

# 2025 Administrators' Institute Session Abstracts and Outcomes

## PLENARY SESSIONS

### **P1 | Embracing the Role of Academic Advising in Supporting Student Success**

An understanding of how and why academic advising supports student progression and graduation success is essential to improving academic advising programs on your campus. Equally important is an understanding of how to establish and integrate the foundational principles of the profession.

This plenary session will discuss the relationship between federal and state pressures on higher education juxtaposed against the importance of advising for student success.

**Participants will:**

- Understand the relationship between academic advising and the national pressures to increase graduation and completion
- Understand the role that technology and data play in advising interventions
- Introduce promising practices to support student persistence and success

**Core Competencies:** C2, C3, C5, I5, R4, R7

### **P2 | Tales from Academic Advising Administrators: What We Wish We Had Known**

Join this interactive panel of seasoned administrators to hear their experiences, insights, and lessons learned on the path into administration. Find out what they wish they had known as they advanced in leadership and how they've made things happen on their campuses. Hear from administrators who started in a range of roles from advisor positions, faculty tracks, and student affairs roles. Learn how you might best prepare for your next role or find needed support in your current role. Topics may include taking on new perspectives in new roles, transitioning from colleague to boss, time management and prioritization, managing up and across, and navigating one's institutional structures and politics.

**Participants will:**

- Know the challenges of serving as a high- and mid-level Academic Advising Administrator in higher education
- Share from their own experiences in this interactive session
- Use the information to go back to their groups and discuss how their roles on their campus differ and/or are similar to information shared at this session

**Core Competencies:** C4, C6, R6, R7

### **P3 | Equity and Student Outcomes at the Crossroads**

American colleges and universities have reached a critical crossroads. The national enrollment cliff of 2025 has intensified the desire at most institutions to expand student access to education and diversify enrollment through new markets of learners. Yet at the same time, anti-DEI legislation is surging in many states, and the 2024 election outcomes surfaced promises to dismantle some of the core support strategies for student success across our increasingly diversified groups of learners. American higher education is under intense scrutiny and growing pressure to produce better student graduation and post-graduation outcomes, while facing less support to do so. Academic advising and student success administrators are uniquely positioned to face these challenges and influence institutional policy, procedure, practices, and curricula. Join senior administrators to explore how we can improve inclusion and the experience of belonging to positively impact student success.

**Participants will:**

- Discuss emerging national enrollment and political issues impacting higher education and student success equity
- Understand the unique and critical role of advising and student success administrators in creating inclusive educational environments
- Identify opportunities in hiring and the need for cultural competency training to advance equity
- Explore policy, process, and curricular strategies that can help administrators improve equitable outcomes in a changing landscape
- Consider with colleagues the emerging needs and concerns raised by their students with various approaches to address them

**Core Competencies:** C2, C6, I5, R2, R3

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## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### **C1 | Learning and Growing as a Leader: Skills and Strategies for a New Era in Higher Education**

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, the need for effective leadership is more critical than ever. This session will address essential competencies and innovative approaches that advising leaders must cultivate to navigate complex challenges and drive institutional success. This presentation highlights key leadership skills, including adaptive communication, strategic decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving. Participants will learn actionable strategies for fostering inclusive environments, engaging collaborative partnerships, and leveraging data-informed practices to enhance student success. By embracing a growth mindset and continuous professional development, aspiring and current leaders will be better equipped to inspire their teams and create positive change in their institutions. This session aims to empower academic leaders to thrive in a dynamic educational landscape, ensuring they are prepared to meet the demands of the future. This session aims to equip both emerging and experienced leaders with the tools necessary to drive meaningful change within their individual campus communities.

