NACADA
The Global Community for Academic Advising

Academic Advising Today
Lighting student pathways . . .

In This Issue

How Technology Complements Academic Advising to Impact Student Success

***Joshua M. Larson**, University of Utah*

I recently applied for the position of Coordinator of Technology in Advising at my university. For the interview I was given the presentation topic, *How Technology Complements Academic Advising to Impact Student Success*. Initially, I was sure there would be lots of ways technology used in academic advising impacts student success. But after talking with others, writing down my ideas, and creating a storyboard using a flip-chart and crayons, I reached the conclusion that advising technologies do not impact student success.

Isn't it amazing that students have access to the same information we do? They can see major requirements, the Credit/No Credit policy, withdrawal procedures, success tips, degree audit reports, and so much more. So how does this access to information complement advising and impact student success? Do students ask us better or different questions? Do they contact us less? Are they getting more from advising? Are they graduating quicker or with fewer problems? Are they more self-confident or self-sufficient? In general, the answer is "no."

I thought this might be an anomaly, so I sought another example. Has the 24/7 access to technologies, (e.g., email, Twitter™, Skype©, text, or Facebook©) done anything to impact student success? Are students doing more internships, going to career services more, appreciating general education more, or petitioning less? Again, I could not conclude that these technologies complemented academic advising or impacted student success.

At a loss for my interview, I reviewed the definition of the word "impact". The Encarta dictionary (2001) defines the word "impact" as "a powerful or dramatic effect" (p. 722). This means that technology must make a real difference. I wondered, when presenters stopped using markers, flip-charts, whiteboards, scissors, and glue and moved to PowerPoint®, did this technology make presentations more powerful, dramatic, or more successful? Did all presentations become more interesting, more to the point, or more relevant? No. Poor presentations are as poor as ever and good ones are still rare. Sometimes technology may actually hurt, distract, confuse, or be an obstacle to success. After thinking about the definition, I could not say that technology has a "powerful or dramatic effect" and was left with the conclusion that technology does not impact student success.

This could not be true. I had given presentations on technology in advising, advocated and used technology in many more places, and regularly received requests to discuss technology in advising. Yet I was going to walk into my interview and say, "Technology doesn't complement academic advising to impact student success."

…but then I took a broader view and asked, "Why are students successful?" Using the PowerPoint example, I asked, "what makes a successful presentation?" Good presentations take hard work, creativity, motivation, and inspiration. Presentations are a success because the presenter has acquired skills and behaviors that make the presentation good; the technology is only a tool. So, how do advisors assess whether students are successful? We use Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

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Our Association Reaches Out to Involved Members Across Higher Education

***Kathy Stockwell**, NACADA President*

As my year as President comes to an end, I am still honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve our Association in this capacity. This has definitely been the highlight of my professional career. I want to thank Vice President **Glenn Kepic**, the Board of Directors, the Council, the staff in the Executive Office and all division leaders for the leadership they have provided. My goal for this year was to keep the organization moving forward for the benefit of all in our global higher education family; the NACADA leadership team along with you, our members, have helped accomplish this goal.

This has been an exciting and productive year for NACADA; a few of the year's highlights include:

- Two webcast series, *Foundations of Academic Advising* and *Academic Advising for Student Retention and Persistence*, which were a huge success. I am pleased to announce that NACADA is switching to a new web platform for the upcoming *AdvisorConnect* series (*www.nacada.ksu.edu/Webinars/events.htm*). Adobe© Connect™ is an interactive platform that allows participants to see presenters and be involved "live" in the discussion. We hope that all members will give this new webcast platform a try!
- Our winter events—*Utilizing Research and Data to Increase Student Persistence and Retention Seminar*, the 9th annual Academic Advising Administrators' Institute, and the 7th annual *Assessment of Academic Advising Institute*—all received rave reviews from participants.
- As reported previously, all 10 Regional Conferences were highly successful. Planning already is under way for next year's conferences, so check out the dates on the NACADA website (*www.nacada.ksu.edu/Events/Conferences/Regional/upcoming.htm*). We should mark our calendars now so we don't miss out on these great conferences!
- Colorado Springs and New Orleans were the sites for this year's sessions of the 25th Annual *NACADA Academic Advising Summer Institute*. This "boot camp" for academic advisors attracted a large number of advising teams from around the globe who spent a week preparing action plans for implementation on their campuses. Those interested in networking with advising colleagues from around the world while being immersed in academic advising will find this is a great event. Watch the NACADA website for the dates and locations of next year's Summer Institute sessions.
- Three hundred members were published this year in one of our offerings (the *NACADA Journal*, *Academic Advising Today*, the *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources*, or one of our new monographs). Those interested in submitting an article about their completed advising research or a best practice on campus should contact **Marsha Miller** (publish@ksu.edu) at the Executive Office; she is happy to help potential authors get started.

The NACADA Board of Directors continues to focus on the following initiatives as we strive to fulfill our strategic goals:

- **Continue to address the needs of higher education globally.** The Association is making an impact globally. President-elect **Jennifer Joslin** spent a week in Australia at the invitation of the University of Melbourne. While there, she visited with the provosts and advising officials and presented a one-day advising workshop for campus advisors. Past-president **Jayne Drake** spent a week in Hong Kong assisting advisors as they transition to an "advising as teaching" model. Executive Director **Charlie Nutt** was invited to the University of Maastricht in the Netherlands to conduct an advising workshop (see p. 8 this publication). In addition, the globalization subgroup continues to address the web page recommendations of our global members and is working on a global glossary of academic advising terms. The Membership Committee continues its work on developing a guidebook for international allied associations, and the Council is assessing how our current regional structure can best meet the needs of international members.
- **Assess the technology needs of the Association.** As reported previously, the use of social media has taken hold within the Association. During the Summer Institutes, pictures and updates were posted daily on Facebook© and Twitter™, and several faculty members and participants blogged about their experience. The website review committee is hard at work examining the functionality of our site. Committee members are reviewing contents,

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From the Executive Office

Prepare to Connect in Denver and Beyond

***Charlie Nutt**, NACADA Executive Director*

In just a few short weeks, NACADA members from across the globe will gather for our Annual Conference held this year in Denver. It is an exciting time for the Association each year as we share best practices in the field of academic advising and student success, hear results of the latest research and its implications for the field, and network with old friends and new colleagues. Each year the NACADA Annual Conference enlightens the profession and demonstrates the integral role that academic advising plays in the success of our students.

Annual Conference is also a time when the Association's leadership meets to continue the outstanding work they do to ensure our vitality today and in the future. NACADA continues to grow and prosper for many reasons, but the main one is the strength, dedication, and hard work of our leaders as they work hand-in-hand with an extraordinary Executive Office staff. Their efforts provide NACADA members with the most cost effective professional development opportunities in higher education and the most comprehensive review of what works in the field of student success.

This year our Board of Directors, led by President **Kathy Stockwell** (Fox Valley Technical College), has taken major steps in planning for the future of NACADA by focusing on our technology needs and outreach, developing plans for connecting with chief administrators on behalf of the profession and our members, and furthering our outreach to the global community of academic advisors. It is very exciting working closely with our outstanding leaders as they ensure that NACADA will continue to be the premier association for student success.

In addition to the excellent work of our Board of Directors, Council leaders, led by Vice President **Glenn Kepic** (University of Florida), have worked to strengthen our Commission and Interest Group system, to include our global colleagues in our region system, and to determine new strategies that will help our institutes, publications, and webcasts reach a broad spectrum of professionals. For example, the Webinar Advisory Board was focused this year on expanding the access and presentation of NACADA webinars and recordings. On September 14th, in-coming NACADA President **Jennifer Joslin** (University of Oregon) and Technology in Advising Commission Chair-Elect **Laura Pasquini** (University of North Texas) will present the first webinar from our new **AdvisorConnect** platform, ***Leading Forward: Technology Planning for Sustainable Advising*** (*http://nacada.ksu.edu/Webinars/events.htm*).

Leaders in our regions, commissions and interest groups, committees, and advisory boards ensure that the quality of all NACADA events and resources is the highest possible. The Association's structure provides members with the opportunity to be the "content experts" while the Executive Office staff implements the plans developed by our members. This continued partnership between our members and our Executive Office staff makes NACADA unique in the field of higher education as well as highly successful. I find it the greatest professional opportunity to work with you, our membership, and the Executive Office staff.

This year's Annual Conference in Denver promises to be superb in no small measure due to the leadership of Conference Chair **Dawn Fettig** (University of Colorado) and the entire

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Discover NACADA's Dynamic Digital Community for Academic Advising

In our Webinar venue, our 2011-2012 season will open on **September 14** using our new interactive Connect platform to consider *Leading Forward: Technology Planning for Sustainable Advising*. **Visit our website for more information!** **www.nacada.ksu.edu/Webinars/events.htm**

The NACADA blog is another great platform for NACADA members to discuss topics of interest and concern. Check out the blog today: **http://nacada.wordpress.com/**

Follow **@NACADA** on twitter! Find news, updates and reminders for the associaton. Twitter is a great way for NACADA members to interact. Follow and use a hashtag during the annual conference #nacada11 and #AcAdv to interact with other academic advisors daily.

Save Green by Going Green: Technology to the Rescue

David Bucci, ***Mary Gabrielsen*** *and* ***Amy Shannon***, *East Carolina University*
Sarah Eberhart, *University of Florida*

Editor's Note: The following article was developed from a presentation given at the NACADA Annual Conference in Orlando, October 2010.

