



## ADVISING COMMUNITIES

In 2019-20, despite challenges during the pandemic, the ACD continued its progress forward. Our Advising Communities (AC's) continue to reflect our member's topical interests and offered opportunities for resource sharing and increased general outreach efforts overall.

### **Strengths:**

- The Chair role is evolving well within the Division as we see AC Steering Committees more fully develop within Advising Communities that act as models for others. Chairs are using their leadership skills to develop distinct positions on their Steering Committees and then funneling work towards these individuals, rather than having to do it all themselves.
- Steering committees within AC's are continuing to build leadership skills and pathways towards Chair positions.
- This year, Advising Communities created more opportunities for engagement online than ever before! The statistics on our online discussions since the pandemic began in March 2020 are located [here](#). Our impact on the interactive content offered by NACADA has increased greatly due to the work of the AC's.
- The Division created a Mediasite channel in Spring that makes all of our recorded discussions available in one place at the bottom of our ACD homepage [here](#). This keeps much of our content in one place so that members have an easier time of finding it.
- We created 3 new opportunities for members to join new Advising Communities this year with the addition of the Wellbeing & Advisor Retention Advising Community, the Students with Experiences in the Foster Care System Advising Community, and the Social Justice Advising Community. We recorded a Zoom meeting with the three new groups to better market them to members [here](#).
- The Division is looking at ways to build member engagement outside of our role at Annual Conference. Though we see great value in our ties to Annual Conference in helping to build a robust program of sponsored sessions and in member engagement activities via business meetings, hot topics and the ACD Fair, the reach is only as far as the members that attend that event. We are thinking beyond Annual Conference to ways we can engage and provide high-quality resources online and possibly through cross-divisional collaborations. Providing additional ways for members to engage outside of participation at a specific event will allow our division to foster inclusion throughout the full membership.

### **Weaknesses:**

- Engagement continues to be a buzzword for the Division. Though we see great numbers for volunteer proposal readers annually, participation on Steering Committees and engagement on

social media or LISTSERVS is not where some Chairs would prefer to create an engaged and robust community. Some groups find it hard to get feedback and get members to contribute in meaningful ways that add to the topics and the profession overall.

- More traditional means of creating resources, such as writing for AAT, submitting webinar proposals or writing scholarly articles has declined overall in the past decade within the Division. Making sure Chairs know about the breadth of opportunities to create content or resources within their topic is an ongoing challenge.
- As membership overall in NACADA ebbs and flows, so too does membership in our Advising Communities. As new groups come into the Division, that may impact those groups already struggling with membership numbers and engagement. Our annual reports and rubrics continue to pinpoint some groups that underperform and may need eventual archiving. In addition, there is still some overlap with groups in the Administrative Division that may need definition around their mission and scope, merging, or more opportunities for collaboration in the future.
- As we offer up more online content, the Division will be rethinking having our discussions/presentations open to any and all. It may enhance membership benefits if we opened our discussions to all, but for our high-quality recordings, they may move to be members only content in future. Another possibility would be to allow the AC's to deliver the content in a format of their choosing, then house the recording behind the membership login on the NACADA website, providing a membership incentive for future access of this content.

#### **Opportunities:**

- The Division continues to see good engagement in our online discussions via the Zoom meeting platform and this year, the Division participated in [Global Advising Week](#), as well as the [Global Connections Series](#). The Division would like to look at future opportunities for virtual events participation, with possible collaborations amongst groups and Divisions.
- As a Division, we continue to try and balance our online discussion format with presentations from members, as well as overall content that does not directly compete with the NACADA webinars overseen by the Webinar Advisory Board. For example, this year, many AC's went directly to regional presenters within their topic area to ask if they would do an equivalent online discussion for their community. This may conflict with overall revenue generating opportunities with online content in the Association as a whole. We don't want to compete, but augment such opportunities.
- Our Division Steering Committee is composed of 9 Cluster Reps that have become a direct contact for our AC Chairs and a much-needed level of mentorship within the Division. Annually, the Cluster Reps directly help move Division goals forward with their participation on working groups. Much collaboration among AC's has come out of Cluster relationships. There is a higher level of communication than ever before with many Cluster Reps doing monthly meetings and/or direct email communications with their Chairs. We continue to refine their role and now have a rubric of expectations for these appointed Reps [here](#). However, they are not considered "official" leadership positions within the NACADA by-laws and are not able to take advantage of any funding for Annual Conference, though they directly support Chairs at Annual Conference.

