Advising Notes: by Advisors, for Advisors

Spring/Summer 2017

Join a Conference Team for Fun and Advancement!

By Moira Fracassa, EACPHS (for L2 Certification)

Advisors are regularly reminded of the value of being involved in professional organizations, but not everyone understands the appeal of presenting at a conference. There are other ways to be involved, however, and one of them is working on a conference team. My first time on a conference team was in 1992, and my most recent was 2016. In both cases my involvement resulted from being "conference-adjacent;" I had colleagues involved in the leadership of an organization and when the planned conference was mentioned, I simply volunteered to be on the committee. If you find yourself interested, but not conference-adjacent, take the initiative to contact the leadership of an organization about an upcoming conference. Or, if conference chairs have been announced (and they are usually announced early), send an e-mail detailing your interest. Committee chairs will usually be delighted to have assistance and volunteering is especially fitting if the conference is local.

There are many roles on a conference planning team so you should think about where you might be most helpful based on your background and skills. The types of roles involved include:

- Communications: Call for proposals, call for registration, print, e-mail, social media
- Registration: Tracking registration and payments
- Fundraising: Soliciting advertising or donations
- Lodging and transportation: Exploring and negotiating group rates, arranging shuttles
- Hospitality: Arranging social events, tours of area landmarks, providing dining options
- Program proposal evaluations: Assessing submissions and providing detailed feedback
- Miscellaneous roles, including drafting schedules, working with keynote speakers, etc.

Take a look at the organization's last conference and review the assigned committee roles (they tend to be posted). For my part, I had experience with Publisher and producing newsletters, so twice I created a conference booklet. Perhaps you have technology skills that would make you best suited to working registration, web editing, or developing an app for the event. Are you a talker and do you like to show off your campus or city? Perhaps you should work a hospitality table or take attendees on a tour. If your ideal role is already taken, be flexible and consider stepping into any role needed. Note that some conference committees are more loosely organized, so jobs are simply assigned as they are discussed. If you don't see a clear structure from past conferences, don't worry. Just go for it.

And don't be intimidated by the role, thinking, "But I've never done this before!" Those who filled the position in the past are usually more than willing to share documents and advice, so there will be some guidance for any questions that crop up. Also consider the option of serving as a co-coordinator: you and a peer can lean on each other if you are unsure or need ideas.

Finally, working on a conference is fun! A lot of hard work, complications and headaches will happen along the way (yes, they will), but being the face of a professional organization when colleagues come to learn and grow as leaders just feels good. You may deal with unhappy attendees, delayed flights, and malfunctioning equipment. You will likely run your tail off, doing whatever needs to be done. But along the way you will also make an impression on your fellow committee members while performing a valuable service to your profession.

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Top 10 Considerations for Student-Advisor Interactions at Orientation

By Cody Bailey-Crow, CLAS

New Student Orientation is both exciting and nerve-wracking for incoming students and advisors alike. It is often the first interaction we have with one another, and it lays the foundation for our relationship in the years to come. Like any relationship, student-advisor interactions greatly rely on "first-impressions," so how can we best present ourselves at such a crucial point in a student's academic journey? Here are 10 considerations:

Understand the type of student you are interacting with

Are they a first-generation student, returning adult learner, an international student, or perhaps a student with special needs? The type of student you interact with should be taken into consideration as you prepare for your first meeting.

Make sure the interaction is student-centered

The major goal of Orientation is to make sure the student is registered for fall classes. Not surprisingly then, your interactions must be student-centered to best determine the appropriate courses to take and the right resources to recommend.

Begin to develop the student's sense of self-efficacy

Advisors should promote student self-efficacy, and this can begin during Orientation. Encourage students to fully participate in the student-advisor relationship, so some of the onus is put on them to take charge of the experience.

Identify your student's housing situation

Understanding each student's living situation may have an impact on the courses or course times you recommend. Housing also has an impact on ways students may choose to get involved during their first term on campus.

Take into consideration the possibility of transfer credits

FTIACs may arrive on campus with AP credit, dual enrollment, transfer credit, or pending test scores. Be certain to ask whether or not they fit into this category and adjust your recommendations accordingly.

Determine whether or not your student committed to their major

We know that many students come in fully committed to their choice of major, but many more will change their major (maybe even at Orientation). Be mindful to ask your students if they are considering changing their major (or not).

