

The New Advisor Guidebook
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Advisor training programs typically end just when the most critical part of an advisor's development begins—the experiential synthesis of the conceptual, informational and relational components of advising that is achieved student-by-student in the advising chair. As a profession, we should do more to help new advisors reach their potential by creating year-long new advisor development programs that recognize the experiential nature of advisor development by setting realistic expectations for first-year advisor development, establishing expectations for long-term development and providing the necessary support to move from the first set of expectations to the second (Folsom, 2007, p. 8). With the publication of NACADA's new monograph, *The New Advisor Guidebook: Mastering the Art of Advising Through the First Year and Beyond*, we now have the resources and tools to do this. As a "guide," *The New Advisor Guidebook* diverges a bit from a typical monograph; therefore, as its editor, I have been given the opportunity here to discuss how we imagine NACADA members using it.

Our aim in the *New Advisor Guidebook* is to

- Serve as a primer/curriculum for new advisors.
- Assist new advisors in creating a plan for self-training and managing their own post-training professional growth.
- Serve as a primer for administrators who wish to extend their current training programs into advisor development programs that support new advisors as they learn to synthesize conceptual issues, informational issues and relational skills while advising students during their first year in the profession (Folsom, 2007, p. 8).

The *New Advisor Guidebook* is designed to serve two audiences: new professional advisors and the people who train them. For new advisors, the monograph provides the content, tools, and road map needed to manage their own first-year training and development when no formal training program is available. For trainers, it provides the content, tools, and road map for creating a year-long new advisor training and development program. The starting point for both new advisors and trainers is the "New Advisor Development Chart" (Chapter One).

The *Guidebook's* "New advisor Development Chart" addresses the core functions of advising by asking: "What should advisors know and be able to do in their first year, in year two, and beyond—regardless of their institutional setting or the type of student they advise?" The Chart gives new advisors and trainers a starting point for development—a "realistic picture of the advising skills and knowledge" (Chapter One) they can attain in their first year by providing explicit short-term goals/outcomes for each of the major components of advising: conceptual, informational and relational. The Chart also provides new advisors and trainers a developmental destination by delineating explicit long-term goals for each component of advising. We anticipate that new advisors will use the Chart to identify learning outcomes they wish to achieve during their first year and that trainers will use the chart to define learning outcomes for their advisor development programs. Then, of course, trainers and new advisors will need road maps—resources that support their journeys from starting point to destination. The rest of *The Guidebook*, representing the expertise of over 30 authors, is devoted to providing this road map.

The *Guidebook* has chapters on the conceptual, informational, and relational components of advising as well as a chapter on how these components are synthesized through advising sessions (both one-on-one and group advising). Each chapter includes practice-oriented articles that can provide training content for new advisors and training programs. In addition, these chapters include informal strategies, tips, ideas, best practices and suggested activities that help new advisors reach their goals—on their own or through formal training programs. Each of the final two chapters focuses on one of the target audiences for the monograph. One chapter addresses the importance of professional development for academic advisors and strategies for getting involved professionally early in one's career. The final chapter is designed for trainers who wish to develop year-long new advisor development programs and includes an article providing guidelines for program development, a sample year-long development schedule, case studies and multiple exemplary practices from a diverse group of institutions.

It is not necessary for new advisors to read the New Advisor Guidebook “cover-to-cover” to derive maximum benefit from it. Rather, those of us involved in the project imagined advisors and trainers “dipping into” the chapters to meet immediate and/or pressing advising needs. For example, new advisors who, at the end of their initial training, are overwhelmed with all of the information they must “learn by heart” may want begin by using the chart to identify the most important information to acquire. Turning to the chapter on informational issues, they will find an article by Mark Goodner that provides a framework for learning information, walks the reader through detailed, practical strategies for acquiring information during their first year, and suggests how to deepen that knowledge as they gain experience. Or perhaps, a new advisor wants to learn more about the specific students and student populations they advise. In that same chapter, Susan Kolls outlines a myriad of ways to learn about students—from institutional demographics to personal interaction. Sometimes, however, a new advisor is the *only* advisor in an office. Reading Peggy Jordan’s article on relational skills or Don Woolston and Becky Ryan’s strategies for conducting effective advising conferences can help give new “sole practitioners” the confidence they need before meeting with their first student.

Likewise, we encourage trainers to dig into *The Guidebook* in a way that makes the most sense for their situations. Trainers may, for example, want to begin with the chapter that outlines a year-long training program, then review the New Advisor Development Chart to identify learning outcomes and finally, scour the conceptual, informational and relational chapters for training and developmental activities, appropriate formats for training on specific content and skills (e.g. case studies, group sessions, campus visits), and to identify points during the year when training on specific skills and content would be the most effective. Or, they might want to begin with the exemplary practices to get a better sense of the programs other institutions have implemented.

We hope that new advisors will want to return to the Guidebook again and again as they gain experience, face new challenges, and seek new strategies; the same articles and suggested activities will assume new and deeper meaning with additional experience. In summary, we hope that *The New Advisor Guidebook* will become an integral part of new advisors’ journeys toward excellence, whether that journey is alone or as part of a formal training program.

References

Folsom, Pat. (2007). *The New Advisor Guidebook: Mastering the Art of Advising Through the First Year and Beyond* (NACADA Monograph No. 16). Manhattan, KS: National Academic Advising Association.

Folsom, Pat, Joslin, Jennifer, & Yoder, Frank. (2005). From advisor training to advisor development: Creating a blueprint for first-year advisors. Retrieved -insert today's date- from the *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* Web site: