

Fall
2014

Newsletter for NASPA SAPAA Knowledge Community

NASPA SYNERGY



SAPAA CO-CHAIRS PAGE

SHANNON GARY & DAN STYPA

As the fall term is underway for many of us, we hope that you enjoyed your summer and found time for some rest and relaxation in advance of what is sure to be yet another busy academic year. We are proud of the work that each of our SAPAA members coordinate and execute on their respective campuses – thank you for not only all you do for SAPAA, but also all that you do in your day to day work that advances the importance of academic and student affairs partnerships.

SAPAA initiatives are moving full steam ahead as a result of the passion and dedication of so many leadership team members and their committee members. The Research & Scholarship committee will soon be launching the annual Promising Practices award. We look forward to hearing about all the great work colleagues from across the country are doing and recognizing those that are making an extraordinary impact on our campuses and in the lives of students. In addition, Dr. William Franklin from California State University, Dominguez Hills is leading the SAPAA sponsored program selection team and we are indebted to his leadership in coordinating the process of selecting programs that will be officially sponsored by SAPAA. We also have Dr. Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth, from UC Irvine, who will be presenting at the Region V and VI western conference and representing SAPAA – if you will be attending the conference, be sure to visit with Marguerite.

It's hard to believe that the 2015 annual conference in New Orleans, LA is only a few months away. We will be hosting our KC business meeting where anyone interested in SAPAA is welcomed to join us. We'll also be highlighting the KC's accomplishments during the 2014-2015 year. Following the meeting, we will have time for each of the committees and working groups to meet so we hope to see many of you there and look forward to having even more members become actively involved in SAPAA! As you might know, Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth and Leanna Fenneberg were elected as your SAPAA co-chairs elect and we have been working together as a team to ensure a smooth transition so that we can welcome them as your new co-chairs officially at the annual conference in New Orleans.

In closing, we would like to thank all of the committees, working groups, and their respective committee members for all the hard work being done to make SAPAA one of the most visible, productive, and largest KCs within NASPA. If you have an interest in serving in a leadership capacity in SAPAA, please contact us and we will be happy to get you connected to the appropriate opportunity.

Best wishes for a productive and meaningful fall term!

Regional Highlight: Region I

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: THE NEED FOR A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO STUDENT & ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



By Michael C. Prinkey and Elizabeth Teurlay

Often viewed as separate and distinct functions of a higher education institution, academic affairs and student affairs are responsible for the vast majority of a college student's campus experience. When approached properly, these two areas of higher education are more similar than we often assume. Practitioners serving in either division are charged with helping students to integrate this knowledge. Focusing our respective conversations solely on fulfilling basic graduation requirements or attendance at a campus event would deprive our students of the chance to find deeper meaning from intentional reflection. Looking more deeply into the knowledge, skills, and abilities present in both student affairs and academic affairs divisions, it is clear how the two worlds often can, and should, overlap. When implemented properly, partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs have the potential to fulfill the many goals of contemporary higher education and create a cohesive environment where learning, in all its forms, may extend beyond the classroom to best prepare undergraduate students to be critical thinkers, world citizens, and sought-after employees. (Nesheim et al., 2007).

Perspectives from Academic Affairs

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) has published a statement of core values which highlights the mission and importance of academic advisors. The document outlines the following six tenets:

1. Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise;

Michael C. Prinkey is the Area Coordinator for Student Conduct under Residential Life & Student Activities at Champlain College. Mike is in his last semester of the M.Ed Higher Education Administration program at Northeastern University, and has a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Washington & Jefferson College. Author's email addresses: mprinkey@champlain.edu

Elizabeth Teurlay is a Program Advisor in Academic Services at Brandeis University. She currently oversees an internal fellowship and scholarship program and also works with the Fellowship Advising Team to support students competing for national awards. Elizabeth received an M. Ed. in Student Affairs from the University of California at Los Angeles and a B.A. in Psychology from Occidental College. Author's email addresses: eteurlay@brandeis.edu

2. Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process;
3. Advisors are responsible to their institutions;
4. Advisors are responsible to higher education;
5. Advisors are responsible to their educational community, for their professional practices and for themselves personally (NACADA, 2005).

When compared to NASPA's *Principles of Good Practice In Student Affairs* (1998), one can see the similarities in goals between practitioners in each profession. While job descriptions and functional roles may differ, each position plays a key role in helping students to merge their learning both in and out of the classroom and furthering the mission of their institution.

