afternoon only]</p> <p>By normalizing conversations around mental wellness, we're breaking generational cycles of silence and empowering our students to thrive emotionally, academically, and personally. This engaging session will provide practical techniques and methods to support a new generation of scholars.</p> <p>Presenter: Dr. Sonia Hunt, Central State University Facilitator: Mortenous A. Johnson, Central State University</p>	Classroom TBD Classroom TBD Classroom TBD

2:00 p.m.	<i>Break and return to plenary space</i>	
2:15 p.m.	<p>PANEL- Student Affairs Today: Trends, Tools, and Challenges Join student affairs and higher education leaders for a candid conversation on what it takes to thrive amid rapid change in higher education. Panelists will examine emerging trends, AI opportunities and challenges, and innovative strategies for engaging the next generation of students.</p> <p>Moderator: Aaron Sturgill, Ohio University Panelists: Angelica Kennedy, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College; Jarrod Tudor, Hocking College; Almar Walter, Columbus State Community College; others TBD</p>	Room 124
3:00 p.m.	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Host: Stacey Bean, Edison State Community College 	Room 124