

# Advising Models: Goal Achievement and Program Effectiveness

Wesley R. Habley, ACT, Inc.

Ricardo H. Morales, University of Iowa

*This is the second in a series of NACADA Journal articles that report on the results of the ACT Fifth National Academic Advising Survey. Collected data are analyzed to determine the performance of Habley's seven advising models on eight advising program goals and their perceived effectiveness on 11 program variables. The data also create the context for a deeper consideration of the relationship between an advising model and an institutional culture.*

This article is the second in a series that reports on the results of the ACT Fifth National Academic Advising Survey. The survey included a stratified random sample of 2-year public, 2-year private, 4-year public, and 4-year private colleges from the 2,710 institutions which were accredited by one of the six regional accrediting associations and offered associate's degrees (2-year colleges) or bachelor's degrees (4-year colleges). Based on response rates from the previous four surveys, as well as diminished national response rates, the largest sample ever drawn for the advising survey (1,395 colleges) constituted the group to which surveys were mailed. Responses were received from 754 colleges (54.1%). Because of the sampling techniques employed, and the number and distribution (see Table 1) of responding institutions, the findings

**Table 1** Institutions by sample and response

| Institution type | % sample | % respondents |
|------------------|----------|---------------|
| 2-year public    | 35.9     | 35.7          |
| 2-year private   | 4.4      | 3.1           |
| 4-year public    | 20.2     | 22.5          |
| 4-year private   | 39.3     | 38.1          |

*Note.* Four respondents (0.5%) did not identify type.

of the survey may be generalized to the national population of institutions.

Specifically, this article provides analyses of data from section IV of the survey which asked respondents to assess their level of satisfaction with the achievement of eight academic advising goals and their assessment of program effectiveness on 11 variables. Both goal achievement and program effectiveness were studied in relation to

the seven organizational models for academic advising first proposed by Habley (1983).

A brief description of Habley's organizational models is provided for clarity and reference. For a more detailed description of the individual models, refer to Habley (1983, 1988, 1992, 1997) and Habley and McCauley (1987).

**Faculty Only:** All students are assigned to an instructional faculty member for advising. There is no advising office on the campus.

**Supplementary:** All students are assigned to an instructional faculty member for advising. There is an advising office that provides general academic information and referral for students, but all advising transactions must be approved by the student's faculty advisor.

**Split:** There is an advising office that advises a specific group(s) of students (e.g., those who are undecided about a major, underprepared, etc.). All other students are assigned to academic units or faculty for advising.

**Dual:** Each student has two advisors. A member of the instructional faculty advises the student on matters related to the major. An advisor in an advising office advises the student on general requirements, procedures, and policies.

**Total Intake:** Staff in an administrative unit are responsible for advising all students for a specified period of time or until specific requirements have been met. After meeting those requirements, students are assigned to a member of the instructional faculty for advising.

**Satellite:** Each school, college, or division within the institution has established its own approach to advising.

**Self-contained:** Advising for all students from point of enrollment to point of departure is done by staff in a centralized advising unit.

Five-point scales, from very satisfactory (5) to very unsatisfactory (1) for goal achievement, and

from very effective (5) to very ineffective (1) for program effectiveness, were presented. Analyses utilized the mean responses for each organizational model on each goal and on each effectiveness variable. These means were compared through the Student-Newman-Keuls statistical test of significance for unequal sample sizes. Student-Newman-Keuls analyses compared means taken two at a time. Thus, the mean for each model on each variable was compared to the mean of every other model on each variable. The Student-Newman-Keuls statistical test identified differences between all possible pairs of means with a level of significance established at 0.05.

### Goal Achievement and Program Effectiveness

Utilizing Habley's seven organizational models, data from the fifth survey were analyzed at two levels. The first level assessed the degree of satisfaction within each of the seven models on eight advising program goals. The second level provides an assessment of the perceived effectiveness of each model on 11 program variables. The advising program goals were derived from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) CAS Standards and Guidelines for Student Services/Student Development Programs (1989). The 11 effectiveness variables were compiled from various sources including the previous ACT National Academic Advising Surveys. The analyzed data were used to provide a comparison of the seven organizational models according to advising program goals and 11 effectiveness variables.

### Goal Achievement

In the survey's sub-section on goal achievement, respondents were given the following instructions for rating the eight goals:

The following goals for advising programs have been established by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Consider whether your current advising services are designed and delivered in a way such that each goal is satisfactorily achieved for most students at your school. Then, check the one response that best indicates your opinion.