According to Creamer (2000), "academic advising is an educational activity that depends on valid explanations of complex student behaviors and institutional conditions to assist college students in making and executing educational and life plans"

(p. 18). Academic advising can come in the form of individual sessions where advisors explore course selection, possible majors, academic and personal support, and resource referrals. Advising may also be performed in a group setting through workshops in particular subject areas for specialized populations. Whether the focus is on building individual relationships or working with a specific group, academic advisors help students reflect on their decision-making and classroom learning, and apply these lessons to upcoming decisions on campus and beyond.

One important role of an Academic Advisor is assisting with each student's journey of self-authorship (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004) by helping to bring their interests, talents, and aspirations together. Sometimes this happens by helping to make the connections between classes: "How does what you are learning in biology impact your interpretations of your theology readings?" "How do fine arts intersect with physics?" Helping undergraduates to make these connections makes both the breadth of graduation requirements and the depth of major requirements seem less imposing and more fulfilling. The connections also



LIM College Photo/M.T Teloki

help prepare students to think more critically about their world, and ultimately become stronger professionals and thoughtful citizens after graduation.

By using these same methods, academic advisors can bring similar lessons to extracurricular pursuits. A student's involvement in service learning, cultural immersion programs, or mission-specific clubs can have profound connections to their

coursework: "How does your work with the Campus Democrats compare to what you are reading in your politics class?" "You seem very involved in your cultural group, and have an interest in medicine. Have you checked to see if an anthropology or sociology class might merge the two?" By helping students to frame extracurricular activities in the context of coursework, they can begin to thoughtfully channel their passions to create an intentional resume of classes and involvement. This builds a strong narrative which will enhance both the activities themselves, as well as students' ability to move themselves forward in their future academic and career pursuits.

Perspectives from Student Affairs

Student affairs professionals are in a unique position with regard to connecting a student's academic and co-curricular involvement. The developmental theories and tools learned in graduate school and practice are designed to help students form a holistic understanding of their own experiences. When meeting with students, regardless of purpose, it is critical to discuss the various aspects of the particular student's involvement. Without an investment into the world of academic affairs, student affairs is not fulfilling its mission. Social, emotional, and educational activities and conduct sanctions should be a response of student affairs to the complex nature of behavior, engagement, and academic performance.

The connection between student engagement and academic success are particularly visible in the field of student conduct. While every school and conduct officer has a unique philosophy and approach to managing policy and behavioral concerns, it is important for all of us to understand the motivating factors behind behavior and how it influences a student's academic performance. Every college and university will have first-year students experiencing significant emotional or behavioral concerns as a result of being thrust into a new environment. Leaving home and what is familiar is perhaps the hardest thing a young adult will go through. In instances where students participate in risky activities, effective conversations dig into potential causality of behavior. The National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2014) estimates that 25 percent of

college students credit poor academic performance to drinking. Both alcohol and drug use are associated with short-term academic concerns as well as lower graduation rates (Alcohol Facts and Statistics, 2014). The means with which we engage students outside the classroom will have direct implications on the academic world.

Furthermore, academic performance is directly linked to mental health. The Center on Young Adult Health and Development suggests that students navigating stress, anxiety and depression often struggle with various academic concerns, including lower grades and reduced persistence from first year to second year. These mental health concerns frequently form a close relationship with substance abuse and other behavioral concerns (Arria, Caldeira, Bugbee, Vincent, & O'Grady, 2013, pp. 2, 8). For the student leader whose work has a sharp dip in quality, it is imperative that student affairs staff members do not simply focus on our expectations; instead, we must dive into the academic performance and how this may be creating personal challenges. When making deliberate attempts at conversation regarding academic concerns, student affairs professionals find themselves in the position to connect a student with the resources needed to thrive. An hour long conversation about a policy violation or job performance may devote significant time to understanding a student's stress level or lack of time management skills. We can connect the student to the lecture series that focuses on stress management or to the residential hall program that brings in academic coaching staff to provide tips and tricks. This complex nature of academic success and engagement mandates intentional partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs.

With each new academic year, the fields of student affairs and academic affairs continue to adjust to meet the needs of growing student populations and the evolving goals of higher education. By helping students to see how each of their campus arenas influence one another, and that all of our offices are spaces to talk about their various experiences, we can work together to ensure that students are supported to make the most of their college experience. By taking a holistic approach to our conversations with students, we can both support the mission of our institutions and provide

students with a consistent message that all parts of their experience matter. While students may arrive in our offices for different reasons and with different questions, our roles are poised to build off of one another, and give students perspectives from which to understand and reflect upon their experience on our campuses.