"Technology" and "going green" have become prominent buzzwords for today's academic advisor. Academic advising conferences and listservs are inundated with technology-based techniques and suggestions aimed at assisting advising, easing financial burdens, and minimizing environmental impact. With the current economy directly affecting higher education funding, and today's tech-savvy student population, the implementation of technology has become important not only for the advancement of the field but for advisor survival. However, the implementation of technology in advising can be likened to giving advisors two sticks and expecting us to eventually make a fire: through trial and error a fire may eventually start, but it will happen sooner with guidance.

Some advisors find it difficult to change work habits. Maintaining the path we know is easier than exploring new ways to approach work responsibilities. Nevertheless, the combination of increased student caseloads and declining operational budgets necessitates change for many advisors. Research has examined the importance of technology integration in advising through lenses focused on students (Wilson, 2004), faculty and staff, and the academy (Paulson, 2002). However, the vastness of information on the topic provides a strong case for information overload and contributes to uncertainty among advisors. Though the advent of technology has provided new avenues for advisors to reach our students, a holistic approach to best technology practices in advising (e.g., the "how to") often is lacking.

Advisors may want to implement change through a "baby-step" or individualized approach to incorporating technology and green practices in our jobs. The first step is to "know thy enemy"—decide whether change is worthwhile. When "going green" through the use of new technologies, advisors can reduce expenses, lessen the need for physical storage space for files, and reduce our negative impact on the environment. All of this can be done while meeting student expectations and reducing advisor stress. Conversely, advisors must be aware of the consequences instilling technology can have on our daily

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2011 Best of Region Winners

NACADA 35th Annual Conference on Academic Advising

Reg. 1: ***The Advisor/Advising Bucket List***
Bentley University

Reg. 2: ***Connecting with Students Utilizing a Syllabus and Blog***
James Madison University

Reg. 3: ***The Dream Team: Intuitive Advising at Work***
Winston-Salem State University

Reg. 4: ***Conversations, Clarification and Collages: Innovative Workshops for Undecided Students***
Florida State University

Reg. 5: ***Advising with Pizzazz! Unique Ways to Connect and Build Student Relationships***
University of Cincinnati

Reg. 6: ***The Dark Side of Self-Esteem***
University of Winnipeg

Reg. 7: ***Helping Your Students Reach New Heights: How Advisors Can Write Better Letters of Recommendation***
University of Kansas

Reg. 8: ***Journey to Wellness - Managing Daily Stress as an Advisor***
Washington State University

Reg. 9: ***Contemporary Student Veterans: How Can Advisers Prepare for this New Wave of Students?***
University of Hawaii-Manoa

Reg. 10: ***Humor as a Tool for Advising Administrators***
University of Colorado-Boulder

Using Technology to Enhance Advisor Training

Naomi Craven *and* ***Kimberley Rolf****, University of Texas-San Antonio*

A brief glance at NACADA's Annual Conference schedule reveals that advisor training and development is a hot topic in the advising field. This hardly is surprising given that a 2005 NACADA member survey found that 29% of those responding were over 50 years of age, suggesting that within the next decade, a significant number of veteran advisors will retire. Nor, at that time, was any substantive training program in place for an influx of new advisors; only 10% of respondents reported receiving any formalized or in-depth training despite many recognizing the need for structured initial training and more extensive developmental opportunities (Folsom, 2007). This training need is also identified by Brown (2008), who argued that although informational training is important, "greater emphasis must be placed on conceptual and relational elements if advising is to be viewed and valued as more than a clerical activity directed at helping students to schedule classes" (p. 311). However, the nature of the advising profession means that new-hires undoubtedly need large amounts of informational training in their first few weeks on the job. Trainers must then determine how to incorporate relational and conceptual aspects into training without neglecting necessary information.

This problem was faced by the College of Sciences Undergraduate Advising Center (COSUAC) at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). UTSA operates a decentralized advising system in which sophomores, juniors and seniors are advised through the college of their major, with COSUAC advisors serving approximately 4000 upperclassmen with declared majors in the sciences. COSUAC advisors are ultimately trained on nine degree plans. Almost all advisor training takes place in-house, and is offered by COSUAC advisors who receive limited time away from their day-to-day duties to spend with new-hires. We needed to ensure that the limited face-to-face time new-hires spend with trainers is maximized, and that advisor training goes beyond policies and procedures to explore the more conceptual and relational elements of advising.

To quickly deliver the large amount of required information in an efficient and user-friendly format, trainers turned to Blackboard™. Trainers created a Blackboard class that contains much of the informational material previously covered in face-to-face meetings. For example, new advisor training now includes Blackboard modules on policies and procedures, incorporating PowerPoint® presentations that cover details related to each degree plan. Each module is organized in a similar fashion, beginning with learning objectives and a PowerPoint covering the subject material. Schwenn (2010) noted the effectiveness of such a structure when he stated that "step-by-step directions detailing the specific execution for every task are beneficial especially as references after the training session has ended" (p.145).

Each COSUAC online training module is followed by a quiz that gauges the new advisor's basic understanding of university functions, policies and procedures, and office issues. Making information available in this format has several advantages:

- it is easy to update and search,
- since advisors review the modules before meeting with trainers there is more time for discussion of the developmental aspects of advising, and
- online modules do not only serve new-hires since updates also can be posted and used by veteran advisors.

The COSUAC online advisor training confirms Pasquini's (2010) hypothesis that "advisor training and development programs that incorporate online resources enhance self-directed learning, provide consistent instructional methods, and include ongoing professional-development initiatives (p.123).

Conversely, one of the strengths of COSUAC's online training program was initially perceived as a potential weakness. When trainers first proposed moving portions of the training program to an online format, some advisors suggested that the move might lead to a lack of communication between team members. The program was designed to ensure that this did not take place, as new hires are allotted time to meet with their trainers. Because the informational training component is covered online, new advisors have time to discuss the more relational and conceptual elements of advising. Similarly, as Schwenn (2010) noted, tools such as the Blackboard discussion board can be used to give advisors a forum to discuss professional issues (p.145). Pasquini (2010) argued that the use of interactive online tools means that "training and development evolve to become social and connected" (p.123).

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Build Better Advising Relationships Through Blogging

***Katie McFaddin**, Brandeis University (formerly University of Oregon)*
***Becca Schulze**, University of Oregon*

Editor's Note: The following article was developed from a presentation given at the NACADA Annual Conference in Orlando, October 2010.

Since 2009, the Office of Academic Advising at the University of Oregon has maintained an advising-themed blog designed for undergraduate students in academic jeopardy (*www.gradefirstaid.wordpress.com*). In this article, we share what we have learned over the past two years about blogging in advising, beginning with our inspiration for the project.

The Office of Academic Advising includes ten advisors and three support staff who work together with faculty to advise the University of Oregon's 19,534 undergraduates. Each term, the Office of Academic Advising electronically notifies students whose term GPA places them on academic warning, probation, or disqualification. The emailed letter outlines the terms and limitations of academic standing and invites students to make an appointment with an advisor.

The idea for a blog evolved from a discussion after a particularly emotional appointment with a student who had just received notice she was academically disqualified. The advisor was struck by the student's vulnerability and confusion when, with tears running down her face, the student asked, "Does *anyone* ever come back?" In a 2009 NACADA podcast about working with students in academic jeopardy, **Shelly Gehrke** and **Jeanette Wong** explained, "As advisors, we should understand the various emotions and feelings that the student [on probation] is experiencing—and we should be prepared for the likelihood that the student will be feeling embarrassed, disappointed, vulnerable and judged" (¶ 34). After the appointment we brainstormed ways to reach students, especially students in academic jeopardy, in a familiar but more personal manner than an official notification email.

First we discussed familiar media – Facebook© and our office website. While Facebook is interactive and easy to update, it is designed for quick messages and content is not searchable. Our office website allowed for lengthier content, but we had only minimal control over the structure and look of the site. We each had personal experience with blogging and determined that it best combined desired qualities: searchable content, the ability to insert tags, and blog creator control of the look, structure, and content of the site. The most popular blog hosting sites (e.g., Wordpress, Blogger©) are free and feature user-friendly templates and site visit tracking.

We spent part of our lunch breaks over the next couple of weeks developing the idea; first with notes on paper, and then by actually playing around in Wordpress. It didn't take long to create the framework and write a few posts. Part of blogging's appeal is that content can be created in a relatively short time and is immediately accessible. When we pitched the idea to our supervisor, we had a tangible product in hand; we were able to say with certainty how big (or in this case, small) of an investment in time and money it would be. We were fortunate that our supervisor, NACADA President-Elect **Jennifer Joslin**, embraces innovation. In a 2011 interview with Eric Stoller on Higher Ed Live©, she said, "Sometimes whether you're in student affairs or academic affairs you can really benefit by a supervisor who says, 'Go for it! This sounds great – let's try something.'"

While developing the blog, we kept in mind two main goals: create original and relevant content, and provide a welcoming and empowering virtual space to help students academically succeed. We first created an "About Us" page to introduce ourselves and tell stories of our own academic challenges. We also included a page with descriptions and links to important campus resources. The main blog page is updated once or twice a month with posts about study skills, favorite academic resources, and current student stories. As we grew more comfortable with blogging, we experimented with multimedia, using podcasts and vodcasts to add voice and video to the posts.

Since the start of the blog, we have tracked visits and clicks, and while they have been steady and significant, they are not our most powerful success indicators. Rather, we are encouraged and inspired by the student from another institution who emailed us for advice on how to overcome disqualification, the mothers who mention the blog as a source of comfort, and the student with repeated semesters on probation who was empowered to meet weekly with an advisor featured on our blog.

