

THE ADVIZINE

A JOURNAL OF INQUIRY INTO ACADEMIC ADVISING AT UGA

Fall 2016
Vol. 1, No. 1

Say it in *The Advizine*

The Advizine: A Journal of Inquiry into Academic Advising at UGA is a mini-journal prepared by and for academic advisors at the University of Georgia. It is designed to serve the needs of professional advisors across campus. It is not a newsletter. It is meant to be a periodical of inquiry into, reflections on, arguments over, opinions about, and reviews of, academic advising practices and scholarship. With the generous support of the OVPI, *The Advizine* will be published three times a year (in the Fall, Spring, and Summer) and distributed to all advisors on campus.

Should you write for it? Yes, you should! *The Advizine* relies on the intelligence, curiosity, and generosity (solicited and unsolicited) of its readers to supply their own reading material. By writing for *The Advizine* you are making a contribution to the scholar-practitioner community at UGA.

What kind of material is it looking for? It welcomes any material specifically in, or directly related to, the field of academic advising. You can look at this issue, the NACADA publications (e.g., the *Journal* and *Academic Advising Today*), NASPA's publications (e.g., the *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* and *Change*), Penn State's *The Mentor* and ACPA's *About Campus* for topics and ideas. *The Advizine* is a journal for scholarship, which does not have to be driven by any particular research method, or any method at all. Reflective or insightful pieces about practice, creative or original thoughts or perspectives, historical or theoretical essays, and reviews of existing scholarship are what we hope to publish.

How should you write for it? You should write a scholarly article or review (500-1500 words, APA style references) that has something to say and says it clearly and succinctly. Email it to *The Advizine* (theadvizine@uga.edu). The editors will read and edit your piece and probably will ask you to make revisions. After your revised piece is accepted the process is complete and your work will be published in an upcoming issue.

Send it in. We look forward to publishing and reading what you have to say. —*The Editors*

Kate Daley-Bailey
Romance Languages

Michael Hill
*Franklin College
Genetics*

Rathan L. Kersey
College of Education

Shannon Perry
Exploratory Center

Ilya P. Winham
*Franklin College
College of Pharmacy*

The Scholar-Practitioner Model for Academic Advisors: What is it? Why now?

By Ilya P. Winham

The academic advising community has long promoted academic advising as both a profession and burgeoning field of study. More recently, the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) has been encouraging advising practitioners to become advising scholars. Since 2008, as Rich Robbins (2016) has noted, NACADA has done much to promote scholarly inquiry in academic advising, including providing research grants, a research agenda, the implementation of NACADA Research Symposia, the 2010 book *Scholarly Inquiry in Academic Advising*, and various conferences and Web Events. In the most recent issue of *Academic Advising Today*, the executive director of NACADA, Charlie Nutt (2016), and its current president, David Spight (2016), both urge academic advisors to become

students and scholars of advising.

Encouraging advisors to engage with and contribute to the literature in the field of advising continues to be a top priority of NACADA. While many advising practitioners have made the individual choice to become scholar-practitioners, for others the pursuit of this model is bound to founder on the rocks of hard reality, be it lack of time, space, support, recognition or know-how. In view of NACADA's recent efforts to promote research and to develop the scholarly identity of academic advising, we must ask: what does it mean to be a scholar-practitioner of academic advising?

Charles McClintock's (2004) oft-cited definition of a scholar-practitioner presents the model as "an ideal of professional excellence grounded in theory and research, informed by experiential knowledge, and motivated by personal values, political commitments, and ethical conduct." To be a scholar-practitioner of academic advising, in other words, means to strive to have two professional lives—the life of a practitioner and the life of a scholar—which are not in conflict but in dialogue with each

other. The scholar-practitioner dwells in both practical and scholarly realms, and works with both experiential and research-based knowledge to advance both theory and practice.

As advising practitioners, we are functionaries who carry out the administrative needs of our institution and students. We are valued primarily as technicians of completion who help students enter, travel through, and graduate from college. The advising practitioner deals one-on-one with individual students and their particular situations. An advising practitioner wants to learn techniques and strategies for doing the job better—becoming a better listener, communicator, problem-solver, and administrator. The practitioner's knowledge derives from experience with the particulars of her institution and with individual students.