As professionals, we should also continuously engage in self-reflection. Make it your mission to create intentional partnerships with the various professionals that you otherwise may not have formed a connection. When setting goals or planning programs, think critically about the following:

- Which divisions, departments, or offices on campus have a similar role to you? Which are responsible for a completely different set of expectations?
- Who are the well-known individuals in these offices? With whom have you not yet made that professional connection?
- What programs, skills, and resources can you and your team offer to other offices? In what areas are you looking to receive help?

When we engage the well-known stakeholders across campus as well as the hidden gems, we begin to create a culture of collaboration and increase access to the many services we offer. We can role model the importance of making connections in and out of the classroom by taking the time to utilize the skills, talents, and resources found across our campuses. Consider taking a colleague from another division to coffee, and you just might be surprised by the ways in which your worlds can intersect.

References

Alcohol Facts and Statistics (2014). *National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism*. Retrieved from <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/alcohol-facts-and-statistics>

Arria, A. M., Caldeira, K. M., Bugbee, B. A., Vincent, K. B., O'Grady, K. E. (2013, May). *The academic opportunity costs for substance use during college*. Center on Young Adult Health and

Development. Retrieved from
<http://www.cls.umd.edu/docs/AcadOppCosts.pdf>

Baxter Magolda, M. B., & King P. M. (2004).
*Learning partnerships: Theory and models of
practice to educate for self-authorship*. Sterling,
VA: Stylus.

Blimling, G. S., Whitt, E. J. et. Al. (1998). Principles
of Good Practice in Student Affairs. *About campus*,
3(1). Retrieved from
https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Principles_of_Good_Practice_in_Student_Affairs.pdf

Creamer, D.G. (2000). Use of theory in academic
advising. In Gordon, V.N. and Habley,
W.R. *Academic Advising: A comprehensive
handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

NACADA. (2005). NACADA statement of core
values of academic advising. Retrieved from
the NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising
Resources Web site:
<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-of-academic-advising.aspx>

Nesheim, B. E., Guentzel, M. J., Kellogg, A. H.,
McDonald, W. M., et al (2007, July 28).
*Outcomes for students of student affairs-academic
affairs partnership programs*. Retrieved from
http://www.redorbit.com/news/education/1015282/outcomes_for_students_of_student_affairacademic_affairs_partnership_programs/

2015 SAPAA Promising Practice

The Promising Practice award
recognizes promising practices in
areas pertaining to Student
Affairs and Academic Affairs
Collaboration.

In order to nominate a Promising
Practice, please go to:

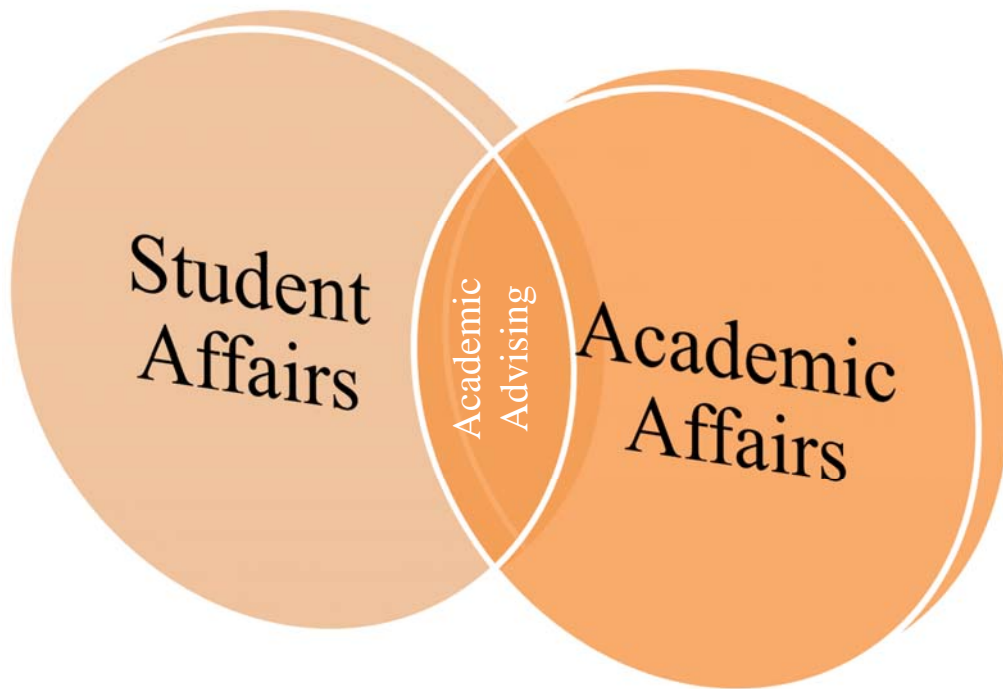
<http://www.naspa.org/about/awards/knowledge-communities/promising-practices-award2> for the
nomination form and the
complete details on the
application process and timeline.