For readers new to blogging but interested in using this format on their campuses, our top four tips for building and maintaining a blog include:

Tip 1: Be a blog lurker
Follow a handful of blogs over the course of a couple months. Bookmark the sites and check them often, or subscribe to an aggregator (i.e., Google Reader), which collects updated posts from selected websites/blogs and presents them in one place. Pay attention to which blogs become favorites and keep notes on preferred aspects of the blogs.

Tip 2: Develop a brand
Use the notes to develop a vision for the blog. Who is the intended audience? What is the blog's purpose? What tone will the writing take? What will be the source for content? Create a blog name and logo that accurately reflects this vision (call upon colleagues with graphic design experience to assist with the logo).

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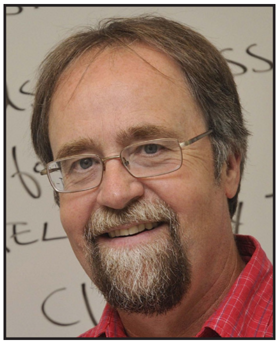
LinkedIn: Expanding NACADA Network Connections Online

Jim Peacock*, Kennebec Valley Community College*
Kristina Ierardi*, Cape Cod Community College*

Editor's Note: The following article was developed from a presentation given at the NACADA Region 1 Conference in March 2011.



LinkedIn© (LI) is one of many online social networks designed to communicate and advance relationships between people. What makes LI unique is its focus on developing *professional* relationships. LinkedIn (March 2011) connects 100 million professionals in over 200 countries. NACADA members who seek professional development and recognize the importance of networking with others in the field will find LI to be a valuable resource for themselves and their students.

There are three key reasons to create or expand an existing LI account:

- to develop and maintain a professional network that is "active" throughout the year,
- to seek advice from others in the field or in 'like-minded' groups, and
- to find employment or to assist students in finding employment.

Networking. One of the benefits of attending a NACADA conference is the opportunity to meet people facing similar challenges in advising. Generating ideas, information, solutions, and support from colleagues is energizing and effective. Unfortunately, the opportunity to make these face-to-face connections happens only a few times a year at national or regional events. With LI, advising professionals can maintain and grow their networks year-round and frequently communicate on topics of interest.

LinkedIn advertises that 100 million professionals already use the site and one million new members join every week. As of June 2011, over 1,600 individuals belonged to the NACADA group on LI. By creating a LI account and performing a "People" search, NACADA members can connect with people they already know. Before sending an invitation to connect, LI members are prompted to identify how they know each person they invite into their network, and each person must agree to accept an invitation before a connection is established. By design, this process attempts to maintain LI as a true 'professional networking' website.

Each LI member receives update notifications about their connections on their Home page. Updates may include book review posts, new group memberships (see below), new position listings, updated credentials, or informational posts. LI is an "active" network because of these frequent updates. Members are continually informed about the people in their network and what they are doing throughout the year. It is easy to begin a discussion, share information, and stay current about colleagues' professional lives.

Groups. LinkedIn features thousands of groups tailored to a variety of subject areas, including NACADA and other higher education groups. Each group has a purpose and attracts like minded members. The discussions can be lively and informative. With a free LI account, members can join up to 50 groups. Each group member can follow discussions of interest, can ask questions, and can initiate and participate in discussions. Every discussion post or response is seen by all group members. This process provides a mechanism for a member to become a familiar face and resource for those within the group. LI statistics even indicate the most influential group members. So, simply discussing common issues can introduce members to each other and expand networks. Additionally, group membership enables each LI member to invite any other group member into their network without sharing another common connection or previously knowing each other. This feature enables group members to exponentially expand their network with 'like-minded' professionals.

Recently NACADA member **Jim Peacock** received more than a dozen great suggestions from one LI group. He was working with a student at a small community college in Maine who was interested in exploring career options in the adoption field. Jim posted a question in one of his groups and within minutes received ideas and leads from numerous group members. To gain this same information would have taken days of research and probably would not have resulted in the same quality of information.

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Collaboration – A Win, Win, Win, Win Situation

***Jo Stewart**, Brock University, Canada*

Collaboration is a word we use in higher education practically on a daily basis. Collaboration can be defined in two ways. "1… the act of working with another or others on a joint project", and "2. something created by working jointly with another or others" (Farlex, 2011). Bennis and Beiderman (1997) argue that "one is too small a number to produce greatness." I propose that if academic advisors around the world foster greatness in our students, then they will in turn generate great things. No one can do this alone; we must collaborate within and between departments and institutions if we are to bring a well-rounded education to our students.

Here at Brock University, we collaborate with colleges in the province of Ontario to provide students with educational experiences with both a strong theoretical and applied base of knowledge. In the province of Ontario, most higher education institutions are public; there are two types of public institutions – traditional degree-granting universities and colleges that offer a variety of diplomas, certificates and applied degrees. Our university degrees are typically four-year degrees, with the liberal arts degrees offering students a broad range of theoretical knowledge. Our colleges, on the other hand, offer technical training and applied/practical diplomas and degrees. As I often tell Brock University students, our university programs teach students the five "W's" – what something is, when it occurred, who was involved in it, where it happened, and why it took place – but do not teach students how to do it. Teaching the "how" is left to our colleges. An example is the discipline of psychology where students come to university and learn what psychology is (the "what"), when major theories were developed (the "when"), the theorists who conducted the research in the discipline (the "who"), the country/lab where the research took place (the "where"), and what led various researchers to develop their theories (the "why"). However, if the student wants to be a counselor, the five W's offer no training. On the other hand, Ontario's colleges do offer innovative and outstanding diploma, certificate, and applied degree programs that allow students to learn the techniques involved in effective individual and group counseling (the "how").

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Helping Students Help Themselves: Advising as Empowerment

Charlie Nutt visits Maastricht University in the Netherlands

Editor's Note: This is an adapted version of an article in *De Observant* (May 19th, 2011), Maastricht University's weekly newsletter.

One of the most important tasks of an academic advisor, according to **Charlie Nutt**, Executive Director of NACADA: the Global Community for Academic Advising, is to teach students appropriate strategies with regard to learning. "We need to focus more on student learning as opposed to *helping* students," he says. Charlie is a charming, energetic, and seemingly tireless American with a true passion for academic advising and improving students' college experience, and he recently spent four days in Maastricht on the invitation of **Nicolai Manie** and **Oscar van den Wijngaard** (both members of NACADA and academic advisors at University College Maastricht – see Oscar's recent AAT contribution at *www.nacada.ksu.edu/AAT/NW33_4.htm#4*). Charlie gave several inspiring workshops, sharing his insights and strategies on increasing study success and improving student retention with the academic advisors and administrators of Maastricht University. In addition, he reserved time for individual meetings with the deans of the various departments.

Academic advising is gradually gaining a stronger foothold at Maastricht University, reflecting a growing awareness of its importance for student success, and aided by a recent Dutch policy that can result in significant cost to both university and students when the allotted time to complete a study program is exceeded.

At University College Maastricht (UCM), students can choose from more than 130 courses, with the guidance of academic advisors, and Charlie's visit to Maastricht couldn't have come at a better time, says **Nicolai Manie**, coordinator of UCM's Academic Advising Office. "At the moment," Nicolai explains, "UCM is re-evaluating its advising system, planning to make some significant changes to it." Other faculties are also implementing new advising strategies this year: the psychology faculty introduced a new mentoring program, and the Department of Knowledge Engineering is piloting a faculty-based academic advising system for first year students, which most likely will be adopted by other departments of the university as well.

With the development of new program structures, many important questions arise within Maastricht University's academic advising community, such as *what is the role of*

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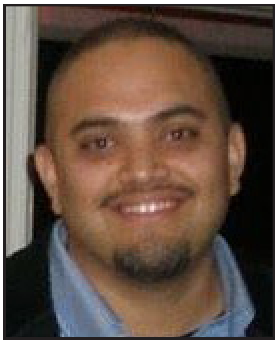
Distance Advising: An Invitation to Join the Discussion

***Steven Starks**, University of Phoenix*



Online education is growing so fast that by 2018 it is paced to supplant face-to-face instruction as the preferred learning modality (Nagel, 2011). In this new era of online education, traditional models of academic advising may not be suitable for advisors serving nontraditional students. Consequently, the relevance of distance advising to institutional retention efforts is greater than ever before. Steele (2005) noted that topics relevant to distance advising can be divided into three primary categories: (a) distance learners, (b) distance advising considerations, and (c) the use of technology in advising. Ranging from cross-cultural communication at a distance (Keller, 2011) to best practices for advising online students (Gravel & Esposito, 2010), NACADA's distance education and advising (DEA) commission has led the way in generating resources on such topics. For NACADA to continue anticipating "the academic advising needs of twenty-first century students, advisors, and institutions" (NACADA, 2011, ¶ 2), members must contribute to the current discussion on distance advising. In particular, information regarding the unique characteristics of online students and strategies for advising them is much needed.

Key Characteristics of Online Students

The concept of the traditional college student between the ages of 18 and 22 who lives on-campus no longer exists (Stokes, 2006). In fact, Siegel (2011) stated that "more than 50% of all entering college students are nontraditional" (p. 10). With online learning driving nontraditional student enrollments, students who are over the age of 24, who have full-time jobs, and who have children are fast becoming the norm in higher education. Distance advisors should know that the demographic characteristics of nontraditional students are also risk factors that can impede their progress toward graduation (Kantrowitz, 2010). Thus, retention rates for online students tend to be significantly lower than their face-to-face counterparts (Varney, 2009). As champions of institutional retention efforts, distance advisors have a responsibility to understand the students they serve; they must know that online learners who succeed are self-driven experts in time management who are technologically savvy (Steele, 2005).