The advising scholar, by contrast, does not think and act solely as a member of a particular institution but as a member of a much larger community of fellow advising scholars. The advising scholar does not write for his or her own institution but for the entire advising community. The advising scholar is concerned with sizing up the practice of advising as a whole, and wants to know, for example, what advising is, how it came to be, where it is going, and what it could be or might become. The advising scholar's knowledge derives from the larger scholarly literature that incorporates multiple contexts, experiences, and perspectives. When an advising practitioner puts on her scholarly hat, she must not be afraid to put forward alternative views of advising, views which might not conform to the advising practices and prevailing opinions at her own institution.

An aspiring scholar-practitioner of advising believes, as Janet Schulenberg and Marie Lindhorst (2008) put it in their article "Advising is Advising," that "academic advising is much more than working directly with students" (p. 44). Of course, while interactions with students remain central, "their meaning

and significance rest in a broader context. The concerns and interests of academic advisors should span many areas of higher education, and advisors should not limit their scholarly attentions to working directly with students" (p. 44). In other words, a scholar-practitioner of advising strives to develop a broader perspective on the practice of the profession, a perspective that ranges beyond the routine, service-oriented work of academic advising, and seeks instead to contribute to a robust understanding of the context, purpose, effect, value, and theoretical basis of academic advising in higher education.

Given that nearly all advisors have a Masters degree or more, most probably fall somewhere between totally confident researchers at one pole, and frightened and totally mystified by research at the other. For the purpose of turning from a practitioner to a scholar of advising, the term "scholarship" simply means learning about advising and saying in print what you understand. What you understand becomes scholarship once it is published.

Becoming a scholar-practitioner is a labor-intensive effort, but it is not as difficult as one might imagine. By virtue of being an advising practitioner you are already positioned to keep one foot planted in your daily job as an advisor and another in a scholarly topic related to your work. When you find yourself thinking clearly and critically about some aspect of the job you are already doing, you are already on a path toward producing scholarship. The next step is to research, that is, to identify a set of literatures to read and engage with, and then start formulating—writing—your response. This may range from a journal-length article to a short essay to a conference or staff meeting presentation. The goal is not to become a professor but to develop expertise in the field, to engage with other advisors on larger issues of higher education that bear upon academic advising, and ultimately to contribute to the formation of a com

What does Heidegger have to do with advising?

By Kate Daley-Bailey

ARTICLE REVIEW

Sarah Champlin-Scharff, "Advising with Understanding: Considering Hermeneutic Theory in Academic Advising," *NACADA Journal* 30:1 (Spring 2010), pp. 59-65.

In a profession where social scientific studies reign supreme, Champlin-Scharff's article provides a refreshing look at advising using a humanities-based approach: Heidegger's hermeneutic theory. While not a new methodological approach to advising, Champlin-Scharff recommends that advisors use this theory to rethink what "ought to be involved in the process of understanding the individual advisee" (p. 59). Shifting focus from empirical data and utilizing the thought of a philosopher, the author asks advisors to seek "on a continual basis, to understand and interpret how advisees find significance and make meaning in the world within which they exist over time" (p. 59).

Advisees are human and, according to Heidegger, "the human entity should be understood in terms of how it finds and makes meaning in the world" because the activity of interpretation (i.e. hermeneutics) is "primary to human existence" (p. 60). Individuals make meaning by interpreting what they experience given their unique context. In order for advisors to understand their advisees, they must "seek to uncover meaning through the process of contextualized interpretation" (p. 61).

To gain a hermeneutically informed understanding, advisors must use a process of contextualized interpretation to ferret out meaning. To develop a process for revealing how advisees constitute their worlds, Champlin-Scharff, using scholarship from Nakkula and Ravitch (1998), suggests advisors focus on four concepts: interpretation, connectedness, world, and time. Advisors, according to this model, should adopt the view "that things do not have an innate identity apart from how one understands and makes sense of them" (p. 61). Interpretation is highly individualistic, some may say relativistic, and heavily dependent on the context. Champlin-Scharff provides an example of how two different students' interpretation of the ambiguous descriptor "good" (what constitutes a "good" general education course) ranges greatly based on each student's individual context. We could imagine a range of different responses to such an inquiry

munity of scholarship.

Should the scholar-practitioner model for academic advisors be supported by the institutions of higher education that are currently satisfied to train and employ only advising practitioners? Advisors whose curiosity about the history, theory, and practice of academic advising is nurtured will be more likely to view advising as a profession rather than a job and thus become more likely to continue to work on themselves to improve their advising knowledge and skills. Scholar-practitioners of advising are the advisors who, as David Freitag (2011) portrays them, are keen to accept “individual responsibility for professional development, mentoring and learning from fellow advisors,” who want to “[work] effectively with the advising administration of the institution,” and who want to “[work] for the professional advancement of the field of academic advising.” I think that institutions of higher education clearly stand to benefit by supporting this model for all who engage in academic advising.