***Nominations will be
accepted through November
5, 2014. Additional
information on page 10.***



NAVIGATING
with
COURAGE

2015 NASPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MARCH 21–25, 2015 NEW ORLEANS



Academic Advising

A LINK FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: LINK ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS THROUGH ACADEMIC ADVISING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' SATISFACTION, RETENTION, AND PERSISTENCE THROUGH GRADUATION



BY ANGÉLIQUE COURBOU AND GAYLA ADAMS-WRIGHT

There are a number of reasons why students leave institutions of higher education. According to Tinto (1993), academic challenges represent only a small percentage of the equation. One major factor is adjustment, referring to the lack of preparation for academic and social changes brought on by the college experience. Second, many students feel overwhelmed by the pressure to establish career goals and to make a permanent decision about a degree. Third, Astin (1984) and Tinto both believe a student must be psychologically and physically involved in campus activities if they are to be retained. Additionally, finances play a major role in

a student's decision to stay in college. Finally, for a student to feel supported in their learning process the student and the institutions mission and values must be compatible.

Many, if not all, of these factors contribute to the success of the student and can significantly impact their retention. Student success in higher education is not simply defined in terms of academic performance; it is also measured through the students' level of satisfaction, engagement, involvement and integration in and outside of academics as well as persistence and degree

attainment (Astin, 1984; Brock, 2010; Kuh, 2001; Tinto, 1993; Wolf-Wendel, Ward & Kinzie, 2009). Similarly, Copeland and Levesque-Bristol state that in order to improve retention the university should promote “supportive and adequately challenging environments and positive relationships” (p. 512). Schoeffel, van Steenwyk, and Kuriloff’s (2011) research also suggests that students thrive if they are encouraged and guided through balancing multiple commitments. All these factors contributing to the success or withdrawal of the students represent both academic affairs (interaction with faculty, and curriculum design for example) as well as student affairs (offices such as Counseling Center, Financial Aid Office, Career and Employment Services, among others) areas of expertise.

Academic support for students can be traced back to the beginning of higher education. Academic affairs, in the colonial times, was geared toward classical studies to include literature, language, science and religion (Thelin, 2004). Higher education was intended to build character and was highly structured but did not adequately address the growing needs of a new country and the changing student demographics. As a result, agriculture, military science, engineering and others were new academic disciplines developed to address these needs (Eaton, 2014).

It was much later, after the civil war that student affairs grew as rapidly as academic affairs did during the colonial era. As written in “A Perspective on Student Affairs” (NASPA, 1987) student affairs was designed to address the “rapidly growing population, unpredicted industrial growth, and federal legislation which dramatically altered the nature and purpose of public higher education” (p. 5). In looking at the history of student affairs, it is often viewed through the lens of experiences outside of the classroom and through the perspective of disciplinary action (Thelin, 2004.) For today’s college student, it is clear that student affairs and academic affairs must work together in order to support the whole student, and collaboration is essential to the growth and success of academia (Foxx, 2013).

In order to fully support students, and to adequately address the concepts listed above, there must be partnership between student affairs

Angélique Courbou is currently a Spanish Instructor and Assistant Program Coordinator, as well as Department Coordinator and Academic Advisor in the department of Modern Languages at Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS. She is enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Counseling and Student Development at Kansas State and holds an M.A. degree in Spanish Literature and an Academic Advising Certificate from Kansas State University, KS. Prior to joining Kansas State, as an international student, she studied Applied Foreign Languages at Blaise Pascal University, Clermont-Ferrand, France. Her areas of research interest are academic advising, retention, assessment, and undocumented students’ access to higher education. She is originally from Châlons en Champagne, France. Author’s email addresses: angeli@k-state.edu

Gayla Adams-Wright is currently an academic advisor with Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS. She is enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Counseling and Student Development at Kansas State and holds an M.S. degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Emporia State University, KS. Prior to joining Kansas State in 2004, she worked as a rehabilitation counselor in northern California for three years and for three years in Kansas. Her research interests include academic advising, gender issues and STEM. She is originally from Modesto, CA. Author’s email addresses: gayla@k-state.edu

and academic affairs. As this holistic philosophy of education grows, the opportunity to recognize the value of academic advising in this process becomes paramount. Cuseo (2003) as well as Nutt (2003), the executive director of the National Academic Advising Association (2003), support this partnership. With Nutt explaining that “any retention effort must clearly recognize the value of academic advising to the success of students and the necessity that advising become a central part of a collaborative campus wide focus on the success of our students” (para.8).

