

## *Incorporating the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies into Advising Practice*

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### Overview

In December 2017, members of NACADA's [Professional Development Committee](#) (PDC), led by Chair Teri Farr, presented [Building Advisor Competency: Introduction to the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model](#), giving a first look at the association's newly debuted [Core Competencies Model](#) in the virtual environment. They shared some of their experiences with the model's development process, the thoughts underlying its framework and core competency areas, and the ongoing project of resource identification and development. They also discussed the creation of the first edition of the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide**, which had debuted at the October 2017 Annual Conference.

In addition to this work, over the next two years PDC members developed the Core Competencies [Resource Repository](#), a free, open-access listing of resources to assist with competency building that is available to all academic advising professionals.

In the five years since the Core Competencies Model was introduced, additional webinars have been devoted to assisting advising professionals with their own individual competency as well as incorporating the competencies into the work of advising programs. Among these are:

- [Building Advisor Competency: Conceptual Understanding Component](#)
- [Building Advisor Competency: Informational Knowledge Component](#)
- [Building Advisor Competency: Relational Skills Component](#)
- [Using the Academic Advising Core Competencies Model to Create an Action Plan for Professional Growth and Development](#)
- [Developing an Advisor Training Program Based on the NACADA Core Competencies Model](#)
- [Scholarly Advising and the NACADA Core Competencies: Practical Frameworks for Discussion, Implementation, and Inquiry](#)

During the 2020-2022 term of PDC Chair Barbara Smith, committee members have overseen the review/update of the first edition of the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide**, and the second edition is on schedule to be debuted with this webinar.

In this PDC sponsored and organized event, we will celebrate the five-year anniversary of **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model** by hearing from NACADA member advising professionals who have incorporated the competencies into their work. Join us to hear their stories of how the Core Competencies have informed and inspired their advising practice and taken them to new levels of professionalism.

# NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model

At the request of the association's leadership, the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model** (2017) was developed by the association's Professional Development Committee. The purpose of the model is to identify the broad range of understanding, knowledge, and skills that support academic advising, to guide professional development, and to promote the contributions of advising to student development, progress, and success. It is intended that the model may be used by:

- **Primary Role Advisors:** for self-assessment and evaluation, and to guide learning, career development, and advancement.
- **Faculty Advisors and Advising Administrators:** to clarify academic advising roles and responsibilities, and to highlight the contributions of academic advising to teaching and learning.
- **Advising Supervisors, Managers, and Mentors:** to identify strengths and areas for staff development, and to guide hiring, training, and evaluation.
- **Learning Professionals, Trainers, and Researchers:** to support curriculum development, establish learning priorities, and advance scholarship in the field.

## Framework

Underpinning the core competencies for academic advising and serving as the foundational elements for effective advisor training programs and advising practice are three content components – the **conceptual**, **informational**, and **relational**. An understanding of these content areas provides advisors the knowledge and skills to be effective guides for their students.

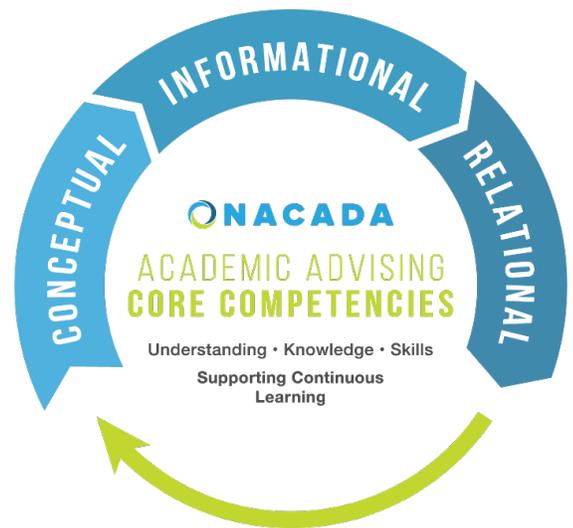
- The **Conceptual** component provides the context for the delivery of academic advising. It covers the ideas and theories that advisors must understand to effectively advise their students.
- The **Informational** component provides the substance of academic advising. It covers the knowledge advisors must gain to be able to guide the students at their institution.
- The **Relational** component provides the skills that enable academic advisors to convey the concepts and information from the other two components to their advisees.

