



Advising Community on Graduate & Professional Students

Newsletter December 2020

WHO WE ARE

The community comprises professionals who advise post-baccalaureate students. We welcome all who work with traditional graduate students, professional degree seekers, adults returning for advanced degrees or certificates, and alternatively delivered and structured graduate and professional programs. Small in size but great in commitment, our community provides a mutually supportive context for discussion of issues particular to serving these student populations. Ongoing projects include encouraging discussion of pertinent topics on our listserv, providing resources to help advisors help students, and increasing our presence at national and regional meetings.

Welcome to the December issue of the GPS Newsletter!

PUBLICATION SPOTLIGHT

This month’s spotlight article features the Advising Community on Graduate & Professional Students Chair, Jamie Heck, and member, Angie Cook, who discuss “Applying Practices of Diversity, Inclusivity, and Connectedness to Graduate Student Experiences.” While institutions may develop initiatives and programming at the undergraduate level to address diversity, inclusivity and belongingness, Heck and Cook point out that it is imperative “...that graduate and professional students are included in the conversation related to institutional strategic planning and associated initiatives” as they are often not. Heck and Cook further discuss key points to work toward inclusion. To learn more, you can read the article in NACADA’s *Academic Advising Today* [here](#).

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



*Melissa Brown
Carnegie Mellon
University*

Hello! My name is Melissa Brown and I am the Manager of MS Programs in Mechanical Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). I’m starting off by sharing my personal experience with education as it’s shaped me not only as a person, but also as an academic advisor. I don’t think I have ever had a truly traditional experience with education. From a young age I spent part of my class time separated from my peers as part of a scholars program. Later in life, I elected to earn my GED rather than complete my senior year of high school. It wasn’t due to a lack of interest in learning or ability, but simply an eagerness to move forward with life. I had a good career within the insurance industry, but my desire to learn led me to enroll as a part-time student in my local community college. After a few years, I took a leap of faith and started a full-time program at the University of Pittsburgh where I earned my B.S. in Business Administration in 2011.



There were two things I was certain of when I completed by B.S. degree – I wanted to have an impact through my work and I did not want to work for a corporation. I focused on non-profit organizations in our area which included local universities such as CMU and I got lucky. That’s what it came down to – pure luck. I was offered a temporary position as an admission assistant in the Civil and Environmental Engineering



Contact Us

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Get Connected

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/gradadvising/>

Subscribe to our Listserv:

listserv@listserv.ksu.edu

Bookmark our webpage:

<https://nacada.ksu.edu/Community/Advising-Communities/Advising-Graduate-Professional-Students.aspx>

department at CMU. In that role, I was introduced to the world of academic advising. The two advisors in that department were incredible and really opened my eyes to what academic advising can and should be for students. I immediately applied for the permanent position that was open and started learning everything I could about supporting students. In 2015, I left my position in recruiting and admission and chose to pursue a position advising MS students.

Ok, let's get back to my current role. I'm still advising MS students and provide them with guidance throughout the lifecycle of their program (application to graduation). In addition, I partner with faculty and staff on strategic initiatives such as recruitment, community building, program development, and assessment. I have found it incredibly rewarding to participate in and lead some of these initiatives which are focused on improving the student experience and educational outcomes. This work led me to join NACADA in 2019 in hopes that I would find a community of advisors dedicated to graduate students. I found that and much more through the Advising Community on Graduate & Professional Students! In the past year I was a panelist on "Step One: Onboarding" which was the June meeting of the GPS Talk Series and a panelist at the NACADA 2020 National Conference presentation "All Aboard! A Panel on Graduate Student Online, Hybrid, and Campus Orientation Models". The best part of the experience was collaborating with five other professionals dedicated to graduate student advising and learning from their best practices. What's next for me? I'm currently pursuing a Master of Public Management degree program at CMU as a part-time student. I'm also looking forward to continue learning from the NACADA advising community and sharing best practices. Feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn or through email mlb2@andrew.cmu.edu.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Advising Community on Graduate & Professional Students offers the **GPS (Graduate and Professional Students) Talks Series!** This online meeting series is offered three times per year: March, June, and September.