Habley, (2010) in a presentation on academic advising, stated that “effective academic advising cannot be done in isolation.” Therefore, coordination and collaboration of the various entities on campus are needed to support student success. What better place to begin this collaboration than where all students generally go: academic advising. In this sense, academic advising can serve as a bridge between academic affairs and student affairs to support students’ satisfaction, retention, and persistence through

graduation. It is the place where students can get information about both academic and non-academic aspects of college life. Thus communication across student affairs, academic affairs and academic advising is crucial to fostering a positive learning environment for the student. Nutt (2003) further stated, "Academic advisors provide students with the needed connection to the various campus services and supply the essential academic connection between these services and the students" (para.3).

It is common for academic advising to be housed under different umbrellas, either Academic Affairs or Student Affairs, depending on the institution. Academic advising is therefore in a unique position and should take advantage of this opportunity to bridge the gap between academic affairs and student affairs by forming relationships, and collaborating with both sides to best support students. As Cueso (n.d.) and Nutt (2003) explain, the success of students is dependent upon both student affairs as well as academic affairs working collaboratively to contribute to student retention. Nutt goes further and states, "academic advising is the direct link between academic affairs and student affairs" (para.7). In addition, according to Noel, Levitz, and Saluri (1985), advisors are the caring professionals who build relationships with students, meet with them on a regular basis to address their concerns and support their development. As such, they can positively affect student retention.

NASPA's Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs (SAPAA) Knowledge Community (KC) provides a forum for "those who are interested in the collaboration between student and academic affairs and how this collaboration can continue and thrive in the future" ("NASPA SAPAA", 2013). With NASPA's support, in our role as co-chairs we hope to explore topics related to academic advising and student retention, the diversity of academic advising practices to gain knowledge for future positive collaboration with student affairs, as well as current successful partnerships between student affairs and academic advising. We look forward to sharing with the NASPA community the knowledge gained through the Academic Advising Work Group.

References

- Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25, 297-307.
- Brock, T. (2010). Young adults and higher education: Barriers and breakthroughs to success. *The Future of Children*, 20(1), 109-132.
- Campbell, S. & Nutt, C. (2008). Academic Advising in the New Global Century: Supporting Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes Achievement. *Peer Review*, 10(1), 4-7.
- Copeland, K. & Levesque-Bristol, C. (2011). The retention dilemma: Effectively reaching the first-year university student. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 12(4), 485-515.
- Cueso, J. (n.d.). The case for promoting partnerships between academic and student affairs. Kentucky Council on Post Secondary Education. <http://cpe.ky.gov/nr/ronlyres/fc5065e4-e5a0-4f3f-9b36-fa33fef29929/0/thecaseforpromotingpartnershipsbetween.pdf>
- Cueso, J. (2003). Academic advisement and student retention: empirical connections and systematic interventions. Retrieved from <http://www.geocities.ws/jccadjunct/advret.html>
- Eaton, P. (2014). Whole learning: Student affairs challenge to college curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 30(1), 64-74.
- Foxx, K. (2013). Student Affairs partnering with Academic Affairs (SAPAA): Three critical issues to consider when partnering with Academic Affairs. *Synergy: Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs*, 2-4.
- Kuh, G. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change*, 33(3), 10-17, 66.
- NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. (1987). A perspective on student affairs: A statement issued on the 50th

anniversary of the Student Personnel Point of View. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/APerspective_on_Student_Affairs_1987.pdf

NASPA Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs (2013). Retrieved from Retrieved from <https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/kcs/student-affairs-partnering-with-academic-affairs>

Noel, L., Levitz, R., & Saluri, D. (Eds) (1985). Increasing student retention. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Nutt, C. (2003). Academic advising and student retention and persistence from the NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources Web site <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/tabid/3318/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/636/article.aspx>

Schoeffel, M., van Steenwyk, M., & Kuriloff, P. (2011). How do you define success?: An action research project leads to curricular change. *Independent School*, 70(4).

Schreiner, L. (2010). The "thriving quotient": A new vision for student success. *About Campus*, 15(2), 2-10. doi: 10.1002/abc.20016

Thelin, J. (2004). A history of American higher education. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Wolf-Wendel, L., Ward, K., & Kinzie, J. (2009). A tangled web of terms: The overlap and unique contribution of involvement, engagement, and integration to understanding college student success. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4), 407-428.



2015 SAPAA

Promising Practices Award

The Promising Practices award recognizes promising practices in areas pertaining to Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Collaboration.