To achieve excellence in their work, regardless of the specifics of their individual campus' advising mission, all academic advisors must understand all three components and be able to synthesize and apply them as needed in academic advising interactions.

## Core Competency Areas

Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding** of:

1. **The history and role of academic advising in higher education.**
2. **NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising.**
3. **Theory relevant to academic advising.**
4. **Academic advising approaches and strategies.**
5. **Expected outcomes of academic advising.**
6. **How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained.**



Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of**:

1. **Institution specific history, mission, vision, values, and culture.**
2. **Curriculum, degree programs, and other academic requirements and options.**
3. **Institution specific policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.**
4. **Legal guidelines of advising practice, including privacy regulations and confidentiality.**
5. **The characteristics, needs, and experiences of major and emerging student populations.**
6. **Campus and community resources that support student success.**
7. **Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles.**

Core Competencies in the **Relational component** (skills academic advisors must demonstrate) include **the ability to**:

1. **Articulate a personal philosophy of academic advising.**
2. **Create rapport and build academic advising relationships.**
3. **Communicate in an inclusive and respectful manner.**
4. **Plan and conduct successful advising interactions.**
5. **Promote student understanding of the logic and purpose of the curriculum.**
6. **Facilitate problem solving, decision-making, meaning-making, planning, and goal setting.**
7. **Engage in ongoing assessment and development of self and the advising practice.**

## Alicia Abney's Themes Chart

<b>THE HISTORY AND ROLE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING IN HIGHER EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advisor-Student Relationship</b></li> <li>• <b>Advising and Student Success</b></li> <li>• <b>Advisor Training and Development</b></li> </ul>	<i>"It's important to know the difference between student success from the institution's perspective and student success from the student's perspective, because they are different. Advisors that look at the success of the students, specifically, are the ones who are empathetic and compassionate. Those that are focused on the institution's success have a major disconnect with students and building student relationships. There needs to be a healthy blend of it all."</i>
<b>NACADA'S CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Empowering Students</b></li> <li>• <b>Caring for Students</b></li> </ul>	<i>"I try to give as many options as I can just because I want my students to feel like they have some agency in what they are doing. With a developmental model, advisors automatically get student agency, right? If students feel like they're part of the process, they're going to care more and they're going to be more involved."</i>
<b>THEORY RELEVANT TO ACADEMIC ADVISING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct Influence</b></li> <li>• <b>Indirect Influence</b></li> </ul>	<i>"With theory, advisors aren't just sitting there specifically thinking about applying theory to practice, but they are just doing the work, day-to-day, because they know there are huge developmental differences between student populations. I use theory in my day-to-day work, but it is often not at all consciously."</i>
<b>UNDERSTANDING ADVISING APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Developmental Advising</b></li> <li>• <b>Prescriptive Advising</b></li> <li>• <b>Other Stated Approaches</b></li> <li>• <b>Other Described Approaches</b></li> </ul>	<i>"I would say the most critical point of advising students is seeing them as the whole person and not seeing them just as their academics or in a single category. Students are holding so many different identities within them, and it's for us to create relationships that cultivate and are developmental to their future. It requires us to advise them in a way that takes into account their own personal values, what they want in a future career, the classes and the challenges they want, and the experiences that they want in the classroom."</i>
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>"accountability", "taking ownership", becoming "self-sufficient", "empowering students"</b></li> </ul>	<i>"They [Students] are the driver. I'm in the passenger seat with the map. We can take this exit, we can take the next exit, and we can even do a full U-turn. They are the driver, but I'm there to offer helpful suggestions and navigate them through the process. Whether they take my directions or not is their decision."</i>
<b>HOW EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS ARE CREATED AND MAINTAINED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Validating Students</b></li> <li>• <b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training and Development</b></li> </ul>	<i>"I do personal readings on my own, but I also joined a subgroup on diversity and inclusion within the [University College Group]. We're actually working on starting a book club to read and discuss with one another on how to better relate to students that are marginalized. We want to know how we can be better. I didn't realize how privileged I was. So, I just started reading and learning. And now that I've done all this reading, I know that I can only do so much, but I can at least continue trying. Every day, I'm just trying to do a little bit better than the day before."</i>

## References and Resources

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. (2017). NACADA academic advising core competencies model. <https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies.aspx>

Resources for Competency Building. <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies/Resources.aspx>

Smith, B., & Cunningham, L. (2022). *NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide*. Available from the [NACADA store](#).

