

Key Resources from “Advising Matters: The importance of a shared understanding of academic advising”

David R. Smith & Janet Schulenberg

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Academic Advising Policy and Context at Penn State

University Faculty Senate (2019). 32-00 Advising policy. <https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>

Faculty Senate policy 32-00 outlines the purposes, structure, delivery, and responsibilities for academic advising at Penn State. The policy was created in 1979 and most recently update in 2019.

Schulenberg, J. (2024). Student retention and academic advising at Penn State. <https://tinyurl.com/PSUAdvising> (log in with PSU email address)

A report prepared for Penn State leadership that examines Fall 2023 undergraduate advising meetings and Spring 2024 course enrollment shows a positive relationship between academic advising conducted according to minimum policy standards and student term-to-term retention. A simple financial model applied to this pattern suggests significant returns for advising structures that are intentional about prioritizing advising outreach and meetings.

Schulenberg, J. (2023). What is student success and who is responsible? *The Mentor: Innovative Scholarship on Academic Advising*, 25. <https://doi.org/10.26209/mj2563327>

In an adaptation of a keynote address, Schulenberg discusses the evolution of academic advising at Penn State. She argues that academic advising plays a central role in student success initiatives, especially for students whose backgrounds have been less welcomed to higher education. She also argues that systemic change and support, informed by the unique insights academic advising can offer, can help institutions adapt to the realities of present-day higher education.

Academic Advising Organization & Administration

Archambault, K.L., & Hapes, R.L. (Eds.). (2022). *Comprehensive advisor training and development: practices that deliver* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003443551>

This edited volume lays out a practical framework for adviser training and professional development. Recommendations focus on how those responsible for academic advising programs can properly support academic advisers to practice academic advising grounded in theory and aligned with standards and values accepted by the field.

Campbell, S.M., Stevens Taylor, C., & Dial, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Academic advising administration: essential knowledge and skills for the 21st century* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003437598>

This edited volume situates academic advising administration as a central and critical function relevant to social justice, globalization, and the nature of the academy itself. Chapters offer guidance on program organization, structure, planning, and assessment and on strategies to recruit and retain an advising team.

Boyer 2030 Commission. (2022). *The equity/excellence imperative: A 2030 blueprint for undergraduate education at research universities*. University Press of Colorado.
<https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/boyer2030/report.pdf> (Academic Advising begins on p.29)

The academic advising section of the Boyer 2023 Commission report asserts that organizing and sufficiently funding academic advising that transcends the transactional should be a strategic priority. The report recommends strategies including providing all students an academic adviser with whom they can develop a relationship and empowering advising leaders to coordinate, assess, and reorganize advising structures. The report criticizes current industry-standard roster sizes for both professional and faculty-role academic advisers as too high to be effective.

Lin, N., Shaw, C., Condon, K., Hammel, M., Tseng, Z., Janson, N., & Bryant, G. (2024). *Driving toward a degree - 2024*. Tyton Partners.

This report summarizes national survey data about academic advising and outlines challenges and opportunities, especially around AI. Caseload size is identified as a root cause of multiple systemic challenges, as is lack of coordination across different supports units. *A note of caution:* this report recommends some solutions that are motivated by corporate partnerships that pose to further exacerbate the persistent issues they describe.

Academic Advising and Retention/Persistence/Academic Outcomes/Sense of Belonging

Bermea, G. O. (2022). Humanistic advising: Applying humanistic theory to the practice of academic advising. *NACADA Review*, 3(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACR-20-07>

Humanistic advising calls for academic advisers to value students' life experiences beyond their academic profile, seek to get to know students as individuals, and aid students in their holistic development as human beings.

DeRosa, E. L. (2024). Academic advising's hidden role in fostering validation/belonging leading to improved grades. *NACADA Journal*, 43(2), 121–135. <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-22-43>

A quantitative study explored the relationships between advising, validation/belonging, and students' college grade point average (GPA) using a national sample of 7,211 graduating senior students. Multiple regression analyses revealed that advising had an indirect positive impact on GPA via students' experiences of validation/belonging. Academic advising mediated some of the additional negative factors affecting marginalized students.

Gray, A. R., Bumgardner, S., Hall, A., Young-Jones, A. D., & Yadon, C. A. (2024). Resilience in post-secondary students: The role of academic advisor support. *NACADA Journal*, 44(1), 55–65. <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-23-05>

A regression analysis demonstrated that students' perceived advisor support significantly predicted resilience, surpassing the influence of psychological distress, and that specific aspects of the advising relationship encouraged student resilience.

Johnson, R. M., Strayhorn, T. L., & Travers, C. S. (2023). Examining the academic advising experiences of black males at an urban university: An exploratory case study. *Urban Education*, 58(5), 774-800. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085919894048>

An exploratory qualitative case study examined the academic advising experiences of Black males at a large urban, Predominantly White Institution. Participants in the study experienced challenges with scheduling advising appointments and accessing their academic advisor. They also found racial and cultural challenges in establishing trust with advisers. When trust was established, advising played a positive role in the student's experiences.

Kitchen, J. A., Cole, D., Rivera, G., & Hallett, R. (2021). The impact of a college transition program proactive advising intervention of self-efficacy. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 58(1), 29– 43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2020.1717963>

A proactive mid-semester academic advising check point developed from a longitudinal study of students in a college transition program improved academic self-efficacy among first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented minoritized students.

Kot, F. C. (2014). The Impact of centralized advising on first-year academic performance and second-year enrollment behavior. *Research in Higher Education*, 55(6), 527–563. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-013-9325-4>

A quantitative analysis showed that students who used centralized academic advising experienced an increase in their first-term GPA, second-term GPA, and first-year cumulative GPA compared to students who did not use advising. Students who used centralized advising during the second term experienced a decrease in their probability of first-year attrition.

Museus, S. D., & Ravello, J. N. (2010). Characteristics of academic advising that contribute to racial and ethnic minority student success at predominantly White institutions. *NACADA Journal*, 30(1), 47– 58. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-30.1.47>

A qualitative study explored the role of academic advisers in facilitating success among students of color at Predominantly White Institutions. Academic advisers who “humanized” the advising experience by letting the student know them as individuals, who were explicitly interested in students as whole human beings, and who used multifaceted approaches to advising were particularly important to students. Participants found that proactive academic advising mattered.

Pitts, S., & Myers, S. A. (2022). Academic advising as teaching: undergraduate student perceptions of advisor confirmation. *Communication Education, 72*(2), 103–123.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2022.2131856>

Student perceptions of adviser behaviors were examined in a qualitative study. Confirming behaviors include recognizing students' experiences outside the classroom (see Bermea's humanistic advising above), collaboration on goals, recalling prior interactions, and offering positive feedback. Disconfirming behaviors include failing to give the student full attention, answering questions indirectly, and refusing to personalize student experiences.

Rozhenkova, V., Sato, B. K., & Buswell, N. T. (2024). "My blood is boiling when I think about advising": The role of academic advising in STEM student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 26*(2), 378-400.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/15210251221084122>

This focus group and interview-based study in a STEM field found that student perceptions of academic adviser behaviors can cause students to feel pushed out of the field, even when students are not experiencing difficulties in pursuing the field. A mismatch between adviser intention and student interpretation is at the root of this, warranting deeper consideration of the guiding philosophies of STEM departments that influence the practice of academic advising. The study emphasizes the need for greater empathy and care in how advisers listen and convey recommendations to students.

Squire, D., Yao, C. W., & Zenner, K. (2023). Neo-racism, academic advisor intercultural (in)competence, and the hindering of international student success. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 61*(2), 139–153.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2022.2147014>

A critical textual analysis of interview transcripts from advisers who work with international students examined how power, privilege, and oppression were embedded in statements made by academic advisers. The analysis shows patterns in attitudes that have the potential to negatively impact academic adviser–international student relations including homogenization of international students' experiences and the expectation of assimilation to US culture. Missing from these interviews was curiosity about students' individual goals for attending university. While none of the participants identified as neo-racists, their assumptions and actions were racist nevertheless and adviser qualifications, training, and institutional supports did not provide opportunity for challenging these assumptions or practices.

Swecker, H. K., Fifolt, M., & Searby, L. (2013). Academic advising and first-generation college students: A quantitative study on student retention. *NACADA Journal, 33*(1), 46–53.
<https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-13-192>

Multiple logistic regression analysis examined the relationship between the number of meetings with an academic adviser and retention of first-generation students. The number of advising meetings is a significant predictor of student retention. The odds that a student will be retained increased by 13% for every meeting with an academic adviser.

Graduate advising

Bloom, J. L., Propst Cuevas, A. E., Hall, J. W., & Evans, C. V. (2007). Graduate students' perceptions of outstanding graduate advisor characteristics. *NACADA Journal*, 27(2), 28-35.

This article is a good starting point to explore academic advising for graduate students. In addition, NACADA hosts an advising community on advising graduate and professional students: <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Community/Advising-Communities/Advising-Graduate-Professional-Students.aspx>