This award is sponsored by the Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs (SAPAA) Knowledge Community (KC) within NASPA.

SAPAA recognizes that there are many great examples of promising practices that exist in academia. We ask you to nominate programs and services that contribute to collaboration or integration of student and academic affairs in a college or university setting. We can all benefit from learning about successful educational endeavors in these collaborations from our colleagues.

In order to nominate a Promising Practice, please go to: <http://www.naspa.org/about/awards/knowledge-communities/promising-practices-award2> for the nomination form and the complete details on the application process and timeline.

Nominations will be accepted beginning October 1, 2014 through November 5, 2014. Promising Practices award recipients will be included in the awards booklet at the NASPA Annual Conference and listed on the SAPAA website. If you have questions about the Promising Practices Award or submission process, please contact Jemilia Davis at davisjs@uncw.edu or (910) 962-3845, or Leah Howell at leah.howell@uc.edu or (513) 556-0896.



R&S Notable Readers Piece

MORE THAN MATH: COLLABORATING ACROSS A DEPARTMENT TO BRIDGE LEARNING GAPS



Shannon Williams, Director, PhD Student Services, School of Policy, Government & International Affairs at George Mason University.

BY SHANNON WILLIAMS

A strong undergraduate transcript is not as strong a predictor of academic success as we would like it to be. As in other graduate schools, the Public Policy program at George Mason University relies on undergraduate records to determine basic competence. Yet after admission, many students discover that their math skills are inadequate for meeting the demands of their courses. A decade ago, a faculty member in the School of Public Policy urged the department to examine the quantitative skills that students needed for a required Managerial Economics and Policy Analysis course. The resulting partnership between instructors, Student Affairs, and other university representatives brought Math Camp to life. Housed in a department that made room for innovation and autonomy, the project set in motion a collaborative venture that now reaches well beyond remediation to meet a diversity of student needs.

The Readiness Gap

George Mason has plenty of company as it faces the mismatch between student skills and the academic demands of their programs. Only 43% of high school seniors met the ACT's mathematics college readiness benchmarks in 2014, suggesting a lack of preparation for college-level mathematics (ACT, 2014). Without the proper academic support, students who start college unprepared are more likely to struggle academically and less likely to graduate on time (Perkins, 2004; Adelman, 1999; Arum, 2011). Those who succeed in undergraduate quantitative courses may then have trouble

applying their skills in jobs or postgraduate study (Llorens, Llinàs-Audet, Ras, & Chiaramonte, 2013).

While tighter admissions standards might yield students who are better prepared, cohorts will be smaller. Enrolling fewer students is an unrealistic option for schools facing budget constraints and enrollment targets. In the past two decades, universities have leaned toward strengthening early learning support, including remedial mathematics programs (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006). Yet a portion of those who most need remediation don't know they do, and some students use math support ineffectively – if at all – when it is available (Bhaird, Fitzmaurice, Fhloinn, & O'Sullivan, 2013). Students may not discover the limits of their skills until they are well into their courses and slipping further behind.

Coming Together to Support Students

The Masters in Public Policy program at George Mason University emphasizes economic concepts and applications. Johnson and Kuennen (2005) find that in courses requiring math – and in economics specifically – reviewing mathematical concepts improves grades, regardless of how students do on pre-tests. Students who build a strong foundation of quantitative literacy are more prepared to grasp economic concepts (Ballard & Johnson, 2004).

Ten years ago, one senior faculty member recognized that instructors for the Managerial Economics and Policy Analysis course had the same complaints every semester: they were sacrificing substantive course content to review high-school level math because so many students were

struggling. The faculty member advocated for the School to put in place a quantitative review for all students taking the course. She found an economics instructor and a statistics professor willing to design and teach a day-long workshop. Student Services coordinated with the Registrar to create a session outside of the normal university calendar at no cost or credit. The IT department and Student Services worked together to develop online tests. Core course instructors required students either to attend the workshop or to pass the pre-test. With many discrete processes functioning together, the School launched its inaugural “Math Camp” in 2005.

Small Improvements

From the start, Math Camp integrated review and revision into its design. The instructors included both pre- and post-tests. Faculty and Student Services staff reviewed each semester’s assessments and discussed the feedback students were providing. Instructors then tinkered with content and made improvements, moving Math Camp toward achievement of its stated goals: (i) teach students the requisite math skills to prepare them for statistics and economics courses; (ii) help students overcome a fear of math; and, (iii) teach students to think in “math mode” when considering public policy questions.

