NACADA | THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic Advising for Social Justice: Theory, Reflection, and Practice

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Overview

In April 2015, NACADA members were introduced to the topic of *Academic Advising and Social Justice: Privilege, Diversity, and Student Success* in the Web Event venue by a presentation team sponsored by the association's Inclusion & Engagement (then Diversity) Committee. Knowing that academic advising personnel must understand social identities in order to identify the challenges students face when interacting with various campus systems—but are often untrained in dealing with issues of diversity and privilege—our presenters shared information and strategies that can help advisors form stronger relationships with students, identify specific challenges and roadblocks facing students, and create individualized solutions to increase student success and retention.

At the 2018 NACADA Annual Conference in Phoenix, three presentation teams drew large audiences and rave reviews when they took this conversation to a deeper level. Members of those teams have combined to bring the conversation to our Web Event platform. In this webinar, our presenters will challenge participants to engage in critical reflection about themselves and the profession to better understand how we can hear our students lived experiences and work towards being the best possible allies for them. Are there ways in which we unwittingly contribute to the maintenance of oppressive systems that do not serve all students equitably? How can we process our discomfort as a participant in oppressive systems? The presenters will examine the role of emotionality for both advisors and students in this important dialogue, discuss contemporary advising approaches and explore the concept of counternarratives as a means to work towards social justice in advising. They will offer frameworks in which advisors' convictions and practices can align to disrupt oppressive systems and place social justice at the forefront of our work.

Pre-Webinar Activity Suggestions

Preparing to enter where you are for this webinar, reflect on the following questions:
1. What training, professional development opportunities, and/or resources have you engaged with around social justice? How were these helpful to you as an advisor/administrator?
2. What does social justice mean to you?
3. What concepts grounded in social justice do you struggle with or find difficult to understand?
4. What practices do you currently implement to provide equitable resources to your students?

Post-Webinar Activity

"Who am I?" Activity:

Respond to the question "Who am I?" by listing ten words that describe who you are. Cross off the three words that you can most readily discard, then three more, then three more, until only one word is left on the list. The one word presumably represents the descriptor that most accurately describes who you are and is most important to your sense of self. In other words, the remaining word represents the identity descriptor that you are least willing to give up. *Adapted from Jones & Abes (2013, p. 80).*

Moving Forward

Consider more systemic ways to bring social justice into your practice.

Connect the ways in which we have been socialized to the systems we operate within (institutions, policies, practices) and how these systems function to uphold the status quo.

Use your voice and positionality. Be the "squeaky wheel" on your campus.

When we are invited to tables, think about the voices not present/not represented.

Advocate for students and stories that challenge the way things have historically been done.

Examine policies and practices through a critical lens.

Support yourself and find community so that you are able to stay with the work when it feels difficult.

Join the Social Justice Advising Community! https://nacada.ksu.edu/Community/Advising-Communities/Social-Justice.aspx

Responding to Microaggressions

Separate intent from impact: "I know you didn't realize this, but when you _____ (comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because_____. Instead you could_____ (different language or behavior.)"

Share your own process: "I noticed that you _____ (comment/behavior). I used to do/say that too, but then I learned_____."

Sharing an apology and appreciation: "I apologize for _____ (comment/behavior). Thank you for educating me about why this is hurtful/offensive, and I have learned _____. I appreciate you giving time and energy to have this conversation with me." (Avoid being defensive when this conversation happens. Don't explain your intent, because it is about the impact in this moment.)

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Resources on Social Justice in the *NACADA Clearinghouse*: https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/Social-Justice.aspx

NACADA Webinars available in the NACADA Store:

Academic Advising and Trans Equity: Building Our Tomorrow: https://my.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Product-Details?ProductsDetails=yes&ID=REC092MASTER

Intersectionality: Understanding Our Students' Multifaceted Identities: https://my.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Product-Details?ProductsDetails=yes&ID=REC068CD

NACADA Webinars available on YouTube:

Academic Advising and Social Justice: Privilege, Diversity, and Student Success:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrmQHqXqDVE&feature=youtu.be

Expanding Your Comfort Zone: Strategies for Developing Cultural Competence in Academic Advising:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kt3LaHXmkvs&feature=youtu.be

LGBTQA Ally Development and Advocacy Empowerment for Academic Advisors:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBMcjuruIqI&feature=youtu.be

Virtual Keynote from Dr. Tyrone Howard: Why Equity Matters:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXLgymg8J3w&feature=youtu.be

Academic Advising for Social Justice:
Theory, Reflection, and Practice

Jayne K. Sommers, University of St. Thomas
Quinn Nelson, University of Minnesota
Ariel Collatz, University of California-Davis
Kyle W. Ross, Washington State University

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Jayne K. Sommers, University of St. Thomas
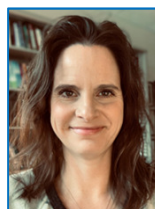
- Pronouns: she/her/hers
- White
- Temporarily able bodied
- Raised in US
- Agnostic
- Parent to one nonbinary child and one daughter
- Partnered (straight-passing queer)
- Credentialed

ONACADA | THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

Quinn Nelson, University of Minnesota

- Pronouns: she/her/hers
- White
- Temporarily able bodied
- Raised in US and Mexico
- Recently moved into middle class
- Agnostic
- First-Generation college student
- Parent
- Married
- Credentialed
- President of the Minnesota College Professionals Associations

