

Letter from the Coeditors

With this issue, we are pleased to present a collection of articles that examine the interplay of the theory and practice of academic advising, where interplay is what we regard as *praxis*. Think of the component parts of taking a journey. *Theory* can be thought of as the map we consult before and during the journey. *Practice*, we can view as the actual terrain or landscape through which we travel. *Praxis*, then, is the journey itself. This journey allows us to see whether the map is a true representation of the territory. As with other journeys we embark upon, sometimes we find that either the map or the terrain present us with difficulties that require us to modify our adventure. And so it is with academic advising. We may regard our personal theoretical perspective as developmental, appreciative, or narratological. However, sometimes we need to shift theories when our current favorite hits a rough patch that jostles the map out of our backpack, and we are left seeking a new guide for our journey. In this issue, we include articles that deal with this map-terrain-journey trio in new and interesting ways.

Gabriel O. Bermea explores the educational philosophy of humanism as a new way to approach academic advising in “Humanistic Advising: Applying Humanistic Theory to the Practice of Academic Advising.” Drawing from the map-terrain-journey metaphor, Bermea tells us that the old maps only take us so far. We need to add a new map—humanism—to help students with the terrain they experience, so their journeys may go more smoothly and meaningfully than they might otherwise have done.

Mapping the terrain to a career in academic advising is the subject of Rene Couture and Michele Tyson’s “The Path to Advising: Understanding Who Chooses the Profession.” Their investigation into primary-role advisors provides insight into who becomes an advisor and how they found their way into this hidden profession. Their findings have implications for the retention of advisors, the diversity of the field, and the increased awareness of academic advising as a career.

In “Coupling Theory and Advising Systems: A New Perspective for Advising Leadership,”

Brian Kapinos and Rhonda Dean Kyncl focus on how coupling theory, taken from the field of organizational management, can be fruitfully applied to both the structures of advising systems and to the practice of academic advising. “Coupling theory,” they assert, “may broaden perspectives and deepen the communicative vocabulary of advising leaders” and give them the opportunity “to become more skilled and effective administrators in applying these insights” (p. 40). We agree and offer this article to show the interconnectedness of advising systems and practices to other systems within the institution.

We are grateful to have “Early Journal Articles and Editors That Shaped the Evolution of Scholarly Writing in Academic Advising, 1972-2001” written by long-standing managing editor for NACADA, Marsha A. Miller, and co-author, Douglas N. Miller. The *NACADA Review* is one of four juried journals devoted to scholarly writing in academic advising; it seems a very fitting place to examine the interplay between theory and practice as it has played out in the foundational decades of NACADA. Miller and Miller have done a splendid and thorough job of providing a useful overview of the history of scholarly writing in academic advising. If you are yourself a scholar of academic advising, then you will find much to draw upon in this article. If you are hoping to become a scholar of academic advising, then this article is a great place to find your bearings and start your journey. We earnestly hope Miller and Miller will continue this valuable project and that we might include the next installment in these pages.

Scholarly inquiry in academic advising can draw from a wide range of perspectives, as can be seen in the varying points of view that authors in this journal have drawn upon. In “Advising and the Consumption Metaphor in Higher Education,” E. Michele Ramsey draws upon her background in communication studies and rhetoric to offer a new theoretical perspective with which to view academic advising. She offers the consumption metaphor and examines its rhetorical impacts specifically regarding the COVID-19 pandemic

and its effects on academic advising. She asks, “how shall advisors think about their work and their message to students?” The consumption metaphor, in Ramsey’s view, relates to the ways in which students have become “consumers” of higher education, with all the demands—better goods, better student services—that such an undergirding metaphor entails. Colleges have rushed to deliver the goods, she argues, which tends to skew how higher education is viewed: as a private good rather than a public good. Ramsey examines what happens to most institutions when a large-scale disruption comes along—such as the pandemic—and students and their families demand refunds and threaten lawsuits, revealing the inadequacy of the consumption metaphor if adopted by the leadership of an institution. The metaphors we choose to live by have real-world implications.

Here at the *NACADA Review*, we try to include an article in each issue that looks farther afield than just advising research to provide our field with ideas from other disciplines. In this issue, our roving reporter, Patrick Corr, dives into a work from the field of medicine in “Translating

Evidence into Practice: A Review of Pronovost, Berenhotz, and Needham (2008) and its Relevance to Academic Advising.” This 2008 article examines how the results of research in medicine get moved to local practice. Corr develops a five-phase model for the dispersal of academic advising research into local practice that is based on the medical model developed by Pronovost et al. Corr’s is the second article to be featured in the *NACADA Review*’s section, “Perspectives: Key Articles on the Praxis of Advising.” Articles for this section of the *Review* feature an article or work from outside of academic advising, examine scholarship from fields adjacent and relevant to higher education research, and discuss its relevance and applicability to the practice of academic advising.

We, the editors, would be pleased to hear from you. Let us know your thoughts about the articles presented in this and previous issues. In any case, happy reading!

Peter L. Hagen
Julie Givans Voller