There are several things institutions can do to support and encourage advisor engagement with research. As Sharon A. Aiken-Wisniewski, Joshua S. Smith, and Wendy G. Troxel (2010) suggest, “advising units can sponsor professional development experience around research, for example, by a) implementing a common reading program that focuses on advising research, b) identifying incentives for advisors to conduct research (e.g., reduced case load, travel funds, financial bonus), and c) incorporating research and evaluation experience as a preferred skill in position descriptions” (p. 10). By encouraging advisors to become students and scholars of advising, the promotion of the scholar-practitioner model for academic advisors would benefit our students, institutions, and the field of academic advising. ■

not only among various students, but also among administrators, faculty, and advisors. Individuals are often influenced by those around them. The author refers to this influence as connectedness, “Being-with.” Of course, disconnection from others is just as potent a force as a connection with others in the world of meaning for individuals.

Heidegger’s conception of an individual’s world is “the individual’s framework of a given human being’s everyday existence” (p. 62). Champlin-Scharff suggests that “within a Heideggerian framework, *where* does not simply signify physical location, but instead includes the overall socio-historical context of everyday life” (p. 61). World is not, as one might assume, synonymous with the physical universe but rather it is the highly nuanced context within which a student finds meaning (p. 62). Many aspects could inform a student’s world such as “race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion, as well as place of birth, educational background, experience traveling, books read, movies watched,” etc. (p. 62). While there is no normative way to determine just how a student’s world will inform that student’s understanding, thinking in such ways might provide the advisor with a unique insight on the student.

Along with the concept of world, time is perhaps one of Heidegger’s most enduring concepts and one that greatly affects

References

- Aiken-Wisniewski, Sharon A., Smith, J. S., and Troxel, W. G. (2010). Expanding Research in Academic Advising: Methodological Strategies to Engage Advisors in Research. *NACADA Journal*, 30(1), 4-13.
- Freitag, David. (2011). Freedom to choose: Advisor classifications and internal identities. *Academic Advising Today*, 34(1). Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Freedom-to-Choose-Advisor-Classifications-and-Internal-Identities.aspx>.
- McClintock, Charles. (2004). Scholar Practitioner Model. *Encyclopedia of Distributed Learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412950596.n134>.
- Nutt, Charlie. (2016). From the Executive Director: Are you a student of academic advising? *Academic Advising Today*, 39(2). Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/From-the-Executive-Director-Are-You-a-Student-of-Academic-Advising.aspx>.
- Robbins, Rich. (2016). In response to “advisors discuss: advising is advising”. *Academic Advising Today*, 39(1). Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/In-Response-to-Advisors-Discuss-Advising-is-Advising.aspx>.
- Schulenberg, Janet K. and Lindhorst, Marie J. (2008). Advising is Advising: Toward Defining the Practice and Scholarship of Academic Advising. *NACADA Journal*, 28(1), 43-53.
- Spight, David. (2016). From the President: Change Perspective. *Academic Advising Today*, 39(2). Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/From-the-President-Change-Perspective.aspx>.

students in college. Time is not merely “a series of discreet instances monitored by a clock”; it is “conceived of as part of the process of existence—the context through which one endures and changes” (p. 62). Perhaps Heidegger’s view of time is best summarized by an axiom from the journals of another philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, which states that “life can only be understood backwards; but must be lived forwards.” Such changes in perspective on the part of the student as they attempt to make sense of the past inevitably leads to changes in the needs of the student as they live life forward. An attentive advisor might have a better chance of connecting with a student undergoing significant and meaningful change by applying a Heideggerian concept of time.

Some advisors might be reticent to delve into such a philosophic endeavor or they might find Champlin-Scharff’s language overly erudite. But others, especially those with backgrounds in the humanities, will find her contribution an opportunity to engage intellectually with students on a more profound level. While statistics provide vital data for analyzing advising outcomes and student success, more philosophical perspectives, such as Champlin-Scharff’s, provide advisors with a much needed contemplative counterweight in an increasingly data-driven profession. ■

We Need More Grown-Ups

By Shannon Perry

BOOK REVIEW

Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, *Authoring Your Life: Developing an Internal Voice to Navigate Life's Challenges* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2009), 400 pp. \$34.00 cloth.

