Chapter 5 - The New Professional Advisor: Building a solid informational advising component

Reader Learning Outcomes

The Reader will:

- Manage Internal and External Information
- Assess challenges to learning advising knowledge
- Acquire advising information including
    - identifying best sources of information
    - reflecting on strengths in advising knowledge
    - learning like students and from them
- Organize information for an effective appointment including
    - developing a framework for advising information
    - creative use of technologies
    - setting up office for information retrieval
    - effective delivery of knowledge
- Plan for practical, intentional self-development

Aiming for Excellence discussion questions and activities

- Observe an experienced advisor and write notes about the conference. Compare your notes with those of the veteran. How are they similar and how are they different? Discuss the reasons the experienced advisor included information that you did not.
- Observe veteran advisors at several points during your first year. Each time, reflect on your observations; specifically compare the salient points from your first-month observations with the issues that seem new or important after 9 or 12 months.
- Choose an academic program admission requirement, a support office (e.g., tutoring, student health, etc.), and a communication issue (e.g., advising a student on communication with parents about academic probation). Using the model of correct, complete, and insightful answers (New Advisor Development Chart in chapter 1), provide answers at each level for the items chosen.
- Identify any "philosophical and historical underpinnings" (Higginson, 2000, p. 303) of the institution that affect the way advising information is disseminated on campus. For instance, what role have faculty members played in advising, and how does that history influence the information available to advisors today? Is the commitment to technology on campus strong and innovative, or has it been limited and poorly developed? How do the current attitudes toward technology relate to daily advising?
- Select three advising colleagues to interview about the best sources for academic program information. Ask them to explain the ways they choose and integrate specific electronic and print resources in their advising sessions.
- Identify three policies, programs, or student situations that you have had trouble describing. Meet with three different advisors to discuss the specific language they use to explain these areas. Ask them about exact phrases or words that enhance and keep conversations with students flowing.
- Keep a log of information you learn from your students. What did you learn about specific courses? What was the academic profile of the student who provided you with new insights or

information? What did you learn about life in residence halls? What did you learn about another department, office, or unit? How might you use student-generated information in future conversations with and referrals for advisees?

- Start a general education journal in a preferred platform (e.g., computer document, pencil-and-paper, etc.) to keep notes on general education information gathered from students and colleagues. Each semester identify five courses to learn about in greater detail. When meeting with a student taking one of the courses, gather information for the journal by asking them about the nature of the course (amount of reading, experiential components, professor expectations, students' initial perceptions vs. their course experience, nature of exams, specifics about content covered, etc.); one you can also interview student peer advisors about these courses.

- Using the New Advisor Development Chart in chapter 1, choose two of the informational component categories and set dated milestones for reaching the year one level of competency.

- After six months in the advisor role, draw a diagram of how advising information is categorized at the institution. Use the image to determine the informational areas in which you lack confidence. Meet with a supervisor or more experienced colleague to discuss strategies for developing the weak areas.

- Make a list of five learning strategies to suggest to students. Determine a way to appropriate these same tactics into your daily advising routine. Reflect on your own progress each week.

- Invite two other advisors on campus to meet and review the NACADA Concept of Academic Advising (NACADA, 2006), especially the curriculum section in paragraph 8 of the Introduction. Discuss it in terms of advising in the first year, identifying the items that might be the most difficult to learn or implement.

- Take the *Myers-Briggs Type Inventory* (CPP, 2013). When meeting with a facilitator to discuss the results, focus ways the outputs indicate individual learning styles and the best ways you can acquire and organize information.

- Read Organizing the Chaos: Office and Computer and identify ideas to implement. After six months, evaluate your organizational efforts.

References

CPP. (2013). *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)*. Retrieved from
https://www.cpp.com/products/mbti/index.aspx

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising (NACADA). (2006). *NACADA concept of academic advising*. Retrieved from http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Concept-of-Academic-Advising-a598.aspx