Considerations for Communication Skills at a Distance

In an environment devoid of face-to-face contact, building strong relationships with online students warrants special considerations. Nutt (2000) observed that communication skills are among the most significant competencies for developing close advisor-advisee relationships. An empirically-based model of interpersonal communication skills particularly helpful to academic advisors is the microskills model (Barnett, Roach, & Smith, 2006). Microskills are the specific behaviors that constitute active listening (e.g. attending behaviors, open-ended questions, paraphrases, summaries); they are observable and can be learned in a relatively short amount of time. In a recent survey of student affairs professionals regarding the most important helping skills related to working with students, microskills were among the top 15 (Reynolds, 2011).

Distance advisors practice microskills when they are mindful of three important considerations. First, for distance advising scenarios that require verbal communication, vocal qualities should be considered analogous to body language. When speaking to students through various communication technologies (e.g. phone, voice chat), distance advisors must use their voice to convey emotion, empathy, and sincere interest. The tone, rate, pitch, and volume of one's voice can dramatically change the intent of the message, especially without the ability to add a warm smile or make appropriate eye contact. Even the timing in which one adjusts certain vocal qualities can influence the way a message is transmitted and received.

The second consideration for distance advisors is that the words one chooses can impact the development of the advisor-advisee relationship. Kramer (2011) indicated that the words one chooses can be punitive or positive depending on how statements are constructed. For example, an advisor who uses punitive language might say to a student *"you failed your math course and must retake it."* On the other hand, an advisor who uses positive language might say *"although you received a non-passing grade, you have an opportunity to retake the course to improve your GPA."* Kramer (2011) pointed out that interpersonal communication should focus on strengths, reflect feelings, clarify concerns, and use open-ended questions to elicit student responses. Although these skills apply to traditional advising models, their significance is amplified in distance advising sessions because of the increased opportunity for miscommunication.

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Holland Revisited: A Self-Authored Approach to Major Exploration

***Art Esposito**, Chair, NACADA Commission on Undeclared & Exploratory Student Advising*

One of the first questions undeclared/exploratory students ask is whether there is a personality test they can take to help them select a major. There are, in fact, many such tools, although an argument can be made against their unqualified use: matching a student's personality with a major is far too teacher-centered and not in keeping with academic advising as a teaching activity.

Those engaging in career advising through the use of Holland's Career Theory—one of many assessment platforms available in the field of undecided/exploratory and career advising—can help students match their three-letter Holland Code to majors and/or careers. However, some assertions that Holland's theory prescribes matches between codes, majors, and/or careers are misleading. Further, when we focus on students' deductive and holistic research into their own multi-facetted set of reasonable sensibilities, we shift from an advisor-focused process to a learning-centered model.

Two definitions are helpful to our discussion:

Reasonable, *adj*

1. Governed by or being in accordance with reason or sound thinking: a reasonable solution to the problem (American Heritage, 2003).

Sensibility, *n. pl.* sen·si·bil·i·ties

1. Mental or emotional responsiveness toward something, such as the feelings of another.
2. The quality of being affected by changes in the environment (American Heritage, 2003).

With these definitions in mind, we can view personality traits referred to in Holland's theory as students' reasonable sensibilities. In so doing, we empower students to understand their reactions to academic subject matter and world of work realities not as genetic programming beyond their control, but as critical thought-based responsiveness to external stimuli. This less prescriptive approach also allows us to encourage students to identify their own meaning in education and career choices. Students will display a greater sense of ownership of their decisions, and enjoy greater connection to their selected majors, rather than struggling through programs of study selected under the pressure of external definitions (i.e. parental/familial influence).

John Holland's career theory indicates a connection between personality and environment that makes his RIASEC codes effective for classifying personality traits, majors, and work environments (Holland, 1997). Many assessment tools use surveys to identify students' personality types as either Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), or Conventional (C), thereby claiming to identify for students the best 'fit' for college major or career field. And while many, including Holland, appreciate that most individuals represent more than one of the six personality types, the use of the RIASEC indicators is strictly applied to disciplines of study and occupations. An example of this is that most Holland-based assessment tools indicate that Investigative disciplines are limited to science and technology fields, suggesting these as the best disciplines for students with a high number of traits in the "I" category. Likewise, majors and careers labeled as Artistic often are limited to applied arts fields—this all but disavows creativity within science fields and investigation in humanities and liberal arts-based programs.

Virginia Commonwealth University's Discovery Advising program focuses solely on advising undeclared and exploratory students. The program has found success encouraging students to treat these assessment data as a jumping off point rather than a prescribed conclusion on the question of major selection. Discovery advisors encourage students to identify what the data are indicating and how they, the students, personally express the suggested temperaments. By doing this, Discovery advisors allow students to identify not only that they process external stimuli a certain way, but also why and how their behavior represents the results of the assessments. This also allows students to identify how their way of responding to certain situations may fit within one major as opposed to another, thereby identifying their "best fit" for a major from a personal or learner-centered perspective.

In his *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* article on Transformative Theory and Undeclared/Exploratory Students (2009), **Kerry Kincanon** observed the importance of transformation and self-authorship in the advising process. By citing such authors as Frier, Keegan, Mezirow and Baxter Magolda (to name but a few of a terrific number of sources

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Why Choosing a Major is Not Choosing a Career (…and not the end of the world)

***Kyle Bures**, Neosho County Community College*

Making the decision to attend college is no small task for many of our students. Yet, advisors often forget to remind students—and especially adult learners and first-generation students—that they should take a moment to applaud themselves for making it this far. Today's college student population is increasingly diverse; students from all generations and backgrounds enter college after work lay-offs, career changes, and family pressure to earn a degree and get a good job. Often lost in the transition to becoming a student is the student's decision to take control and improve his or her life.

Unfortunately, some students do not get the chance to appreciate their journey to becoming a student. Well-meaning individuals often burden students with questions surrounding their major: "Why are you going to college?"—"What is your major?"—"What job are you going to get with that?" These common questions can create stress and anxiety for students. Especially in today's economy, there is a spike in this line of questioning. Students may seek majors that will lead to well-paid careers rather than those that fit students' interests and abilities, a point illustrated beautifully in an article by Keyes (2010). As advisors we should be cautious, as we may be guilty of asking some of these questions ourselves.

Perhaps one of the biggest student misconceptions is that choosing a major locks students into one career for the rest of their lives. Students fear that if they make the wrong decision now they will waste thousands of dollars and be stuck in a career they hate. This misconception is often fueled by parents and family who pressure students into "following the money." Obviously if a student wants to be a nurse, then a nursing degree is needed—but a nursing degree (or any degree, for that matter) also equips graduates with a set of skills and abilities that can be applied to any number of employment opportunities.

Rather than picturing the selection of a major as *locking* them into one career, students should be encouraged to see it as *unlocking* a number of career opportunities. A career can include several jobs over the course of many years with each new job influenced by a variety of factors (e.g., previous jobs and experiences, increased education, life changes). Being new to advising (less than two years), I would not have predicted as an undergraduate that I would pursue advising as a job and possibly as a career. Thus, it is an unnecessary burden when students think that choosing a major is locking themselves into something for the rest of their lives. However, selecting a major should still be a well-researched decision.

Suggesting that students do not need to stress over choosing a lifelong career as an undergraduate does not mean that they should ignore career exploration. Career exploration is an important part of the undergraduate experience and should be presented to students as part of the developmental process. Advisors can reference O'Banion's (1972) model of developmental advising. Later additions by Habley (1994) posit that students should explore life, career, and educational goals before selecting and scheduling courses. When doing this, students will be able to work with advisors to select courses more relevant to their developing goals, which in turn should increase attendance and improve students' GPA.

Our lives are full of unplanned events and opportunities that impact our career paths. Knowing this, advisors should encourage the transformation of these "unplanned events into opportunities for learning," and suggest that students "generate, recognize, and incorporate chance events into their career development," ideas proposed by planned happenstance theorists Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz (1999, p. 117). Students should take a moment to consider what led them to this particular point and appreciate the events that got them here. When students recognize these events and "spin" them in a positive way, they make a profound impact on how their careers play out.

What can advisors do *now* to help students prepare to make the most of their education? Advisors should work with students to complete appropriate career assessments and assist in interpreting the results of these assessments. When we use developmental advising theory, we equip students with an awareness of their skills, abilities, and values – and how each of these relates to their education, career, and life goals.

Advisors should help students choose activities that accentuate their coursework and individualize their education. Students who choose biology as their major should be encouraged to

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Peer Advisors and the Major Exploration Process

***Ellen Murkison**, Georgia Southern University*

Choosing a major is a *major* problem for many students. At Georgia Southern University, Peer Academic Advisors (PAAs) help make the major exploration process more enjoyable and less stressful for students. PAAs' positive attitudes help counteract many fears, concerns, attitudes, and motivation issues displayed by students who begin college without a major. Peer advisors play both formal and informal roles within the advising center as they assist undeclared students.

Academic advising centers at Georgia Southern provide intrusive advising to students. As defined by Glennen (1984) "the intrusive advising approach is based on the philosophy that schools should not wait for students to get in trouble, but should continually call them in for advising and counseling throughout the year" (pp. 604-605). While intrusive advising practice encompasses many strategies, mandatory advising meetings are a hallmark of our university's commitment to frequent student/advisor contact. These practices support the university's larger retention, progression, and graduation goals for our students.

