Fostering a Sense of Belonging through Advising

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Description of Session

Knights of the Roundtable, the Lost Boys of Neverland, and Han Solo: Best practices for advising cohorts, mixed-cohorts, singletons, and everyone in-between.

This presentation will identify methods and strategies for advising cohorts, students switching in and out of cohorts, and non-cohort students. The presentation will offer suggestions for integrating advising into teaching (and vis versa) to create a more seamless 'full service' model for ALL types of students. Through the use of such best practices, advisors can help support and retain their advisees, while also endowing their students with an authentic sense of belonging throughout their academic careers at FSU.

Fine, but what are we actually going to do for an hour…

1. We're going **to review** why advising is so important
2. We're going **to think about**, **discuss**, and **reflect on** our own advising experiences
3. We're going **to consider** our advisees
4. We're going **to share** suggestions for integrating advising into teaching (and teaching into advising) to make advising more seamless and 'full service'
5. We're going **to identify and integrate** strategies to help us all better support and retain our advisees, and increase their sense of belonging

Academic Advising...
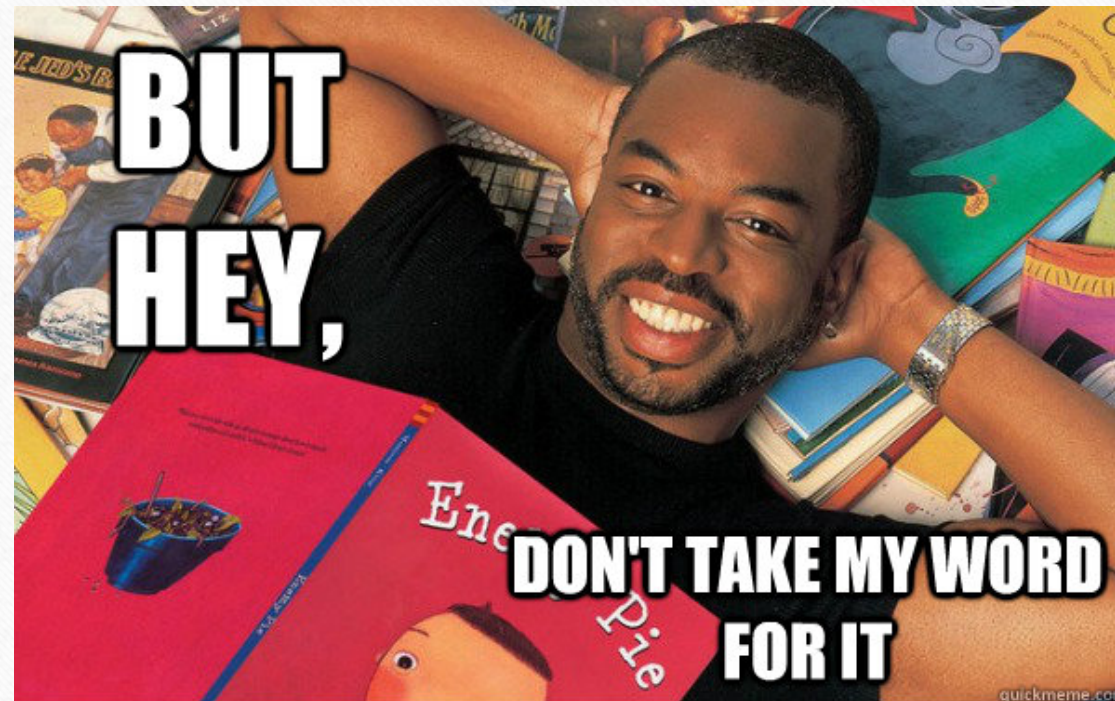## and why it's supes important

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Students' connectedness with faculty, staff and administrators beyond the classroom also impacts their commitment to learning, sense of belonging and interdependence, and ability to overcome obstacles, factors which ultimately determine their satisfaction with -- and success in -- higher education settings.

