

Emerging Issues in Academic Advising Theory (DW50)

Web Event Handout

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Overview

The vision of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising is to be the leader within the global education community for the theory, delivery, application and advancement of academic advising to enhance student learning and development. In this Web Event, sponsored by NACADA's [Theory and Philosophy of Advising Commission](#), our panelists will consider questions such as *Where do the theory and philosophy of advising stand today? Where are they headed? How is theory related to our practice? Is there a difference between "theory" and "philosophy" and if so, how are they related? What theories of advising are represented in the most important literature on the subject? How should our limited ability to know our students affect how we think about the nature of advising? What will a successful theory of advising accomplish?*

Panelists will offer separate but related short takes on these questions, then invite event participants to text in questions for further discussion. Our moderator will help identify linkages among the presentations, and there will be ample opportunity to begin an open conversation, which will then be continued at our October [Annual Conference](#) in Salt Lake City.

Pre-Event Reading Suggestions

Himes, H., & Schulenberg, J. (2013, September). Theoretical Reflections: Theory and Philosophy Should Always Inform Practice. *Academic Advising Today*, 36(3). Available at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Theoretical-Reflections-Theory-and-Philosophy-Should-Always-Inform-Practice.aspx>

Lowenstein, M. (2012, June). Theoretical Reflections: Why a Theory of Advising? *Academic Advising Today* 35(2). Available at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Theoretical-Reflections-Why-a-Theory-of-Advising.aspx>

Musser, T. (2012, Sept). Theoretical Reflections: Constructivist Foundations for Academic Advising. *Academic Advising Today* 35(3). Available at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Theoretical-Reflections-Constructivist-Foundations-for-Academic-Advising.aspx>

Hagen, P. (2007, Sept). Narrative Theory and Academic Advising. *Academic Advising Today* 30(3). Available at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Narrative-Theory-and-Academic-Advising.aspx>

Suggested Questions for Post-Webinar Discussion

Do you have a personal philosophy of advising? Have you ever discussed it with colleagues? Would it be useful if your advising unit united around a particular philosophy?

Why is theory important to the work of academic advising? Are there any theories that you use frequently in your work that weren't mentioned in the presentation?

What are the essential qualities/characteristics of academic advising?

Two of your colleagues are arguing which is more central to the philosophy of advising, students' personal development or their academic learning. Would you be on one side or the other?

How might you facilitate a dialogue to help draw out an advisee's socio-historical context?

Recommended Follow-up

For those who will be attending the NACADA Annual Conference in Salt Lake City:

On Monday, Oct 7th, at 11:30 a.m. Marc Lowenstein, drawing from his concluding chapter in the newly-released NACADA/Jossey-Bass publication *Academic Advising Approaches: Strategies That Teach Students to Make the Most of College*, [Envisioning the Future](#), will sketch some ideas about the future to initiate discussion and then encourage session participants to discuss their ideas about where advising should do and why (C41).

On Monday, Oct 7th, at 2:00pm join Chair Sarah Champlin-Scharff and the Theory & Philosophy of Advising Commission to discuss how the commission can further contribute to the growth of the "discipline" of academic advising and the merging of theory and practice.

Marc Lowenstein's chapter (above) will also be the inspiration for this year's NACADA Common Reading. Join fellow participants on Monday, October 7 from 5:30 -7:00 p.m. in a discussion of the reading and its ramifications for academic advising.

On Tuesday, Oct 8th, at 10:00 a.m. Sarah Champlin-Scharff and Peter Hagen will present *Understanding and Interpretation: A Hermeneutic Approach to Academic Advising* (C134).

On Tuesday, Oct 8th, at 3:15 p.m. today's panelists will continue the discussion on *Emerging Issues in Advising Theory* – come join the conversation! (PAN228)

References and Resources

NACADA members can download the following *NACADA Journal* articles at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Journal/Download-Journal-Articles.aspx>

- Grites, T.J. (2013). Developmental Academic Advising: A 40-Year Context. *NACADA Journal* 33(1), 5-15.
- Grites, T.J. & O'Banion, T. (2012). From the Co-Editors: Guests Thomas J. Grites & Terry O'Banion. *NACADA Journal* 32(2).
- Champlin-Scharff, S. (2010). Advising with Understanding: Considering Hermeneutic Theory in Academic Advising. *NACADA Journal*, 30(1), 59-65.
- O'Banion, T. (2009). Retrospect and Prospect. *NACADA Journal*, 29(1), 83-89.
- Schulenberg, J., & Lindhorst, M. (2008). Advising is Advising: Toward Defining the Practice and Scholarship of Academic Advising. *NACADA Journal* 28(1), 43-53.
- Lowenstein, M. (2005). If Advising is Teaching, What do Advisors Teach? *NACADA Journal*, 25(2), 65-73.
- Hemwall, M.K. & Trachte, K.C. (2005). Academic Advising as Learning: 10 Organizing Principles. *NACADA Journal*, 25(2), 74-83.
- Crookston, B. (1972/1994). A Developmental View of Advising as Teaching. *NACADA Journal*, 14(2), 5-9.

