[Virginia Gordon, Senior Editor of the *Journal* and Past President of NACADA, was the keynote speaker at the 1998 annual conference held in San Diego on October 5th. Her remarks are presented below.]

New Horizons: Learning From The Past and Preparing For The Future

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Reflecting the conference theme, a brief history of NACADA is presented and personal vignettes shared to lay the foundation for understanding the organization's role at the turn of the century. Specifically addressed are the characteristics of tomorrow's students and evolving issues in higher education—including the role of faculty and information technology—that affect advising. Futurists predictions for meeting the challenges of the changing education environment conclude the presentation.

I must say it is an honor to stand before you, representing many individuals who have committed themselves and contributed so much to academic advising in general and NACADA in particular. I have been privileged to witness the unbelievable growth and change in academic advising over the last several decades. We can be proud of our history. At the same time, we must think about the future and how we can creatively prepare for it.

To consider where advising might be in the future, it is important to understand and appreciate how advising has evolved. We cannot do this unless we understand the history of the environment in which we work, that is, higher education. The first true universities can be traced to the llth and 12th centuries in Italy, France, and England. While our students are no longer monks and the curriculum has changed dramatically, what I find fascinating is how much the modern university is recognizably the direct descendant of the institution it was almost a millennium ago.

No institution lasts nine centuries without adapting. We have changed quite a bit since 1852 when Cardinal John Henry Newman described the function of the ideal university as a separation of the pursuit of truth from mankind's "necessary cares." Some would still like to see the university exist only to pursue knowledge for knowledge's sake, but universities today celebrate their achievements as producers of knowledge that is practical. The ties of today's universities to—and the source of research funds from—the government and private enterprise are forever inescapable.

American colleges are unique in that they recognized early in their existence the academic and personal needs of students. Academic advising in the early American colleges was performed by the president and later by the faculty. The first system of faculty advisors was initiated at Johns Hopkins University in 1876, partially because of the increased growth of the student population and the increasing complexity of the curricula. The first coordinator of faculty advisors was appointed in 1899 by the president of Johns Hopkins; this appointment was the first official recognition of the important institutional need for academic counseling (Cowley, 1949).

The early recognition of the unique needs of first-year students can be traced to the 1889 board of freshman advisors appointed at Harvard. President Lowell of Harvard discussed student needs in his 1909 inaugural address and proposed that freshmen, in particular, be segregated into dormitories where advisors also lived and by intimate contacts with their advisees, helped in developing the "manhood" of their charges (Rudolph, 1962). Our advising programs in today's residence halls have strong historical roots.

Since many of the earliest American colleges were predominately private and controlled by clergy, their mission was to "save students' souls" and guide their private lives (Rudolph, 1962). (I am glad we are no longer responsible for those tasks! Few of us would be willing to be advisors if we were held responsible for our students' private lives—not to mention their souls.)

In the 1960s and 1970s the students were demanding more and better academic advising. Dramatically increased enrollments created a need for more individualized attention to academic planning and adjustment, especially among the "new" diverse students who were entering higher education in large numbers. During this time community colleges can be credited with recognizing this need and promoting advising as a critical service for students (Cross, 1974).

The Past

Amid this historical milieu, it was natural for

an organization like NACADA to be born. The first national conference on advising, held at the University of Vermont in 1977, was the brainstorm of Toni Trombley. She recognized the need to bring together people who were involved in advising and hoped that when advisors talked with each other, some questions could be answered and the process itself defined. No one knew what types of people were involved in advising. Some of the questions being asked included what made some advising programs successful and others not? Was academic advising making a difference in students' lives (Trombley & Holmes, 1981)? We are still trying to answer these questions today.

J. D. Beatty, our archivist, provided a narrative history of the first 10 years of the organization in the Spring 1991 issue of the *NACADA Journal* and will offer an update soon. Many people have had a profound influence in shaping this organization and others are continuing this great tradition today. Many of them will tell you that it has been a great ride with fond memories.

Let me share some memories from several past presidents. Tom Grites, for example, remembers the pressures on the original steering committee to come up with an acronym for the organization's name and more difficult yet, its pronunciation. This all took place minutes before they were to present it to the entire membership at the 1981 conference in Memphis.

The year we held a conference at Disneyland, Carol Ryan remembers a call from the Walt Disney Corporation's lawyer who threatened to sue her and NACADA if we did not take a Disney logo (for which we had previously received permission) off our conference materials, including tee shirts that were already made. It seems they had just sold that logo for a huge amount to the Mars Candy Company.