For those attending NACADA 2022 Annual Conference in Portland, OR, Alicia Abney will give a Scholarly Paper Presentation on her research on Tuesday, October 25 at 10am – watch for this title in the conference app: *The Front Lines of Student Success: A Phenomenography Exploring the Background and Knowledge of Primary Role Academic Advisors in Higher Education*.

Alicia's **Dissertation Link** - <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/4098/>

University of Central Florida Resources:

UCF- Advisor Training and Development: <https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/ssa/advisor-training/>

Professional Development/SSA Certificate: <https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/ssa/professional-development/>

Dreher, J. & Juneau, G. (2012, June). Mentoring: Personal thoughts on the value of advance preparation. *Academic Advising Today*, 35(2). <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Mentoring-Personal-Thoughts-on-the-Value-of-Advance-Preparation.aspx>

Kreitler, C. (2006, December). Be an exceptional academic advisor: Share yourself, become a mentor. *Academic Advising Today*, 29(4). <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Be-an-Exceptional-Academic-Advisor-Share-Yourself-Become-a-Mentor.aspx>

Niles, S. G., and Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2009). Understanding and applying theories of career development. In *Career development interventions in the 21st Century* (3rd ed.) (pp. 35-87). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

### Level 1: Bronze

#### CORE COURSES (all required)

- AAT 101: Introduction to Academic Advising **W**
- AAT 102: Academic Advising Essentials **PR W**
- AAT 112: Student Well-Being **PR**
- PER 227: Kognito At-Risk **W**

*New academic advisors, hired March 2020 or later, will have the above Level 1: Bronze courses completed as part of the required New Advisor Training Curriculum.*

#### LEGEND

- W** Asynchronous online course
- PR** Requires a prerequisite course
- D** Core courses for Office of Diversity Education and Training (ODET) *Unity Star* and *Inclusion Champion* certificate programs.
- ^** Requires completion in 2019 or later

*\*\* Review the Acceptable Course Substitutes list in the SSA Certificate Catalog for possible substitutions from retired courses.*

Version Date: July 28, 2022

### Level 2: Silver

#### CORE COURSES (all required)

- AAT 201: Student Populations **W**
- AAT 202: Major Exploration & Career Readiness **W**
- AAT 212: QPR Suicide Prevention\*
- DIV 008: Understanding Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion **D**

#### RESTRICTED ELECTIVES

##### Supporting Student Populations (choose 3)

- AAT 211: Preparing First Generation, Low Income and Underrepresented Students for Graduate School
- AAT 213: Supporting Pre-Health Students
- AAT 214: Supporting Pre-Law Students
- AAT 215: Supporting Student-Athletes
- DIV 223: Examining the Real Disability Barriers
- DIV 291: Veterans Education Training & Support
- DIV 441: Immigration 101

##### Diversity & Inclusion (choose 1)

- DIV 033: Safe Zone LGBTQ+ 101
- DIV 044: Communicating Across Cultures **W**
- DIV 433: Social Justice 101
- DIV 434: Unpacking Social Identity
- DIV 586: The Unconscious Mind **D**

*\*AAT 212 is used to track QPR completion within the advising community*

### Level 3: Gold

#### CORE COURSES (all required)

- AAT 301: Developing as an Academic Advising Professional **PR W**
- DIV 053: Inclusive Communication **D**
- DIV 585: Intent vs. Impact\*\* **D**

#### RESTRICTED ELECTIVES (choose 2)

- AAT 310: Appreciative Education Part 1
- AAT 311: Appreciative Education Part 2 **PR**
- AAT 312: Helping Students Build their Portfolio through High Impact Practices
- DIV 440: Intercultural Competence
- DIV 241: Safe Zone Advocates **PR**
- PER 203: Conflict Resolution

#### PARTICIPATION<sup>^</sup> (choose 3 unique items)

- Professional conference (attendance only)<sup>^</sup>
- Conference/webinar presentation (facilitation)<sup>^</sup>
- Conference planning committee<sup>^</sup>
- Facilitate a training or professional development program<sup>^</sup>
- Publish an article or chapter in a book<sup>^</sup>
- Serve as a mentor in a formal program<sup>^</sup>
- Serve as a book or article reviewer<sup>^</sup>
- UCF community involvement (1-year service)<sup>^</sup>
- Serve as an RSO advisor (1-year service)<sup>^</sup>
- Leadership Empowerment Program or other UCF Leadership program<sup>^</sup>
- Leadership in a professional organization<sup>^</sup>
- Completion of the Safe Zone Series (DIV 033, DIV 241, DIV 242, DIV 243) **PR**

**NACADA Core Competencies Analysis Worksheet for Academic Advisors**

**Wendy G. Troxel & Debra A. Dotterer**

This worksheet is provided as one way to reflect on your perceived levels of confidence and experiences related to each of the recommended competencies as articulated by NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising (NACADA).