Although faculty noticed small gains in math proficiency, some students struggled in the economics course even after completing Math Camp. They mastered the formulas in their numerical form yet could not apply the skills in their analysis of public policy issues. Math Camp’s abbreviated format, while convenient, didn’t give students a chance to review and ask questions. By expanding to two sessions separated by a practice day, performance improved and confidence levels rose. Making slides from previous sessions available online also allowed students to study the concepts before the class meetings.

The instructors predicted that participants might fare even better with more exposure to math concepts. The workshop, however, had reached its scheduling limit. At some point, additional sessions overburden students – many of whom are working professionals – and overextend the Registrar’s flexibility. The team had to find other ways to expand Math Camp’s reach.

Turning Point

In 2012, an instructor worked with two Ph.D. student volunteers to meet the growing numbers of Math Camp attendees. As an advocate of learner-centered teaching, he understood that the passive consumption of lecture slides is a poor substitute for learning. He also recognized that doctoral students in the school were eager to gain hands-on teaching and course design experience. He encouraged his TAs to seek out interactive online tools. Kahn Academy’s tutorials covered the necessary topics, and the team used a virtual group platform to communicate with and track students. The students took over instruction. Participation increased and performance improved.

A team of administrators, students, and faculty saw this as an opportunity to establish a new structure for funding and delivering the class. While the face-to-face workshop comprises only two days, many of its components – and most university offices contributing to the project – must be available year-round. The Registrar is involved in scheduling and enrollment. The IT department keeps the various platforms up to date while A/V technicians record videos of every in-class session. Print Services, Facilities, Human Resources and Payroll provide administrative support. The Student Services team acts as a hub for these dynamic and interdependent contributors. By being nimble in its coordination, Student Services makes the workshop a more seamless experience for students taking it and those teaching it. Today, the Economics Math Workshop is a hybrid course with



LIM College Photo/M. Teloki

asynchronous online components and an individualized “learning path” for each student. It draws on case studies to link abstract math formulas to relevant policy issues. With doctoral students in the lead, the workshop is running for its third successful semester.

A Design both Durable and Flexible

How does a constantly changing team of instructors deliver increasingly intricate course content? Math Camp’s history is a valuable guide. Because it began as a shared venture with different professors leading the class over several years, slides and other materials were portable and easy to adapt. High standards for hiring and training of student leaders – e.g., Ph.D. students shadow for one semester and teach the next, cycling out after a year – help to ensure the program’s sustainability. The current instructors are now developing an in-house website for storing the complete course to also capture rich online course materials.

The workshop’s novel approach to remediation filled an additional need: a comprehensive teaching opportunity now exists where none did before. For doctoral students seeking academic careers, this experience is critical (Campbell, Fuller, & Patrick, 2005). The Economics Math Workshop design has extended to other partnerships between faculty, staff, and students in the School, including a lab for students taking Statistical Methods for Policy Analysis and a workshop to strengthen student writing skills.

Gauging the Impact

Aiming for a 360-degree view, the School collects data from pre- and post-tests, self-assessments, homework, quizzes, and Kahn Academy reports. Instructors measure student progress in real time – both for individual students and for the class as a whole – and use the data to make adjustments to workshop components. Participants also receive ongoing feedback from these instruments so that they focus appropriately in remedial sessions and in their courses.

Future assessments will need to focus on a few unanswered questions. First, does success in the workshop predict success in graduate classes? Although the professors teaching core courses provide anecdotal evidence of a positive impact, no

data yet exist comparing program performance for those who take the workshop to those who don’t. Second, what are the outcomes for Ph.D. students? The instructors phase out of their leadership roles without formal review, and it is too early to tell if the experience has a measurable impact on job searches. It is up to the Student Services team to put systems in place for looking more closely at the long-term performance of both masters and doctoral students.

Lessons Learned

Given the financial pressures facing universities, some schools must concede to lower admissions requirements while also reducing resources for staff and faculty. Moving beyond remediation, the Economics Math Workshop offers a blueprint for a collaborative, efficient design that can respond to the ever-changing learning needs of students.

Important takeaways from our lab experience include:

1. **Small department and university administrator buy-ins yielded strong benefits.** Baseline support – modest funding, Registrar and classroom support, technology and licenses, meeting space – eased overall enrollment strains by helping students to master foundational material. The leaders of several campus units also allowed the instructional team autonomy in designing the course.
2. **Multiple faculty mentors were collaborative in leading critical form and content.** Faculty members involved in the project approached learning in innovative ways, offering guidance on subject matter and pedagogy. They also stayed engaged in a collaborative process that had many moving parts.
3. **Student Affairs was a coordination hub.** As coordinators, Student Affairs representatives facilitated communication among contributors and kept the various processes on track. As advisors, they committed to paying ongoing attention to the professional and academic needs of students – instructors and attendees alike.
4. **Student instructors stayed the course.** Graduate students who took on this leadership role made

room in their lives to commit to the creative demands of the project.

