

Letter from the Coeditors

Among the joys of co-editing the *NACADA Review* is not only deepening our knowledge of academic advising, but in expanding the boundaries of scholarly work within the field. As editors, we are proud to provide a platform for diverse voices, diverse institution types, and diverse methodologies and epistemologies. Issue 5(1) is an excellent example of this mission. It brings together four excellent articles, with each drawing upon a different scholarly tradition.

The issue kicks off with an invited piece from White. In a work that draws upon the history and philosophy of academic advising, White argues that the only proper place for advising within our institutional structures is in academic affairs. His article outlines the benefits of this philosophy for students, for advisors, and for the field; it also draws provocative conclusions on how focusing on the “academic” could affect who does advising, how those advisors are educated, and how their work is structured. Overall, the article raises an important question: Is academic advising ready for such uniformity?

In our next article, authors Spratley and Suarez address that question. They demonstrate that uniformity of experience is not the norm, even for advisors working within the same institution. This qualitative study supports its claim by examining the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and advisors of Color at a predominately white institution through the lens of Critical Race Theory. Through the voices of their participants, Spratley and Suarez ask us to recognize and challenge the dominant narratives of higher education.

In contrast, article three by Dills and Traywick takes a positivist approach to creating knowledge of the field of advising. Seeking to determine if a case management approach to academic advising can make a difference in student outcomes, these authors employed a randomized control trial (RCT) to assign first year students to one of two advising experiences. RCT, considered one of the highest standards for determining causality, is a methodology rarely used in academic advising scholarship. This article will be of special interest to advisors and administrators who view the world through a more “scientific” lens.

The issue’s final article employs a participatory action research approach. Here, Broadbent and Knight use theory to identify solutions to the problem of connecting with and delivering needed advising information to new students during the early years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Deploying their approach after analyzing colleague feedback and student input, Broadbent and Knight standardized an online advising experience for first year STEM students where, they hoped, nothing was left to chance. This work ensured that all students engaged with their assigned personal tutors, and that advisors covered all necessary topics during a time when “hallway conversations” were impossible.

We thank our authors for these contributions to the advising literature, which will inform the scholarship, practice, and theory of academic advising well into the future. Let their work inspire you all to ask deeper questions and seek more profound truths about advising, advisors, and our students.

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