#### **Participants will:**

- Explore leadership approaches and skills in the context of constant change and evolving expectations.
- Identify and address competing priorities advising leaders are facing in a new era
- Identify strategies for growing and strengthening their leadership skills and empowering their team to achieve their mission.
- Understand key conceptual, informational, and relational components of advising administration
- Provide a roadmap of growth for new leaders/administrators
- Share and reflect on their experiences and perspectives on leadership

**Core competencies:** C4, C1, C2, C3, C6, C7

### **C2 | Bridging the Gap: Academic Advising as a Catalyst for Enrollment Growth**

In today's higher education landscape, academic advising plays a pivotal role in the success of both students and institutions. This session will explore how intentional and data-driven advising directly influences key enrollment management metrics such as retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Using case studies, best practices, and innovative approaches, we will examine how advising strategies can help institutions not only meet enrollment targets but also enhance the overall student experience. Attendees will leave with actionable insights on how to align advising efforts with institutional goals to drive measurable success.

#### **Participants will:**

- Understand the direct relationship between academic advising and enrollment management metrics (retention, persistence, and graduation rates).
- Learn strategies to leverage advising for improved enrollment forecasting and student retention.
- Identify best practices for fostering collaboration between academic advising and enrollment management offices.
- Explore innovative advising models that support strategic enrollment management.
- Develop actionable steps for integrating advising into institutional enrollment strategies.

**Core Competencies:** I3, R4, C4

### **C3 | Creating a Learning-Centered Advising Curriculum**

Designing an advising curriculum that achieves stated student learning outcomes can be accomplished through the implementation of backwards design, which keeps student learning central in the curriculum design process. Using this approach, the curriculum is designed to meet student learning needs, with assessment integrated throughout. This session will introduce participants to the concept of backwards design and guide them through the process of employing backwards design to create a learning-centered advising curriculum. Participants will have the opportunity to begin the curriculum design process for their unit's student learning outcomes.

#### **Participants will:**

- Understand backwards design and its role in advising curriculum development.
- Design a curriculum to achieve advising-related student learning outcomes.
- Be able to map student learning outcomes within an advising curriculum.
- Integrate assessment into curriculum development.

**Core Competencies:** C3, C5, I5, I7, R4

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## **C4 | Making the Case for Resources Based on Student Advising Experiences**

As higher education leaders, advising administrators are charged with positively impacting student success and retention. More specifically, they are held accountable for student outcomes such as persistence, academic performance, and graduation rates. Additionally, advising administrators must develop measures to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs and services to ensure that they are successfully meeting student needs. This session will focus on understanding the types of data and evidence that best “make the case” to senior administrators that advising is making a positive difference and is a worthwhile investment. The session will include ways to collect and utilize data about student advising experiences, and a model to analyze advising capacity to bolster the case for resources.

### **Participants will:**

- Understand the impact of the student experience on retention and persistence
- Explore multiple evaluation measures of student advising experience
- Consider models for evaluating advising resources
- Identify opportunities for use of these measures and data on their campuses
- Discuss strategies to use this type of data to influence senior-level funding decisions

**Core competencies:** C5, I5, R2, R4, R7

## **C5 | Student Success: Telling the Story of Enrollment and Technology with Data**

Advising administrators are often pulled in varying directions and responsibilities. While academic advising is a primary focus for many, the worlds of student success, enrollment management, technology, and data are more prevalent in our work than ever before. To better navigate the varying pushes and pulls of a broader look at the impacts of advising, administrators must have a greater understanding of their roles and how they can effectively tell the story of advising on their campus. This session will focus on defining student success, exploring the enrollment focus within the academic advising world, identifying technologies, and how data and storytelling can be critical to your work as an administrator.

### **Participants will:**

- Learn about the role and definitions of student success
- Understand varying levels of enrollment focus within advising
- Identify roles of technology within academic advising
- Participate in discussions on how to utilize data to support student success
- Identify opportunities to utilize storytelling within their own data

**Core Competencies:** C4, I6, I7, R3, R7

## **C6 – Incorporating “Servingness” Into Advising at Minority Serving Institutions**

Academic advising at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) is central to a student’s academic journey. Many academic advisors at MSIs report that their primary duties mostly reflect recruitment and retention responsibilities, but also believe academic advisors serve as teachers educating their students on the essentials of learning to navigate their institution, offering interventions to support progress, helping their students make connections to their education both inside and outside the campus. This workshop will provide examples and information on how advisors work to incorporate “Servingness” into their practice.

