The State of Technology Use in Academic Advising and Counseling

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Session Overview

- Why academic advising is important
- How technology can help academic advisors
- Opinions of different stakeholders
- The implications of using more technology
- What technologies are available
- Challenges in using technology
- How to overcome these challenges
Why is academic advising and counseling important?

Like I need to convince you...
Benefits of Academic Advising

- Increases institutional commitment
- Increases degree commitment and academic integrity
- Reduces attrition rates
- Correlates with higher student satisfaction
- Facilitates access to other college resources
What technology can do to help?

Wouldn’t you like to know
Benefits of Technology in Advisement

- Increases accuracy of advisement
- Facilitates contact with more students
- Clarifies more complex degrees
- Provides convenient communication methods
- Frees up advisor's time
What professionals think

... You tell me
Advisors Perceptions

- Most advisors are comfortable using tech
- Technology is well integrated into administrative tasks
- When trained in tech, advisors more likely to use it
- Many are less inclined to use it for student centered services
What students think

I’m still trying to figure this one out
Student Perceptions

- Like having advisors available when they are
- Like being able to connect in different forms
- Appreciate the convenience, especially those with busy lives
- Have some preference for face-to-face over computer-mediated communication
What major organizations say

Those people who fill your inboxes
NACADA

Offer a minimum set of core services which assist distance learners in identifying and achieving their education goals

Employ a myriad of technologies in the delivery of distance education and related services

Commit sufficient technical and financial resources on a continuing basis in the delivery of services to distance learners

Provide appropriate student support services for distance learners as they would for students on campus
NASPA/ACPA

Remain current on student and educator adoption patterns of new technologies and familiarize oneself with the purpose and functionality of those technologies
Counselors understand that the profession of counseling may no longer be limited to in-person, face-to-face interactions. Counselors actively attempt to understand the evolving nature of the profession with regard to distance counseling, technology, and social media and how such resources may be used to better serve their clients.
Case Study - Britto & Rush (2013)

Failure rates in online education programs are higher in distance education programs.

Lone Star College launched Online Student Services Unit.

- **Staffing**
  - Hired specific manager
  - Dedicated online advisors

- **Targeted populations**
  - Student with early alerts
  - Student requiring online advising
  - First time - full time fully online students

- **Services Provided**
  - Online readiness assessment
  - Online orientation
  - Online tutoring
  - Facilitation of technical support

- **Outcomes**
  - Offered at least comparable support to online students
  - Hired additional staff to meet the needs of these students
  - Provided support outside of normal business hours
  - Increased opportunities for traditional students to access advising
Where do we go from here

... Session 2?
See what technology exists -- Try some new ones

- Student Information Systems
- Learning Management Systems
- Early Warning Systems / At-Risk Management
- Degree Audits
- Appointment / Line Management
- Screensharing / Videoconferencing
- Information Sharing Tools
- Social Media / Website
Please Text ‘Davidbyrnes934’ to 22333
Which student information systems do you use?

- leSoft
- Banner
- Jenzabar
- Access
- Other

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Student Information Systems

- Peoplesoft
- Banner
- Jenzabar
- Access
Learning Management Systems

- Blackboard
- Moodle
- Brightspace by Desire 2Learn
- Canvas by Instructure
- Google Docs
Early Warning Systems / At-risk Management

- Student Success Collaborative by EAB
- Starfish Retention Solutions
- Maxient
- Excel spreadsheets or Macros
- Website Referral
- Google Forms
Does your department utilize an Early Warning/At Risk Management system?
Which Degree Audit Software do you primarily use?

- DegreeWorks
- uAchieve
- Advisor by conclusive systems
- DARS
- Home Grown Platform
- Other

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Degree Audits

- DegreeWorks
- uAchieve
- Advisor by Conclusive Systems
- DARS
- Home grown platforms
- Google Sheets
- Some of these platforms have transfer capabilities
Does your department use an appointment or line management technology that students can access?
Appointment / Line management systems

- WC Online
- Appointment Plus
- Starfish
- Qminder
- NEMO-Q
Does your school allow students to meet with an advisor remotely?

- Complete advising with video or screen sharing
- Yes, but only through phone or text-based chat
- Yes, but only to receive general information
- No, student must meet with advisors in person

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Screensharing / Videoconferencing

- Adobe Connect
- Go to Meeting
- Skype
- Join.me
- Screen Leap
- Uber Conference
Sharing Information with Colleagues

- Website
- ApplicationXender
- Shared folders
- Slack
- Trillian
- Wikis
- Google docs
How does your department send out mass emails to students?

Through an email service (Mailchimp, Constant Contact, etc.)

Through a mail merge

We don't send out mass emails

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Sharing Information with Students - Email

Website don’t always work

- Constant Contact
- MailChimp
- Mad mimi
- Mail Merge
Does your department contact students via text message?

Yes

No

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Sharing Information with Students - Text

- Alert systems
- RAVE
- AMG Alerts
- Trumpia
Do you feel comfortable interacting with students on social media?

Yes, it's very convenient
Yes, but only for advising questions
No, not my style
No, I don't think it's appropriate
Social Media

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
Challenges and Ethical Concerns

- FERPA issues
- Financial constraints
- Lacking experts
- Training staff
- Reaching distance education students
Overcoming those challenges

- Create code for students to use when meeting remotely
- Received permission from the Information Technology or a department head before using a new technology
- Hire students from technology department to help
- Have adept members of the department regularly train struggling colleagues
- Dedicate services to only distance students - cultural shift


NACADA. (2010). NACADA standards for advising distance learners. Retrieved from:
https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Portals/0/Commissions/C23/Documents/DistanceStandards.pdf


References


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Questions?