

From the Co-Editors

This issue of the *NACADA Journal*, dedicated to Virginia N. Gordon, was conceived by the executive director, Charlie Nutt; the coeditors, Susan Campbell and Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski; and the managing editor, Marsha Miller. The decision to commit one entire *NACADA Journal* issue to Virginia Gordon is both fitting and proper. As one reads through this issue of the *NACADA Journal*, one cannot help but be struck by her leadership and unassuming personality and by the quantity and quality of the work Gordon produced and the constant encouragement she offered to others as she strove to advance academic advising as a field of study and as a profession.

The authors of this issue were selected based on their relationships with Virginia Gordon as they interacted with her during different times and in different ways during her and their lifetimes. The first article, written by Higgins and Campbell, addresses Gordon's leadership style. They describe and define Gordon as a "servant leader." Using a qualitative approach, Higgins and Campbell interviewed friends and professionals who knew Gordon to learn more about how she influenced the personal and professional development of other higher education professionals and about the effect she had on the field of academic advising. Higgins and Campbell's article provides critical insight regarding what effective leadership means for all in higher education.

The next two articles focus on the advising programs that Gordon created at Ohio State University. The first article describes the Undecided and Alternatives Advising programs Gordon created in University College at Ohio State University in the 1970s through the 1990s. Steele describes the context within which Gordon worked and the various influences she embraced and mobilized to create these two programs. This article also describes the focus of these programs on student learning and the resources and methods of delivery deployed to help students create their academic and career plans. The second related article spotlights Gordon's approach to advisor professional development. McDonald reviews Gordon's efforts in these areas at Ohio State University and presents how Gordon viewed the professional development of advisors in her care as a continuous learning process. McDonald points out that Gordon focused on a theory-based approach grounded in practice. Both articles show

how creative and forward-thinking Gordon was regarding designing advising programs, addressing administrative issues, and focusing on intentionality throughout the advising process. Although Gordon's efforts are four decades old, they still offer a wealth and freshness of possibilities that many advising programs today would be fortunate to embrace.

In addition to being a noted educator and administrator, Gordon was also a distinguished scholar. Nguyen, Grites, and Aiken-Wisniewski analyze Gordon's scholarly work through the scholar-practitioner perspective. Using a narrative recounting Gordon's work by her long-time friend and colleague, Tom Grites, the authors address not only the scope of her work in terms of topics and the variety of research methodologies she deployed but also her work's influence on the field of academic advising. Underlining the conclusions Steele and McDonald drew in their articles, Nguyen, Grites, and Aiken-Wisniewski also concentrate on Gordon's contribution to the field, that is, her focus on learning as being the critical component for academic advising.

The final invited chapter, "Scholarly Advising and the Scholarship of Advising," originally published in *New Directions in Higher Education*, is one for which NACADA has been graciously granted permission to reprint by Wiley Periodicals, Inc. Troxel, the director of the NACADA Research Center for Academic Advising, addresses both the scholarship of advising and scholarly advising, two concepts that Gordon wholeheartedly embraced. Thus, it is fitting that this chapter is included in this dedicated issue. Troxel speaks of the relevance of this chapter and the relationship to Gordon's own beliefs about scholarship in the profession:

[This chapter] addresses the importance of committing to the literature that not only got advising where it is today, but also how and where to situate practice. It speaks to the professionalization of academic advising and the approach that both primary role and faculty advisors must take in order to embrace the intentional pedagogy of their work as educators. In her work with students, staff, and faculty, Virginia Gordon never shied away from the complexity of issues related to cognition, decision-making, choice, and the developmental maturity of

students of all ages. She called for academic advisors to improve their own competency by participating in related research over a decade ago (Gordon, 2006), and the influence of academic advising on students continues to be evident for those who practice the role in a scholarly way. (Troxel, personal communication, August 5, 2019)

Finally, the editors of this issue decided to let Virginia have the last word. Gordon's article on the design of a graduate course on academic advising is reproduced here. Her article, "Training Future Academic Advisors: One Model of a Pre-Service Approach," was first published in the *NACADA Journal* in 1982. This article clearly shows how, as an educator, Gordon approached all aspects of academic advising: with intentionality and a focus on learning. As a primer to understand how Virginia approached integrating academic and career advising, her chapter from her book on the 3-I process (inquire, inform, and integrate) is

shared here. The reprint of Gordon's (1994) article "Development Advising: The Elusive Ideal" encourages advisors who advocate a student-learning perspective for advising to persist in their efforts, even though they encounter challenges on many fronts. All of Gordon's writing is as timely today as when written decades ago.

Gordon's effect on the field of academic advising was profound. Hopefully, this issue of the *NACADA Journal* shows, in at least a minimal way, why this assertion is true. More so, it is our desire that readers recognize the personal qualities of Virginia Gordon the woman and, with the same determination, compassion, gusto, and zeal, are inspired to pursue the use of academic advising as the keystone for student success in higher education.

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