

CONNECTED18

Preparing Advisors for Proactive Caseload Management

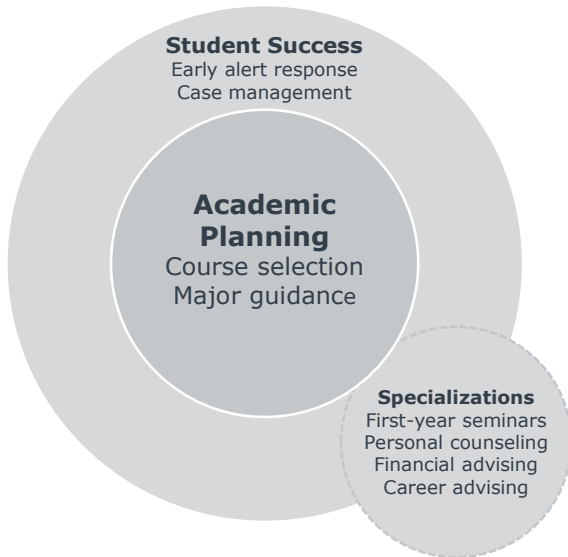
Lindsay Miars, Director



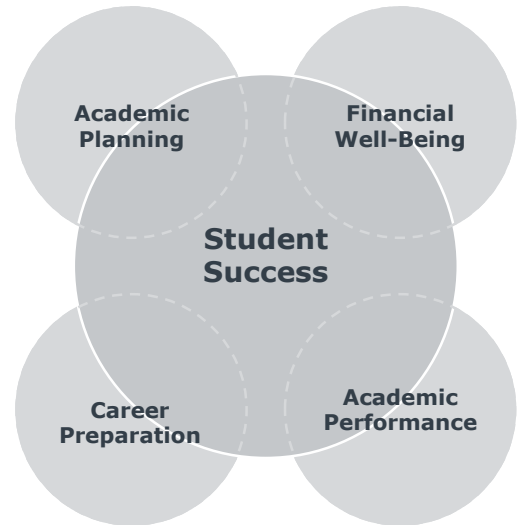
The Advisor of the Future (and Present)

Moving Beyond Transactional Responsibilities to More Holistic Care

Traditional Advisors



Next-Generation Advisors



***Many names for this role**, including Success Advisors, Retention Specialists, Population Managers, and Success Coaches

Role Shift Gaining Traction and Rigor

Community Colleges Transitioning Advisors in Support of Guided Pathways

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESEARCH CENTER

Advisors as “Registration Clerks”



New Advisors

✘ Optional Advising

Students have no assigned advisors, and drop-in advising is the norm

✘ Emphasis on Course Selection

Advising sessions emphasize academic planning and schedule creation

✘ Transactional

Advising is seen as a discrete function rather than a long-term relationship



Assigned Caseloads

Advising structure promotes a sustained and personalized approach



Advising as Teaching

Sessions support students holistically with emphasis on long-term goals



Holistic and Integrated

Advisors conceive of student success as program completion and engage with other student services staff



Role Shift Gaining Traction and Rigor

Community Colleges Transitioning Advisors in Support of Guided Pathways

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESEARCH CENTER

Advisors as “Registration Clerks”



“SSIPP” Advisors

- ✓ **Sustained**
Provide ongoing support
- ✓ **Strategic**
Differentiate levels of support
- ✓ **Integrated**
Plan efforts across departments
- ✓ **Proactive**
Initiate services within student lifecycle
- ✓ **Personalized**
Offer the appropriate response and support from a known staff member



A Major Step in the Right Direction...

Wave of Updated Job Descriptions Clearly Articulating Role for New Hires

ACADEMIC ADVISOR I—Duties (Excerpt)

University of Texas at San Antonio
Effective February 1, 2017



Provide Undergraduate Academic Advising *Value: Critical to Performing the Job*

- Participates in the planning and delivery of academic advising services to students while adhering to FERPA guidelines, including federal, state, university, college, and advising policies and procedures.
- Accurately uses and interprets all active Undergraduate Bulletin to explain university policies. Submits core Standing Curriculum Committee.
- Demonstrates proficiency with the following Core Components (skills advisors must demonstrate):
 - Relational component** (skills advisors must demonstrate):
 - Create rapport and build advising relationship.
 - Facilitate problem solving, decision-making and goal setting.

- Encumbers no more than 3 valid complaints from students listed above during the current evaluation period.
- Information discernible from the student's records and information disclosed by the student)
- Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles. (Adept in the uses of SSC-Campus, Degree Work, Banner, UTSA's web and other educational resources.)

“Create rapport and build advising relationship; Facilitate problem solving, meaningful planning, and goal setting...”

“Approach to overall caseload management is data driven, scalable, strategic, proactive...”

- Outstanding (O)
- Consistently exceeds all standard measures.
 - Responds with exceptional effort by helping resolve conflict.
 - Acknowledged by students and colleagues as exceptional in situation and its resolution.

- Solid Performer (SP)
- Fulfills all standard measures.

- Improvement Needed (I)
- Frequently fails to meet standard measures.
 - Fails to accurately assess student's situation based on information records and information offered by the student.
 - Recommends inappropriate or unrealistic solutions.
 - Encumbers 4 or more valid complaints from students, staff or faculty regarding the criteria listed above during the current evaluation period.

Advising Caseload Management *Value: Critical to Performing the Job*

- Approach to over-all caseload management is data driven, scalable, strategic, proactive, and in line with UTSA Advising initiatives.
- Participates in all mandatory UTSA academic advisor campaigns and outreach and meets established benchmarks.
- Avoids advising errors, as defined by a technical mistake, which hinders timely degree progression and/or has a negative economic impact on the student.
- Responds promptly to student scheduled contacts (Appointments, Walk-In and Advisor on Call) providing timely service to students.
- Returns emails and phone calls in a timely manner.
- Ability to direct student to appropriate resources offered by students.
- Ensures availability in SSC semester.
- Reaches out to students with day.
- Documents essential advising comprehensive and timely.
- Adept in using Academic Advising calendar availability schedule.

- Outstanding (O)
- Consistently exceeds all standard measures.