ONACADA | THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

Ariel Collatz, University of California-Davis

- Pronouns: she/her/hers
- African and European American descent
- Temporarily able bodied (mostly)
- Raised with dominant US cultural norms
- Agnostic
- Mother
- Resingled
- Credentialed, 4th gen college grad
- Chair, Social Justice Advising Community

ONACADA | THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

Kyle W. Ross, Washington State University

- Pronouns: he/him/his
- White
- Temporarily able-bodied
- Raised in the US
- Raised Catholic, but identify as agnostic
- Married
- Straight
- Middle-class
- Credentialed
- Parents who are credentialed

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Enter Where You Are

Social justice work is commitment to a process. We acknowledge that we are all in different places on this journey.

We don't come to you as the experts to tell you how to do it right. We come with offerings of theory on social justice and opportunities to reflect so that you may further work it into your practice.

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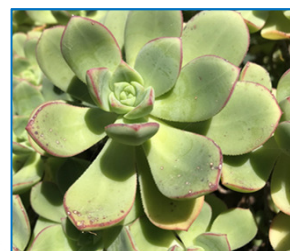
Photo courtesy of Ariel Collatz

How to Use this Webinar

Image by Joshua Kahn Russell

NACADA Core Values and Principles

https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies.aspx

Core Concepts

Equality   Equity   Liberation

Image by Quinn O'Reilly, age 10 (2020)

Why Social Justice in Higher Education?

https://universityhistories.com

Photo courtesy of The Harvard Gazette, by John Chase. (2020).

Why Social Justice in Academic Advising?
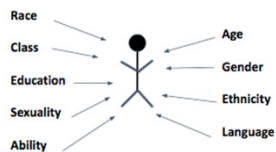
Image courtesy of EpicTop10.com

Advisors as Educators and Advocates

"Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom…" (Freire, 2000, p. 34).

Positionality

Kathryn Pauly Morgan (1996)

Cycle of Socialization (Harro, 1982)

Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MMDI)
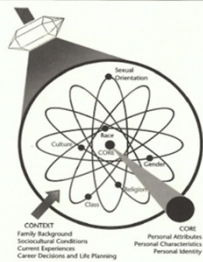
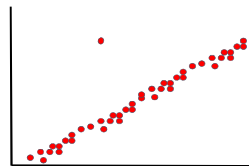## Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MMDI)
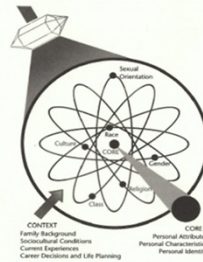
Who Am I?
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

Intersectionality

Photo courtesy of Ross A Hall

Outliers vs. Counternarratives

Cover of
Counternarratives
(2016)

What do we do with these?

Emotions in Social Justice Dialogue

Emotional responses can be triggered by everyone involved.

Recognize your responses and process them mindfully to better engage in the difficult dialogue.

Image by Ariel Collatz.

The Embodied Experience
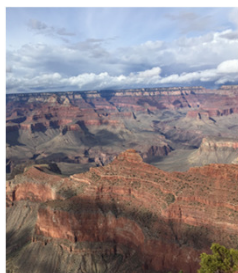
Oppressed Identity
• Battle fatigue

Privileged Identity
• Sweet nothingness

Advising practices
• Validate the experience
• Listen to understand
• Acknowledge inequitable structures within higher education.

Smith, W. A., Yosso, T. J., & Solórzano, D. G. (2011)

White Fragility

Set of emotions that protect white people's self-esteem triggered during conversations about race and moments when race is salient (DiAngelo, 2018)

Check out the podcast series "Seeing White" through Scene on Radio!

Biewen, J. (Producer). (2017, February-August). *Seeing white* [Audio podcast]. https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Image by Ariel Collatz.

White Fragility

Image by Ariel Collatz.

Common Triggers:
1. The perception that racism only refers to extreme acts of violence, severe acts of discrimination, and overt use of harmful language

1. Disruption of unracialized identity

DiAngelo (2018)

For people of color, the privilege of being seen (and seeing themselves) as unique individuals outside the context of race cannot be taken for granted. Talking about race and racism in general terms such as white people is constructive for whites because it interrupts individualism. But racial generalization also reinforces something problematic for people of color-- the continual focus on their group identity. Furthermore, it collapses many racial groups into one generic category, thereby denying the specific ways that different groups experience racism. While people of color share some experiences of racism overall, there are also variations based on a specific group's history. (pp. 89-90)

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Emotions and Physical Reactions

How to feel uncomfortable

Acknowledge sensations

Set aside judgments

Provide support

Magee, R. V. (2019)., Neff, K. D. & Germer, C. (2017).

Takeaways

1. Oppressed identities have different embodied experiences than privileged identities
2. Social justice work requires emotional work, commitment and preparedness
3. This is work that is done with our minds, bodies and hearts

Moving Forward

Move from being advisor to advocate

- This works is always ongoing...
- It takes energy
- Feels lonely at times
- Can feel insignificant when we are up against slowly-shifting campus cultures
- How do we make change?
- We need to find allies in this work… join the Social Justice Advising Community

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