

From the Co-Editors

This issue of the *NACADA Journal* includes articles on instrument development, students' developmental experiences in higher education, cohort-specific studies, and advisee perceptions of academic advising. On the surface, the contents of this issue may seem disparate, but digging deeper, one sees the interconnections between all seven articles: student learning.

Because student learning results from academic advising, the evaluative tool fashioned in light of a specific mission and programmatic goals as well as the consideration of student learning as a result of advising make the initial article particularly relevant and appropriate. Three articles address students' needs, decisions, and expectations as they relate to student learning conferred via advising received throughout their academic careers. The articles on two specific student cohorts, student-athletes and those in STEM careers, specifically document student learning as an outcome of academic advising. Higher education is about learning, and these articles show that academic advising is an important component of the overall learning experience.

In the first article, Marilee Teasley and Erin Buchanan discuss the process of developing a new evaluative instrument to measure student satisfaction with academic advising and student understanding of advising functions that correspond to specific university goals and academic advising mission statements. This purposeful matching of mission and goals to specific questions, along with the validity and reliability of the instrument, make the Teasley and Buchanan contribution particularly useful to others wanting to evaluate academic advising processes. Robert Kurland and Harold Siegel consider the student experience in their two studies of students' levels of attachment security and college student success. Their findings inform academic advising and add to the literature on attachment theory.

Krista Soria and Michael Stebleton offer an empirical examination of the relationship between students' motivations for choosing academic majors and their satisfaction and sense of belonging on campus. In addition to the useful applications to advising, their thesis presents clear implications for student persistence through ongoing discussions of student decision making and belonging. In their investigation of students' perceived support from

instructors and academic advisors and ways their efforts relate to students' basic psychological needs, as per self-determination theory, Tracie Burt, Adena Young-Jones, Carly Yadon, and Michael Carr show that combined efforts on campus result in student success.

Julia Fullick, Kimberly Smith-Jentsch, and Dana Kendall studied the relationship between students' expectations and perceptions of psychosocial and career support received through a peer-advising program and the appropriate support behaviors demonstrated by peer advisors. Their results demonstrate the importance of aligning advisor-advisee expectations.

In their inquiry of community college STEM students, Becky Wai-Ling Packard and Kimberly Jeffers discuss ways professors, major advisors, and transfer office staff support students' transfer progress by providing accurate information or referring students to helpful resources. They also elucidate educators' roles in answering advisees' unasked questions and keeping students on track to transfer. The second cohort-specific study in this issue, by James Johnson, describes the application of the graduation risk overview (GRO) model, designed to identify academic risk for Division I student-athletes, in terms of semester GPA. The effectiveness of the model informs specific interventions, including provision of information to promote academic success. All of the aforementioned *Journal* articles reinforce academic advising as an important part of the overall learning process in higher education.

In closing, we recognize the excellent contributions of and express sincere appreciation for the work performed and professionalism demonstrated by Ruth Darling of the University of Tennessee–Knoxville, Jeffrey McClellan of Frostburg State University, and Susan Poch of Washington State University, whose tenure on the *NACADA Journal* Editorial Board ended at the 2013 NACADA Annual Conference. All three of these outstanding professionals added to the quality of the *Journal* through manuscript reviews, feedback on issues, and overall dedication to the *Journal*, specifically, and NACADA and the advising profession, in general.

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