“Ability to direct students to campus resources and give appropriate referrals based on information offered by students”

...But a Job Description Alone Is Not Enough

Most New-Hire Training Is Insufficient, Leaving Advisors with Skill Gaps

New Advisor Training

Sample Agenda, Midsize Public College

- Introduction to the College
- Overview of Academic Policies & Procedures
- Review of Tools and Available Resources

1/2 Day in total

Professional Development

- Monthly or quarterly sessions on ad hoc topics

Training Overlooks an Advisor's Need for:



Success orientation with clear focus and expectations



Knowledge beyond academics, in order to provide holistic support



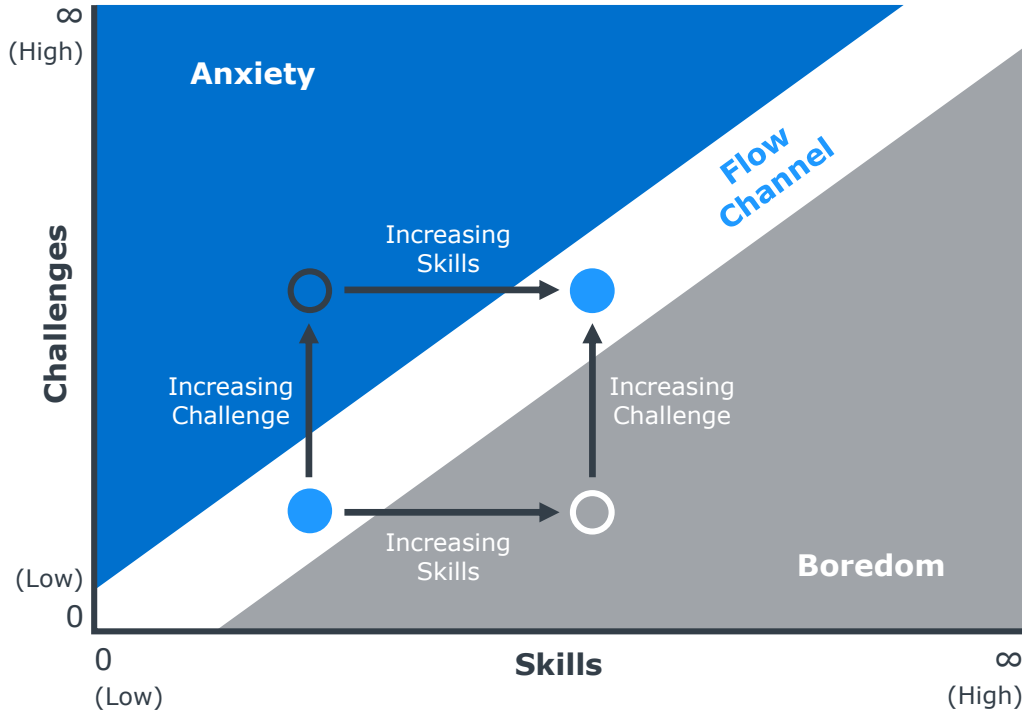
Proactive caseload management skills



Ongoing, strategic professional development

Why Is This a Problem?

New Expectations Without Adequate Training Creates Anxiety



Preparing Advisors for Proactive Caseload Management

1

Equipping New Advisors with the Right Skills



1. Adding new practical skills to advisor training
 - Using risk to prioritize
 - Caseload management
 - Holistic support
2. Structure and delivery of initial training
3. Ongoing professional development

2

Getting Resistant Advising Staff on Board



4. Restructuring staffing
5. Advisor messaging
6. *Articulating new expectations (Appendix)*
7. Encouraging skill redevelopment



Equipping New Advisors with the Right Skills

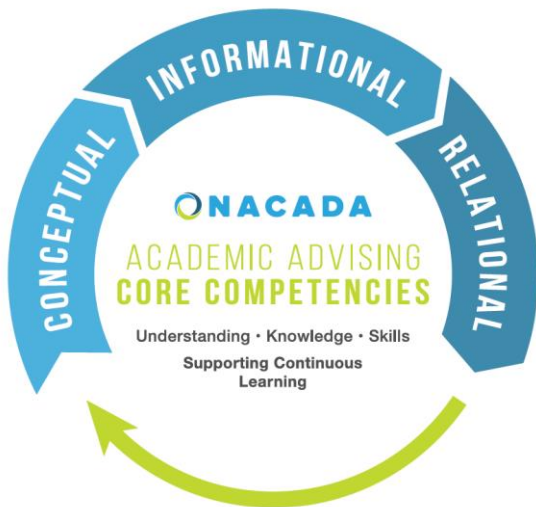
SECTION

1

Skills Absent from Most Competency Frameworks



...And Missing from Most Training Programs



CONCEPTUAL



Understanding of...

- The history of academic advising
- Advising approaches and strategies

INFORMATIONAL



Knowledge of...

- Curriculum and academic requirements
- University policies and resources

RELATIONAL



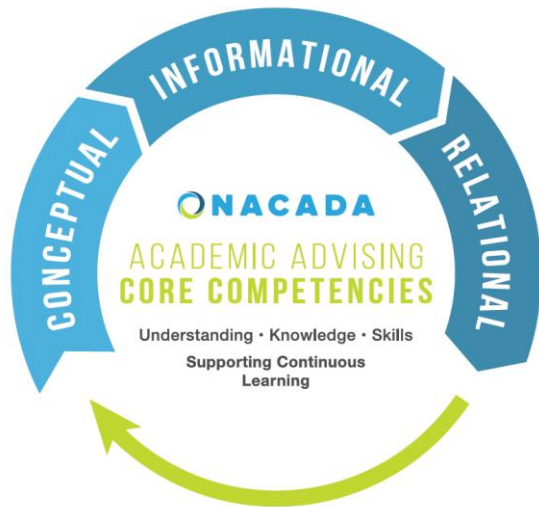
Ability to...