- O'Banion, T. (1994). An Academic Advising Model. *NACADA Journal*, 14(2), 117-119. (Reprinted with permission from *Junior College Journal* 42)
- Hagen, P. (1994). Academic Advising as Dialectic. *NACADA Journal*, 14(2), 85-88.

Additional Recommended Resources

Cobb, P. (2005). Where is the Mind? A Coordination of Sociocultural and Cognitive Constructivist Perspectives. In C. T. Fosnot (Ed.), *Constructivism: theory, perspectives, and practice* (pp. 39-57). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Lyotard, J. F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Sarup, M. (1993). *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism* (2nd Ed.). Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.

Stowe, D. E. (1996). Postmodern view of advisement in higher education. *NACADA Journal*, 16(2), 16-18.

Emerging Issues in Academic Advising Theory

A Panel Discussion

The vision of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising is to be the leader within the global education community for the theory, delivery, application and advancement of academic advising to enhance student learning and development. In this Web Event, sponsored by NACADA's Theory and Philosophy of Advising Commission, our panelists will consider questions related to where theory and philosophy of advising stand today, where they are headed, and how they relate to the practice of academic advising.



Clarifying the Importance of Theory and Philosophy

How is theory related to our practice?



What is the relationship between "theory" and "philosophy"?



Relationship between Theory and Philosophy

"...Philosophy influences how one sees the world, theory shapes how one intentionally interacts with that world"

(Himes and Schulenberg, 2013)

Philosophy is the critical study of the **basic principles and concepts** of a particular branch of knowledge, especially with a view to improving or reconstituting them

What is academic advising and why is it important?

Theory is a set of statements that provides authority from which we can make generalizations about phenomena

Where do the theory and philosophy of advising stand today?



Adviser as guide for student choice

"[Student academic choice]...forces the student to become conscious of what he is doing, permits him to become a partaker in his own work, and makes him perceive that gains and losses are immediately connected with a volitional attitude. When such a consciousness is aroused, every step in knowledge becomes a step toward maturity " (Palmer, 1885, p. 398).

The Student Personnel Point of View aimed to help students:

- adjust to the college environment,
- build study skills,
- find comfortable living facilities,
- develop a sense of belonging at the college,
- develop healthy habits,
- develop a better sense of self,
- understand their emotions,
- diversify their interests,
- gain financial control,
- progress toward appropriate vocational goals,
- develop maturity,
- “discover ethical and spiritual meaning in life,”
- learn to live with others,
- develop socially acceptable sexual adjustment, and
- prepare for post-college life

(American Council on Education, 1949, p. 4-7)

Definitions of “Developmental”

- Developmental Advising
 - An activity meant to promote holistic student development.
- Developmental Theory
 - A variety of psycho-social theories that explain and predict how humans develop.
- Developmental Approaches
 - Techniques that are believed to promote a particular kind of psycho-social development.

“Advising is Teaching”

- Aligned academic advising with student learning
- Concisely describes the role of academic advising as a teaching endeavor



Where do we stand today?

Two important movements

- 1) Diversification of the theories from other fields that are being applied to academic advising
- 2) Active discussion of academic advising's purpose in higher education

Theory in Advising

What theories of advising are represented in the most important literature on the subject?



Frequently included in Advising Literature

Social Sciences
Developmental
Self-authorship
Identity theories

Education
Constructivism
Social Constructivism
Curriculum theory

Humanities
Hermeneutic
Postmodern

Common Characteristics of Theories applied to advising

- Development of skills
- Education (i.e. understanding the process of learning and pedagogy)
- Interpretation & Communication (i.e. the role of narrative and meaning)

How should our limited ability to know our students affect how we think about the nature of advising?



Constructing an Education

- Advising ought to offer the co-construction of an education
- Understanding each advisee is central
- Identifying what is meaningful is essential

**Centrality of Interpretation:
Hermeneutics**

- Something needs to be “uncovered”
- Meaning is not something “out there” in the world
- Meaning is contextual and develops over time

Dialogue and the Process of Understanding

Socratic Dialogue:

- Aims to acquire knowledge and understanding
- Involves recognition of limits of what one knows
- Understanding is a continual process

Meaningful Advice

Truly meaningful advice, that matters to the individual student, ought to be grounded in an understanding that is nuanced and involves self-consciousness of our own context and limitations, our advisees context and limitations, and continual re-assessment.

What will a successful philosophy of advising accomplish?



What is a philosophy of advising?

A statement of the essential nature and purpose of advising

- What advising could and should be
- An ideal to strive for
- About advising in any setting, for any students

Comprehensive Philosophy of Advising

- Provide unity of purpose
- Articulate why advising is essential
- Stimulate debate within the profession

Goals for Comprehensive Philosophy

- Tied to philosophy of higher ed
- Identify common elements of advising
- Distinguish essential / incidental elements
- Distinguish advising from other activities

Goals for Comprehensive Philosophy

- Identify what advisors do
- Show why advising is critical
- Imply an expected standard
- Inspire a vision of excellence

Proposals for Moving Forward

Where is the theory of advising headed?


