Overview

Open admissions institutions welcome all students, many of whom may not have the skills needed to succeed in college. The challenges these students face are many and advisors are tasked with helping them succeed. What are some successful strategies advisors use to help students acquire needed basic skills? How can advisors help students whose families lack an understanding of the academic demands college places on students? What can be done to assist students who must work full-time as they attend classes? Join the panelists in a discussion of these issues and learn practical ways advisors can help more of these students succeed.

Definitions

Open admissions = all students are admitted to the institution. Open admissions ≠ open enrollment into courses with either prerequisite skills/courses or competitive enrollment programs (e.g., health sciences).

Mandatory placement requires that students follow the placement recommendations provided by the basic skills assessment test to ensure their academic success.

Informed choice placement allows students the option to waive enrollment in the development skills courses suggested by the placement test.

Questions the panel will address:

Q1: What are some successful strategies advisors use to help students acquire needed basic skills necessary for success?

Q2: How can advisors help students whose families lack an understanding of the academic demands college places on students?

Q3: What can be done to assist students who must work full-time as they attend classes?
**Case Studies:** Panelists will discuss the following three scenarios:

**Question 1 scenario:** One week prior to the start of the semester, Gwen, who has not attended school for eight years, decides she wants to enroll at Harker Heights Community College. HHCC is an open admissions institution with no application deadline so Gwen’s application is processed and she is admitted for the upcoming term. Prior to registering for classes, Gwen is required to take the placement exam; she does poorly on all components of the assessment--reading comprehension, sentence structure, arithmetic, and elementary algebra, making her ineligible to take any general studies courses or the core courses in her chosen major. She is now in your office for a test interpretation and late registration. How do you advise Gwen? What can you do to help her be successful as she returns to school?

**Question 2 scenario:** A parent comes to an advising session along with their son/daughter to discuss the student’s developmental placement in English. The parent tells you that s/he received a grade of “B” in high school English so why can’t the student take regular college English now? The parent also questions you on the rumor that you won’t be able to talk with the parent about their son’s/daughter’s progress towards an associates degree. The parent asks you if it is true and if so why? Finally, frustrated, the parent asks what else they should know about this place?

**Question 3 scenario:** Carole recently lost her career position at a local company. She never finished her Associates Degree which she started years ago. She is currently under-employed at a convenience store. She is searching for new employment but most of the job openings require a four-year degree. She needs to finish her degree as soon as possible.

**Pre-Webcast Activity Suggestions**

- Read and reflect upon the three case study scenarios listed above prior to the broadcast. What strategies would you use to address the issues presented in each scenario? Discuss these strategies with your colleagues.
- During the broadcast check to see if panelists mention your strategies and note additional strategies discussed by panelists.

**Post-Webcast Discussion Questions**

- What additional strategies did panelists suggest for each scenario?
- Which of the strategies suggested do you find most intriguing?
- Which of the strategies suggested would be politically impossible on your campus? Which could be possible?
- Which of the strategies suggested would be most beneficial to your students?
- Implementation of which strategies might be easily implemented on your campus?
- Implementation of which strategies might mean more work but could pay big dividends?
- What strategies can advisors on your campus use to help students persist and reach their goals?

**References and Recommended Resources**

- NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources
  - Advising underprepared students [http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingissues/academically-underprepared.htm](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingissues/academically-underprepared.htm)
  - Early alert resources [http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/Links/Early-Alert.htm](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/Links/Early-Alert.htm)
Panelists and Moderator

Tim Kirkner has been employed as a professor/counselor at the Rockville campus of Montgomery College, since 1993. Montgomery College is a two year, three campus college with approximately 25,000 credit students and is located in the DC suburb of Montgomery County Maryland. Tim earned a BA in Psychology and MS in Counselor Education from McDaniel College (formerly Western Maryland College). In this role, he teaches a student development courses, advises and counsels students and explores ways innovate in the academic advising arena. He has held a number of leadership positions during his time at the College, including grievance officer for the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), co-chair of the Advising Steering Group, and advising coordinator for the Counseling department. He has served in leadership positions for several professional associations, including Two Year Colleges Commission Chair for the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and President of the Middle Atlantic Career Counseling Association (MACCA). Tim continues to be active in these organizations as MACCA Maryland Member-at-Large, member of the Research and Technology Committees for NACADA. He is also a regular presenter at both national and regional NACADA conferences.