Explain the value and importance of the student-advisor relationship

Many students may not understand the importance of the student-advisor relationship. By taking some time to explain what students can expect from their advisor (and what the student should bring to the relationship) will not only clarify what we do for students, but will encourage students to continue their work with us moving forward.

Let them know a few reasons why WSU is awesome

Certainly many incoming students know at least a few great things about WSU already, but take a moment to brag about some of the opportunities available to them. Let them know just how great a place they've come to!

Encourage the student to get involved in your department and/or college

When discussing academic goals and career aspirations, make appropriate recommendations for students to get involved in a departmental organization or a relevant research project. You might also mention specific faculty members they should seek out early in their program.

Determine the next steps for your student and schedule a follow-up appointment

As a wrap-up to your first interaction at Orientation, leave students with a set of recommendations prior to setting-up a follow-up appointment. This is especially helpful when working with freshmen, as it encourages a continued student-advisor relationship.

Advisor Spotlight: *Ryan Ferrante*

By Rachel Pawlowski, Honors College

Ryan Ferrante is the current Academic Advisor for the Department of Political Science in CLAS. He began his career as a WSU advisor in 2014, but has been a champion of WSU ever since he graduated with his bachelor's degree in Secondary Education back in 2007. Ryan enjoyed his studies at WSU so much that he came back and received his MA in Political Science in 2013.

From 2007-2013 Ryan worked as a teacher of U.S. and world history. He taught at Southgate Anderson for 3 years, University Prep Science and Math Center for 1.5 years, and Lincoln Park High School for half a year. After he received his Masters of Arts in Political Science, however, Ryan decided that academic advising was a career path he was very interested in, especially since there was an opening within the Political Science department. It was meant to be.

As an academic advisor, Ryan primarily sees undergraduate students although his experience in the MA program draws in the occasional graduate student seeking advice from someone who has successfully navigated the program. Ryan's motto is to be as proactive as possible. He tries to find problems before they become ones for students. He likes to help students focus on the balance between their academic careers and life. He is holistic in his advising approach and always tries to encourage students to do something that they are interested in and not something that just looks good on paper.

Currently, Ryan is serving as the chair of the Training Committee for the Academic Advising Council (AAC). With the assistance of his committee members, he recently created a training liaison program that will go into effect in summer 2017 for newly hired academic advisors. This innovative program will not only help new hires get oriented to WSU and their advising role on campus, but will also serve

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Student Service Insider By Avanti Herzceg, CFPCA

WSU's Financial Literacy Program

In September 2016, the Academic Success Center's Financial Literacy Program (FLP) was established to assist WSU students (and WSU community members) in developing their personal financial goals and in helping to align these goals with their academic goals. The FLP was created as part of a retention strategy to assist students, at every level, with everyday concerns and struggles.

Adam Bauer, Financial Education Coordinator of the FLP, was hired full-time when the program launched and sees the FLP as an opportunity to help students "make financial maneuvering a little easier." A high school English teacher in Illinois, Adam moved with his wife to the Detroit area where he pursued his MBA in Finance at WSU and worked part-time as part of the study skills team in the ASC. When the coordinator position opened, he knew it would be a good fit with both his finance and teaching background.

Adam considers the FLP services as the "next step" after a student speaks to financial aid. Financial aid is there to fund a student's education, but there are other financial concerns to consider while in college: budgeting, saving, credit, investing, responsible spending, etc. The FLP does not go too far into a student's financial specifics; they are there to give options and suggestions on how to make good financial decisions—to be aware of "what's coming in, and what's going out." Finances can seem complicated to students and the FLP can assist in simplifying the process through "time and grit."

The FLP offers several resources such as one-on-one financial coaching, an online community, workshops, and a living learning community (LLC). The one-on-one financial coaching, Adam says, is cost-effective and can be tweaked to a student's specific needs. It is also the most underused service they offer. There are four workshops per semester which are open to anyone in the WSU community. There are also private workshops offered that are geared towards a specific student population (i.e. physicians speaking to pre-med students on money mistakes). Adam sees the online community, which provides quick tips, discussions, access to all resources, as a new way to "get in front of people." Finally, the LLC provides a peer-led monthly group meeting with a space to discuss finances, tips, and goals.

Adam states that there are not many universities in the country with student financial literacy programs. WSU is very progressive in this manner and, while we "can't solve every student issue, we can help them come up with a plan" to help ease the financial burden—to allow students to put more of their focus on school.

For more information visit **success.wayne.edu**. Adam is also available at 313-577-9181 or adam.bauer@wayne.edu.

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to create a sense of community. New advisors will get valuable information about the University, the Advising Training Academy, and the current community of advisors. It is a much needed program and will help all academic advisors across campus operate out of our silos.

Ryan is currently a member of NACADA, MIACADA, and still has his provisional teaching certificate. Some fun facts about Ryan is that he was a member of the WSU fencing team for 2 years during his undergraduate studies. He plays the guitar and piano, loves 90s music (New Found Glory, Blink 182, etc.), and Detroit sports teams.

Wayne State University is lucky to have such a dedicated and knowledgeable academic advisor serving students in the Political Science department. Ryan constantly demonstrates professionalism to the highest degree and always puts students first. He is always available to help other advisors and the University as a whole. If you have not met Ryan yet, his door is always open.

AAC Update

The AAC will be hosting a picnic for all advisors on Wednesday, May 24 from 1 to 5pm.

In addition to fun and food there will also be a short business meeting to announce the new board members for next year as well as a reveal of the new AAC logo. Contact Cody Bailey for more information: fs3981@wayne.edu

Introductions

By Kim Morgan, CLAS

WSU welcomes Chris Clark as the newest advisor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In February 2017 she joined the Department of Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures in which there are 16 language and cultural studies programs.

Chris' passion is in helping students, so she relishes the opportunity to advise them regarding classes and careers. Chris comes to Wayne State with a bachelor's degree in history from Michigan State University. During her time there she interned at Grand Ledge High School because she wanted to be a K-12 teacher. She soon realized, however, that higher education was her true love. So, she obtained a master's degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs from Eastern Michigan University. While there Chris worked as a volunteer in the Honors College, tutored student athletes, interned, and finally worked as a first year advisor. One of her most memorable responsibilities was working on an orientation called "Fast Track."

Chris spends her free time writing short stories and novels "which may never be published" but she loves it just the same. She collects minerals and is very excited to welcome a new member to her family – a pet rat. Since she is new to Detroit, exploring the city's architecture and history is a top priority, and she would love any suggestions you may have for her explorations.

Chris has many goals. Among them are continuing to work with students and widening her education. Her true passion, however, is career advising. She truly enjoys helping students connect what they like, including their hobbies, to their language major so they can make a lifetime career from it. It gives her great satisfaction.

Chris has already delved deeply into professional development and life as an advisor at Wayne State. She has already shown herself be an asset to our students and a valuable member of our team. Welcome to Wayne State, Chris!

ATA Update by Kate Bernas, ATA

The ATA completed another successful round of Training Modules this April. 19 new advisors earned Level 1 Certification this round, bringing the total to 65 WSU advisors who have earned Level 1. In addition, 4 new advisors earned Level 2 Certification so far this year for a total of 8 at the University.

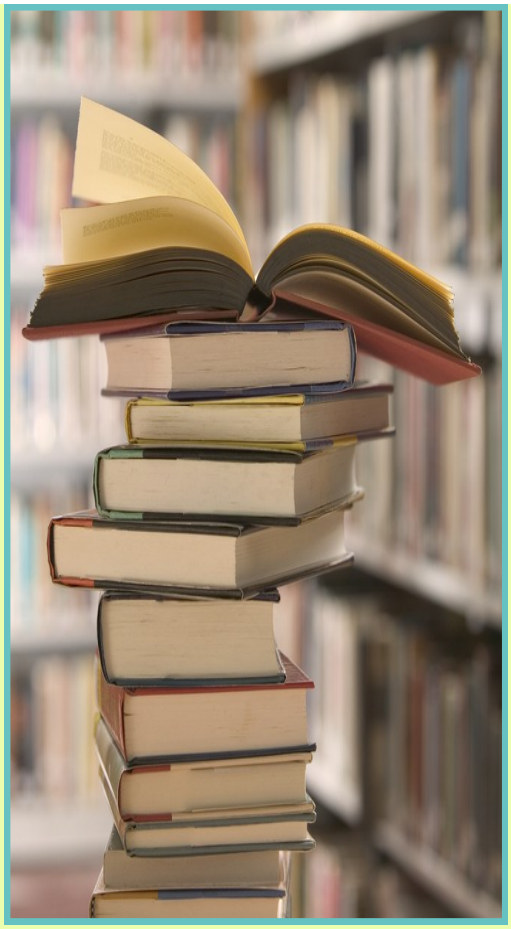
The trainings will be offered again in the fall, with dates announced during the summer. Level 2 can be earned at any time after Level 1 with the completion of the following three criteria:

1. A professional presentation
A state, regional, or national advising conference presentation would certainly be acceptable. Other options would be an ATA-sponsored workshop or Lunch and Learn on an advising topic of interest to you and/or relevant to WSU advisors. Contact me with information on a presentation you would like to apply toward your Level 2.