For each of the competencies listed, please indicate your perceived general level of competency in the left space the following codes:

- 1 = no experience
- 2 = minimum experience or confidence with the competency
- 3 = moderate level of competency
- 4 = high level of competency

**Perceived level of competency:** Indicate your current the level of competency, then the level you wish to have either in your current role or a future role. Then add a note if this is a competency that you are particularly interested in pursuing.

**Experiences:** In the table below that assessment, indicate specific experiences you’ve had that relate to the competency, including dates and details. Think of this as a portfolio you might use as you seek a new position, or a promotion, or an annual performance review. Write “no experience” if you have no experience. Don’t think of this as a failure, just room for growth!

**Next Steps:** In the final table, consider specific training or professional development activities and/or resources that you could pursue next. (Consider the need for presenting a breadth and diversity of skills to grow as an academic advisor (primary role or faculty) or advising administrator.)

**SAMPLE**

**Conceptual 5. Expected outcomes of academic advising.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I’d like to work on?)
2	4	<i>** This seems important to help students understand what we do!</i>

Experiences	
	8/2020 – Attended new advisor orientation at Acme Univ., listened to the Director of Advising talk about what we’re expected to do in advising sessions (received a copy of the advising syllabus)
	10/2020 – Attended a NACADA Annual Conference session on SLOs

Next Steps	
	Fall 2021 – Participate in a reading group with other members of my team to read at least one related article and develop an action plan for helping my advisees engage more deeply in at least one area
	Fall 2021 – Attend the NACADA Annual Conference and focus on sessions relating to this
	Fall 2021 – Search the NACADA publications for more information and practical tips

## NACADA Competency: INFORMATIONAL

Using the following scale, reflect on your perceived levels of confidence and experiences for each competency and consider next steps for continued growth.

- 1 = no experience
- 2 = minimum experience or confidence with the competency
- 3 = moderate level of competency
- 4 = high level of competency

**Core competencies in the Informational component (knowledge academic advisors must master) include knowledge of:**

### Informational 1. Institution specific history, mission, vision, values, and culture.

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

### Informational 2. Curriculum, degree programs, and other academic requirements and options.

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Informational 3. Institution specific policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Informational 4. Legal guidelines of advising practice, including privacy regulations and confidentiality.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Informational 5. The characteristics, needs, and experiences of major and emerging student populations.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Informational 6. Campus and community resources that support student success.**

<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Aspirational Level</b>	<b>Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)</b>

<b>Experiences</b>	

<b>Next Steps</b>	

**Informational 7. Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles.**

<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Aspirational Level</b>	<b>Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)</b>

<b>Experiences</b>	

<b>Next Steps</b>	

## NACADA Competency: CONCEPTUAL

Using the following scale, reflect on your perceived levels of confidence and experiences for each competency and consider next steps for continued growth.

- 1 = no experience
- 2 = minimum experience or confidence with the competency
- 3 = moderate level of competency
- 4 = high level of competency

**Core competencies in the Conceptual component (concepts academic advisors must understand) include understanding of:**

**Conceptual 1. The history and role of academic advising in higher education.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Conceptual 2. NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Conceptual 3. Theory relevant to academic advising.**

<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Aspirational Level</b>	<b>Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)</b>

<b>Experiences</b>	

<b>Next Steps</b>	

**Conceptual 4. Academic advising approaches and strategies.**

<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Aspirational Level</b>	<b>Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)</b>

<b>Experiences</b>	

<b>Next Steps</b>	

**Conceptual 5. Expected outcomes of academic advising.**

<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Aspirational Level</b>	<b>Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)</b>

<b>Experiences</b>	

<b>Next Steps</b>	

**Conceptual 6. How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

## NACADA Competency: RELATIONAL

Using the following scale, reflect on your perceived levels of confidence and experiences for each competency and consider next steps for continued growth.