In support of Georgia Southern's student success goals, First-Year Experience (FYE) became the first advising center on campus dedicated solely to advising undeclared students. With student success in mind, FYE created the PAA program to provide roughly 800 undeclared students with assistance in major exploration each fall. FYE staff members (one full-time coordinator and two part-time graduate assistants) were stretched to devote the time each undeclared student required for major exploration and course advising. Clearly additional staffing was necessary if we were to provide the quality of assistance our students needed to make good progress toward degree completion. Peer advisors helped us meet the needs of our undeclared students and PAAs continue to be an important component of our major exploration efforts even after gaining two additional full-time professional positions.

Peer academic advisors are undergraduate students recruited, hired, and trained by the FYE assistant director. From summer orientation, through first semester advising sessions, to the intensive pre-advising program designed for sophomores who are still undeclared, PAAs are a constant presence. Peer advisors do not take the place of fully-trained academic advisors, rather they "enrich faculty or staff advising by offering a different but complementary point of view from faculty or staff advisors' perspectives…" (Koring and Campbell, 2005, p. 11).

Practice

PAAs first interact with undeclared students during a small-group orientation activity. A version of the Cocktail Party exercise (Bolles, 2001) is distributed and students self-select the Holland Codes that best match their abilities and interests. Each PAA facilitates a series of exercises with the small group, discussing potential majors linked to the traits in each of the six codes. PAAs help relieve many anxieties new students have as they explore majors, meet with advisors, and register for classes.

During each semester, students meet with a PAA as a component of their scheduled advising time. PAAs administer an initial questionnaire to students, collect important data on student success activities (or lack thereof), provide referrals to campus services, and help students become comfortable as they engage in the advising process. PAAs guide undeclared students through major exploration and provide specific suggestions for students on ways to explore various majors. PAAs enthusiastically encourage students to complete exploration activities after the advising session.

Special pre-advising appointments are required of undeclared sophomores (students yet to declare after earning thirty to forty-four credit hours) during the initial weeks of the semester to expedite these students' major declaration. With only forty-two hours of general education required at our institution, undeclared sophomores are at-risk of delaying their progress to graduation the longer they fail to declare a major. A worksheet details activities sophomores must complete to be eligible for a regular advising appointment later in the semester. Typical activities include attendance at the Majors Fair, completion of a major exploration program, individual consultation with a professor or expert in a field, or completion of personality/skills assessments sponsored by Career Services.

Assessment

Quantitative data suggests that students are not delaying declaration of a major at the rate seen prior to the creation of the FYE advisement center. The percentage of undergraduate students who are undeclared dropped from a high of 12.9% (1999) to a rate of 3.6% (2010). Likewise, the number of students reaching the 45-hour mark still undeclared continues to drop. The number of students in this undeclared cohort fell from 57 students (spring 2007) to only 11 students (spring 2011). Since the 45-hour mark is the required declaration point, this progress is significant.

Qualitative data describes informal benefits students found from their interactions with PAAs. When asked to rate agreement to the following statements (fall 2010), students responded:

The PAAs directed me to appropriate resources for major exploration.	100% Strongly Agreed or Agreed
The PAAs improved my overall advisement experience.	96.6% Strongly Agreed or Agreed

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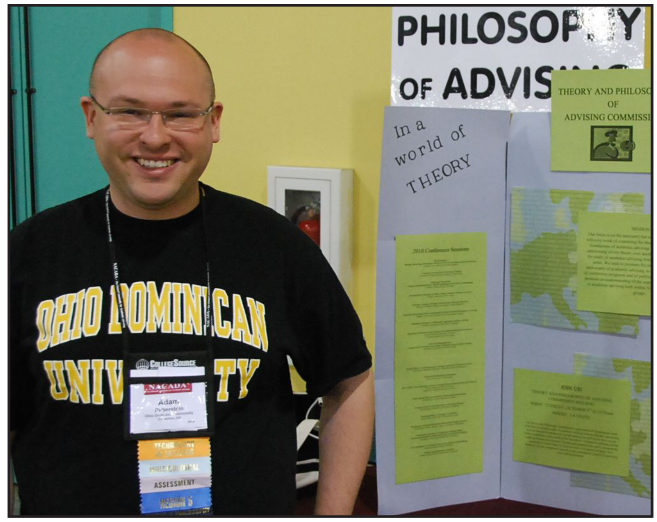
2011-13 NACADA Emerging Leaders Class Announced

The Diversity Committee developed the **NACADA Emerging Leaders Program** to encourage members from diverse backgrounds to get involved in leadership opportunities within the organization, outfit participants with the skills and tools necessary to pursue elected and appointed leadership positions, increase the number of leaders from diverse groups, and encourage and assist members of underrepresented populations to attend State, Regional, or Annual Conferences.

Members of the Emerging Leaders Classes currently serve, have served, or have been elected/appointed to serve as Region 7 Chair, Multicultural Concerns Commission Chair, GLBTA Concerns Commission Chair, Two-Year Colleges Commission Chair, Canada Interest Group Chair, Native American and Tribal College Interest Group Chair, New Advising Professionals Interest Group Chair, Membership Committee Chair, Diversity Committee Chair, Member Career Services Committee Chair, and Webcast Advisory Board Chair. Emerging Leaders have served or are serving on the Awards Committee, the Diversity Committee, the Finance Committee, the Membership Committee, the Member Career Services Committee, the Professional Development Committee, the Research Committee, the Webcast Advisory Board, the Annual Conference Advisory Board, the Summer Institute Advisory Board, the Publications Advisory Board, the AACSS Advisory Board, and the Emerging Leaders Program Advisory Board. One Emerging Leader initiated the Interest Group for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. A number of Emerging Leaders have presented (some with their Mentors) at Regional and Annual Conferences, and several have served on Region or Conference Steering Committees. One served as the Exhibits Chair for the 2009 Annual Conference in San Antonio and another as Chair of the 2010 Annual Conference in Orlando. Emerging Leaders have written for *Academic Advising Today* and NACADA monographs, taken part in Webinar broadcast presentations, and been awarded NACADA Research Grants. Emerging Leaders also report that they have become more involved at their home institutions. One said, "We've taken what we've learned through the program back to our home school. This program has not only made an impact on NACADA, but also on the institutions where the NACADA ELP participants work."

The 2009-2011 Emerging Leaders and Mentors, who began work at the 2009 Annual Conference in San Antonio, have been diligently pursuing their goals over the past two years and look forward to receiving their Certificates of Completion at this year's Conference in Denver, where they will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony.



2009-2011 Emerging Leader **Adam Duberstein** (Ohio Dominican University) says, "Undoubtedly, the NACADA Emerging Leaders' Program is the most valuable professional development opportunity in which I have ever participated. The program truly allows academic advising's Emerging Leaders to showcase their strengths, while challenging them to broaden their perspectives on advising and related activities. From serving as a member of the NACADA Diversity Committee to working with the NACADA Website Review Committee to presenting at conferences, I have enjoyed the opportunity to see how advising operates in multiple contexts. Additionally, the relationships that I have built with my mentor and fellow ELPers have proven beneficial, as we can all learn about advising from each other. Through the opportunities that I have enjoyed and the relationships that I have built through it, the ELP has inspired me to become a serious student of academic advising practice, and to be the best advisor that I can be."

Emerging Leaders Program Advisory Board Chair **Sandy Waters** (Old Dominion University) is pleased to announce the 2011-2013 NACADA Emerging Leaders and Mentors.

Emerging Leaders

Melinda Anderson (College of William and Mary)
Lizette Bartholdi (St. Catherine University)
Johnika Dreher (Prince George's Community College)
Salawati "Sally" Garner (University of Oregon)
Ross Hawkins (Missouri State University)
Monica Jones (University of Arkansas)
Mandy Metzger (University of Wisconsin-Parkside)
Chrissy Renfro (Laramie County Community College)
Kristan Venegas (University of Southern California)
Angie Walston (Barton College)

Mentors

Art Esposito (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Art Farlowe (University of South Carolina-Columbia)
Susan Fread (Lehigh Carbon Community College)
Gayle Juneau (University of Nevada-Las Vegas)

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Advisor Wellness – Coming up for air!

Dear Career Corner:

I am an academic advisor in a bustling central advising office where the work seems to never end! We continue to see increased workloads with no end in sight. I am very passionate about what I do as an advisor and want to be there for all of my students, co-workers, parents, supervisor, etc. I am feeling incredibly overwhelmed and haven't been taking care of myself. I am looking for some suggestions on how to find that "balance" that everyone talks about.

Sincerely, Overwhelmed

Dear Overwhelmed:

Thank you for submitting your question, an incredibly relevant one during these times of budget reductions and increased enrollment. So many of us as advisors come into the profession because we are passionate about working with students and love to help others! The satisfaction of seeing our students learn and grow makes all of the hard work worthwhile, but it is easy to lose sight of ourselves when we are always focused on how we can serve others.

Some key components of overall well-being can support us in finding ourselves more revitalized and rejuvenated on a daily basis. In much the same way that flight attendants remind us to put on our oxygen masks before assisting others, if we take care of ourselves first we will be better equipped to help our students. Perhaps this is a silly analogy, but when we put it into practice, it really works! Here are a few suggestions.

Healthy = Happy. Research shows that healthy people are happier and happy people are healthier! The positive loop is important to remember. Lifestyle and mental changes can increase our basic happiness level. Having a healthy diet, a regular amount of exercise, and a positive mental attitude all support our wellbeing.