(Huston, 2013. p. 5)

Academic Advising…
and why it's supes important

Research shows that interaction between students and faculty increases student involvement on campus and makes students more likely to remain in school. These advantages of the academic adviser system are particularly valuable for the increasingly diverse student populations attending U.S. universities. Interested and informed advisers work with all students, not only to help them stay in school but also to help them become contributing members of the college or university community. (Frost, 2003, p. 4)
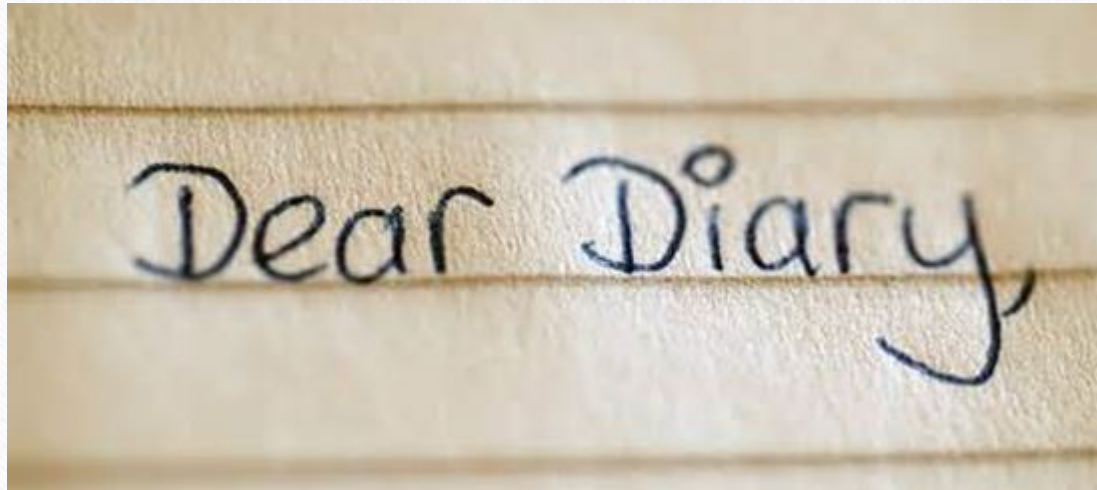
Academic Advising…
and why it's supes important

In their piece entitled, "Knowing Me, Knowing You: Building Strengths Awareness, Belonging, and Persistence in Higher Education," Soria and Stubblefield (2015) discuss the dual goals of advisors to a) create a community by developing connections and b) foster a sense of belonging amongst students.

Academic Advising…
Our OWN Experiences

Let's take a moment to think about and reflect on our OWN advising experiences. Alright, everyone get our your ADVISING DIARIES…

What do you mean you don't keep an ADVISING DIARY?!

Academic Advising...
Our OWN Experiences

Academic Advising…
Our OWN Experiences

Instead of sharing our advising diaries (FULL DISCLOSURE – I KNOW some of you have them…), let's play a game!

Academic Advising…
Our OWN Experiences

Find the person with the same piece of CANDY as you (if you have an allergy and/or cannot eat the candy you were given, please see Lyndsey for an alternative treat)!

Academic Advising…
Our OWN Experiences

Consider the following questions with your candy partner:

1. What is the most important *action* you take during academic advising sessions?

2. How do we miss the mark on creating a community of learners?

3. What is a regret you have regarding advising?

Academic Advising...
Our OWN Experiences

What are some key TAKEAWAYS from OUR OWN ADVISING EXPERIENCE?

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

At the start of our presentation, we offered three conceptual models for understanding your advising group…

1. Knights of the Roundtable

2. Lost Boys of Neverland

3. Han Solo

. . . and if you thought we would not subject you to visuals of this highly-revered academic model, you were wrong (seriously, seriously wrong).

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

While you consider your own advising group, let us tell you just a bit about the groups WE are advising and how our advising load has shifted over time…

"Well, if you're interested in both Psychology and Law, we do offer a dual major. It's our 'Freudian Slip & Fall' program."