- 1 = no experience
- 2 = minimum experience or confidence with the competency
- 3 = moderate level of competency
- 4 = high level of competency

**Core competencies in the Relational component (skills academic advisors must demonstrate) include the ability to:**

**Relational 1. Articulate a personal philosophy of academic advising.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 2. Create rapport and build academic advising relationships.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 3. Communicate in an inclusive and respectful manner.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 4. Plan and conduct successful advising interactions.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 5. Promote student understanding of the logic and purpose of the curriculum.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 6. Facilitate problem solving, decision-making, meaning-making, planning, and goal setting.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

**Relational 7. Engage in ongoing assessment and development of self and the advising practice.**

Current Level	Aspirational Level	Notes (is this an area I'd like to work on?)

Experiences	

Next Steps	

Further comments: In what ways do you hope your continued training and professional development activities will contribute to your growth as an academic advisor?

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**Incorporating the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies into Advising Practice**

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**CCs History Recap - PDC Chairs**

**Teri Farr**  
University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign  
PDC Chair 2015-2018

**Deb Dotterer**  
Michigan State University  
PDC Chair 2018-2020

**Barbara Smith**  
University of Texas-San Antonio  
PDC Chair 2020-2022

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**Presenters**

**Philip Aguinaga**  
University of North Texas

**Alicia Abney**  
Middle Tennessee State University

**Natalie Brown**  
Truckee Meadows Community College

**Diana Thompson**  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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**Teri Farr - PDC Chair 2015-2018**

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**Resources for Competency Building**

**Overall Core Competency development**

- NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide
- Digital Recording: Building Adviser Competency: Introduction to the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model

**Core Competency Areas**

- CONCEPTUAL**
- Digital Recording: Building Adviser Competency: Conceptual Understanding Component
- Understanding of the history and role of academic advising in higher education.
- Changshouqun He and Phyllis Taylor
- Dr. Yeh-Tsun, Foundations of Academic Advising: Building the Framework: Advising as a Teaching and Learning Process
- Dr. Yeh-Tsun, Foundations of Academic Advising: The Conceptual Component of Advising: Developing the Purpose, Values, and Frameworks for why we do what we do.
- Priscilla Clarke, What is Academic Advising? An Introduction to the Field
- NACADA Journal: Alan W. Warrick, Johnson, Lerman, & Baskemeyer (2015). A Preliminary Report of Advisor Perceptions of Advising and of a Professional Institution Staff
- NACADA Journal: Smith & Jones (2016). Does Content Still Affect Practice? Implications and Advice for Counselors Who Shaped Success's Work
- International Staff
- NACADA Journal: Gittel (2013). Development Academic Advising: A 45-Year Context
- NACADA Journal: Applegate (2012). Debunking the 2nd Century Student Advising As It Then Lives (and Our Future) Dependent on It
- NACADA Journal: Brantley-Gibson (2012). Advising as Interrelated Domains
- NACADA Journal: Cunningham & Swabbers (2010). The Effect of Self-Efficacy and Professional Development on Major Changing Behaviors

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**Barbara Smith**  
**PDC Chair 2020-2022**

**NACADA** THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

**NACADA ACADEMIC ADVISING CORE COMPETENCIES GUIDE** 2nd EDITION POCKET GUIDE

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**Stephanie Morawo**  
PDC Chair  
2022-2024

**Resources for Competency Building**

Identified by members of the Professional Development Committee and the Advisor Training and Development Committee

**Overall Core Competency development**

- NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide
- Digital Resource: Building Advisor Competency: Introduction to the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Board

**Core Competency Areas**

**CONCEPTUAL**

Digital Resource: Building Advisor Competency: Conceptual Understanding Component