- Create rapport and build relationships
- Facilitate student planning and problem solving

Skills Absent from Most Competency Frameworks



...And Missing from Most Training Programs



Missing Practical Skills



Proactive Caseload Management

- Understanding of “differentiated” care and using risk to prioritize
- Ability to strategically manage a student caseload



Holistic Support

- Knowledge of other departments (financial aid, registrar, career center, tutoring, etc.) and referral processes

Using Risk to Prioritize

First-Year Guides Tailor Frequency of Contact to Student 'Coaching Level'

Guilford College

- Private liberal arts college in Greensboro, NC
- 1,674 undergraduates
- 59% six-year graduation rate



Guides with **40-60 first-year students** in their caseloads (also teach FYE seminar labs)

GUILFORD
COLLEGE

Recommended Communication Schedule (Sample)

Week	High Coaching Level (approx. 5%)	Moderate Coaching Level (20%)	Low Coaching Level
1			
2	Check-In/Initial Coaching Report	Check-In/Initial Coaching Report	Check-In/Initial Coaching Report
3	Complete Success Plan		
4	Assess/Adjust	Semester Plan	-
5	Assignment		-
6	Check-In for Midterms	Check-In Before Midterms	Check-In Before Midterms
7	Reflect on First Half		
8			
9	Plan from Midterm	Check-In Before Registration	-
10	Reality Check		-
11	Registration Check-In		-
12	Register for Classes	-	-
13	Follow-Up After Reg.	Follow-Up After Registration	Follow-Up After Registration
14	Reflect/Set Goals		

Total contacts

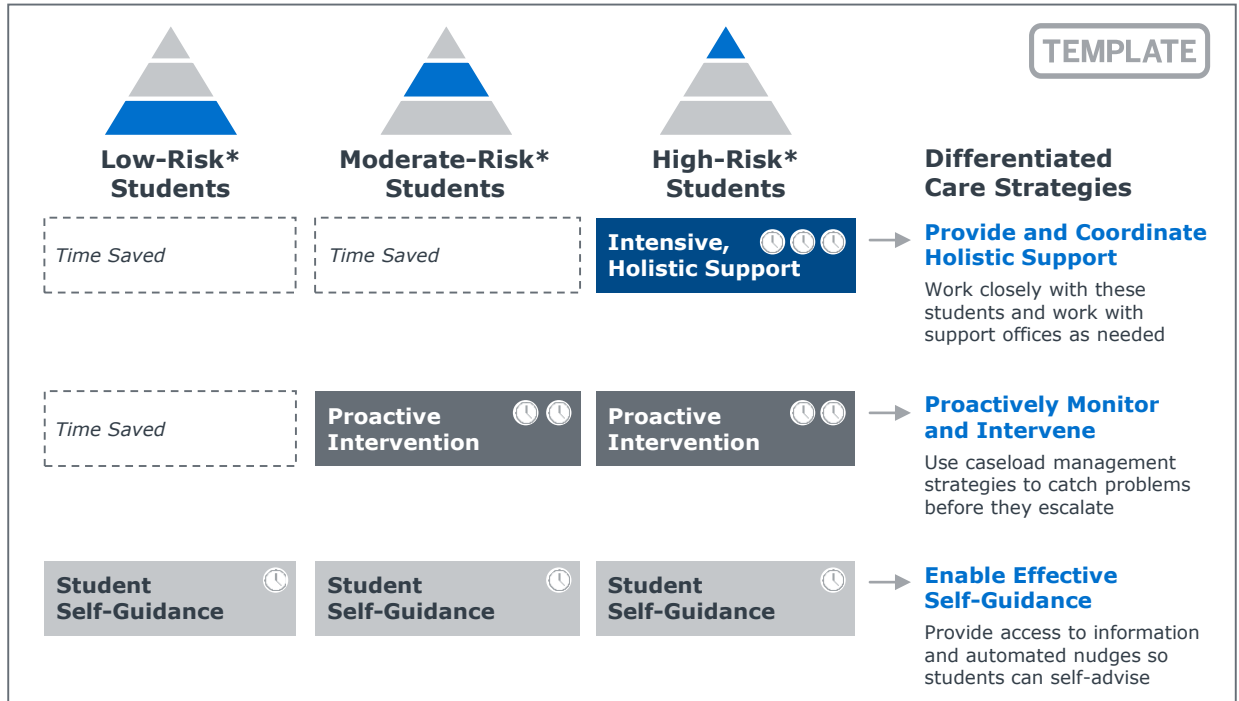
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5

3

Population Health Management

EAB Framework Could Help Advisors Understand New Philosophy



*Option to swap "risk" for softer terminology or different prioritization mechanism (e.g., <15 credits, conditional admit students)

Teaching Proactive Caseload Management

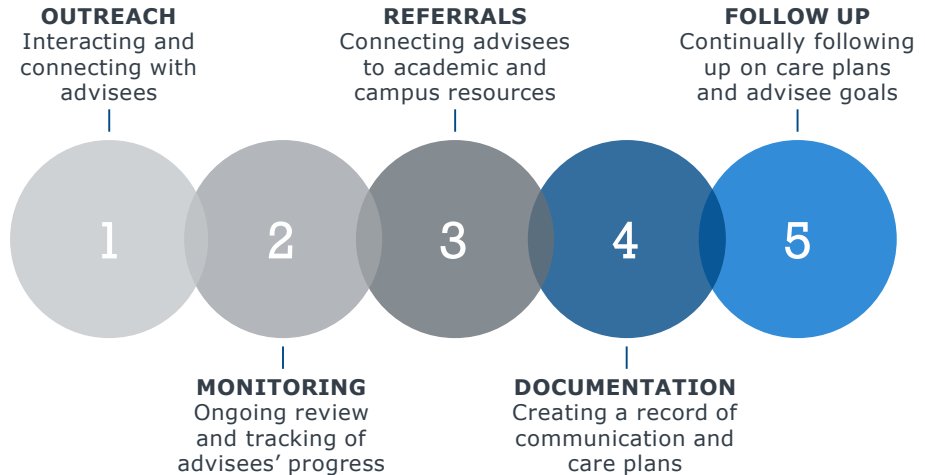
Bringing Together Case Management Practices and Appreciative Advising

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

- Public research university with campuses across the Rio Grande region; part of the UT system
- 25,000 undergrad students; 89% Hispanic
- 39% six-year graduation
- Professional advisors (including six new hires) serve four major clusters

UTRGV

Five Step Framework



Applying **appreciative advising** and inquiry tactics which support students in considering their options