Wes Habley remembers how he felt when, "My term as president of NACADA began at the same time I began working for ACT and there was dialog regarding whether there might be a conflict of interest for me. In order for the board of directors to discuss the issue openly, I felt very noble as I volunteered to leave the room. Instead of the hallway, I walked into a closet and after standing in the dark for what seemed an eternity, walked out and said, 'that's a closet.' I then left the room mortified amid howls of laughter."

Ask Peggy King about her tour of cows at Kansas State University while visiting the national office when she was president. Through windows that had been placed in each cow's stomach, she, Tom Kerr, and Mike McCauley could watch them digesting food. She will always be indebted to Bobbie Flaherty for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Many of us remember (or perhaps prefer to forget) when the main water supply line broke during our 1991 conference in Louisville. Over 1,000 of us did not take baths for 2 days!

Seriously, let me enumerate some critical milestones that have made this organization such a vital force in the academic advising field. I remember several concerns that surfaced in the early years that generated many different, and sometimes contentious, opinions. At NACADA's birth, advisors at small colleges worried that larger institutions might dominate the organization. This concern was addressed by creating institutional-type representatives to the NACADA Board of Directors in addition to regional representation. Although apparent that some of the concerns and interests of smaller institutions are different from those of larger ones, the complicated organizational structure it created was inefficient and unnecessary. Some of those common institutional size issues are now met through commissions and interest groups.

Another early concern was in the creation of regional conferences. Some feared that too many regional meetings would detract from attendance and programs at the annual national conference. I think most would agree that, to the contrary, regional meetings have strengthened the organization.

One of the most important milestones in NACADA's history was the early establishment of the *Journal*. Thanks to Ed Jones, our first editor, we were able to produce a very professional journal in the second year of our existence. We were able to communicate with our members through the *Newsletter* from our very first year, thanks to Billie Jacobini, who edited it for the first 5 years. There has been a long line of dedicated and talented *Journal* and *Newsletter* editors ever since.

Like any evolving organization, NACADA has confronted issues of structure, financial stability, and definition of leadership roles. The first minority affairs committee was established in 1983. In that same year election rules and procedures were formalized. Legal issues were recognized as important considerations and for the first time speakers at the 1981 National Conference addressed this topic. The theme of several national conferences in the 1980s explored the relationship of student development theory and advising with such speakers as William Perry and

Lee Knefelkamp.

The mid-1980s witnessed an interest in advising as a profession and the need to promote national visibility for advising. Many advisors felt their efforts were unrecognized and unrewarded, not to mention underfunded (so what else is new?). The emphasis on the retention of students in the 1980s certainly helped highlight the importance of academic advising's role in providing the personal touch that was viewed as critical in retaining students.

We take for granted many of the milestones that our NACADA leaders accomplished over the years:

- In the beginning the first steering committee struggled to write the NACADA bylaws and we were incorporated in 1979.
- In 1981, we joined the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education so that we could take the lead in establishing the national standards for academic advising. Dan Wesley was our first representative and Eric White is currently representing us.
- In 1981, we were able to add "academic advising" as a descriptor in ERIC for the first time.
- The first national awards were instigated in 1982 and in 1984 a national awards program was established with ACT to recognize outstanding individual and institutional achievement.
- In his stint as treasurer, Wes Habley with the help of Mike McCauley, took the first steps in computerizing our records.
- The first summer institute was held in 1986 and it has fulfilled its promise of offering more concentrated development of professional and faculty advisors and administrators.
- The Consultants' Bureau was formed as a result of a demand for expertise in many advising-related areas.
- Although an informal resume bank and placement service was functioning in the early 1980s, a formal service was created in 1986 when the demand substantially increased. In 1988, research grant awards were initiated to promote and encourage research devoted to academic advising and related areas.
- Although the National Clearinghouse for Academic Advising had been established at The Ohio State University in 1984, NACADA joined Ohio State in financially supporting the National Clearinghouse in 1989.
- The first monograph was published by NACADA in 1995.
- We do not need to remind ourselves of the wonderful national and regional conferences that have taken place over the past two decades, thanks to the hard work of many of our members and later the national office staff.
- And, of course, one of the most important milestones was the establishment of our national office at Kansas State University in 1990 and the hiring of the bright, energetic stars who have made it a success.

I do not agree with Dwight Eisenhower who was quoted as saying, "We have seen the past and it doesn't work." Our past has not only worked, but what we have accomplished is remarkable. Our historian, J. D. Beatty, called the 1980s the "wonder years" of NACADA but the 1990s have been just as astounding. We now have over 4,700 members and are recognized as the national, if not international, voice for academic advising.