- Understanding of the history and role of academic advising in higher education.
- Disciplinary History & Philosophy Index
- On YouTube: Foundations of Academic Advising: Building the Framework: Advising as a Teaching and Learning Process
- On YouTube: Foundations of Academic Advising: The Conceptual Component of Advising: Developing the Purpose, Values, and Frameworks for a Faculty or Staff Role
- Podal Guide: What is Academic Advising? An Introduction to the Field
- NACADA Journal: Adams-Hawkins, Johnson, Lutes, & Barkmeier (2015). A Preliminary Report of Advisor Perceptions of Advising and of a Professor's Institutional Role
- NACADA Journal: Smith & Allen (2014). Does Contact With Advisors Predict Judgments and Attitudes Counselors With Student Success? A Multi-Method Study
- NACADA Journal: Wilson (2013). Developmental Academic Advising: A 40-Year Context
- NACADA Journal: Applegate (2002). Studying the First-Generation Student: Advising as a "Thin Line" and Our Public's Dependence on It
- NACADA Journal: Shockey-Carlson (2002). Advising as Intentional Change
- NACADA Journal: Cummings & Swanson (2000). The Effect of Self-Identity and Psychological Development on Hope-Changing Behaviors

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## Using Competencies by Personal Narrative

**Philip Aguinaga**

- M.Ed. in Counseling
- Assistant Director, Career Center
- Previously in Advising at UNT for over 10 years

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## Using Competencies by Personal Narrative

**Oct 2021 NACADA Annual Conference**

- Title of Presentation: *Coach Speak, What I learned as a football coach's son, and how it influenced my advising*

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## Using Competencies by Personal Narrative

**Philip Aguinaga, Sr**

- Football coach in Texas from 1995-2020, now retired

Here are some of the lessons...

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## Follow Your Dreams

- He encouraged me to follow the dreams I have in life (just as he did with his goal of coaching)
- Emphasized Education to myself and my brother (as he was a First Gen student)
- As Advisors, we aim to provide a vision too, show students what *can be*
- Gave me a better appreciation of nontraditional students, allowing me to empathize with them

**C6** How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained

**R3** Communicate in an inclusive and respectful manner

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## Handle Expectations

- As a coach's son, I was expected to play football
- In advising, we can help students who have expectations (from elsewhere or themselves) by providing an ear, motivating them towards success, and reminding them they aren't alone in this journey
- Also, we should be there for students who are ready to say "it's not for me" and be able to encourage additional options

**I2** Curriculum, degree programs, and other academic requirement and options

**R2** Create rapport and build academic advising relationships

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### Learn New Techniques

Football offenses changed in the late '90s and early 2000s

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### Learn New Techniques

- In advising, this should be our aim too – to learn new things about advising techniques, curriculum changes.
- We also should be reminding our students that they should be learning new things even as they get older – this is hard to remember for our young and educated students that are learning the newest techniques now, but they will one day have to maintain or stagnate (Donald Super, see Niles, S. G., and Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2009))

17 Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles  
 R7 Engage in on-going assessment and development of the advising practice

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### Prepare for Difficult Conversations

- In advising, we have difficult students – be kind, firm, and patient. We might also have a hard time with mentors or supervisors – again, be kind, firm, patient and don't leave them just because there was a disagreement.
- We can teach this to our students too. They may have to have hard conversations, with parents/roommates/instructors/supervisors, and we can help them

C4 Academic advising approaches and strategies  
 R4 Plan and conduct successful advising interactions  
 C3 Theory relevant to academic advising  
 R1 Articulate a personal philosophy of academic advising

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### It's Not About Football

- My Dad loves football, but more than anything...
- In Advising, there are other things we can make sure we are focusing on, and we can focus on other things with our students too

C2 NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising  
 16 Campus and community resources that support student success  
 15 The characteristics, needs, and experiences of major and emerging student populations

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### Using Personal Narrative

- What is your story as an advisor?
- What students do you relate well to?
- What student groups do you need to learn more about?
- What experiences have you encountered that seem similar to the Core Competencies?

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### The Front Lines of Student Success:

A Phenomenography Exploring the Background and Knowledge of Primary Role Academic Advisors in Higher Education

Alicia N. Abney

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## Introduction

- Student Success
  - Retention, Persistence, Completion
- Academic Advisors
  - Responsible party for student success metrics



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## Background

- Who are the primary role academic advisors currently working with students?
- Conference Presenters sharing their “past lives” and what they did before becoming an advisor.
- My own experience becoming an advisor.



## Research Problem

Higher education administrators risk student success as it relates to retention, persistence, and graduation rates when effective and ongoing training, professional development, and educational resources are not provided to prepare primary role academic advisors to work directly with students.

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## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenography was to understand the experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives of new, primary role academic advisors at four-year public institutions in the United States.

This study described the perceptions and attitudes of individual, new, primary role academic advisor experience and knowledge of student development theory within NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency from two dimensions.