BREATHE! This sounds so simple, but it is important to take those few moments throughout the day to breathe. Take a ten minute break in the morning and again the afternoon. And yes, we can find ten minutes! Packing our own lunch can often be healthier than restaurant eating, but is is also a good idea to get out of our offices during our lunch break. If we spend some time outside and get some sun, we will have the added benefit of getting some much-needed Vitamin D. (A sunshine lamp is a good alternative for not-so-sunny locations.)

Time Management. Like our advisees, many of us struggle with time management and self-care. We may find ourselves talking to our students about good time management habits and school life balance but not 'practicing what we preach.'

Daily Practices.
- Meditation can be very beneficial to our overall well-being. We should each take a few minutes in the morning, at lunch, or before going to bed just for ourselves. There are many different styles of meditation – such as guided, silent, trance, movements, chants, or sacred texts – and researching to see which one works best for us can be an enjoyable journey. We should also consider our intentions for meditation, such as health & well-being, personal development, self-mastery, or identifying spiritual path.
- Writing down our thoughts and feelings can be helpful for many of us. The act of putting pen to paper can relieve quite a bit of stress. We should not think of this exercise in terms of a typical academic paper needing evaluation, but instead, write about what is true for us at the moment. We might want to write about what went well today, the glitches we experienced, what we are grateful for, or goals for the next day.

The key to incorporating these daily practices is to focus on the journey and not the destination. These are not one time events; they are practices that we incorporate into our daily routines so that they come as naturally as brushing our teeth. According to Thomas Merton, "Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony." We just need to get started!

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Commission & Interest Group Updates

NACADA members can view updates and related information on the individual Commission or Interest Group home pages. Announcements, content-related resources, meetings and other conference events, leadership contact information, listserv subscription instructions, and other items of interest are posted on these webpages.

Members are encouraged to become more involved with the Commissions and Interest Groups by participating in events and activities or volunteering to serve on a committee. Visit the links below for more information on specific units and contact information for the Chairs of those units of special interest.

- Commissions: *www.nacada.ksu.edu/Commissions/index.htm*
- Interest Groups: *www.nacada.ksu.edu/InterestGroups/index.htm*

Bookmark preferred Commissions and/or Interest Groups and check back throughout the year for updates and new developments!

2011 Service to Commission Awards

Congratulations to the 2011 NACADA Service to Commission Award recipients. These award recipients will be formally honored at the respective annual Commission meetings held during the NACADA Annual Conference in Denver this fall. The recipients this year include:

Marc Lowenstein	Theory & Philosophy of Advising Commission The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, Pomona, N.J.
Darcie Peterson	Advising Education Majors Commission Utah State University, Logan, Utah
Steve Schneider	Two-Year Colleges Commission Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wis.
Janet Spence	Advising Administration Commission University of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.

The Service to Commission Award is presented to an individual who has provided outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to a particular commission. For more information on the guidelines for the Service to Commission Awards, visit *www.nacada.ksu.edu/Programs/Awards/CService.htm*.

Advising Students with Disabilities Commission

***Erin Justyna**, Chair*

It was great meeting Commission members at the Region 7 Conference. We had several new people sign up and others volunteer to be more involved. If you are in a different region and looking to volunteer, please contact me. I believe there are many more people on our campuses who can get involved in NACADA and our commission. Do you know someone in your disability services office or special education department that might be interested in NACADA and the Advising Students with Disabilities Commission? Tell them about this great resource.

Thank you to commission members who put in proposals and who volunteered to read proposals for the 2011 Annual Conference. I am also looking for volunteers to work on the materials in the *Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources*. Please email me if you are interested.

Don't forget our commission can be found on Facebook by searching Nacada: Students with disabilities commission. Please log on and post. This is a great free forum for us to use in between conferences.

I look forward to seeing you all in Denver!

Erin Justyna
Assistant Director
Student Disability Services
Texas Tech University
erin.justyna@ttu.edu

Commission & Interest Group Updates

Canada Interest Group

***Shari Dorr**, Chair*

The Canada Interest Group covers such a large area of communities with both similarities and differences! To facilitate discussion that is meaningful to all NACADA members that are in Canada, the group is seeking involvement from all regions of the country so that the group can determine needs, identify issues to be addressed, and celebrate triumphs from those in advising throughout the country.

To accomplish this, we are hoping to hear from NACADA members from the following provinces/territories that are severely under-represented in the group's membership:

Yukon
Northwest Territories
Nunavut
Newfoundland and Labrador
PEI
New Brunswick

If you are an advisor at an institution in one of these regions, please send an email to me at the address below.

Shari Dorr
UAIC Coordinator
Office of the Associate Vice President (Academic)
University of Guelph
Ontario, Canada
s.dorr@exec.uoguelph.ca.

2012 NACADA Leadership Election Information

The next NACADA Leadership elections will be held in February 2012. For a complete list of NACADA leadership opportunities available in these elections, visit the NACADA website at www.nacada.ksu.edu/Election/index.htm. A direct link to this election information is also available on the NACADA home page.

Nominations for the various positions can be submitted electronically using the online form available at the website above. Other versions of this document are also available at this site that can be faxed or mailed to the NACADA Executive Office. In addition, nomination forms will be available in the NACADA display booth in the Exhibits area at the Annual Conference in Denver in October as well as in the back of the printed conference program. These forms can be submitted while at the conference or faxed/mailed afterwards. The deadline for submitting nominations to the Executive Office for the 2012 elections is Friday, October 28, 2011.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the governance of the Association, you are encouraged to submit a nomination to be considered for a position. In addition, if you know someone whom you believe would be a good candidate, please submit his or her name via the nomination form, and the NACADA Executive Office will follow up to determine if he or she is interested and meets the eligibility criteria. Leadership position overviews, including eligibility requirements, and general election information are provided on the NACADA Web site at the URL above. If you would like to inquire about your eligibility or that of a colleague for a particular position prior to submitting a nomination, please contact the Executive Office.

Each candidate accepting a nomination will be required to complete a short personal biography form online, detailing past NACADA involvement and specific accomplishments, and other relevant support of advising as well as respond to specific questions as part of a platform statement. Each candidate is also asked to submit a photograph that will be posted on her/his platform Web page. Based on nomination acceptances received, the NACADA Nominating Committee may solicit additional nominees to ensure at least two candidates for each position. The final slate of candidates will be available in late fall 2011 and posted to the election web page noted above. The elections will be conducted online in February 2012 and newly elected leaders will take office in October 2012 after the annual conference in Nashville.

Watch the monthly Member Highlights for more information about these elections. If you have questions, contact the NACADA Executive Office at nacada@ksu.edu or (785) 532-5717.

How Technology Complements . . . *continued from page 1*

Technology only complements academic advising to impact student success when it is used as a tool to achieve a SLO. It is important that technology is used within an assessment rubric because though technology is ubiquitous in today's institutions, I could find little evidence that technology impacts student success.

When a student sits at my computer and, with my guidance, generates his DARS report, explains his report to me, and decides what he needs to do to graduate, the student meets an advising SLO using technology. When the student asks about a job after graduation, I refer him to the Career Services webpage and he makes an appointment. The student again achieves a SLO. When we teach students how to access and use information themselves via technology, we use the technology tool to achieve the institution's academic advising SLOs (e.g., student is proactive, student can generate a DARS report, student knows where to find graduation information, student has investigated career opportunities, and student values advising). If, at the end of a session we review and agree on the appointment notes, and I send the notes and all documents to the student, we use technology to achieve the SLO for the student and advisor for keeping accurate, up-to-date, and relevant records of all academic appointments. Finally, because the student can use technology to find information, I can expect more from the student in preparation for a second appointment: "Now that you know how to generate and evaluate your DARS report, bring a list of the requirements you still need to fulfill and the courses you want to take to fulfill those requirements. Because you are interested in internships, be prepared to show me two opportunities you want to know more about."

Because technologies are nearly an infinite resource in today's world, finding cool technologies is easy but relatively unimportant to student success. It is more important that advisors understand how, why, and when to implement technology in advising. Implementation of technology can be effortless when advisors understand that technology complements academic advising when used as a tool to achieve Student Learning Outcomes. When we view technology as a tool, great innovation is not in the technology itself but in how it alters or impacts how we advise. Thus, the greatest impact technology has on academic advising is that it leads us to find new ways to achieve our outcomes and help students succeed.

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Reference

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Our Association Reaches Out to . . . *continued from page 2*

navigation, and presentation; a full report will be presented to the Board in October.

- **Educate university and college decision makers about the role of quality academic advising in higher education.** The committee charged with investigating the best and most efficient ways to make connections with institutional decision makers drafted a survey that could be distributed to campus administrators. Board of Directors members piloted the survey by visiting upper level administrators on their campuses to learn their perspectives on advising and to share information about NACADA. Results from the pilot survey will be shared with the Board in October, and a plan for the future use of this tool will be discussed.
- **Ensure the effectiveness of the Association.** The annual assessment of the Board, Council, and Executive Office was conducted in June. Results will be shared with leadership during the annual meeting in Denver.

In my welcome speech in Orlando, I invited all members to stand up and join me as an advocate for student success and academic advising on all campuses in our global higher education family. I hope each of us will continue this effort under the leadership of incoming President **Jennifer Joslin** and Vice President **Joshua Smith**.

Again, it has been an honor to serve as president of the world's premier organization for academic advising and student success. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to give back to the Association that has helped me so much throughout the years. Good luck to all members as we begin the fall term. I hope to meet many of you in Denver.