Now, as we contemplate the future, I feel like the scientist who made a very wrong prediction about the future of jet engines. When asked years later what he did wrong in his forecast, he answered, "I wrote it down." Unfortunately, I have had to write these thoughts down for the *Journal*. By examining what some futurists project for higher education, we can speculate about advising's role.

The Future

As in our past, the future of academic advising is inextricably intertwined with the fate of higher education. Advising has been affected and influenced by many of the trends and issues confronting higher education. Obviously we do not have the powers to predict the future of advising precisely, but we should at least attempt to make

some educated guesses, establish some goals, and set plans in motion to accomplish these goals.

We are all aware of how quickly the world changes and people's beliefs, values, and attitudes along with it. Jennifer James (1996) in her book, *Thinking in the Future Tense*, urges us to become more adaptive—like chameleons. "We spent 10 million years as hunter-gatherers. It took us 8 thousand years from being hunters to becoming farmers. It took us 200 years to move from agriculture to urban industry. It has taken us only a second in time to move from an industrial society to a bioeconomy that combines cloning with electronics" (p. 15). Toffler and Toffler (1995, p. 18) tell us a new civilization is emerging in our lives. "Humanity . . . faces the deepest social upheaval and creative restructuring of all time. Without clearly recognizing it, we are engaged in building a remarkable new civilization from the ground up."

What startles some of us is how the pace of change has accelerated. Instead of changes taking two or three generations, we are now forced to assimilate them in less than a decade. You have experienced this in the technology you are using in your home and office. We would have laughed 10 years ago if someone had told us we would be charged a fee to talk to a real person instead of a machine, as some banks are doing today.

Since the process of change is inevitable, how we prepare for it now personally and professionally will determine how well we negotiate it in the future. Perhaps the first question to ask is "will academic advising still be needed in the next century?" Will a national organization like NACADA be viable? Wes Habley has asked: "Have we really defined NACADA's purpose as an organization? Are we an association *of professional* advisors or a professional association *for* advisors?" I personally prefer to think we are the latter. But the answer to this question will have an obvious impact on the goals we set as an organization. When we consider the history of advising and its purpose, I am convinced there will be an even greater need for advising in the future.

One critical element in planning for future advising is to anticipate who our future students will be. We know they will be the most diverse group of students in our history. The oldest of the "echo boomers," or the "'Net generation" as they are sometimes called, are approaching 21 years. The echo boomers make up the first generation to claim the computer as a birthright. They were weaned on video games and many can teach their parents the fine points of E-mail and cruising the Internet (Tapscott, 1998). (I heard that if you hold your arm out straight, anyone who can walk under it knows more about computers than you do.) Students today aren't all that impressed with technology; they just want to know what it can do for them. This trend of student ease with technology will undoubtedly continue even as technology becomes more sophisticated.

Futurists emphasize that leadership skills will be critical for the next generation. Peter Drucker (1996) urges us to teach leadership to our students—even through required course work. He says that as machines "take over routine work and the percent of knowledge workers grows, more leaders will be needed" (p. 28). Although some think leaders are born, we know leadership skills can be taught. Different types of leaders will be needed in different situations, so everyone will need to take responsibility at one time or another. Drucker says, "The leader of the past was a person who knew how to tell. The leader of the future will be a person who knows how to *ask*" [*emphasis added*] (p. 38).

We also need to instill in our students the concepts of critical thinking, teamwork, and continual learning. Richard Levin, President of Yale University, thinks the liberal arts curriculum will continue to thrive in the future. "It's the generalized ability to think critically, to read carefully, to weigh arguments, and to solve problems that is most important in having a successful career. Liberal arts provide that. You learn mental flexibility and acquire the ability to adapt to new environments" (pp. 200–201). These skills can be taught and reinforced through classroom exercises and assignments, campus activities, experiential learning opportunities, and cyberspace networks.

What opportunities are available on your campus to help students master the critical competencies that will be essential to success in the future workplace? It seems to me that advisors are not only in a position to encourage that leadership be taught in course work and through other campus activities, but to convince students of the value in acquiring or enhancing their skills.

Future issues in higher education

I asked past presidents of NACADA for their ideas about the most important issues NACADA and advising will face in the future. Several mentioned the need to maintain personal relationships with students while at the same time taking full advantage of technology, or what Gary Kramer (1998) calls a "human-tech nexus." Other issues

included coping with the continuing lack of resources, the demand for accountability, and the need for research that demonstrates advising's effectiveness and positive impact on students.