These dimensions include individual advisor educational and professional backgrounds.

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## Research Questions

- 01 How do primary role academic advisors perceive their educational and occupational backgrounds influence their work with students?
- 02 Do primary role academic advisors know of NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency? If so, how do primary role academic advisors describe learning about NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency?
- 03 What elements of NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency do primary role academic advisors report as influencing their work with students?
- 04 How did primary role academic advisors describe learning about student development theory?
- 05 What are the different ways primary role academic advisors perceive that knowledge of student development theory impacts their work with students?

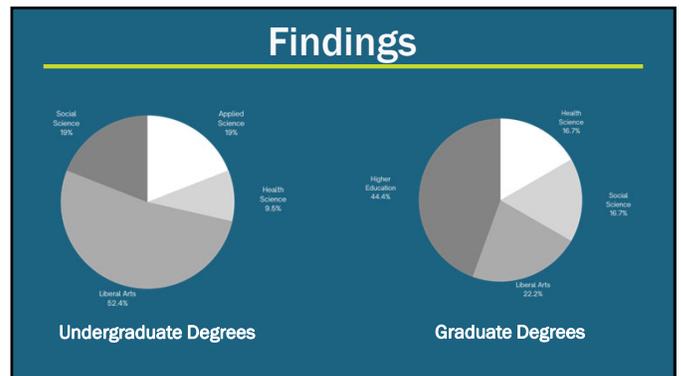
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## Data Collection & Analysis

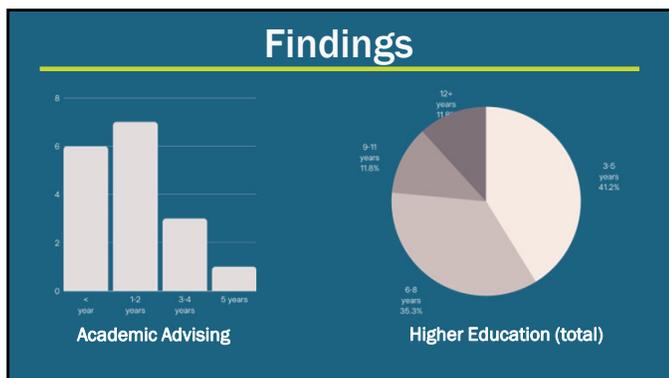
- Sample
  - Snowball sampling
  - 17 new primary role academic advisors
- Date Types
  - Survey
  - Directory Information
  - Artifacts
  - Interview
- Analysis
  - 7-Stage analysis process for phenomenography



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### What elements of NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency do primary role academic advisors report as influencing their work with students?

Six elements in which an advisor "needs to understand about the student and about the institution's advising environment" (Higginson, 2000, p. 301)

- History and role of academic advising in higher education
- NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising
- Theory relevant to academic advising
- Understanding advising approaches and strategies
- Expected outcomes of academic advising
- How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained

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THE HISTORY AND ROLE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING IN HIGHER EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advisor-Student Relationship</li> <li>Advising and Student Success</li> <li>Advisor Training and Development</li> </ul>	"It's important to know the difference between student success from the institution's perspective and student success from the student's perspective, because they are different. Advisors that look at the success of the students, specifically, are the ones who are empathetic and compassionate. Those that are focused on the institution's success have a major disconnect with students and building student relationships. There needs to be a healthy blend of it all."
NACADA'S CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowering Students</li> <li>Caring for Students</li> </ul>	"I try to give as many options as I can just because I want my students to feel like they have some agency in what they are doing. With a developmental model, advisors automatically get student agency, right? If students feel like they're part of the process, they're going to care more and they're going to be more involved."
THEORY RELEVANT TO ACADEMIC ADVISING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct Influence</li> <li>Indirect Influence</li> </ul>	"With theory, advisors aren't just sitting there specifically thinking about applying theory to practice, but they are just doing the work, day-to-day, because they know there are huge developmental differences between student populations. I use theory in my day-to-day work, but it is often not at all consciously."
UNDERSTANDING ADVISING APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developmental Advising</li> <li>Prescriptive Advising</li> <li>Other Stated Approaches</li> <li>Other Described Approaches</li> </ul>	"I would say the most critical point of advising students is seeing them as the whole person and not seeing them just as their academics or in a single category. Students are holding so many different identities within them, and it's for us to create relationships that cultivate and are developmental to their future. It requires us to advise them in a way that takes into account their own personal values, what they want in a future career, the classes and the challenges they want, and the experiences that they want in the classroom."
EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"accountability", "taking ownership", becoming "self-sufficient", "empowering students"</li> </ul>	"They [Students] are the driver. I'm in the passenger seat with the map. We can take this exit, we can take the next exit, and we can even do a full U-turn. They are the driver, but I'm there to offer helpful suggestions and navigate them through the process. Whether they take my directions or not is their decision."
HOW EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS ARE CREATED AND MAINTAINED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validating Students</li> <li>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training and Development</li> </ul>	"I do personal readings on my own, but I also joined a subgroup on diversity and inclusion within the [University College Group]. We're actually working on starting a book club to read and discuss with one another on how to better relate to students that are marginalized. We want to know how we can be better. I don't realize how privileged I was. So, I just started reading and learning. And now that I've done all this reading, I know that I can only do so much, but I can at least continue trying. Every day. The just never really finish but better than the alternative."