Kathy Stockwell, President
NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising
STOCKWEL@FVTC.EDU

Prepare to Connect in Denver . . . *continued from page 3*

conference committee. Not only will "in person" connections and sessions be outstanding, but the technology "back channel" discussions and conversations on the NACADA Blog, Facebook©, Twitter™, and other social media outlets will add heighten excitement and energy to our conference. Both conference participants and those who cannot join us this year will actively connect. Thanks goes to **Rhonda Baker** and **Michele Holaday** in the Executive Office, **Brad Popiolek** (University of Texas at Austin), **Laura Pasquini**, and **Jennifer Joslin** for all their work in bringing NACADA into the world of technology!

I look forward to connecting with all of you in Denver! Please stop and say hello, find me on Facebook at **Charlie Nutt**, or tweet me **@charlienutt**. It will be wonderful to connect with all of you in Denver!

Charlie Nutt, Executive Director
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NACADA Career Services Corner *continued from page 14*

Work/life balance is important. Deschene (n.d.) offers some suggestions on achieving work/life balance from:

- **Keep your approach flexible.** Every day, there are new problems and new solutions. Sometimes, one solution works and other times other solutions work. ~Amit Bhatia
- **Define the things that are non-negotiable.** Exercise every day, eat healthy, and sleep at least 6-7 hours a night. Consistency is the key for me. ~Billie Joe Heller
- **Embrace imperfection and chaos.** Give up perfection in one area to have the other in your life. ~Melanie Greenberg, PhD
- **Let the little things go.** We need to remember that this life is just a ride. Sit down and enjoy. When we are less worried we can finally live our lives, and balance will show up when we don't expect it. ~Kim Van Biezen
- **Allow yourself to achieve flow.** To be engaged at whatever I am doing, whenever I am doing it. What I do wholeheartedly energizes me, no matter what that is. It is only when I get into the pattern of getting through one thing in order to get to the next thing that I feel exhausted and overwhelmed. ~ James McMahon and Lauren Rosenfeld
- **Don't put all your eggs in your inbox.** The key is to not expect more than work can actually provide. While it's important to enjoy work, you can't expect it to fulfill every aspect (passion, social, entertainment, etc.) ~Melissa Mizer Wilhel

The bottom line… taking care of ourselves makes us better, happier human beings! Isn't that the model we want our students to take with them into their educational experience and career?

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Save Green by Going Green: . . . *continued from page 4*

operations. These consequences include time and expertise needed to set up technology, the time and energy needed to train staff, what must be done to address privacy concerns, and how best to confront and overcome staff fear of change.

Successful implementation of technology in advising hinges on access to available and reliable resources and advisor willingness to seek means toward a positive end. A well-funded institution may provide campus-wide resources and technologies that enhance the advising experience but advisors at lesser-funded institutions may be required to "fend for themselves" to install new technologies. Simple technological endeavors (e.g., e-mail and e-folder based advising) offer results that can be as effective as more labor intensive technologies found at larger, well-funded institutions. The prominence of free cloud technologies (e.g., use of online applications, such as Google™ Docs rather than proprietary software such as Microsoft™ Word) has further increased resource availability and provides other avenues for cash-strapped advisors.

Before worrying about the finer points of "green" resources, advisors should seek basic information that will allow them to take the first step towards a paperless world. We suggest three basic considerations for advisors seeking effective methods for "going green":

Know the institution and the budget. Simply stated, advisors must become aware of the resources provided by their institutions. Before recreating the wheel, advisors should research the availability of campus programs and personnel that may be readily available. This may also require a realistic understanding of funding limitations. For example, an advising group will likely be unable to purchase a $20 million system, although it may be possible to use existing programs in new ways (i.e., institutional e-mail, social media, and standard documents).

Consider the challenges. When considering the implementation of a "green" technology plan, it is important to broach the topic of challenges. Beyond initial costs, resource needs, the fear of change, and the daunting task of developing green practices, technology integration must address records security concerns. With implementation of third party sources (e.g., Google™), it is common to fear a loss of privacy. Before implementing third party technologies, advisors must be aware of their partnerships and the security levels of these applications and programs. Advisors must be cognizant of who has access to electronic records; e-files must meet the same security standards as paper files.

Advisors must consider both institutional challenges and challengers. Are advisors completely restrained by the institutional budget? Are advisors within a department against this change? Is the administration supportive of this effort? Careful navigation is required at each level; effective leadership is needed to find common ground that will allow for the enactment of new procedures.

Take the first step. The first step is often the most difficult. Just as each advisor employs technology in an individualized manner, so too will implementation glitches require modifications to a plan. Advisors should be prepared for backlash if an idea does not initially succeed. Keep in mind that initial steps do not require a huge leap; it may be best to simply implement small and slow changes. Small changes can help minimize staff fears and provide sufficient time to effectively train personnel who need more guidance. The integration of small pieces of a plan provides a testing ground for detractors and may bring a balance between growth and the continued satisfaction of all involved parties.

Despite a variety of concerns about the implementation of technology, green advising methods are becoming prominent fixtures on college campuses. It is important that advisors embrace new technologies and understand the benefits of these technologies while remaining cognizant of concerns. When we are open to change and are willing to explore new options we can take the first steps towards "going green."

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Region News: A Click Away!

NACADA members can view their Region's news and information on the individual Region home pages. The Region leadership will list announcements, post news articles & pictures, as well as contact information for all Regional programs, other items of interest, and important links.

Visit ***www.nacada.ksu.edu/Regional_Divisions/regions.htm*** to see what is happening in your Region and how you may become more involved by participating in events and activities! Bookmark your favorite Region and check back often for new developments!

Using Technology to Enhance . . . continued from page 5

Rather than reducing communication between advisors, the integration of online learning into the advisor training program ensured that the connectivity between advisors occurred on a more meaningful level, focusing on relational and conceptual issues rather than the intake of information.

Leonard (2008) asserted that "there is nothing else that has had as significant an impact on advising in the past ten years as the introduction of new technologies" (p.292). However, Leonard only examined the role new technologies play in services to students. The program developed by the COSUAC demonstrates that Schwenn (2010) and Pasquini (2010) were correct in suggesting that technology can also play a role in advisor training and development by providing an easier and more efficient way for advisors to absorb the informational component of the job. Online informational training allows trainers to spend more time focusing on conceptual and relational aspects of advising, thus moving advisor development closer to the ideal envisioned by Brown (2008).

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Build Better Advising Relationships . . . continued from page 6

Tip 3: Get behind the wheel
Until the blog's web address is shared, practically no one will come across it. On the rare chance that someone does, type a short post to the effect of, "Site in Progress – Check Back Soon." Start experimenting with the tools, tracking features, and widgets, then draft a few posts. Ask friends and colleagues for feedback on everything from the blog's name and logo, to the length and content of the posts.

Tip 4: Provide original content not found elsewhere
Avoid creating the digital version of a crowded college bulletin board - quick re-posts of deadlines, reminders, and dates. We call this the "info-dump phenomenon." Although it may take longer to create original content, which may mean posting less frequently, readers will appreciate it. Some of our favorite creative projects included a podcast interview with an academically disqualified student who had recently been reinstated to the university and a series of vodcasts highlighting UO's Teaching and Learning Center.

When we talk about this project with fellow advisors, the most common response is, "I would love to try something like that but I'm not much of a tech person." Let us be clear – we weren't either – but we adopted a "learn as you go approach" and took advantage of NACADA resources such as pre-conference technology workshops that featured hands-on learning. We hope that our experience encourages other advisors to reach beyond their comfort zone when brainstorming solutions to meet student needs.

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LinkedIn: Expanding NACADA . . . *continued from page 7*

Sample LI groups we are involved with include: NACADA, College Career Expert, Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, and the National Career Development Association. The LI "Groups" tab allows members to easily explore their own groups and potentially interesting groups, the "Groups Directory," and even create a group of their own.

Seeking Employment. Job seekers are able to use LI to develop their online presence, market themselves to employers, and take control of online content that might be viewed by potential employers. LI members can post one professional picture, easily import a resume, upload a portfolio, and receive written recommendations from connections. A complete LinkedIn profile with active connections also increases "PageRank" which then lists LinkedIn search results in search engines (e.g., Google©) before results from other online sites (e.g., Facebook©); this allows members to showcase their professional achievements first.

LI also provides great resources for job searches. LI automatically shows member-posted positions targeted toward experiences listed on their resumes. Members can conduct general job searches using the "Jobs" tabs. The "Companies" tab allows LI members to search jobs by company and follow companies of interest. Members who follow companies receive automatic updates about new job postings, new hires, and news from the companies they follow.

LI groups provide a unique means to connect with someone at a company of interest. For example, a college or university alumni group member list may show other members who currently (or previously) work at a desired place of employment. Job seekers may choose to contact that group member and ask about the company culture or request an informational interview.

Some advisors work with students on career development and placement matters. LI can be a resource for students to explore career options, develop job search marketing materials, brand themselves, and find jobs. Advisors should encourage students to join LI and utilize its resources for career advancement.

Only three of the primary benefits of LinkedIn have been discussed here. There are many more LI advanced features, uses, and tools to discover. To find out more about LinkedIn try the following resources:

- Learn.linkedin.com (great general information)
- Careerservices.linkedin.com (useful PowerPoints and webinars).

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Peer Advisors and the Major . . . *continued from page 12*

Conclusion

The Peer Academic Advisor program at Georgia Southern University has made a significant impact on the ability of staff within the First-Year Experience advising center to support the broad institutional goals of retention, progression and graduation of students. Additionally, the positive atmosphere and empathetic attitude displayed by PAAs encourages student engagement in a cohort which is traditionally less likely to feel connected to the institution by virtue of their undecided-ness. These benefits will continue to improve the Georgia Southern campus and community for years to come.

