EMBRACING THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING IN SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

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TOPICS

- Academic Advising and Retention
- The College Experience
- Promising Philosophical Perspectives & Practices
- Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

OUR SHARED GOAL: STUDENT SUCCESS

- Commitment to the Education of Students

“Retention is a by-product of a good educational experience.”

Vincent Tinto
Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition, 1993.
ACADEMIC ADVISING PROMOTES RETENTION

Good advising is one of the key conditions that promotes retention for it reflects an institution’s commitment to the education of students.

Vincent Tinto
Taking Student Retention Seriously
Retrieved April 24, 2007 from http://soeweb.syr.edu/Faculty/Vtinto/

KEY INSTITUTIONAL CONDITIONS

- High Expectations
- Support
- Academic Advising
- Involvement
- Student-Learning Focused

Vincent Tinto
Taking Student Retention Seriously
Retrieved April 24, 2007 from http://soeweb.syr.edu/Faculty/Vtinto/

Adviseing is viewed as a way to connect students to the campus and help them feel that someone is looking out for them.

George Kuh
(Indiana University Bloomington)
Student Success in College, 2005.

Advisors are interpreters who help students navigate their new world. As such, academic advisors have to make connections.

Nancy King
Kennesaw State University

ADVISING SERVES AS A BRIDGE

Personal tutoring [academic advising] can provide information about higher education processes, procedures and expectations....Personal tutoring can provide guidance and structure, especially in those early days.

ADVISORS AID STUDENTS IN UNDERSTANDING

- the amount of time needed to study vs. their expectations
- what a particular program of study or course involves vs. their perception
- The college culture vs. their high school experience

Nancy King, Vice-President for Student Success, Kennesaw State University

ACADEMIC ADVISING HELPS STUDENTS:

- make sense of their experiences
- derive meaning from their experiences
- make decisions about their experiences

NACADA Concept Statement on Academic Advising, 2006.

ACADEMIC ADVISING IS ESSENTIAL

- Academic Advising is not just “nice to have”
  
  Effective retention programs have come to understand that academic advising is at the very core of successful institutional efforts to educate and retain students.

Vincent Tinto
Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition, 1993.
Advising should be at the core of the institution’s educational mission rather than layered on as a service.

Robert Berdahl
New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 1995.

THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

ENGAGEMENT

The intersection of student behaviors and institutional conditions over which colleges and universities have at least marginal control.


NSSE and CCSSE: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Engagement

- Dimensions of the College Experience:
  - Institutional Conditions
  - Student Behaviors
INSTITUTIONAL CONDITIONS

Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the right activities.

HIGH-IMPACT EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES – WHAT ARE THEY?

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects


WHY THEY MATTER

(from Kuh, G.D., High Impact Educational Practices, 2008)

- They demand that students devote considerable time and effort to purposeful tasks.
- They put students in circumstances that demand they interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters.
- They increase the likelihood that students will experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves.

- Students typically get frequent feedback about their performance in every one of this activities.
- They provide opportunities for students to see how what they are learning works in different settings, on and off campus.
- Finally, it can be life changing to study abroad, participate in service learning, conduct research with a faculty member, or complete an internship.
STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- What matters most is what students do and the effort they expend, not who they are.

BUT...

- But Who They Are Affects What Students Do and the Effort They Expend
- Understanding This is Important to Designing Academic Advising Programs

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEAVING (OR STAYING): INTENTIONS AND ATTITUDES

- The intention to leave (or stay) is the best predictor of actual student departure.
- Intentions are the by-product of the interaction of the student and the institution
  - Faculty
  - Other Students
  - Administrators and Staff Members

Bean, 2005

Newsflash

Attitudes affect Intentions
ATTITUDES

- Attitudes about Attachment to the Institution
  - Institutional Fit
  - Social Integration
  - Institutional Commitment
  - Psychological Dispositions

Bean, 2005

INFLUENCING ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS

- Good advising should link a student’s academic capabilities with his or her choice of courses and major, access to learning resources, and a belief that the academic pathway a student is traveling will lead to employment after college.

- Advising should be done well so students recognize their abilities and make informed choices.

Bean, 2005

IN THE END, GOOD ADVISING CAN AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO

- Academic and Social Integration resulting from positive experiences that increase:
  - satisfaction with being a student at a given institution,
  - confidence in one’s ability,
  - academic competence, and
  - one’s understanding his/her educational, career and life goals.

Bean, 2005
PROMISING PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES & PRACTICES

- Advising as Teaching and Learning
- Collaborative Reflection and Decision-Making - aka Assessment
- The Advising Syllabus
- Student Self-Authorship
- Advising to Optimize the Student Experience

ADVISING AS TEACHING & LEARNING

- Guides and Defines Our Roles as Educators and Facilitators of Learning
  - Learning is Individual and Developmental
  - Indicates a Knowledge Base that Extends Beyond Information toward Conceptual Understanding
    - Student Learning and Development
    - Career Development
    - Others

COLLABORATIVE REFLECTION AND DECISION-MAKING FOR IMPROVEMENT

- AKA – Assessment
- What Do We Need to Know to Improve
  - Student Learning?
  - Advising Practice?
- How Can We Build a Collegial, Collaborative Approach to Reflection for Improvement?
THE ADVISING SYLLABUS

- The Advising Syllabus Sets the Stage
  - Creates Conversation
  - Prompts Questions
  - Outlines the Relationship
  - States Outcomes
  - Defines Academic Advising

AMONG THE COMPONENTS

- Mission
- Definition/Philosophy
- Contact Information
- OUTCOMES
  - RULES, RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES
  - Policies & Procedures
  - Resources

PROMOTING STUDENT SELF-AUTHORSHIP

- Becoming self-authored requires transformational learning that helps students “learn to negotiate and act on [their] own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those [they] have uncritically assimilated from others”.
  
  Mezirow, 2000

- The shift to self-authorship occurs when students encounter challenges that bring their assumptions into question, have opportunities to reflect on their assumptions, and are supported in reframing their assumptions into more complex frames of reference.

  - The role of the educator is to initiate conversation, listen, and help students learn from their experiences.

  Magolda, 2007
QUESTIONS FOR CONTEMPLATION AND DISCUSSION

 How do you define student success? How do you define retention? How does your campus define each of these terms?

 The literature continues to support an important role for academic advising in student success and retention. In what ways is academic advising considered important to your campus plan for student success and/or retention? As an administrator, how might you add support to or make the case for academic advising as a strategic initiative for enhancing student success and/or retention?

 Consider the students and the student experience(s) on your campus. How would you describe the nature of that/those experience(s) on your campus and how might academic advising be utilized to strengthen that/those experience(s)? What are your ideas for action?

WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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REFERENCES


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