5. **The collaborative team looked to the future.** Individuals from each of the groups in the leadership team sustained the project by gathering feedback and other data and using it both to make improvements in student learning and to sow seeds for future innovations.

In an ideal university, everyone is ready and willing to work together to bridge gaps in students' academic readiness. In reality, the terrain – organizational, political, personal – can be uneven, especially in difficult financial times. The question educators must answer is not *whether* to imagine new approaches, but *how*? Meeting a burgeoning academic need requires ingenuity, resourcefulness, and a willingness to join forces across outdated divides.

References

ACT. (2014). *The Condition of College and Career Readiness*. Retrieved from <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/cccr14/pdf/CCCR14-NationalReadinessRpt.pdf>

Adelman, C. (1999). Answers in the Tool Box. Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED431363>

Arum, R. (2011). *Academically adrift: limited learning on college campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Attewell, P., Lavin, D., Domina, T., & Levey, T. (2006). New Evidence on College Remediation. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(5), 886–924.

Ballard, C. L., & Johnson, M. F. (2004). Basic Math Skills and Performance in an Introductory Economics Class. *Journal of Economic Education*, 35(1), 3–23.

Bhaird, C. M. an, Fitzmaurice, O., Fhloinn, E. N., & O'Sullivan, C. (2013). Student non-engagement with mathematics learning supports. *Teaching Mathematics and Its Applications*, 32(4), 191–205. doi:10.1093/teamat/hrt018

Campbell, S. P., Fuller, A. K., & Patrick, D. A. (2005). Looking beyond research in doctoral education. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 3(3), 153–160. doi:10.1890/1540-9295(2005)003[0153:LBRIDE]2.0.CO;2

Johnson, M., & Kuennen, E. (2005). On-Line Mathematics Reviews and Performance in Introductory Microeconomics. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research*, 6(3), 1–21.

Llorens, A., Llinàs-Audet, X., Ras, A., & Chiaramonte, L. (2013). The ICT skills gap in Spain: Industry expectations versus university preparation. *Computer Applications in Engineering Education*, 21(2), 256–264. doi:10.1002/cae.20467

Perkins, R. (2004). *The high school transcript study: A decade of change in curricula and achievement, 1999-2000*. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004455.pdf>



WHAT IS SAPAA

The Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs (SAPAA) Knowledge Community provides a forum for interaction among student affairs professionals serving in an academic unit within their institutions and/or those who are interested in the collaboration between student and academic affairs and how this collaboration can continue and thrive in the future. It also promotes the presentation of programs and workshops at regional and national conferences on issues related to the connection between student affairs and academic affairs. In doing so the SAPAA Knowledge Community serves to enhance the professional development of the person working in this area as well as to provide an opportunity for others to become aware of, and more familiar with, these issues. Finally, the SAPAA Knowledge Community encourages research and scholarly publication in the area of collaboration between academic and student affairs as well as promising practices at institutions.

SAPAA COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE BOARD

Co-Chairs: Lianna Scull, LIM College and Lauren Bazhdari, Columbia University

Co-Editors: Lindsey Marx, Ohio University and Mitchell Levy, Atlantic Cape Community College

Image Contributor/Editor: Mohanlall T. Teloki, LIM College

Layout/Upload Coordinator: Linda Snyder, University of California at Irvine

Synergy Newsletter Article Submission

Format Guidelines

Manuscripts must be clear and concise, with a well-organized presentation of ideas. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition* (2009) should be followed for general style guidelines and reference formatting.

- 12 point font, 1 inch margins
- Single space with double space between paragraphs
- No more than 3-4 pages with references
- Please include author information
 - Name
 - Title
 - Institution
 - Email address
 - Phone
 - Head shots of the author(s)
 - A brief 2-3 sentence personal/professional bio
- Optional information
 - Other campus views/images

Please send photos and/or accompanying artwork for articles as high resolution .jpg files with suggested captions identifying relevant individuals, institutions and/or programs in attached WORD documents

- Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all references, quotations, tables, and figures. Please make every effort to ensure that such items are complete and correct.
- Material should be submitted electronically only by the due dates below to Co-Editors, Lindsey Marx at marxl@ohio.edu and Mitchell Levy at mlevy@atlantic.edu.

November issue on Career Services text **due by Monday, November 10, 2014**