Kathy Stockwell recently retired from Fox Valley Technical College. During her 29 years at FVTC, she served in many capacities: faculty member, faculty advisor, department chair, Associate Dean, manager of a regional learning center, and as Faculty Advising Coordinator. She was involved with the original development of FVTC’s faculty advising guidelines and continues her work with faculty teams on the use of technology to enhance their advising efforts. In addition, she helped design and continually updates the 12-module faculty advising training program used at her institution. She has also served as a co-coordinator for FVTC’s Peer Advising Connection and is a member of the PAC advisory committee. All three of these FVTC programs have been nationally recognized by NACADA. Stockwell has been actively involved in NACADA since 1999. She has been recognized as an Outstanding Faculty Advisor; has given numerous presentations at state, regional, and national advising conferences; has served on the Faculty Advising Task Force; as chair of the Faculty Advising Commission; as the appointed CIG Division representative on the Council; as a member of the Board of Directors; and as vice president of the Association. Stockwell has served on the Annual Conference Advisory Board; on the New Leader Orientation Task Force; as a consultant for the NACADA Consultants and Speakers Service; as a mentor for the Emerging Leaders program; and as co-author of A Faculty Guide to Academic Advising pocket guide. She is also a Summer Institute Faculty member, is the chair of the International Sustainability Task Force, and is the immediate past president of NACADA.

Jennifer Woltjen works as a Retention Specialist at Broome Community College (BCC). BCC, part of the State University of New York, enrolls approximately 6,000 commuter students in a suburban setting. The student population is approximately 70% traditional and 30% non-traditional. At BCC, Woltjen is co-chair of the campus-wide Academic Advising Committee. As Retention Specialist, she is responsible for coordinating college-wide retention programming, including the development of an academic Early Alert System. Woltjen, a member of NACADA since 2002, serves on the Two-Year College Commission Steering Committee and has presented at both regional and national NACADA conferences on transition programs for adult learners and enrollment practices at community colleges. In 2011, she was awarded the Wes Habley Summer Institute Scholarship. Woltjen has a Master of Science in Education and is currently enrolled in the M.S. Degree in Academic Advising at Kansas State University.

Success begets success: Student success courses catching on at community colleges via Inside HigherEd

Advancing at Open Admissions Community Colleges
Marsha Miller, NACADA’s Assistant Director for Resources & Services, worked at Cloud County Community College, a 3000 student college in Kansas, for fourteen years in various capacities including teaching developmental skills courses and directing student services at a branch campus located near an army post. Upon completion of her duties as Chair of the faculty committee charged with restructuring Cloud’s advising and academic support services, Marsha was appointed as the first director of Cloud’s Advising Center that received the NACADA Outstanding Advising Program award and the Noel-Levitz citation for Excellence in Student Retention. Marsha directs the NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources and is an editor for the 2013 NACADA/Jossey-Bass advising approaches book. She is one of two NACADA representatives to the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) Board and answers member questions regarding advising related concerns.
Critical Issues in Advising at Open Admissions Community Colleges

A Panel Discussion

Introductions

Advising strategies that help students succeed

Definitions

Open admissions = all students are admitted to the college

Open admission ≠ open enrollment
- prerequisite skills/courses are honored
- students must be fully admitted into competitive enrollment programs
What are some successful strategies advisors use to help students acquire needed basic skills?

Scenario

Gwen, who has not attended school for eight years, wants to enroll. She does poorly on all basic skills assessments and comes to late registration for test interpretation and enrollment.

Late Registration Issues

Pathways to Success: Integrating learning with life and work to increase national college completion - Congressional report

Definitions:
• Mandatory placement
• Informed choice placement
Setting the Stage for Placement Testing

- Placement Levels
- High School Testing
- Test Preparation
- Ability to Benefit

*Multiyear Study of Community College Practices Asks: What Helps Students Graduate?* (Chronicle article)

Assessment Skills and Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search Courses</th>
<th>Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Click on the "Course Outcomes" link below the course description to access the outcomes. Then enter an # and please check with the department for specific course outcomes.

Montgomery College

Montgomery County, Maryland

Informed Choice Placement Strategies

Review placement test scores with students and

- Compare student scores to program requirements
- Identify courses that pair well with basic skills courses
- Build upon student strengths
- Offer orientation for late enrollees
- Enroll in a Student Success course
- Utilize an early alert system
Informed Choice Placement Strategies

Placement test review strategies (cont...)
• Intrusive/proactive advising
• Learning communities
• Utilize academic support system
• Student self-efficacy

How can advisors help students whose families lack an understanding of the academic demands college places on students?

Scenario
Parent accompanies student to enrollment session to discuss the developmental English placement and questions privacy of student records.
Strategies

- Orientation options
- Parent/family engagement resources
- Time management
- FERPA
- Technology

What can be done to assist students who must work full-time as they attend classes?

Scenario

Carole loses her career position and returns to complete her degree as quickly as possible
Adult Learner Advising Strategies

• Help student understand what is ahead
• Degree plan
• Time management
• Realistic schedule building
• Online classes (if appropriate)
• Older Wiser Learners (OWLs)

Adult Learner Advising Strategies

• Peer mentors
• Important to stay connected on campus
• Decision making research
• Career advising/counseling

Critical Issues in Advising at Open Admissions Community Colleges

A Panel Discussion