

NACADA, Gardner Institute announce new, collaborative effort to transform academic advising

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising is joining with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (Gardner Institute) to create and offer the Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) process. EAA is a comprehensive advising strategic planning process that has the potential to change and affirm the role and influence of academic advising in higher education.

The two-year program will be offered to higher education institutions nationwide, beginning with an inaugural cohort that will be guided through an evidence-based decision making, planning, and implementation process to improve their academic advising efforts. Institutions selected to be part of the inaugural cohort will engage in an institution-wide initiative using NACADA and the Gardner Institute's nine "Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising." These standards acknowledge the role of academic advising in promoting student learning, success, and completion as well as the complexity of higher education and organizational change.

NACADA and the Gardner Institute, along with the initial group of institutions, will refine, validate, and establish the aspirational standards for colleges and universities to evaluate and improve academic advising. The process draws on NACADA's academic advising audit experience and is enriched by the Gardner Institute's success in guiding institutions toward systemic change and improvement in student success. Formal consultants' reviews and guidance will support the development of a set of evidence-based institutional recommendations for change, as well as provide support for plan implementation.

"Academic advising is a key component of student success, persistence, and degree completion on many campuses," said Charlie Nutt, NACADA executive director. "By examining advising through multiple lenses and implementing evidence-based recommendations, institutions can ensure alignment with priorities for student success."

About this significant collaborative effort, John Gardner, Gardner Institute chair and chief executive officer, noted that "The work we are doing with and for NACADA in 'Excellence in Academic Advising' is a perfect fit for our non-profit organization's mission of supporting efforts to attain excellence in undergraduate education AND will be one of the most important of our undertakings over our eighteen-year history of service to American higher education. This is a win/win for all, especially our students whom I like to think have a 'right' to the highest quality of academic advising."

Drew Koch, Gardner Institute president and chief operating officer added, "We believe the combination of analytics, sage and trusted external guidance, and wise internal institutional knowledge that we are building into the EAA model will yield measurable improvement in institutional outcomes related to academic advising – especially for our nation's most historically underserved and underrepresented students. There are important completion agenda and equity imperative considerations at work here. We are delighted to be part of this historic endeavor."

Beginning in the late fall, NACADA will host a series of free informational webcasts to provide additional information about this groundbreaking project.

NACADA is a global association of professional advisors, counselors, faculty members, and administrators working to enhance the educational development of students in higher education through research, professional development, and leadership. The Gardner Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to partnering with colleges, universities, philanthropic organizations, educators, and other entities to increase institutional responsibility for improving outcomes associated with teaching, learning, retention, and completion.

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