Respondents were presented with the 5-point scale: (5) Very Satisfactory, (4) Satisfactory, (3) Neutral, (2) Unsatisfactory, (1) Very Unsatisfactory. They were asked to use it to complete the following sentence: "The design and delivery of

advising services for meeting this goal at this institution is . . ."

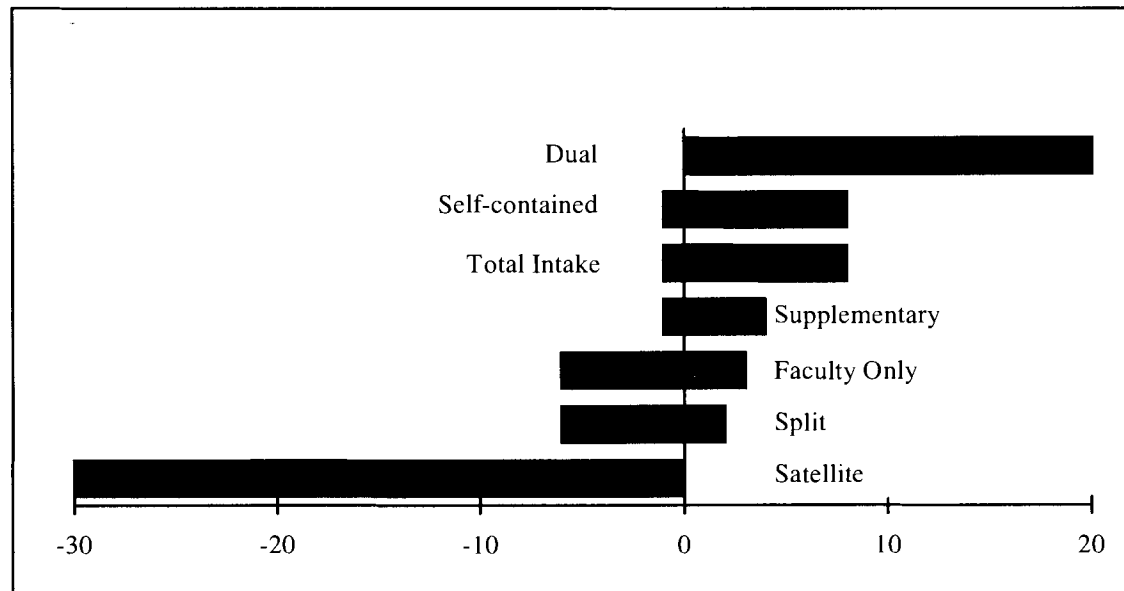
- A. Assisting students in self-understanding and self-acceptance (value clarification, understanding abilities, interests and limitations)
- B. Assisting students in considering life goals by relating interests, skills, abilities, and values to careers, the world of work, and the nature and purpose of higher education
- C. Assisting students in developing an educational plan consistent with life goals and objectives
- D. Assisting students in developing decision-making skills
- E. Providing accurate information about institutional policies, procedures, resources, and programs
- F. Referring students to other institutional or community support services
- G. Assisting students in evaluating or reevaluating progress towards established goals and educational plans
- H. Providing information about students to the institution, college, and/or academic departments

Although mean scores for each advising goal by organizational model provided a mechanism for assessing satisfaction with goal achievement, tests of statistical significance provide a clearer picture of differences among the models. Table 2 displays the results of the Student-Newman-Keuls test for significance at the 0.05 level for goal achievement. It provides an overview of model ratings for each goal and compares it to the performance of the other six models on each goal. If the table is read vertically, the letters that appear in a cell correspond to the goals for which a particular model scored significantly lower than the model at the top of the column. For example, the Faculty Only model scored significantly lower than the Total Intake model on goal E. If the table is read horizontally, the letters that appear in a cell correspond to the goals for which a particular model scored significantly higher than the model

**Table 2** Goal achievement

| Model/Model         | FO         | SUP | SPL           | DU | TI | SAT                 | SC |
|---------------------|------------|-----|---------------|----|----|---------------------|----|
| Faculty Only (FO)   | *          | —   | —             | —  | —  | A, B, C             | —  |
| Supplementary (SUP) | —          | *   | —             | —  | —  | A, B, C, H          | —  |
| Split (SPL)         | —          | —   | *             | —  | —  | A, B                | —  |
| Dual (DU)           | A, B, E, F | A   | A, B, D, E, F | *  | A  | All                 | A  |
| Total Intake (TI)   | E          | —   | E             | —  | *  | A, B, C, E, F, H    | —  |
| Satellite (SAT)     | —          | —   | —             | —  | —  | *                   | —  |
| Self-contained (SC) | F          | —   | —             | —  | —  | A, B, C, D, F, G, H | *  |

Note.  $p < 0.05$ .