### **Participants will:**

- Learn how evidence-based practices are used at MSIs to incorporate “Servingness” into their advising practices.
- Learn how equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained at MSIs.
- Learn about the characteristics, needs, and experiences of significant and emerging student populations at MSIs.
- Learn about incorporating “Servingness” into your philosophy of academic advising.

**Core Competencies:** C3, C6, I15, R1

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## **C7 | Show Me the Money: How to find and apply for External Funding (Grants) to Support Advising Initiatives**

Have a new advising initiative in mind but lack the funds to launch it? This workshop will guide you in identifying potential funding sources and writing a compelling grant proposal to bring your idea to life. It will also provide a broad overview of funding options, including the Department of Education, National Science Foundation, private foundations, and other opportunities available to institutions, helping you explore where and how to apply for funding.

In this hands-on session, you'll gain strategies for structuring a strong case to request project funding. We will guide you through developing a logic model, outlining a proposal, and identifying key considerations when seeking funding. Finally, you will review the available funding resources and learn from experts about how to apply.

### **Participants will:**

- Create a logic model that aligns with funding priorities.
- Define organizational change and how to leverage it as a funding opportunity.
- Develop a project timeline with clear goals.
- Identify funding sources and resources within their institution to support a successful application.

**Core Competencies:** C3, C5, I13, R4, R5, R6

## **C8 | Navigating the Nexus: Leadership, Collaboration, and Politics of Our Roles**

As administrators in academic advising, you are tasked with leading teams, managing multiple partners, and collaborating across various departments—all while navigating the complex political landscape of higher education within your institution. This session will equip you with the tools and strategies to successfully balance these challenges. We'll explore common political dynamics within institutions, from understanding partner priorities to handling power struggles and competing interests.

In addition, we will dive into the essential role of cross-campus collaboration, examining ways to build strong relationships with key partners such as faculty, Student Affairs, and other administrative offices. Learn how to strategically manage both upward and downward communication while fostering collaboration that supports student success.

Through real-world examples, leadership insights, and actionable takeaways, this session will provide a roadmap for navigating the nexus of politics and collaboration within academic advising administration. Whether you're dealing with departmental conflicts, working to align institutional goals, or leading advising initiatives, you'll leave equipped with practical tools to thrive in your role.

### **Participants will:**

- Gain a deeper understanding of the political landscape within your role, particularly as it pertains to academic advising. They will learn to identify key partners and recognize the power dynamics that influence decision-making processes.
- **Leave** with practical strategies for managing and communicating with diverse partners, including faculty, senior administrators, and support staff. They'll learn how to tailor communication styles and approaches to different groups to build stronger relationships and avoid conflict.
- Acquire tools and techniques for fostering collaboration across departments and units, including Student Affairs, Registrar's Offices, and Career Services. They will learn how to initiate and sustain partnerships that support student success and holistic advising.
- Develop leadership skills essential for guiding teams through change, whether it involves policy shifts, new advising models, or organizational restructuring. They will learn how to lead with confidence and agility within a politically complex environment.
- Leave with a set of actionable takeaways, including communication frameworks, decision-making tools, and collaboration best practices that can be applied immediately to their roles as academic advising administrators.

**Core Competencies:** R3, R4, C4, C5, I5

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## **C9 | Mission Possible: Creating and Sustaining Engaging Advisor Training and Development Programs**

The development of a comprehensive advisor training and development program is critical to the overall success of any academic advising program. This presentation focuses on diverse strategies for creating and delivering advisor training and development for new advisors, as well as continuous development for seasoned advisors. Topics will include creating a holistic training plan utilizing NACADA's Core Competencies, engaging advisors by creating their own individual professional development plan, delivery methods, and assessment of learning, as well as a review of NACADA resources available to enhance your campus program. Participants will engage in conversation to share specific challenges and solutions in advisor training and development.

