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## Dominican welcomes Dr. Ashley Finley

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## **Dominican welcomes Dr. Ashley Finley**

Dr. Ashley Finley, whose research focuses on student learning and student success in higher education, has been named Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean for the Dominican Experience, effective August 1.

Dr. Finley joins Dominican from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), based in Washington, DC, where she served as Senior Director of Assessment and Research. She is the national evaluator for the Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) project, an initiative dedicated to understanding the intersection of students' engaged learning, civic development, and well-being.

Dr. Finley's work with colleges and universities across the United States has focused on engaging faculty and staff in developing student-centered, sustainable practices that support student learning and success with an emphasis on equity and evidence-based standards for improvement.

"After consulting and working with hundreds of campuses during my tenure at AAC&U and BTtoP, I have learned the value of a campus community – inclusive of faculty, administrators and staff - that is willing to innovate, to challenge themselves, and to put students truly at the center of academic life and learning," Dr. Finley said. "Dominican has that community and that vision for innovation."

In 2013, Dominican initiated a campus planning process to create the Dominican Experience, an educational model designed to provide all students with an education that purposefully integrates high-impact practices (such as service-learning, internships, research, leadership development, global education), with academics and student support services. The Dominican Experience will connect classroom study to the greater community.

The Dominican Experience will include a team-based integrative advising framework that supports students individually in connecting the pieces of their education and their career goals; a series of signature activities common to all students that develop and put into practice the core values underlying the curriculum; and focused opportunities for access to engaged learning practices.

Dr. Finley added: "I will collaborate with Dominican faculty and staff to ensure that the Dominican Experience is rooted in learning that happens inside and outside the classroom, provides consistent support and reflection, and provides every student with the opportunity to find their passion and to succeed."

Dr. Finley's recent publications include *Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices* and the edited volume *Civic Learning and Teaching*, both with Tia McNair; and *Making Progress? What We Know about the Achievement of Liberal Education Outcomes*—in addition to numerous book chapters and articles. She has participated as co-PI or Evaluator in a number of significant grant-funded projects, including a First in the World (FITW) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Prior to her work at AAC&U, Dr. Finley held a faculty position in the department of Sociology at Dickinson College. She received her doctorate and master's in Sociology from the University of Iowa, and a B.A. in Sociology and English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.