**Figure 1** Goal achievement

at the top of the column. For example, the Supplementary model scored significantly higher than the Satellite model on goals A, B, C, and H.

A cursory look at the goal achievement data on Table 2 suggests that the Dual model was viewed most positively and the Satellite model most negatively. A graphic representation of this polarity is shown in Figure 1. It shows the number of goals for which a mean score was significantly higher (right of center) or significantly lower (left of center) than that of the other models. Using this form of analysis, the highest possible score for any one model would be 48, resulting from that model scoring significantly higher than all other models on all eight achievement goals,  $6 \times 8 = 48$ . The lowest possible score,  $-48$ , would result from any one model scoring significantly lower than all other six models on all eight achievement goals,

$6(-8) = -48$ .

Figure 1 shows the Dual model (20, 0), as the most positively viewed by respondents where the model is being used, and the Satellite model (0,  $-30$ ) as the most negatively viewed. The Self-contained (8,  $-1$ ), Total Intake (8,  $-1$ ), and Supplementary (4,  $-1$ ) models are perceived as slightly more positive than negative. On the other hand, the Faculty Only (3,  $-6$ ), and the Split (2,  $-6$ ) models are perceived as slightly more negative.

### Program Effectiveness

In the sub-section on program effectiveness, respondents were given the following instructions for rating the 11 effectiveness variables described below.

“Indicate how effective you think your institution’s advising program is in terms of the follow-

ing.” [The 5-point scale was provided: (5) Very Effective, (4) Effective, (3) Neutral, (2) Ineffective, (1) Very Ineffective.]

- A. Providing for the overall academic advising needs for your students
- B. Identifying and selecting high quality advisors
- C. Implementing training programs for advisors
- D. Providing advisors with timely and accurate information about their advisees
- E. Providing appropriate levels of coordination, direction, and supervision for advisors
- F. Systematically evaluating the advising programs
- G. Systematically evaluating the effectiveness of academic advisors
- H. Rewarding good advising performance
- I. Providing communication among advisors, deans, department heads, and the coordinator of advising, if such a position exists
- J. Meeting students’ advising needs within the limits of human and fiscal resources

- K. Providing advisor accountability, both to a higher level of authority and to advisees

Although mean scores for each effectiveness variable by each organizational model provide a mechanism for assessing satisfaction with program effectiveness, tests of statistical significance provide a clearer picture of differences among the models. Table 3 displays the results of the Student-Newman-Keuls tests of significance at the 0.05 level for each of the program effectiveness variables. It provides an analysis of the performance of each model on each effectiveness variable when compared to the performance of the other six models on each effectiveness variable. If the table is read vertically, the letters that appear in a cell correspond to the effectiveness variable for which a particular model scored significantly lower than the model at the top of the column. For example, the Faculty Only model scored significantly lower than the Dual model on effectiveness variables E and I, and also scored lower than the Self-contained model on all variables except D and J. If the table is read horizontally, the letters that appear in a cell correspond to the effectiveness variable for which a particular model scored significantly higher than the model at the top of the column. For example, the Supplementary model performed significantly higher than the Total Intake model in effectiveness variables I and J, and the Satellite model on variables A, C, D, E, I, and J.

