**Professional Development Workshop**

**Bridging the Advising Chasm: Strategies for a Holistic Advising Approach**

**Abstract**

The faculty role includes teaching, research/professional development, and service. Oftentimes, advising is also included as part of the expected duties. Yet, the role of advisor is one that is frequently taken-for-granted. The goal of this workshop is to develop attendees’ abilities to navigate the pitfalls associated with advising. As such, we plan to provide an advising workshop that addresses some of our best practices for each stage of the advising process, including before, during, and after meeting with students.

**Keywords**

Professional Development, Advising, Student Interactions, Student Success

**Introduction**

The purpose of this workshop is to shine a light on an all-too-often overlooked aspect of being a faculty member – advising. After many years of attending MOBTS conferences, we cannot recall many (if any) sessions devoted to the topic. Perhaps we all have succumbed to the assumption that many business schools seem to make – attend your university’s advising workshop and then figure out the rest on your own. Although this approach ends up working for motivated and experienced faculty, the learning curve is often quite steep and stressful for new educators who are unfamiliar with the process. From trying to advise students properly on which classes to take, to building a rapport with them in what limited time you have, the goal of this workshop is to aid faculty development by providing attendees with tips, techniques, and best practices for advising students. The target audience for this workshop is new educators who are unfamiliar with the advising process as well as seasoned faculty needing a refresher on current challenges and best practices for advising students.

**Learning Objectives, Engagement, & Takeaway**

This workshop is designed to address some of the advising challenges faculty may experience when engaging with today’s student populations. Students are currently faced with a variety of difficulties, such as adjusting to college life due to desocialization and increased stress levels in the aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Additionally, today’s students are in contact with their parents several times a day and data show they require more support and resources than students in the past (McMurtrie & Supiano, 2022; NACADA, 2023). Furthermore, the changing demographics of student populations coupled with more complex college curriculums present unique challenges to advising. Non-traditional, international, high-risk, first generation, and underrepresented students each come with their own experiences and expectations that should be considered during the advising process. We intend to address these challenges and present strategies and/or best practices to effectively engage with and advise students in order to promote their academic retention and success.

As for learning objectives, upon completion of this workshop attendees will be able to:

* Identify the stages of the advising process
* Recognize the expectations of a faculty advisor today and the unique challenges facing different student populations
* Understand the importance of the faculty-advisor engagement process in promoting student success for the current generation of students
* Understand available tools, tips, and techniques to meet students’ needs, including campus resources and when to use them

*Participant Engagement*

During this workshop, attendees will learn about all aspects of the advising process. Specifically, based on the learning objectives, we plan to address the following topics in detail:

* The Advising Process – A Brief Review
	+ Pre-Meeting
		- Importance of attending advising workshops to learn about school’s registration rules and flowsheets, as well as available campus resources
		- Improved advising through technology
			* Familiarity with school technology (e.g., Degree Tracker, Navigate)
			* Tips & tools for scheduling (e.g., how to write an introductory email, timing, SignUpGenius)
	+ Meeting with students (in-person or electronically via Zoom/MS Teams)
		- How to build rapport to learn about student’s interests/passions and challenges
		- Required content (i.e., holds on a student’s account, GPA, available resources, degree completion plans, recommendations for upcoming semester, registration deadlines, and preparation for commonly asked questions)
		- Current advising challenges (e.g., addressing equity and other gaps on one’s campus)
			* Strategies and best practices for advising a diverse student population (i.e., what works, what doesn’t)
	+ Post-Meeting
		- Proper etiquette for follow-up email with students (e.g., summarizing recommendations, providing answers and/or next steps)
* Bridging the gap between faculty and professional advisors

After discussing these important topics, we will provide attendees with the opportunity to participate in fishbowl-style role-plays featuring an advisor meeting with their student. This form of audience engagement will enable attendees to practice applying what they’ve learned during the workshop and see how others handle such situations. Meanwhile, it will allow for us to provide additional advice and reinforce certain insights in real-time.

*Key Takeaways:*

While we fully acknowledge that each school has its own idiosyncrasies involving major/concentration flowsheets, pre-requisites, and registration processes, based on our collective experience at multiple universities, we aim to codify the steps we’ve taken towards having a positive impact on our advisees. For early or soon-to-be educators, this is the advice many need to hear to help them prepare for their upcoming responsibilities as an advisor. Thus, by attending this session, participants will:

* Gain and/or refresh their knowledge of the advising process
* Understand the needs of students
* Be able to learn best practices and strategies for successful advising
* Gain insight into the significance of connections and collaboration across campus, including the benefit of a shared advising model between faculty and professional advisors
* See how effective advising contributes to decreasing university equity gaps

**PDW Overview & Timeline**

 To engage our audience, we intend to conduct our own advising workshop in which we will share several tips and techniques that we have found to be successful in administering our duties as an advisor and building a connection with students. Our goal is to help attendees to be better prepared to advise students by discussing common issues and sharing experiences of what has worked, and what has not, when advising students. Using the aforementioned Pre-, During-, and Post-Meeting format, we will guide discussion through each stage of the advising process while inviting discussion and participation in the form of role-play scenarios. Upon completion of that portion of the session, we will break into small groups for further discussion on some of the denser topics, such as building rapport with students and developing strategies for addressing current advising challenges. We will then conclude with our big takeaways recapping the session before sending around a sign-up sheet to share our materials and for everyone to stay in touch.

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| **PDW on Advising** | **Duration for 75-minute session** |
| Welcome & introductions | 10 |
| Discussion of advising-related topics with role-plays | 40 |
| Small group discussion addressing various current advising challenges | 15 |
| Q&A, recap/big takeaways, and email exchange/sign-up | 10 |
| **TOTAL** | **75** |

**References**

McMurtrie, B. & Supiano, B. (2022, December). The Future of Advising: Strategies to Support Student Success. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

NACADA (National Academic Advising Association). (2023). NACADA at Kansas State University. <https://nacada.ksu.edu/>. Accessed on 1/25/2023.