The next GPS Talk online meeting is coming up in March 2021. More details to come.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE

NACADA offers a wealth of resources for advisors, and this month we are sharing information about the Wellbeing and Advisor Retention Advising Community. The Well-Being & Advisor Retention Advising Community exists to encourage advisors to address wellbeing and self-care with their students, while also encouraging the same for advisors. This community hopes to decrease burnout among advisors and increase retention in the field. The community views wellbeing as a holistic and human need for students and advisors alike, and views self-care as ensuring student and advisor needs are met. This community hopes to encourage discussion among advisors about integrating wellbeing and self-care into advising appointments with students, while also encouraging institutions to consider the needs of their advising staff, and advisors to consider their own self-care.

[Learn more](#) about the Well-Being & Advisor Retention Advising Community.

2021 VIRTUAL REGION CONFERENCES

As you explore professional development opportunities in 2021, consider attending a virtual region conference. [Learn more](#) about the various region conferences that will be held in March/April 2021.

2021 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

February 2, 2021: Deadline to submit a conference proposal for the 2021 NACADA International Conference that will be held June 22-25, 2021 in Athens, Greece. The call for proposals will open on January 2, 2021. [Learn more](#) about the conference proposal submission process.

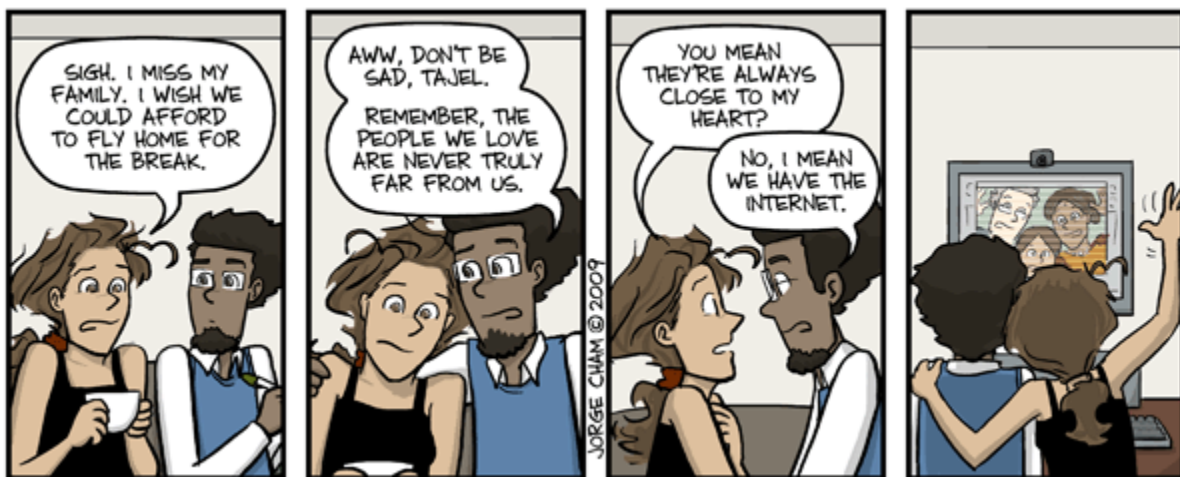
2021 NACADA ANNUAL CONFERENCE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

February 18, 2021: Deadline to submit a conference proposal for the 2021 NACADA Annual Conference that will be held October 6-9, 2021 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The call for proposals is currently open. [Learn more](#) about the conference proposal submission process.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 9-11, 2021: NACADA Virtual Assessment Institute. Assessment of academic advising is essential for a successful and effective academic advising program on any campus. This working institute is an intensive two and a half days focused on the components of a successful assessment program as well as specific strategies and tools for developing and implementing assessment programs on your campus. Registration closes one week before the start of the event. Space is limited, so register now!

February 17-19, 2021: NACADA Virtual Administrators' Institute. This highly successful NACADA Administrators' Institute provides you with strategies to enhance your own leadership and to lead an academic advising program on your campus. The Institute utilizes learning community groups facilitated by Institute faculty who are experienced advising administrators and leaders in the field. Registration closes one week before the start of the event. Space is limited, so register now!



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