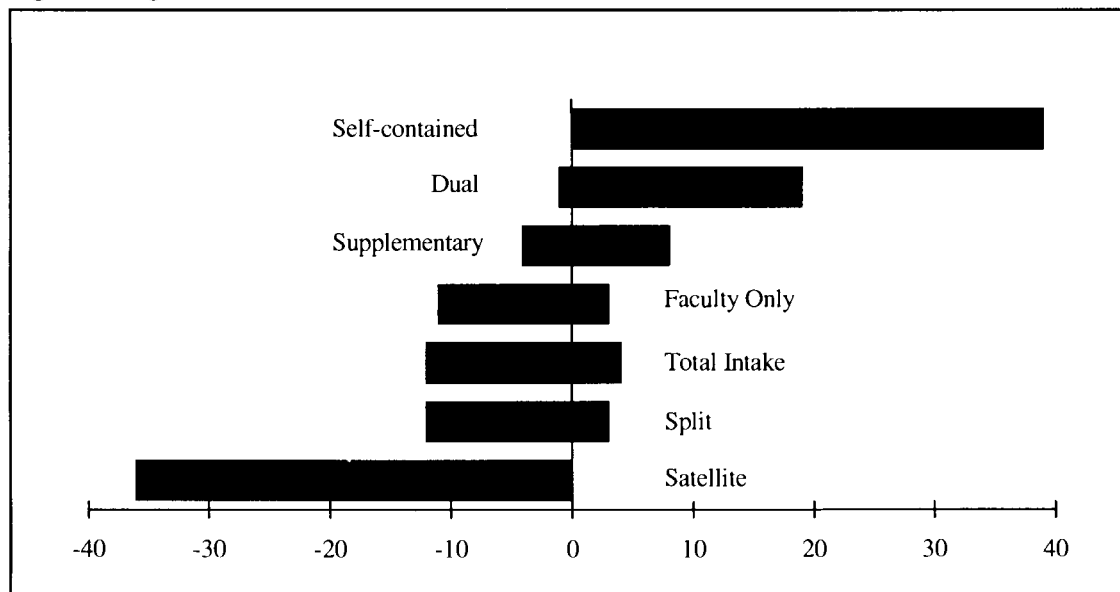
Table 3 indicates that the Self-contained model and the Satellite model are at opposite ends of the

**Table 3** Program effectiveness

| Model/Model         | FO                        | SUP        | SPL                    | DU | TI                  | SAT                          | SC |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------------------|----|---------------------|------------------------------|----|
| Faculty Only (FO)   | *                         | —          | —                      | —  | —                   | A, D, J                      | —  |
| Supplementary (SUP) | —                         | *          | —                      | —  | I, J                | A, C, D, E, I, J             | —  |
| Split (SPL)         | —                         | —          | *                      | —  | —                   | A, D, J                      | —  |
| Dual (DU)           | E, I                      | —          | A, E, I, J             | *  | E, I, J             | A, B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, K | —  |
| Total Intake (TI)   | —                         | —          | —                      | —  | *                   | A, D, E, J                   | —  |
| Satellite (SAT)     | —                         | —          | —                      | —  | —                   | *                            | —  |
| Self-contained (SC) | A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, K | B, F, G, K | A, B, E, F, G, H, J, K | B  | B, E, F, G, H, J, K | A, B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, K | *  |

Note.  $p < 0.05$ .

**Figure 2** Program effectiveness



program effectiveness continuum. This contrast is seen in Figure 2, which shows the number of effectiveness variables for which a mean was significantly higher (right of center) or significantly lower (left of center) than that of the other models. Using this form of analysis, the highest possible score for any one model would be 66, resulting from that model scoring significantly higher than all other six models on all eleven effectiveness variables,  $6 \times 11 = 66$ . The lowest possible score, -66, would result from a given model scoring significantly lower than all other six models on all eleven effectiveness variables,  $6(-11) = -66$ .

Figure 2 shows the Self-contained model as the most positively viewed model (39, 0) and the Satellite model as the most negatively viewed (0, -36). The Dual (19, -1) and Supplementary (8, -4) models are perceived as more positive than negative. The Faculty Only (3, -11), the Total Intake (4, -12), and the Split (3, -12) models are seen as slightly more negative than the others.

### Discussion

Although these data reflect clear patterns of satisfaction with goal achievement and assessment of program effectiveness, a word of caution on interpretation is in order. Mean scores provide but a single measure of both positive and negative viewpoints for each model on goals and effectiveness. Yet, mean scores do not capture the range of ratings within a given model. It is very likely that

several institutions have not been successful in implementing the most positively viewed models. It is equally likely that many institutions have successfully implemented models that do not fare well when overall means are used as the basis for comparison. The authors suggest that the key factor in the success, or lack thereof, of an advising model resides in the degree to which there is a fit between the model and institutional culture. The culture includes the institution's mission; the role of faculty; various programs, policies, and procedures; and student needs.

The mission of an institution is dependant on four primary factors including general control of the institution, the level of educational offerings, the nature of programs, and admissions selectivity. General control refers to the institutional status as public, private, or proprietary. The level of educational offerings includes the degrees granted (i.e., associate, baccalaureate, and graduate). The nature of the programs offered may be liberal arts, professional, vocational/technical, or some combination of these courses. Finally admission selectivity is an important factor in the institutional mission. Selectivity ranges from open door to highly selective and competitive.