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

So, you've heard about the groups WE are advising and how our advising load has shifted over time…

What about you? Just whom are you advising, anyway?

1. Knights of the Roundtable

2. Lost Boys of Neverland

3. Han Solo

Just whom are you advising, anyway?

How does your work as an advisor change with different types of advisees?

1. **Knights of the Roundtable**
2. **Lost Boys of Neverland**
3. **Han Solo**

Integrating advising into teaching…
and vis versa

As I mentioned before, over the past few years, I have found myself teaching the knights of the round table. What that means for me is – I teach nearly everyone I advise – and vis-ee vers-ee.

Integrating advising into teaching… and vis versa

Frost (2003) explores the crossover between teaching and advising: "Academic advising, in developing these valuable relationships between teachers and students, becomes an important form of teaching." (p. 4)

Integrating advising into teaching…
and vis versa

What does this actually look like?

What does this actually mean?

I integrate advising goals and teaching goals to help students make progress on both fronts. We spend class time reviewing components of Stage Reviews. The students use class time to pick a day/time to register to take MTELs.

While everyone spends advising time discussing teaching – I spend teaching time discussing advising.
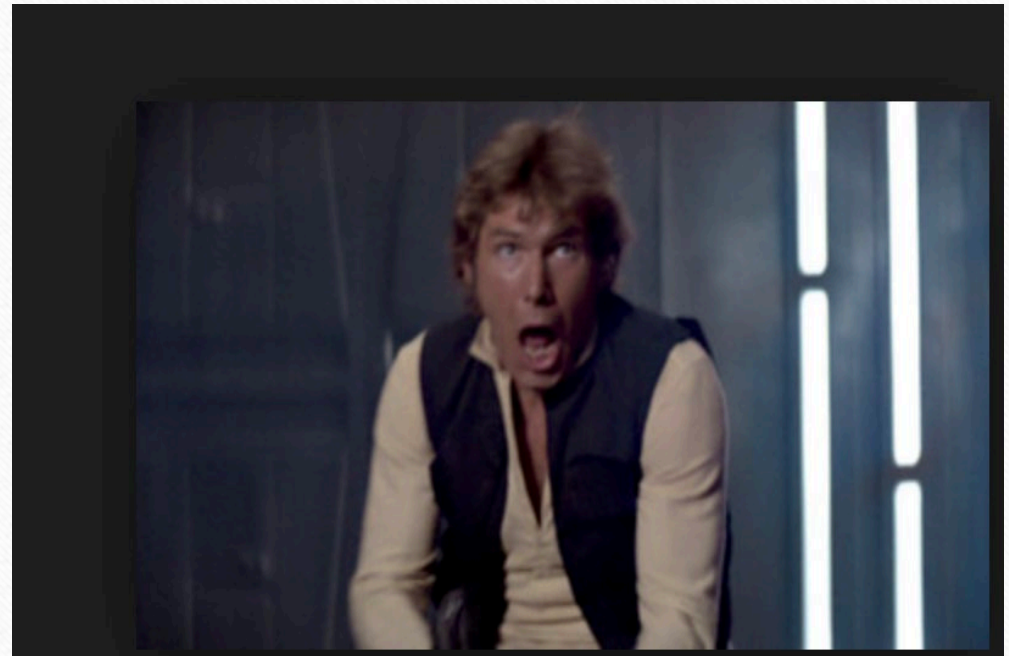
Integrating advising into teaching… and vis versa

What does this actually look like?

What does this actually mean?

Katy is right! We should give students the opportunity to discuss things outside of advising sessions.

I schedule a "check-in" before the start of each class. This helps students discuss their concerns, achievements, and goals with their peers.

Integrating advising into teaching… and vis versa

Frost (2003) goes so far as to advocate that academic advising can become "an innovative form of teaching that helps students become involved in their own choices" (p. 2). Why, then, can teaching not (occasionally) morph into a form of academic advising?