Future exploration of these positions could be very beneficial to growing diverse and robust leaders from within the membership.

**Threats:**

- Volunteerism during the pandemic may go down and impact the viability of some of our AC's, especially those already struggling or on probation.
- Job losses within higher education could impact turnover in Chair and/or Steering Committee positions within Advising Communities.

## 2019-20 Division Goals

The Division also addressed specific goals this year that speak to the overall Association goals in more depth below.

**NACADA Goal #7: Expand the use of innovative technology tools and resources to support the work of the Association.**

***Specific Desired Outcome:** The Division Reps and EO Liaison will explore the development of automated communication to engage membership when they join and/or change membership into an AC*

This year, the Division focused on leveraging the Association's membership management system, Protech, to create customized communication for new members of NACADA. The ACD Communications Working Group, as well the Assistant Director for Membership Engagement Office (Joan Krush), crafted an introductory email that will be tested and sent to new members. Along the way, we worked with the Membership, Recruitment and Retention Committee (MMRC), as they were also involved in creating auto messaging for new members about the association overall. We discussed the timing of emails so the new member email will go out shortly after someone joins, then the ACD email would follow after ~1 month of membership. We are still working with the MMRC to finalize the details on messaging about the Divisions, but we hope to have something in place for 2021 that introduces new members to our Division. In addition, the ACD Communications Working Group will continue to work on an overall communications plan so that we are consistent with messaging about division happenings and opportunities throughout the year, not just on an ad hoc basis. A division communication plan will be a goal for 2021-22.

**Goal #6: Engage in ongoing assessment of all facets of the Association**

***Specific Desired Outcome:** Assess ACD Fair*

Continuing the work of the ACD Fair Working Group from the prior year, this year's working group continued to look at data and feedback gathered from 2018-2019 work in order to implement new facets of the ACD Fair event at Annual Conference. The Fair changed in format from table top displays

to posters and that has worked well for everyone, but we're still concerned with whether or not the event addresses the goals for the ACD Fair, also outlined in 2018-19. In 2019-20, the group decided to try a few new aspects of the Fair in Puerto Rico including setting up a "welcome" table at the entrance to the poster displays to introduce the Division overall before attendees started to browse the advising community options and began talking with Chairs/Steering Committee Members. At the table, Division Reps and Steering Committee members would hand-out promotional items about the Division, as well as perhaps get members to enter a contest of some type to incentivize visits to various AC's. The Division also wanted to implement table tents on each of the breakfast tables within the venue to encourage those coming in for breakfast to learn more about the Division and visit the posters. Since Annual will not happen in person in Puerto Rico, these ideas will be carried forward for Cincinnati. As we continue to look at how the ACD is involved at the Annual Conference, there may be opportunities to grow and change this event for the future. The group discussed an outreach or involvement event that could better help members get connected and engaged in the association overall, perhaps something cross-divisional that highlights multiple opportunities. As the Council moves forward on a cross-divisional working group, this may be addressed there as well. In addition, the ACD needs more opportunities to market to the membership outside the Annual Conference as only a fraction of members attend this event. This plays into our future goals and the Division communication plan mentioned above.

**Goal #5: Develop and sustain effective Association leadership.**

*Specific Desired Outcome: Structure Clear, Consistent, and Transparent Expectations for Division Roles through the development of sustainable training materials*

This year, the ACD Training Working Group was not able to greatly advance our goal in relation to moving all of our training into our Learning Management System, Canvas. A sample course was created and some elements moved into it, but ultimately with the pandemic and the additional responsibilities of our Reps in their personal and professional lives, this was not possible to achieve. This goal will move to the 2020-21 year and another Training Working Group will begin work on the Canvas courses. We are structuring our online Zoom training for Incoming Chairs in such a way this year that we will be able to "modularize" and more easily splice/dice this training into our Canvas courses for the future. We were able to conceptualize the course for Incoming Chair training this year, which will help us move forward with that course first.