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### Discussion

- Do primary role academic advisors know of NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency? If so, how do advisors describe learning about the competency?
  - Self-ranking scale as an inaccurate representation of knowledge
  - Discussion added to existing literature to support the inconsistent knowledge, training, and development of academic advisors currently working with students on campus.
- What elements of NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency do primary role academic advisors report as influencing their work with students?
  - Every element within NACADA's Conceptual Core Competency influences advisors' work with students, but advisors were not aware of the labels and models
    - "I did the work, I just didn't know the work had a name."
  - Results illustrate the need for standardized initial training with continued onboarding training and development.
  - Results also support the inconsistent knowledge, training, and development of advisors.

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### Final Thoughts

Is it important advisor know there is a name for the work they do?

**YES!**

A Final Reflection

Hire = Relational Component  
 Train = Informational Component  
 Development = Conceptual

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# Initial & Continued Training

## Informed by Core Competencies

Natalie J. Brown



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## About me



Natalie J. Brown, Ph.D.

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## Core Competencies as a Training Roadmap

A roadmap tells us the desired outcome and where we want to be.

The Core Competencies include the 3 major components advisors must master to reach the goal.



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisment



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## Onboarding

Process begins weeks before new staff arrives

Request access needed and required early on.

Personalize onboarding and training itinerary.



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisment



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## Training is Ongoing

1 \$ & \$ ' \$ '&LCB'&LJ MBQK@BP'PBQP" QEB'QLKB'LOBUMB@Q>QLKP'LCQEB" >ASEPLO'PRMBCSEPLO>KA" ABM>QQJ BKQ† , : E>Q'>CB'VLRO'ABM>QQJ BKQ>I" MCELOQB Pfi , + LT 'AL'VLR'ABJ LKPO>QB'VLRO" MCELOQB Pfi



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisment



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## Weekly Training

- & LK@BMQR>I†
- Advising theory and discussion
- CAS standards.
- DEI training.
- ,KLOJ >QLK>I†
- Programs updates. Safety protocols.
- Changes to advising technologies.

- 5 B'>QLK>I†
- Review advising assessment plans.
- Discussion about programs and learning outcomes



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## Be Deliberate

- Check-ins at periodic intervals.
- Create personal advising philosophies.
- Utilize the strengths of the team!



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisement

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## Assessment & Development

- CAS Standards
- Annual Report
- Structured monthly check-ins
- NACADA: webinars, podcasts, e-tutorials, and other resources.



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisement

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## Share widely!

- Provide NACADA pocket guides and NACADA Core Competency handouts during large gatherings.
- Distribute copies of reports showcasing the work being done by advising departments.



Photo courtesy of TMCC Academic Advisement

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## Closing Remarks

- Create that foundational training using Core Competencies
- Make direct connections with the Core Competencies
- Align advising assessment plans to the Core Competencies.
- Start small.



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## Diana Thompson - University of Hawai'i at Mānoa



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## So... Where do I Start?



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### The Pre-Existing Product

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### The Steps I Took

- Identify**
  - Which of the CCs aligns with an existing product/project?
- Evaluate**
  - Rate how well you're aligned on a 5 pt. scale
  - Determine which CC areas can be improved
- Plan**
  - Brainstorm steps you can take to improve your scores

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### Incorporating the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies into Advising Practice

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