

You Are Not So Smart: Academic Advising Edition

Presenters:

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Overview

At the 2017 NACADA Annual Conference, “Best of Region 10” presenters **Gina Beyer** and **Amanda Voight** (Arizona State University) drew over 200 enthusiastic attendees to their presentation entitled, *You Are Not So Smart: Advising Edition*. Participants described it as *energetic, funny, and engaging*, as well as *informative*, and encouraged that it be taken to a wider audience.

In this webinar, drawing from concepts introduced in David McRaney’s 2012 bestselling book, *You Are Not So Smart*, Gina and Amanda will discuss these concepts’ relevance to the work academic advisors do with students. They will take participants on an adventure through their brains, demonstrating how easy it is for us to fall prey to ways our minds work, including biases and logical fallacies in the context of education. They will show how these natural workings of our brains can affect our daily lives and create social and psychological challenges, and they will share tips and tricks on how to work through the challenges of the human mind to improve student learning.

Imagine an emotionally charged, highly resistant 3rd year student who was doing okay for semesters but is now failing most of her courses and has to come to your office to register for classes. The student doesn’t appear to like you or the university. What might be going on in the student’s brain? In yours? How will you help her? Gina and Amanda will use interactive case studies so participants can apply their new insights to create solutions for some of their most challenging student interactions.

[Academic Advising Core Competencies](#) that will be addressed in this presentation include:

- R2 – Ability to create rapport and build academic advising relationships
- R3 – Ability to communicate in an inclusive and respectful manner
- R4 – Ability to plan and conduct successful advising interactions
- R5 – Ability to promote student understanding of the logic and purpose of the curriculum
- R6 – Ability to facilitate problem solving, decision-making, meaning-making, planning, and goal-setting

Pre-Webinar Preparation

This event will include a live online interactive activity. Participants may wish to bring a smartphone or laptop to take part in this activity.

KEY TERMS

Behavioral economics – a field of study that combines insights from psychology and economics to explain why individuals often do not make choices that are in their best interests.

Bounded rationality – rationality is restricted because there are limits to our thinking capacity, available information, and time.

Cognitive Bias – predictable patterns of thought and behavior that lead us to draw incorrect conclusions.

Choice architecture – refers to the practice of influencing choice by changing the manner in which options are presented to people.

Default – the outcome when an individual fails to make a decision; pre-set courses of action that take effect if nothing is specified by the decision maker. Setting defaults is an effective tool in choice architecture when there is inertia or uncertainty in decision making.

Heuristics – commonly defined as cognitive shortcuts or rules of thumb that simplify decisions. They represent a process of substituting a difficult question with an easier one. Heuristics can also lead to cognitive biases.

Logical Fallacies – common errors in reasoning that undermine the logic of an argument. Fallacies can be either illegitimate arguments or irrelevant points and are often identified because they lack evidence that supports their claim.

Rational vs. Irrational Choice – rationality assumes individuals make conscious choices aligned with their best interests (the “I Should” in the future) vs. irrational or non-rational choices in which individuals make decisions rapidly based on emotions or intuitions (the “I Want” in the present moment).

Nudging – using choice architecture to alter the physical, social and psychological aspects of a given context thereby influencing people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their incentives.

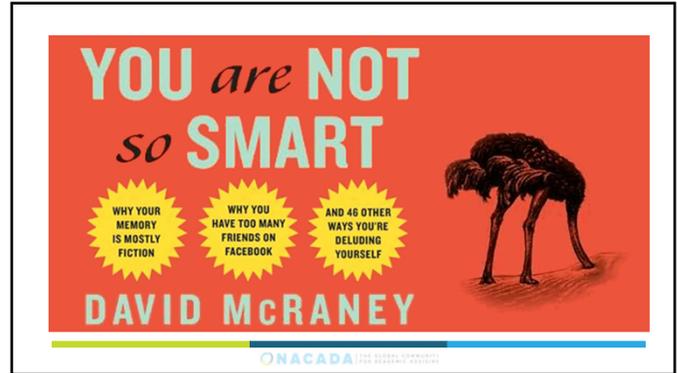
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Outcome

- We are NOT rational
 - What would have been rational?
 - When people know each other, it affects the outcome
- Altruistic punishment
 - You don't deserve the money
- SCARF Model

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Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Title.

What was used?

- Priming
 - Effects from one stimulus influences the response to another stimulus
 - Example of how you could use it?
- Ego Protection
 - Avoid effort in the hope of keeping potential failure from hurting their self-esteem
 - Example of how you could use it?

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Priming

Misconception: You know when you are being influenced and how it affects you.

Reality: You are unaware of the constant nudging you receive from ideas formed in your unconscious mind.

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Hindsight Bias

Misconception: After you learn something new, you remember how you were once wrong.

Reality: You often look back on the things you've just learned and assume you knew them all along.

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Ego Protection

Misconception: In all you do, you strive for success.

Reality: You often create conditions for failure ahead of time to protect your ego.

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Brand Loyalty

- Emotional Connection to a Thing
- Created by Choice
- Supports our Story of Self
- How do we see this as advisors?

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Brand Loyalty

Misconception: You prefer the things you own over the things you don't because you made rational choices when you bought them.

Reality: You prefer the things you own because you rationalize your past choices to protect your sense of self.

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Self-Serving Bias

TOOK FIRST STEPS AT 4 MONTHS OLD...
I MUST BE SOME KIND OF GENIUS
FELL DOWN... CRACK IN THE SIDEWALK



Self-Serving Bias

Misconception: You evaluate yourself based on past successes and defeats.

Reality: You excuse your failures and see yourself as more successful, more intelligent, and more skilled than you are.

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Dunning-Kruger Effect



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Dunning-Kruger Effect

Misconception: You can predict how well you'd perform in any situation.

Reality: You are generally pretty bad and estimating your competence and the difficulty of complex tasks.

Anchoring Effect

- Ties you down to an idea
- So effective, it's illegal!
- How you talk about things matters!



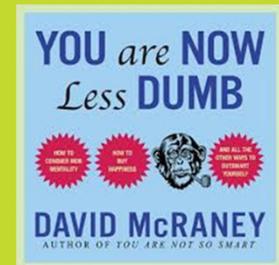
Anchoring Effect

Misconception: You rationally analyze all factors before making a choice or determining value.

Reality: Your first perception lingers in your mind, affecting later perceptions and decisions.

Conclusion

- Cognitive Bias
- Heuristics
- Logical Fallacies
- Use your powers for good because...



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