

## From the Editor

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We are pleased with the breadth and depth of the articles offered in this issue of the *NACADA Journal*. By responding to the call for manuscripts, advisors from a cross-section of institutions and a host of specialties are showing their research and writing mettle. We welcome the opportunity to share with you their contributions in this edition of the *Journal*.

The opening article is the text version of Trudy Banta's 2002 National Conference speech. In addition to a thorough discussion of the importance of assessment to advising programs, she and her colleagues offer unique suggestions for planning, implementing, and sustaining the assessment process. Those not fortunate enough to hear Dr. Banta speak in October 2002 will want to read the printed version here.

While Banta et al. approach the results of advising efforts, Regina Waters explores how faculty advisors learn the practice. In one of the most unique manuscripts we have received on advisor development, Waters describes the information and people that influence faculty in their work as advisors. She concludes that advisees may influence practice in ways not previously acknowledged and finds that faculty consider the most readily available information, that on organizational policies, to be the most useful to their practice. In this summary of her dissertation, Waters provides solid research that will likely serve as a seminal piece on which other studies on advisor development will be based.

H. Gibbs Knotts wrote a timely piece that is sure to resonate with advisors challenged to explain the importance of a liberal arts education to those who consider college as job training. Using salient real-world examples, Knotts showcases the variety of liberal arts courses that are critical to preparing college graduates to assume positions in the new economy. Perhaps more important, Knotts clearly explains how well-rounded liberal arts students can market their educational experiences to prospective employers and skeptics.

In an innovative study designed to help administrators at large universities handle increased numbers of at-risk students with stagnate or decreasing advising resources, Stephen DesJardins and Wang Jie introduce a statistical model that can be used to guide entire advising programs. The model will appeal to those interested in using hard data to predict which incoming students are most likely to need intensive advising services. Through their multivariate formula, DesJardins and Wang show

that noncognitive information yields important information about students and can be useful in predicting low GPA and attrition. They conclude their article with suggestions about using risk-factor information for identifying and serving at-risk students.

Salvatore Maddi et al. use their years of experience in studying and implementing hardiness training to highlight a means of preparing at-risk students with skills that make them resilient to life challenges. In a classic comparison study, Maddi et al. look at the grades of high-risk undergraduates who undergo hardiness training and those that take a leadership or enrichment course. They introduce the historical contexts of hardiness training and explain how advisors can use hardiness concepts to help at-risk advisees.

According to the NACADA Research Coordinator, Marsha Miller, NACADA members have recently expressed a particular interest in peer advising programs. Joel Diambra and Kylie Cole-Zakrzewski accommodate these requests for information with a description of a peer advising program at the University of Tennessee. Although they use surveys from both faculty and peer advisors to explain how peer advising programs benefit the institution, the faculty, the program, and the advisees, Diambra and Zakrzewski's most interesting finding regards the benefits of the program to the peer advisors themselves. Through their unique perspective, the peer advisors describe the benefits they enjoy in their service role, and the faculty affirm that the peer advisors can use the experience to hone important service skills.

Mike Lynch, in the second in a three-part series, gives the readership a complete analysis of the professional training, compensation, and support available to advisors in the profession. He takes data from the 2000 NACADA Survey to generate the big picture of the advising profession.

In the Advisor's Toolbox, Jennifer Mayhall and James E. Burg describe a counseling technique, solution-focused advising, to lead undecided students into a goal-setting and resolution mode. Through two examples of undecided students, they encourage advisors to use small-steps to achieve big changes in advisee thinking about majors and careers.

We are excited about the progress we are making in the *Journal* publishing schedule. Keep the manuscripts coming!

Thomas J. Kerr