Advising has been affected by many of the trends and issues confronting higher education now and in the past, including a) changing demographics and the critical needs of diverse students, b) the revolution in information technologies, c) changes in the role of faculty, d) the role of federal and state governments in higher education, e) legal and social issues, f) the ongoing discussion of the value of a liberal education in a technological society, and g) the seesaw of funding sources (or the lack thereof)—just to name a few. Many of these issues will continue to be debated.

Changing faculty roles. Dolence and Norris (1995) suggest that for the new, Information Age learning environment, ". . . faculty will play a variety of roles—researcher, synthesizer, mentor, evaluator and certifier of mastery, architect, and navigator" (p. 60). Not all faculty will play all these roles since the new university will enable greater "role differentiation and specialization."

One trend that will continue and will profoundly affect faculty, according to Arthur Levine (1997), is that of government intervention. In the last two decades government support for higher education has decreased both financially and politically. In the eyes of the politicians, higher education has moved from being a growth industry to a mature one. Levine points out that the two are treated very differently. When higher education was a growth industry, it received unqualified support that few questioned. Levine says that since higher education is now considered a mature industry, government seeks to regulate and control it.

As we well know, the shortfall in state appropriations for public higher education has not been accompanied by a reduction in state involvement in university practices and purposes. How does this influence faculty roles? Issues such as tenure, the cost of educating a student, and the balance between teaching and research are involved. The effectiveness of faculty is also being questioned. Low graduation rates, 5-or-more year degrees, and remedial education are only a few issues being raised. Greater accountability from higher education is being sought and the burden, according to Levine, rests with the faculty.

Questions of productivity and efficiency are being raised in the private sector as well. "The focus is moving from *teaching* or what faculty do in the classroom to *learning* or what students get out of their classes" [*emphasis added*] (Levine, 1997, p. 3). External demands from outside the academy—both financial and political—will be a large and continuing part of our future. We can only speculate how these issues might influence advising, but accountability and the shift from process to outcomes will certainly affect the way advising is conducted on some campuses.

Information technology. I recently went back to look at the 1982 book *Megatrends* (p. 40). Naisbitt says that the most exciting breakthrough in the 21st century will not be because of technology but will be the expanding concept of what it means to be human. He insists: "We must learn to balance the material wonders of technology with the spiritual demands of our human nature." As advisors we must not lose our sense of balance between high tech and high touch.

Imagine yourself working as an advisor in your college or university 10 years from now. How will your advising tasks be changed? What kind of issues will you confront? As information technology continues to become more sophisticated, we must become more creative in our approaches to teaching and advising students. As the enormous amount of easy access information on each student becomes available, I think more specialized and personalized advising will be necessary.

Information is only as valuable as how we use it, either in person or in cyberspace. The life cycle of information will continually shrink (Dolence & Norris, 1995). We must prepare ourselves for "infoglut" which is projected to be one of the major problems of the Information Age. Too much information means that useful information may be devalued or ignored. We must learn to select and prioritize what is most important in our contacts with students.

We must avoid what Naisbitt (1982) calls ". . . drowning in information but starved for knowledge" (p. 24). And as in the world in general, confidentiality will be a enormous issue. New thinking about what constitutes ethical practices will be of primary concern. We will need to develop more specific guidelines in these areas for students and ourselves.

An excellent example of how technology can affect advising is described by Matheson, Moorman, and Winburn in the Spring 1997 issue of the *NACADA Journal.* They describe the "McDonaldization of advising" at their college since computer terminals made ". . . advising become more quantifiable and predictable. Routine procedures produced routine questions"

on the part of students (p. 13). The advisors at this community college were not satisfied with this quick and efficient McDonaldization type of advising. They wanted to foster a more developmental philosophy and approach. Their solution was to set aside a "two-day block of time for advising only." Of course, their efforts took good old-fashioned organization and commitment on the part of everyone at every level. But over 90% of the students were very satisfied with this opportunity "to have all their questions explored" and to become "more involved with the decision-making process" (p. 14). This is an example of how technology and the commitment to human contact can be joined and the advising process enhanced.

I hope we will continue to share our innovative ideas and successful techniques in the *Journal*, the *Newsletter*, through the advising network, through our Web sites, and during our national and regional conferences. Just as important, we must prove the effectiveness of these ideas and practices through careful evaluation and research. (Who knows? We may have presentations on how well we have succeeded at NACADA's 75th National Conference in the year 2051 at the Holiday Inn on the moon!).