The components of a mission vary significantly from one institution to another. For example, a school may be a public, technical, 2-year community college or it may be a private, highly selective, graduate research university. Just as variations in these factors reflect diversity of

institutional missions, they also create a template from which an advising model can be derived.

The institutional programs, policies, and procedures form another set of considerations in the development of an advising model. These factors involve course sequencing which may be non-existent at some institutions, yet highly specific and sequential at others. The complexity of graduation requirements such as residency, number of credit hours, minimum GPA, as well as the scope of majors and minors and the specificity, or lack thereof, in general educational requirements must be acknowledged. Finally, the degree to which advisors must approve various academic transactions (e.g., class schedules, change of major, graduation applications) must be considered in the development of a model.

The nature of faculty role is a third factor playing an important role in determining the type of academic advising model to implement. Six of the seven organizational models utilize faculty as advisors in varying degrees. Terenzini and Pascarella (1980) noted that student-faculty interaction, such as in advising, has a positive impact on student growth and retention. To foster this type of relationship, top administrators need to put forth a conscious effort to make advising a clear priority for faculty. At many institutions academic advising must compete with faculty commitments to teaching, research, publishing, and committee memberships. One way to establish advising as a clear priority is to reward faculty advising. Recognition of advising through salary increments, release time from other commitments, consideration in tenure and promotion decisions, and rewards for excellence in advising help to create an environment that promotes the active participation of faculty members in the advising process. Institutions interested in employing a model of academic advising that involve their faculty members clearly need to address these concerns to cultivate a feeling of faculty ownership in advising.

Student needs is also a consideration when contemplating the restructuring of an advising program. Habley (1988) notes that nearly all colleges enroll students with characteristics displayed on a continua depicted in Figure 3.

Just as institutional missions vary considerably, student needs also differ across institutions. For example, the needs of students at a 2-year public, community college located in an urban setting, attended primarily by part-time commuting adults will be quite different from those at a 4-year private, residential, liberal arts college located in a rural setting, and attended primarily by full-time, traditional-aged college students. An exemplary advising model is one that is driven by student needs.

### Conclusion

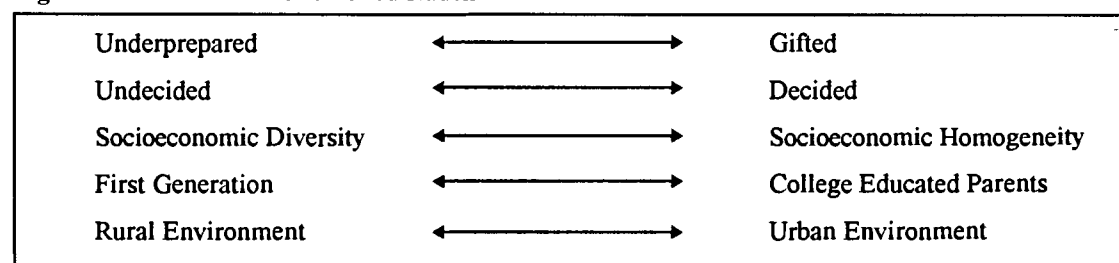
A review of the data on goal achievement and program effectiveness might tempt the reader to conclude that one organizational model of academic advising is best. However, the data should not be used to distinguish a most effective model. Instead they should raise questions about and provide insights into the circumstances that lead survey respondents to positive (or negative) ratings of the goals and effectiveness of a particular advising model.

The data also create the context for a deeper consideration of the relationship between academic advising and institutional culture. For academic advising to be successful, the organizational thread must be woven into the fabric of the institution's culture. The model must be part of the seamless process that reflects the mission, the nature of programs and policies, the role of faculty, and the needs of students at the institution.

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**Figure 3** Characteristics of enrolled students



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## Authors' Notes

Wes Habley earned his doctorate in Educational Administration from Illinois State University and currently serves as the Director of the ACT Center for the Enhancement of Educational Practices. He is a past Treasurer and past President of NACADA and has served as primary researcher for the 1987, 1992, and 1997 ACT national surveys on academic advising practices. Dr. Habley may be contacted at ACT, 2201 N. Dodge Street, Iowa City, IA 52243 or via the Internet at [Habley@act.org](mailto:Habley@act.org)

Ricardo Morales earned his master's degree in Higher Education Administration from the University of Iowa in 1998. After working as a Research Assistant in the ACT Center for the Enhancement of Educational Practices, he recently accepted a position as a financial aid counselor at Cornell University.