Integrating advising into teaching... and vis versa

Integrating the two can help instill within students "a sense of commitment to their future plans and responsibility for their decisions" (Frost, 2003, p. 2).

CREATE
DREAM
DISCOVER
DECLARE

NAVIGATE
ORIENT
DIRECT
DEVELOP

GRADUATE
REFLECT
PROJECT
CONNECT

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

Now, that is a ~~tall~~, ~~grande~~, VENTI order…

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

How do we DO IT?

- Academic Self Concept

- Sense of Belonging

- Advisor Support

- Furthermore, "research consistently shows that constructive advisor relationships positively affect important student outcomes, including sense of belonging and academic self-concept" (Curtin, Stewart, & Ostrove, 2013, p. 112).
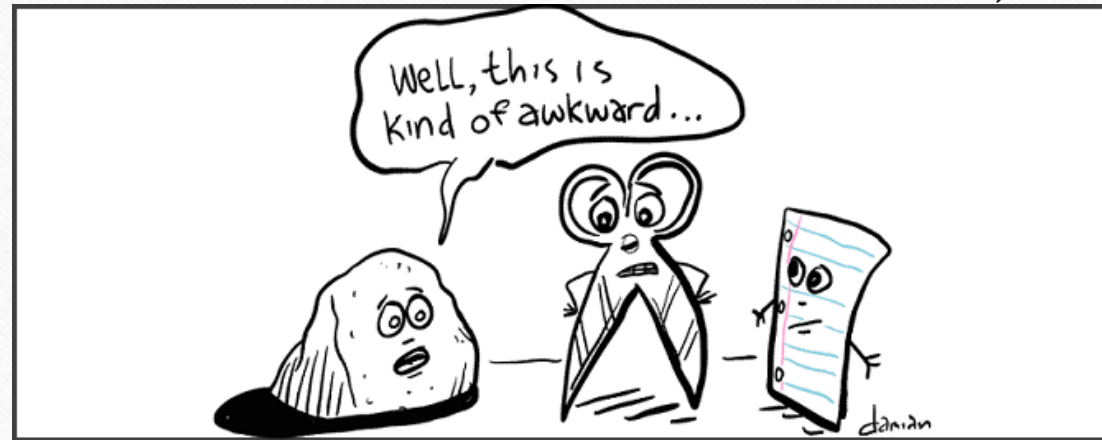
Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

How do we help our advisees FEEL LIKE THEY BELONG?

- Making Connections
- Success with acknowledgement
- Sense of being valued

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

(You're right, Lyndsey – we haven't made anyone feel uncomfortable in a long time. YES! It's time for more COLLABORATIVE work!)

Turn to the person on your right and discuss what you believe a *strength based approach* is and how you can identify students' strengths.

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

The benefits of focusing on advisees' STRENGTHS…

Knowing my strengths…

"helped me contribute positively to the group environment during the semester"

"allowed me to understand my particular role as an undergraduate in my community"

"helped me understanding myself as an individual"

helped to create a "community where others can relate their experiences, ambitions, and academic goals. It not only provides us with a greater awareness of ourselves but it also provides us with a more comfortable means of networking and reflection"

(Soria & Stubblefield, 2015, p. 365)

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

As the previous slide made clear, Soria and Stubblefield (2015), believe that identifying students' strengths should be the advisor's focus.

Further, they argue that using a *Strengths-based approach* with students can lead to "confident, efficacious, lifelong learners whose work is infused with a sense of purpose" (Lopez & Louis, 2009, p. 2).

Support and retain our advisees - - *and* impart a sense of belonging

- Building Self Confidence

In Closing…

Through open-ended questions and discussions, academic advisers develop a valuable relationship with undergraduate students, helping them to become more responsible members of college or university communities and to develop a lasting sense of personal responsibility.

(Frost, 2003, p. 4)

In Closing…

Questions?

Thoughts?

Feedback?

Critique?

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(cause, again, I could not help it…)