2. A written contribution to the WSU advising community
Again, an article through NACADA or another journal (published after Level 1) would be great. I am also hopeful that advisors will be interested in doing an article or book review (something relating or relatable to academic advising) and then submitting a draft to me for some light editing. I will then "publish" and save the articles on Blackboard. If there are many that come in at once, I will space them out a bit so they do not bottleneck in our inboxes and remain unread! Articles may also be printed in the "Advising Notes" newsletter if room permits. Please see Moira Fracassa and Pam Dale's articles in this edition for examples.

3. **A written endorsement by the advisor's supervisor** (requested by me after 1 and 2 are complete)

Upon completion of Level 2, advisors will receive up to $250 toward the registration fee at an advising related conference as well as a recognition letter from the Associate Provost for Student Success copied to their supervisor or Dean/Director. A more formal recognition will also take place at our annual certificate program at the end of the year.



Good News

We still want to hear your "Good News!" Please send along any personal or professional highlights from the past term; accomplishments, milestones, and other life events. Submit information to Kate Bernas at ab9599@wayne.edu.

Hidden Gems: Wayne State University Academic Advisors by Pamela Dale, APEX
(for L2 Certification)

Academic Advising is defined as a process of information exchange that empowers students to realize their maximum educational potential. The advising process is student-centered and will result in the student gaining a clearer understanding of him/herself and the experience of higher education (PBS teleconference: Academic Advising: Campus Collaboration to Foster Retention, aired via satellite, November 4, 1999).

The advising staff at WSU are the real hidden gems at the institution. They are often not truly appreciated for the valuable things they do to encourage students to keep going, even when everyone around them is telling them to throw in the towel. The job of an advisor is multifaceted, involving the college or department, the student, the faculty, and often the parents or guardians. Despite the number of advisees you have, in my opinion there are three tenets that every advisor must be aware of in order to be effective.

1. **Self-Knowledge**

In order to be a trusted adviser you must know yourself. It is imperative that you are honest with yourself on why you are in this career. Advisors perform a very important task not only for students, but also for the college or department for which they work. Neither faculty nor administrators can touch the life of a student the way an advisor can; it really doesn't matter if you advise a student one time or ten times. Here are questions to consider:

1). Are you really invested in the life and future of every student you serve?

2). While in college, what was your relationship like with your academic or faculty advisor?

3). Are you a good listener or do you jump to conclusions based upon what you thought you heard?

2. Institutional Knowledge

Suggestions for newly hired advisors: be patient and learn your job thoroughly. Be willing to place yourself in the role of student first, and then teacher. Many units have a web of policies and procedures (many not written down) that you must familiarize yourself with and it's helpful to gather information from experienced colleagues to understand the why and how of the policies you must enforce. In higher education, the only constant is change. Most recent examples include the suspension of the Gen Ed math requirement and the newly implemented Advising Works.

You should be willing to learn more about the profession of advising by reading books and articles on various advising topics, and by attending conferences, workshops, webinars, and Lunch and Learns that address theories in the advising field. Adopt various advising models that work for individual students. You may need a developmental approach for one, a prescriptive for another, an intrusive, or a strength-based for others. One approach will not work for all students so you must learn to be flexible.

Submit an article for the ATA newsletter based upon your area of expertise or interest. Consider writing for a scholarly journal or doing a presentation. We all have so much to share and learn from each other (Applying Theory to Advising Practice: the Application of Theories of Development to Academic Advising Philosophy and Practice, Sherry Williams, NACADA).

3. Practical Knowledge

Lastly, as an advisor I truly believe that we must leave our students more educated each time we met them. Simply put, if I serve as your adviser it is my responsibility to make sure that you know more with each visit; more about yourself, the institution, or its policies. How do we know that we have successfully helped a student? Do they tell you or do you just know? We often know when we have done transformative work with a student, and in so many cases "thank you" are words we seldom hear, and don't find necessary.

In conclusion, I offer the words of Wayne State University president Dr. M. Roy Wilson, "Students do their part and Wayne State University does its part." One student at a time, every student counts. If we put students first and are willing to learn and to share, the profession of academic advising will continue to grow and develop as the important university entity that we know and love.