Empowering Students to Author their Lives

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CONCEPT OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

✻ Craft a coherent educational plan based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests & values

✻ Use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals

✻ Assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements

✻ Behave as citizens who engage the wider world around them

DEVELOPMENTAL LENS

- How we “make sense” of our experiences
- How we view knowledge - decide what to believe, come to know
- How we view ourselves - sense of identity
- How we view social relations - how we construct relationships
- Holistic perspective - all three dimensions intertwined
**DEVELOPMENTAL CAPACITIES**

- *Complex cognitive capacities* enable acknowledging multiple perspectives, critically analyzing knowledge, and judging relevant evidence in context to make informed decisions about what to believe.

- *Complex intrapersonal capacities* enable critical analysis of one’s values and social identities to construct a coherent, internal sense of self.

- *Complex interpersonal capacities* enable authentic interdependent relations with diverse others in which perspectives and needs are mutually negotiated.
A DEVELOPMENTAL BRIDGE

“a holding environment that provides both welcoming acknowledgement to exactly who the person is right now as he or she is, and fosters the person’s psychological evolution. As such, a holding environment is a tricky, transitional culture, an evolutionary bridge, a context for crossing over” (Kegan, 1994, p. 43)

BAXTER MAGOLDA STUDY

- Began with 101 first-year traditional age college students in 1986
- 80 interviewed annually during 4 years of college [see Knowing & Reasoning in College, 1992]
- 30 remain in study in 25th year [see Making Their own Way, 2001; Authoring Your Life, 2009]
- Learning Partnerships Model [see Learning Partnerships, 2004]
WABASH NATIONAL STUDY

www.liberalarts.wabash.edu/nationalstudy

* Designed to discover the student experiences and developmental capacities that affect growth toward seven liberal arts outcomes (King, Kendall, Brown, Lindsay & VanHecke, 2007)

* Began with 315 traditional age students on six campuses in 2006 [approximately one third identified as students of color]

* 177 students returned for interviews all four years of their college experience
Developmental narratives offer *possibilities* regarding how to interpret student meaning-making.

Transferability: educators’ responsibility to judge applicability based on deep understanding of particular context.

Learning partnerships: key to understanding partners and interpreting development in context.
FOLLOWING EXTERNAL FORMULAS

- Believe authority’s plans; how “you” know
- Define self through external others
- Act in relationships to acquire approval

CROSSROADS

- Recognize the importance of hearing one’s internal voice and begin work to identify it.
- Attempt to get internal voice into conversation with external voices.

Realize that reality is beyond your control, but that you can control your reaction to reality.

Use internal voice to shape reaction.

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 Advisors recognize and respect students’ diverse backgrounds

 Advisors help students develop and reinforce realistic self-perceptions and help them use this information in mapping out their futures

 Advisors encourage self-reliance and support students as they strive to make informed and responsible decisions, set realistic goals, …

Respect learners thoughts and feelings

Situate in learners’ experience

Develop personal authority

Share authority; interdependence

Mutual learning & problem solving

Complex work & life challenges

Learning Partnerships

Support

Challenge

REFLECTIVE CONVERSATIONS

Encouraging reflection: help persons explore beyond what happened to them to why it was meaningful and how they interpreted the experience

Encouraging interpretation: step back and make sense of how experiences have affected them and how to use those insights

Key Element: encouraging persons to make sense of their experience rather than the educator making sense of it for them!

TRANSFORMATION FOR EDUCATORS

- Recognize how our authority is interwoven in our behavior
- Recognize assumptions about students
- Examine our own development - are we self-authoring such that we can share power and authority with learners? Challenge structures & systems that constrain learning?
LPM AS A PHILOSOPHY

- LPM is a philosophy about learning and development, about the roles of educators and learners in the learning process.
- LPM dissolves boundaries between learning and development, intellectual and personal development, learning and teaching, and learners and advisors.