Providing Clear Guidelines for Each Step

Sample Slide from UTRGV Training Deck



STUDENT SUCCESS UT RIO GRANDE VALLEY

MONITORING

- Employ ongoing review and tracking to measure the student's progress towards degree and intervene when appropriate
- Identify problems and opportunities for intervention
- Verify that the student's care plan continues to be appropriate, realistic, understood, accepted by the student, and supported by the advisor
- Metrics to monitor:
 - ✓ **Progress Reports and Early Alerts**
 - ✓ **Degree Progression** (Percentage Towards Completion, Graduation Milestones, Program Progression, Applicable Coursework, Anticipated Graduation Date)
 - ✓ **Academic Health** (GPA Trends, Earned/ Attempted Trends, Catalog Year, Declared Major/Minor, Academic Standing)
 - ✓ **Financial Health** (SAP Standing, Excess Credit Hours, Maximum Time Frame)

Creation of a Student-Centered Advising Model

New "Hub" Model Integrates Navigators and Faculty Advisors

Trident Technical College

- Public associate college in Charleston, SC
- 13,000 students across seven campuses
- 10% six-year graduation rate
- Transitioned to a new advising model in 2016 with goal of providing "one-stop shop" in The Hub

10

Navigators funded by Title III, iPASS grant, and the institution



Navigator

Onboarding Expert

0-30 CREDITS (Determined by Program)

Contact new applicants to provide guidance and support.

Responsibilities:

- Assigns faculty advisors
- Trains students on Navigate
- Answers common first-time student questions and provides information on available campus resources
- Assists in building student plan
- Monitors student progress



Faculty Advisor

Program Expert

30+ CREDITS (Determined by Program)

Transition student after reaching programmatic threshold.

Responsibilities:

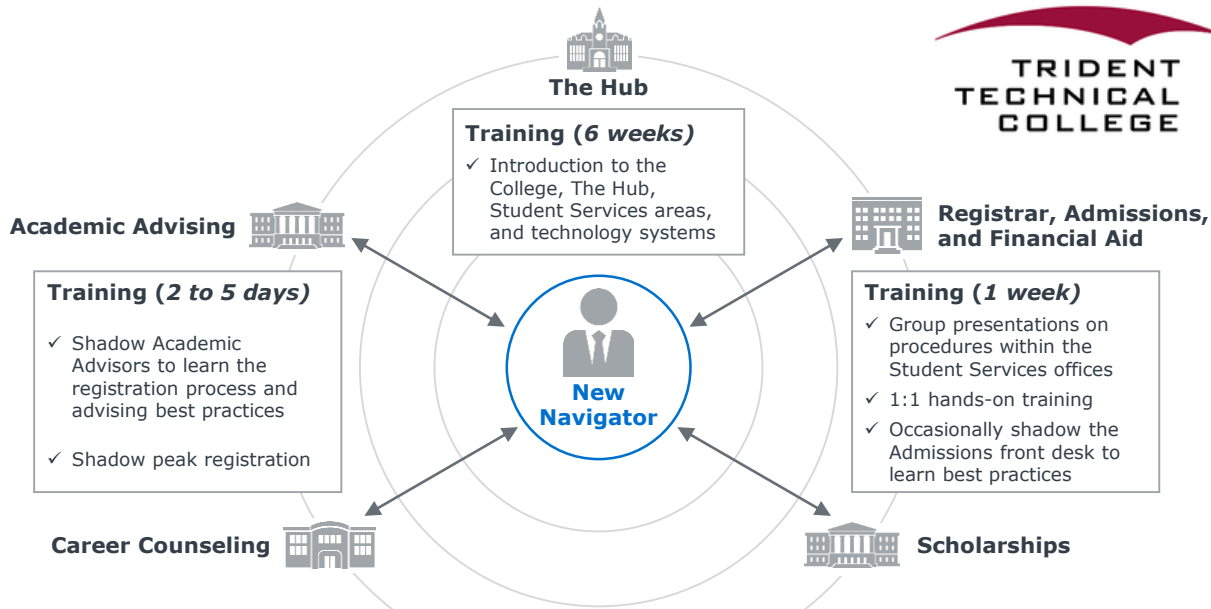
- Answers specific programmatic questions about courses, transfer, and prerequisites
- Meets with students for scheduled appointments and office hours



**TRIDENT
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE**

Immersive Training to Prepare for Holistic Support

Navigators Spend 2+ Weeks Learning in Other Departments



Benefits of Immersive Training

- ✓ Navigators are confident in their ability to be a "one-stop shop"
- ✓ Fewer referrals to support offices and better collaboration
- ✓ Greater trust in Navigators among faculty members

How to Structure and Deliver Effective Training

Best Practices for Onboarding and Developing Staff

New-Hire Training Should Be...

Standardized



Include the same skills and competencies for each new-hire (aligned to your job description and evaluation)

Multi-Modal



Combine lecture-style presentations with group discussion, hands-on activities, and opportunities for practice



Modularized

2-6 min.

Ideal length of a lesson, followed by opportunity to practice or reflect

Teach specific and concrete learning objectives in digestible “chunks”

Experiential



Incorporate personal reflection and opportunities outside of their comfort zone (e.g. shadowing other departments)

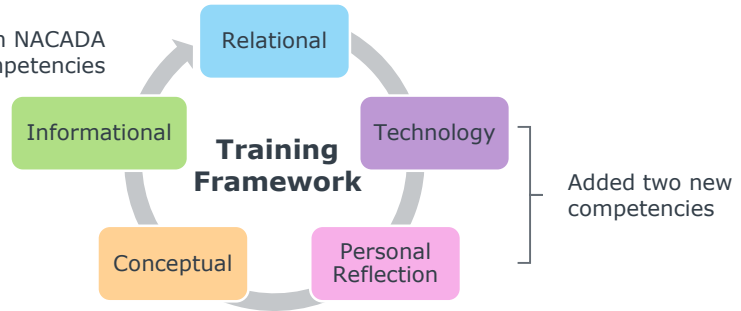
Robust Seven-Day New-Hire Training

Hands-on Program Designed to Set PACT Mentors Up for Success

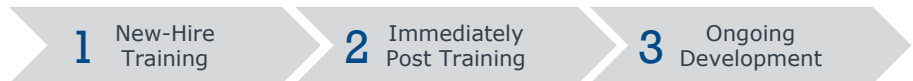
Mercy College

- Midsize private college in Dobbs Ferry, NY, with additional campuses in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Yorktown Heights
- 6,029 undergraduate students, 64.2% Pell-eligible
- 42.6% six-year graduation, 72.7% retention
- PACT Program has 50 full-time mentors with target caseloads of 150

Based on NACADA Core Competencies



Training & Professional Development Overview



Designed by a working group of Assistant and Associate Directors of PACT in 2016

Based on competencies above, building toward ownership of student caseloads



New mentors get their lists and hit the ground running



Receive training binder to reference as needed



Opportunity to attend conferences



Prof. development and training out of the Pres. Office



Refresher trainings based on surveys

Training Calendar Builds Toward Autonomy

Monitoring Caseloads and Navigating In-Person Conversations

DAY 1		DAY 2		DAY 6		DAY 7	
Welcome		Settle-In Time		Settle-In Time		Settle-In Time	
PACT Expectations		Team Expectations		Athletics		Advising Article	
Policies & Procedures		Residential Life		SHNS Overview		Shadow Mentor	
Break		Student Life		Break		Break	
Tour		Residential Life		Registrar Review		Shadow Mentor	
Advising Article		Campus Resources Round Robin		Mercy Website/Catalog		Shadow Mentor	
Admissions Process		Lunch		Lunch		Review Banner Screens	
Admissions Processing		Career Pathing		15-to-Finish Best Practices		Lunch	
Lunch		Career Services		Honors Program Overview		Advising Article	
HR/Benefits/Tuition Remission		Break		EAB Overview		Banner Scavenger Hunt	
Break		Mercy Connect Overview		Break		Community Standards	
Overview of Financial Aid		DegreeWorks		Shadow Mentor		Observations & Reflections	
Observations & Reflections		Observations & Reflections		Observations & Reflections		Observations & Reflections	

Competency

- Conceptual
- Informational
- Relational
- Technology
- Personal Reflection

Shadow tenured mentors to observe different approaches

“[Most] professional development... occurs only once a year to introduce the newest [tech] and the latest financial aid policies. Many times professional development may be blindly teaching people the latest course registration process.”

—Charlie Nutt
Executive Director, NACADA

A Data-Driven Approach to Professional Development

Knowledge-Based Review and Ongoing Training at Mercy College



- **Semiannual assessment** of PACT mentor knowledge in four categories:
 - Advising
 - Career
 - Financial
 - Student engagement
- Identify common challenges and sources of struggle
- Determine what additional training courses are needed
- Planning to assess students in the future as well



Advisor capabilities (as demonstrated to manager)

		Needs additional training	Could benefit from additional training	Does not need additional training
Advising	Explain the registration process via Mercy Connect			✓
	List current program directors in school they advise in		✓	
	Make an appointment with a student in EAB		✓	
Career	Create résumé with student information; edit a résumé	✓		
	Log in to Career Maverick and walk through the review and approval process			✓
	Log in to Guide and complete Major Matcher, save results, and articulate follow-up with student		✓	

Dual Incentives for Initial and Ongoing Training



Codifies Goal-Based Outcomes


Simplified Advising Curriculum

Learning Objectives:

- Incorporate pathways process
- Learn labor market info and career development
- Structure conversations around key touchpoints

Curriculum Overview:

- ▶ 60 total hours
- ▶ In-person and online
- ▶ Homework assignments

In partnership with  **CAEL**
Leading Learning and Work

Simultaneously Elevates the Advising Function...



Top of license: Certified Advisors operate at highest capacity level



Standardized: Certified Advisors are all equipped with same skills



Focused: Certified Advisors gain essential holistic training and pathway knowledge

...and Incentivizes Continued Learning



\$1,000

Certification Pay



Master Advisor
Designation



**Renewable
on annual
basis*

**Upon Demonstration of Continued Competency*



**ALAMO
COLLEGES
DISTRICT**

20%

increase in the number of students with a formal academic plan

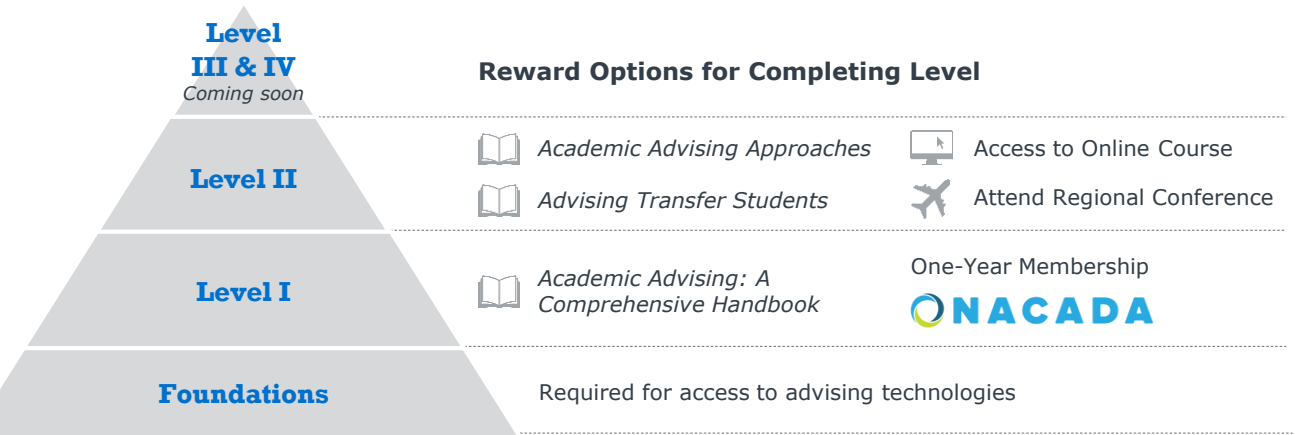
12%

reduction in credits at graduation, saving students nearly a full semester on average



Building Rewards into a Tiered Training Structure

U of South Carolina's Certification Levels Provide Rewards and Recognition



Completion of Each Level
Receives **Public Recognition**

88

Advisors who have completed
Level I as of September 2018
(out of 145 professional advisors)

12%

Increase in students who report
being "extremely satisfied" with
advising since 2014

Buy, Build, or Borrow?

Developing Full-Scale Training Is a Heavy Investment, but There Are Options



Preparing Advisors for Proactive Caseload Management

1

Equipping New Advisors with the Right Skills



1. Adding new practical skills to advisor training
 - Using risk to prioritize
 - Caseload management
 - Holistic support
2. Structure and delivery of initial training
3. Ongoing professional development

2

Getting Resistant Advising Staff on Board



4. Restructuring staffing
5. Advisor messaging
6. *Articulating new expectations (Appendix)*
7. Encouraging skill redevelopment



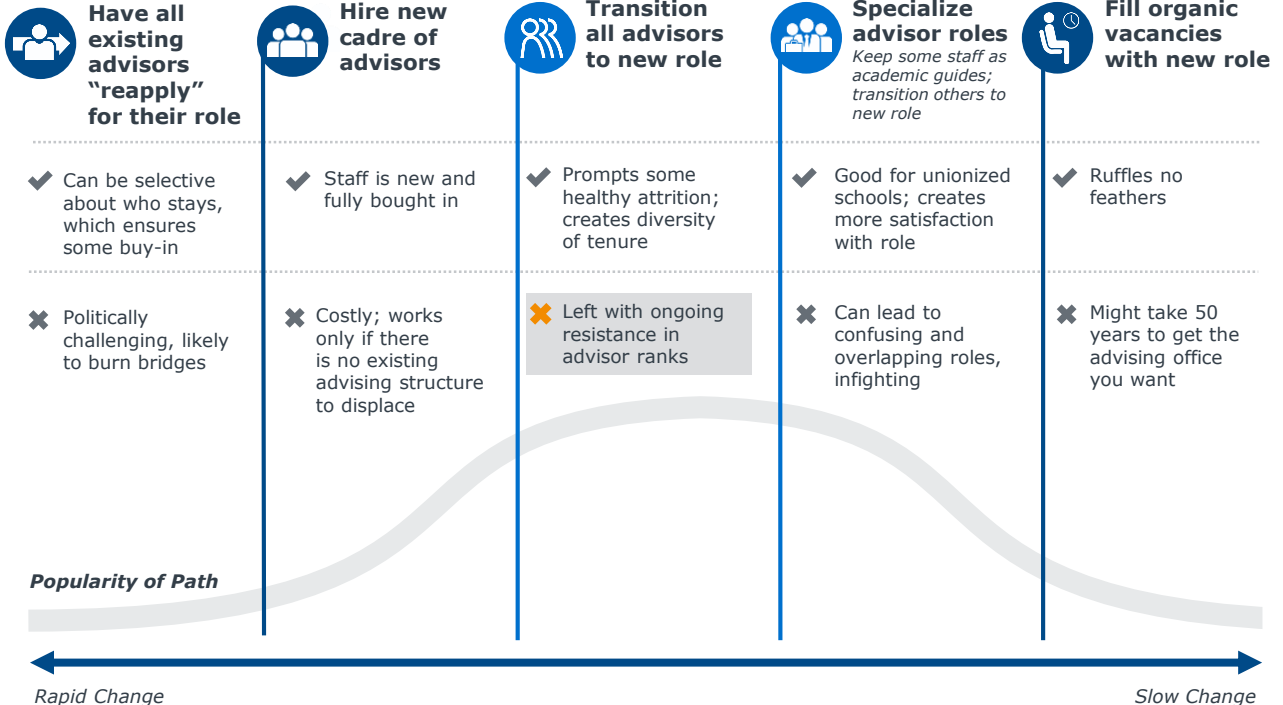
Getting Resistant Advisors on Board

SECTION

2

Five Observed Paths to Restructure Staffing

Pros and Cons to Each Path, Dependent on Campus Culture

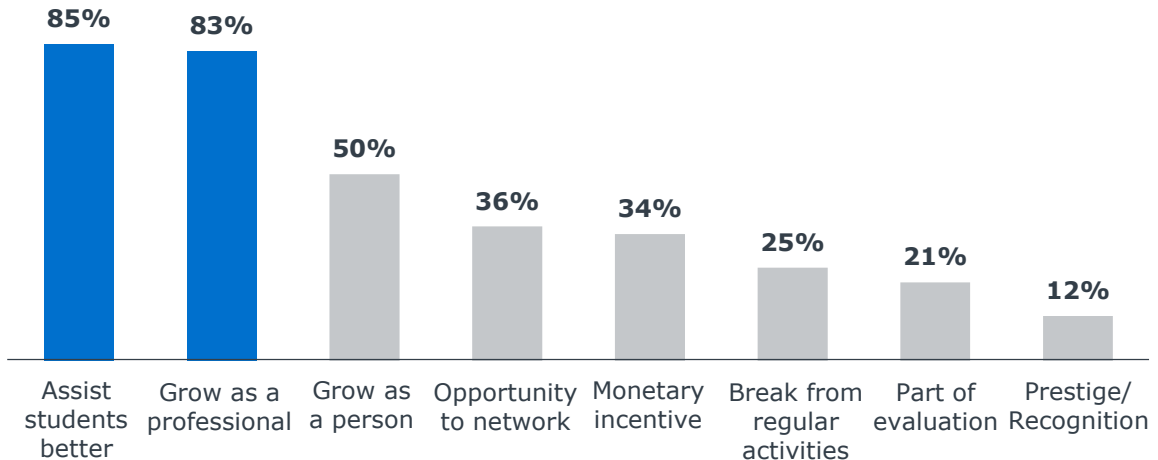


What Motivates Tenured Advisors?

Motivation to Attend Professional Development

Percentage of Advisors Who Rated Each as "Very Important"

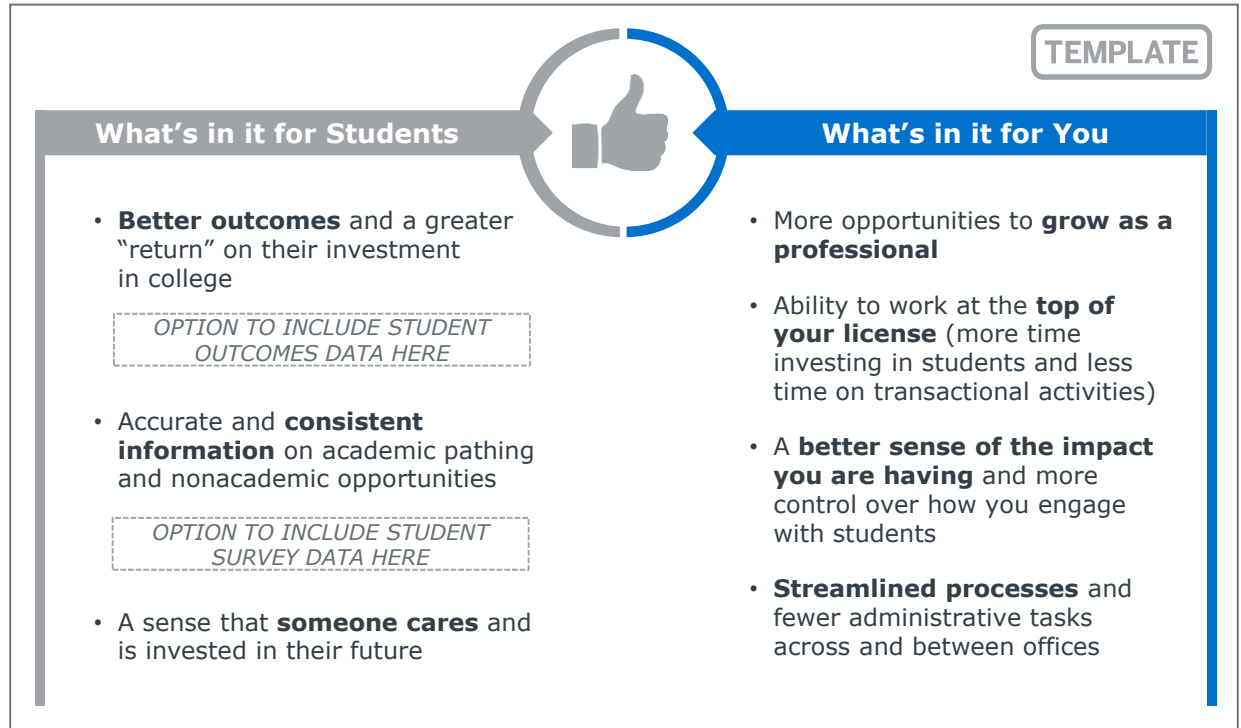
NACADA Poll (n=1,917)



Source: NACADA. "Survey: Recognition and Reward for Academic Advising (N = 1,917)." 2007. <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Portals/0/Surveys/Documents/Recognition-Reward-of-Advising--July-2007.pdf>; EAB interviews and analysis.

Start with Good Old Fashioned ‘WIIFM’

Messaging of Role Shift Should Emphasize (Only) What Advisors Care About



Skill Redevelopment

Two Practices to Encourage Tenured Staff to Complete New-Hire Training

Motivate Through the Promise of Certification



“Our more tenured advisors complete the trainings because they want certification. They’ll say, **I’ve been advising for 10 years—I should at least be Level II!**”

Level II


Level I

Foundations

—Stacey Bradley
 SAVP for Student Affairs
 and Academic Support

Bring Them into the Fold by Leveraging Their Expertise

New Hire Training Sample, Small Regional Public Univ.

Facilitator	Session
 Tenured advisor	Academic Policies
Assistant director/trainer	Understanding Risk
Assistant director/trainer	Monitoring Your Caseload
Assistant director/trainer	Student Outreach Best Practices

Stays for the full day of training

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 - *Using risk to prioritize*
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Appendix

APPENDIX

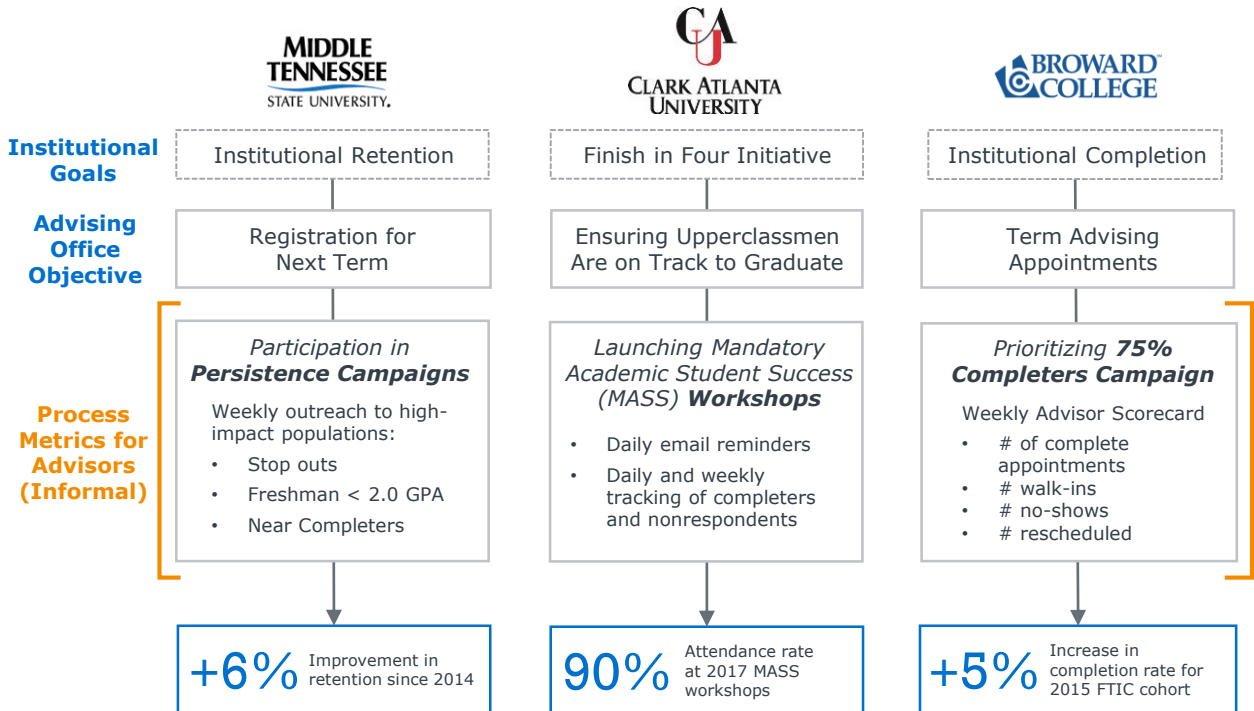
A Formula Already Exists on Your Campus

Active Ingredients for Effective Case Management-Based Support Programs

	Small Caseloads	Singular Objective	Process Metrics
 Student Support Services <i>(Federal Program)</i>	125:1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motivating and supporting at-risk students to persist to the next term	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weekly in-person check-ins and monthly seminars and workshops
	80:1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting or exceeding the eligibility standards set forth by the NCAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weekly academic progress audit and follow up
	40:1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging and supporting FTIC students through their first three terms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bimonthly check-ins with set agenda (and creation of advising report)
	Emphasis on relationship building and interpersonal skills	Culture of ownership and responsibility for the student	 Often no formal evaluation—but expectations are clear

A Clear Focus—Without Formal Evaluation

Advisor Process Metrics Rolling Up to Institutional Goals



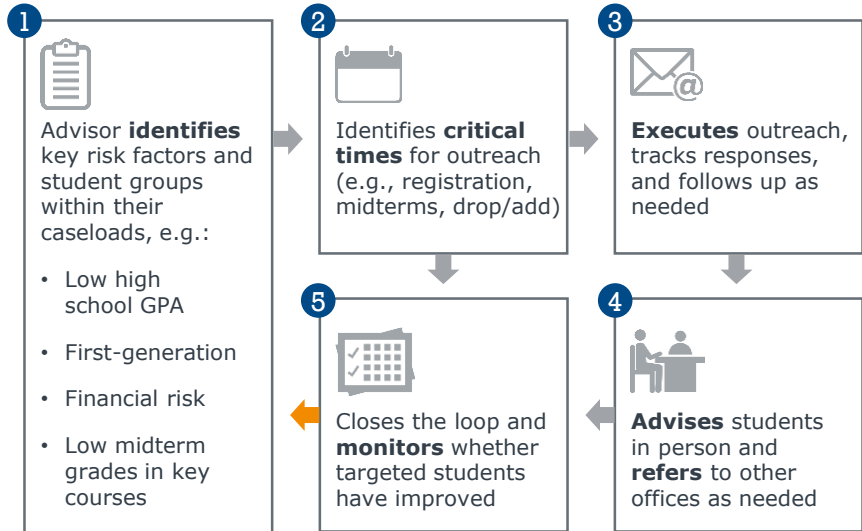
What Is Proactive Caseload Management?

A Comprehensive and Continuous Approach to Student Support

Three New Factors in Advising Pave the Way for PCM:



- Advisors **monitor evolving needs** of students in their caseloads
- May have multiple visits with same students and no visits with others
- Advisors **given trust and latitude** to “manage their lists” using all available tools



A Caseload Within a Caseload

Structuring Intensive Support When Small Caseloads Aren't Possible



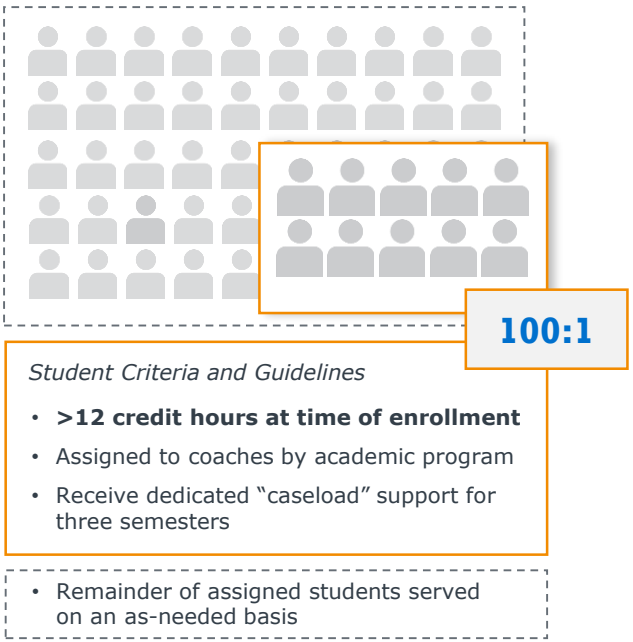
Persistence Advisors (PAs)

High Risk Cases Managed by Specialized Advisors



First Time in College (FTIC) 'Coaches'

Advisors Provide Intensive Support to FTIC Students



The Dreaded “Peak Registration”

Advisors Cite Lack of Capacity as a Reason They Can’t Embrace New Role

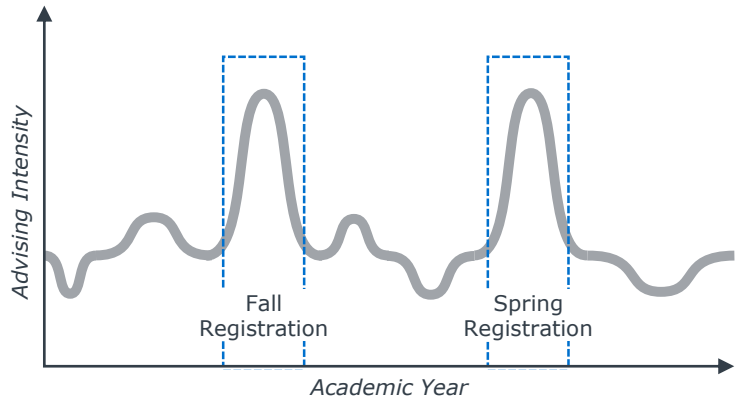


“I Don’t Have Time”

Translation: *I am spending too much time on...*

- ✘ Duplicative paperwork
- ✘ Unnecessary admin tasks
- ✘ “Other duties as assigned” for deans (e.g., staffing a table at orientation)
- ✘ Course selection and student schedule creation
- ✘ Lengthy appointments with high-performers who opt in to advising
- ✘ Killing time during off-peak season

Seasonal Peaks in Advisor Workload



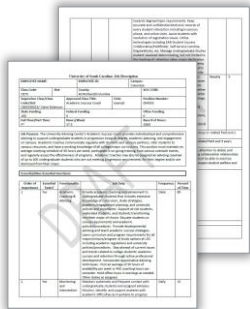
What Characterizes the Peaks?

- Advisors at capacity with multiple hours of appointments each day, often 15–30-min. sessions
- Focused on course registration
- Less rewarding as there is little time for meaningful conversations

Breaking Old Habits

Clearly Articulate New Expectations, Including Use of Time

USC Academic Success Coach Position Description



Student Monitoring and Technology (10%)

- Frequently contact advisees
- Monitor, identify, and support struggling students
- Use technology like EAB in daily work

Academic Advising (80%)

- Provide academic coaching (450 hours per semester)
- Support at-risk and undeclared students with appreciative advising techniques
- Referrals to other support offices as needed

Training and Development (5%)

- Training and completion of certification levels

Assigned College Operations (5%)





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