For over twenty years, Dr. Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership at Miami University, has explored how individuals develop the ability to shape the course of their own lives. Her self-authorship theory describes how this journey unfolds, while her learning partnerships model outlines how interpersonal relationships can facilitate the process. *Authoring Your Life* represents the most accessible account of Baxter Magolda's more than twenty-year-long study following young adults from their first year in college through the life and career challenges of their twenties and thirties. While intended as an aid to young people struggling to build meaningful lives, the author claims a broader political purpose:

We live in a time when we need more grown-ups. We need citizens who do not just 'go with the flow' and who can think for themselves about the questions not only of our individual lives but also of the changing life of our society, our world, our planet. (xvii)

In 1986, Baxter Magolda began conducting annual interviews with a group of a hundred students in order to understand how individuals' decision making abilities, reflective capacities and interpersonal relationships intersected and evolved over time. By 2006, thirty-five participants remained and Baxter Magolda possessed hundreds of interviews from which to map patterns and themes. Her analysis revealed that the personal journey to self-authorship often unfolds in predictable ways.

Many individuals follow an "external formula," or voice of authority, until some, often painful, situation forces a reconsideration of the inherited belief(s) or value(s). The individual, having entered a crossroads, begins negotiating this uncomfortable terrain through introspection, reflection on new experiences, and, with any luck, the guidance of supportive partners. This phase entails learning to listen to one's internal voice and building an internal foundation of personal beliefs, experiences and values to help navigate life's next challenge. Self-authored individuals become empowered to balance personal needs with social expectations in order to engage in authentic, mutually fulfilling relationships.

The book's compelling core consists of six chapters detailing the life stories and rich reflections of six participants. Between their own words, Baxter Magolda intersperses relevant interpretative analysis to situate particular moments and life events within the context of self-authorship. We meet Dawn, a creative explorer who declares multiple college majors before settling on history and theater. She chooses these because of the

intrapersonal strengths these majors allow her to draw upon. Dawn's belief that artists must engage in continuous self-discovery leads her to multiple cross-country moves in pursuit of romantic and career opportunities. The strength of this personal belief also helps Dawn accept and begin sharing her non-mainstream sexual orientation with others. A different struggle presents itself when, at the age of thirty-three, she is diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. This health prognosis forces Dawn to think about the limitations of her previously freewheeling lifestyle. Through her thirties, Dawn struggles to balance a personal need for unstructured creativity with her new need to establish and maintain health-promoting routines and relationships.

Unlike Dawn, the young Kurt possesses a deep desire to please others and to make a difference supporting the good work of his superiors. He takes a manufacturing job soon after graduation and, through his cognitive and interpersonal abilities, quickly ascends the management ladder. Through his late-twenties, Kurt's biggest challenge involves balancing the need to be well-liked with his desire to become an effective manager. Despite setbacks along the way, Kurt grows under the mentorship of a boss who challenges him to find alternate ways to approach difficult situations and encourages him to develop a personal philosophy for decision-making. By his late thirties, Kurt's intrapersonal growth and firm internal foundation of beliefs and values allow him to succeed in overseeing the company's entire manufacturing operations. Having developed a realistic interpersonal strategy alongside a personally authentic management philosophy, Kurt looks forward to applying what he has learned in his new role as father.

Many readers will draw personal connections to these powerful personal narratives. As a practitioner of advising, I found much practical use here as well. Reading stories of individual struggles reminded me that each student represents a multi-faceted, developing person embarking on a life journey and deserving of compassion and respect. Their stories also provided perspective on the relatively short-term, but potentially vital learning partnership opportunity open to advisors. If willing, advisors have the power to regularly encourage students into the reflective spaces and provocative experiences that help young people learn to navigate life in our complex, ever-changing world.

All individuals encounter some crossroads eventually. Advising aspiring to the level of learning partnership cultivates intuitive and critical thinking abilities to help individuals more confidently approach a lifetime of future ambiguities. Advisors seeking to incorporate more reflective conversations and exercises into an advising program will appreciate the chapters on how to become a more helpful learning partner to oneself and others. Here Baxter Magolda offers a set of broadly relevant reflective questions as well as specific suggestions for how parents, managers/employers, mentors, friends, and spouses might also become better partners on the road to self-authorship. Baxter Magolda and King's *Learning Partnerships* (2004) represents the best resource for those seeking to apply self-authorship theory and the learning partnership model in designing higher education programs and curricula. ■