Changes in higher education

Gerald Celente (1997) in his book *Trends* suggests that many educators and politicians have not understood that higher education, Western-style, is a trend in its own right. He states, ". . . the institutions designed to further it and instill it are obsolete, physically damaged, and increasingly irrelevant to the new Global Age" (p. 247).

Some futurists tell us that universities will be the next institutional dinosaurs if they do not wake up to the realities of cyberlearning. "Interactive U" has arrived! By the mid-1990s computer literacy at the college level was near universal, and although many of us have mixed emotions about this fact, it is no longer necessary to attend a college *in person* to get a degree. Interactive, on-line learning is revolutionizing education. Distance learning is the new wave and many of your colleges and universities are taking advantage of the rich opportunities it offers. NACADA has already established an interest group in this area. Those of you who are working in distance learning are pioneering advising programs and techniques that will serve as models for all of us.

A well-known futurist, Joseph Pelton (1996) claims that higher education today is looking at the future through a "rear-view mirror." He lists some educational reforms that are needed for higher education in the 21st century. They include the need to

- stimulate competitive learning systems by deregulating education at the institutional level.

- develop new ways of "keeping score in education"; credit hours and degrees are increasingly passé. To quote him: "the idea of awarding degrees in ever narrowing areas of expertise ultimately seems self-defeating. Smart machines equipped with artificial intelligence, expert systems, and ever greater memory banks are well suited to become the 'quasi-Ph.D' experts of the twenty-first century. Humans still have an edge in reasoning, judgment, critical analysis, and making connections, so we need more rigorous and challenging multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies" (p. 19).

- reform the old "publish or perish" paradigm of academic research. Pelton claims that higher education is locked into an "industry of specialized information generation that has little to do with the instructional process" (p. 19). Like course work, academic research also needs to involve interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs.

- emphasize experiential learning and rethink classroom attendance as a measure of acquired knowledge.

- adapt to the globalization of education, interactive networking, and the coming of the "era of the global brain" when more people will need to be "educated in the next 30 years than have ever been educated in all of human history!" (p. 20)

Celente (1997) predicts that by the year 2020, higher education will be so transformed that students of the "progressive era will wonder how, without interactive capabilities, their parents and grandparents ever learned anything at all. It will be like trying to imagine a world without automobiles, or computers, or Saran Wrap" (p. 252).

Conclusion

We must always be aware that when we are in a period of transition we often feel waves of nostalgia for the "good old days," even though those

days were not always as good as we like to remember them. The magnitude of change we are experiencing in our society, our economy, and our institutions can produce a sense of frustration and unease. There are times when the whole world seems fragmented and crazy.

This state of affairs reminds me of a story I recently heard: There was a mother who wanted to take her 5-year-old child to church but she was afraid the child would be bored and make a disturbance. So, being a creative mother, she decided to take a puzzle to keep the child occupied. She saw a beautiful picture of the world in a magazine, tore it out, and cut it into pieces. She gave the puzzle to the child in church along with some tape and was satisfied that it would occupy her for most of the service. In about 5 minutes the child had put the world completely together. When the mother asked how she did it so fast, the child said, "There was picture of a man on the back so when I put the man together, the world came together." These are times when we need to develop a clear vision of how we are going to put our world together so we can be sure our students are prepared for this new age in their intellectual and working lives.

What are our goals? What outcomes do we want advising to accomplish with and for our students? What actions do we need to take to achieve those goals? Now, more than ever, we need an organization like NACADA to help us set our sights on national goals that will move academic advising into the next century. At the board of directors meeting (here) in San Diego, NACADA has appointed a task force to establish a strategic plan for the next 5 years. It will be up to each of us to translate these goals into our own personal and professional worlds.

I especially like Arthur Levine's reminder of Rip Van Winkle. You remember Rip: the guy who fell asleep for 20 years and who said upon wakening, "everything has changed and I'm changed." Washington Irving's (1937) story was more than a tale about a man who overslept. It was an allegory for relentless change and the effect on a man who tried to orient himself to a world that seemed to change overnight (Levine, 1997).

An observer of the Information Age said, "It wasn't until recently that I began to get an inkling of what poor Rip must have felt the day he finally opened his eyes and rejoined the world" (Levine, 1997, p. 18). Those of us who work in the world of academe are going to be caught up in an equally unbelievable world. Drawing strength and knowledge from our past and joining together with a common purpose and resolve, we can welcome the future with excitement, anticipation, and confidence.

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