### **Participants will:**

- Understand the various methods and strategies for delivering academic advising training and development
- Understand the Core Competencies every Advising Training and Development Program should include, and incorporate these competencies into a plan for advisor development.
- Recognize reasons and simple methods for assessing academic advisor learning for those who provide academic advising on your campus
- Know how to access and employ NACADA resources to support a campus training and development program

**Core Competencies:** C3, C4, C5, C6, R2

## **C10 | Moving from traditional to transformational: Redesigning advising support structures**

As Advising Administrators we are often asked to implement significant changes to the current advising structures on our campuses. Campus leaders no longer believe that the "way we have always done things" works and the pressure on advising to positively impact student success becomes the impetus for change. How do you determine that best advising model for your campus? How do these models impact student success? How does an Advising Administrator go about creating/changing advising models on their campuses?

This session will examine current advising models and organizational structures, factors to consider when moving to a new framework, and the process of creating an implementation plan. We will then explore the multiple considerations and strategies Advising Administrators must contemplate as they embark on a campus wide change including collaboration with campus partners to build support for the initiative and managing.

### **Participants will:**

- Understand various options for organizational structures for academic advising
- Consider the various factors that influence reorganization or advising services
- Consider the impact on students and the advising profession
- Understand the use of data to inform changes to advising structures
- Explore strategies for collaborating with campus partners to create advising models and organization to enhance student success Identify change management strategies that support campus-wide change efforts
- Gain an understanding of planning and implementation tools to support a redesign

**Core Competencies:** C3, C4, C5, I1, I3, I6

## **C11 – Research that Matters in Advising Initiatives and Outcomes**

Academic advising operates within a complex educational environment that ignites all learning and development elements across every academic discipline. Advising administrators are increasingly held accountable for outcomes related to the impact of advising initiatives and interventions while also overseeing implementation and staffing. Given these challenges, there seems to be no time or energy for engaging in advising-related research, much less determining how to use it in practice. This session tackles these concerns through an actionable approach to the knowledge base that matters in advising. Using case studies, we will discuss the current knowledge in the Scholarship of Advising, including the "lenses" through which research can ground equitable advising initiatives and outcomes. We conclude with practical steps advising administrators can take to support their academic advisors to grow as professional educators through a shared understanding of and commitment to the literature base that informs both the impact of the work for students and the context of their role in higher education.

### **Participants will:**

- Understand the current state of knowledge and trends in advising-related research
- Through case studies, discuss how relevant literature can inform practical knowledge to help students succeed.
- Consider the relationship between the context of academic advising and critical issues of equity
- Generate actionable next steps toward a commitment to Scholarly Advising in practice

**Core Competencies:** C1, C3, C5, C6, I5, R4, R6, R7

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## **C12 | Moving Beyond the Pursuit of Happiness: Being Content, Engaged, and Driven in a World of Change**

In an ever-changing world, especially in the academic advising field, administrators and their teams are faced with new advising trends, student populations, institutional initiatives, and events that impact our students and the profession. Administrators are often tasked with delivering the news of yet another change or having to ask staff to assist in the implementation of changes to disengaged and overworked staff members. Using Gallup poll data from the *State of the American Workplace* and motivation research, attendees will learn about ways to keep staff engaged and driven in their environments while tackling the challenges of an ever-changing higher education workspace.

### **Participants will:**

- Recognize the challenges administrators and advising staff encounter their campuses and in their lives that have an effect on their work with students.
- Understand the conceptual and practical challenges of meaning making in their work as advisors/advising administrators
- Recognize the signs of an engaged workplace
- Learn how to most effectively engage with our advisors and other administrators in times of change
- Identify what motivates employees/advisors and how our behaviors as administrators can impact that process in positive ways.

**Core Competencies:** C2, C4, I6, R1, and R4