From the Chair

Happy Pumpkin Spice Season (which doesn't have pumpkin in it, but I digress)!

I know registration is well underway for many of us, so as always, I appreciate you taking time to connect with CUES. I want to personally thank the NACADA 2021 Annual Conference Planning Committee for a wonderful and engaging conference. It was so refreshing to connect with my colleagues and discover new ways of engaging with my students. I would also like to thank those of you who were able to attend the annual business meeting. Your feedback is crucial in helping us set our goals for 2021-22! If you were unable to attend, don’t worry—I got you, fam!

We are hosting a Virtual Undecided and Exploratory Students Advising Community Business Meeting, November 16th, 2:30 PM CST. Be sure to register here. You can access the agenda online, and you are welcome to add your ideas.

Hope to “see” you there.

Christina Bowles, Chair
Missouri State University
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Member Spotlight
Philip Aguinaga (he/him)
University of North Texas
Academic Counselor
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How long have you been supporting undecided/exploratory students?
9 years

Why did you join the Undecided and Exploratory Students Advising Community?
I joined the community to receive more resources on helping undecided/exploratory students. At UNT, we have a general Advising Services office, but no "Undecided" major. Instead, advisors in each decentralized College/School (like myself) should know how to help students who are still exploring. This provides a unique process for training our advisors and gaining knowledge about each program across campus. Finally, it’s helpful to have the exploratory resources to help students explore 'within' the discipline, as we discuss electives and internship opportunities.

What makes you excited to work with Undeclared/Exploratory students?
The vast amounts of possibilities when a student meets with me makes me excited to work with them. When a student arrives (in office or virtually now!), I don’t always know what I’ll hear regarding their interest. In the majors I advise for, there are certain categories and areas that are always common, but often I’ll still hear of a new company, position grouping, or entrepreneurial venture that is exciting to know about.

What is the greatest challenge in working with this population?
I think of two challenges that are huge issues when I talk to this population (I’m cheating, sorry). First, when students don’t take the time they need to research, explore, and follow up on the suggestions I have given. It’s hard to help students that won’t make time for something potentially meaningful to their decision making. Second, when life and reality intervene in their exploration process. It's necessary to have some reality-meets-expected conversation with some exploratory students. Sometimes, though, they have to make a hard decision, like choosing between finances/flexibility of an interdisciplinary degree and going in depth into a major they are passionate about but requires a lot of on campus time/effort to complete the degree. There are options, graduate school, and plans B/C/D/etc., but it can be disappointing for them to realize they might not be able to choose to follow their passion exactly like other students have the privilege of doing.

What is one fun fact about you?
I write or use utensils with my left hand but throw a ball or use scissors with my right hand.

Do you want to introduce yourself to other community members? Sign up with our online form.

Upcoming Events

Virtual Annual Undecided and Exploratory Students Advising Community Meeting
Tuesday, November 16th, 2021, 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM CST
Registration
Meeting Agenda

Save the Date!
Our next Exploratory Conversation will be December 2. Details to come!
Interested in coordinating a conversation? Contact Philip
Resources
Check out our Google Drive for resources.
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