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Why Choosing a Major is Not . . . *continued from page 11*

apply to become a Biology department student worker, to get involved in the Science Club, or to find a business where they can job shadow. The information gained from such experiences can be extremely valuable in ultimately deciding their career path. Plus, combined with a degree, these experiences will help students build a resume to land that first (or next) job.

When advisors embrace student development theory, students are better prepared to answer the difficult questions from family and friends; they are able to discuss with more confidence why they are taking their chosen path. Advisors should remind students (and themselves) to take a deep breath and appreciate where they are and what they have done to get to this point. Then we should challenge students to get involved and take control of their career path. Advisors should not let the stress of choosing a lifelong career rob students of their creativity. We should remind students that their major does not determine the rest of their lives—they do!

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Collaboration—A Win, Win, Win . . . *continued from page 8*

About ten years ago, it became apparent that many Brock students wanted to obtain the applied/practical experience that would give them an edge when entering the job market. Many arrived at advising sessions a few months before graduation with one big question – "Now what do I do?" In school for as long as they could remember, many suddenly realized that the light at the end of the educational tunnel was getting brighter, and felt they did not have marketable skills in their chosen field. After these "just-before-graduation" advising sessions, students often decided to pursue the practical knowledge and training they needed by attending one of our provincial colleges for a diploma or certificate. This meant additional years in school and additional tuition dollars to receive the training they felt needed to succeed in the work place.

Sasson (2011) noted that "collaboration saves time and maximizes curriculum." In the Brock University Faculty of Social Sciences, we realized that our liberal arts approach to education was not providing our students with all of the tools needed to successfully enter the work force. Advisors and faculty members realized that our students were interested in learning about the who, what, where, when, and why of their discipline, but also needed to learn the how; thus many headed to our provincial colleges upon completion of their degree studies. Given the primary mandate at most universities does not involve providing applied knowledge, we realized that collaboration with the colleges in Ontario would allow us to develop unique educational programs to give our students not only a strong theoretical base of knowledge but the applied/practical knowledge the colleges provide. A maximization of the curriculum would provide students the opportunity to gather information from the five W's plus the H. We also recognized that students' time and money would be maximized in collaborative programs.

For example, one very popular collaborative program was developed for Film Studies majors. Brock's Film Studies degree program is very theoretical with no film-making opportunities. Students in this program indicated a strong interest in learning film production techniques, so a collaborative program was developed with the Advanced Film-Making program at Fanshawe College. Interested and qualified students are accepted into the collaborative program at the end of their first year of studies. At that point, one year's worth of upper-year elective credits are removed from the students' degrees, and the fourth-year required courses are shifted to years two and three. This frees up one entire year for students to attend Fanshawe College where they receive advanced standing and complete the program in a year. Upon completion of the Advanced Film-making program at Fanshawe College, students receive one year's worth of elective credits at Brock University and complete a university degree and a college certificate program in only four years.

Besides the Fanshawe College program, we have an additional 13 collaborative programs with ten different Ontario colleges in such areas as Police Foundations, Public Relations, Behavioural Science Technology, Emergency Management, Paralegal, Geomatics, and Social Service Work. Besides providing practical/applied training, these programs allow students to network in their chosen field as they complete their field placement requirements. This often leads to their first job upon completion of their studies.

The collaborative programs we have developed are a true "win, win, win, win" situation. Brock University wins because these programs bring very good students. The colleges win because collaborative program students bring critical thinking and research skills that provide leadership in their classes. Parents win because the tuition they pay for their children is drastically reduced. Most importantly, the students win because they receive an education that will allow them to reach the greatness to which they aspire. Fostering greatness in the next generation is possible because of the collaboration that takes place across so many Ontario institutions.

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Helping Students Help Themselves . . . *continued from page 8*

an academic advisor and in what way is it different from a study advisor? Charlie Nutt cautions that it is very important that each faculty defines these roles for themselves, making clear distinctions between the tasks of study and academic advisors. One word that is crucial to academic advising was heard repeatedly in Charlie's workshops: connection. Making sure that the students can identify with their studies, that they can relate to the philosophy of the faculty and the university, is key for a pleasant and successful college experience.

What is the most important factor for students during their studies, and what distinguishes students with a successful career from those who are less successful? The quality of teaching? Having a rich social life? Richard Light, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, conducted a survey with 1800 Harvard graduates and found the answer: the relationship with the academic advisor is the key to success. Or as Light put it (2001): *Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience* (p.81).

"Think about your own time as a student," Charlie Nutt urges. "Perchance you met a professor who was truly inspiring and gave you guidance. But such an encounter should not be left to chance. We need to build a relationship between the students and the advisor *before* the students realize they need someone to help them out. Because once they realize they are in trouble, they're already in so much trouble that they have difficulties getting out by themselves." However, Charlie says, it is not the task of the academic staff to hold the students' hands and solve all their problems for them. Rather, advisors should help students learn from their mistakes and "provide them with strategies and techniques to take success into their own hands, which is the student's responsibility." Advisors should help the students feel empowered.

What do we need to teach students? According to Charlie Nutt, without a doubt, we need to "teach them how to make choices because they don't know how to do that. Up until they enter university, decisions have been made for them. We need to teach students the important difference between choosing a certain study program and choosing a career. When asked: *why do you want to study a particular subject? And how did you arrive to this conclusion?* students' most cited answers are: 'I thought this subject was interesting in high school,' 'my friends study the same,' 'my parents wanted me to,' and 'I didn't like anything else better.' It's not about helping, it's about teaching: teaching to think, teaching to make the right choices." Some students have no idea what courses to choose in their first year. It takes time to get used to being a university student. Charlie adds, "Don't forget that these young people are standing on their own feet for the first time; it's often the first time they leave their parent's place. They need time to get used to this."

To many freshmen the university is a different world. Many have a hard time adjusting to it; some of the students who had high grades in high school are now barely passing their classes, panicking that they might fail. "It is important that they realize that it is normal, that they can relax" Charlie says. "I share my own story with them," says someone in the audience. "I too had good grades in high school, but was not doing so well in my first year of college. It helps sharing these stories with students; they instantly open up to you, they can relate."

At the end of one of his workshops, Charlie provides a list of helpful tips for future advisors: "Know your students! Who are they, what are they telling you? Are they ready to study at university? Have high expectations. If they are too low, students will only make very slow progress. Set up a team of professionals and staff members with different skills; jointly take up the responsibility of ensuring study success. Motivate students to reflect. Give valuable information. Integrate academic advising in the first year and focus on university culture sooner than later. If we don't, students will assume that we are not interested in them and their stories, which is just the opposite of what a good academic advisor should be."

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Distance Advising: An Invitation . . . *continued from page 9*

The third consideration for distance advisors is sequence. Sequence refers to the order in which advisors respond to student concerns. For example, when a student requests tutoring for fear of failing a class, the advisor who realizes the importance of sequence attends to the student's anxiety first and provides information second. The advisor can make an empathic statement (e.g., *"I can tell you really care about learning the material"*) prior to providing instructions for accessing tutoring services. Distance advisors must pay special attention to the order in which they attend to concerns if they want to build strong relationships.

Conclusion

In a few years, online learners will no longer be considered a subpopulation of students, but rather the majority within higher education. Clearly, distance advising will be a central element to retention strategies, especially considering the risk factors associated with nontraditional students. By practicing sound communication strategies such as microskills, distance advisors can overcome the challenge of building relationships in the absence of direct, face-to-face contact. Moreover, when we pay attention to three important considerations, vocal qualities, word choice, and sequence, distance advisors can interact with students more intentionally. In a distance advising model, every student interaction should be considered an opportunity to strengthen the relationship. NACADA members who have experience with distance advising should share their ideas on how to achieve this goal. In doing so, NACADA will continue to shape the future of academic advising into the 21st century.

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2011-2013 NACADA Emerging . . . *continued from page 13*

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New Emerging Leaders and Mentors will meet at the Annual Conference in Denver to create partnerships and begin development, conversation, and group building. Partners will develop goals pertaining to leadership in NACADA over the next six months and continue their work together over the two-year program.

Visit the Emerging Leaders Program website at *www.nacada.ksu.edu/Programs/EmergingLeaders/Index.htm* for more information.

Holland Revisited: A Self-Authored . . . *continued from page 10*

cited in the piece), Kincanon reminds us that these authors have long indicated the importance of situating learning in students' experiences, thus empowering students to reflect about their experiences, goals, and values, and encouraging them to self-author meaning for their educational experiences. When we encourage students to define their own meaning from Holland theory observations, rather than prescribing meaning for them, we guide students to self-authorship, we challenge them to derive deeper meaning from their choice of major, and thereby improve their chances of academic success and persistence.

Pizzolato (2006) indicated that self-authored students will not blindly follow parental expectations or request advisors to tell them which major to select. It seems counter-intuitive to expect such students to simply follow the sometimes narrowly defined recommendations of assessment instruments when making education planning decisions such as major choice. Specific to major exploration, we can strip away prescriptive observations by encouraging students to identify how they personally display characteristics of any of the six Holland types. Just as self-authorship encourages defining one's own meaning, so should we encourage students to identify their own reasonable sensibilities and decide which of their multiple facets they choose to pursue in degree programs that bear the same indicators.

When we encourage students to understand how they uniquely represent aspects of the Holland Codes in their reasonable sensibilities, we empower them to not only make thoughtful decisions about their major, but to become self-authored and more thorough decision makers in every aspect of their education.

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