Over the past two centuries, academic advising has emerged as a defined and increasingly important component of higher education. Attention to its purposes, guiding principles, and outcomes has been increasing, and as the field matures, its practitioners have begun to view it as a profession. In line with this movement, it is important that practitioners have a working understanding of the history of academic advising and the ability to see how that history affects not only their daily work with students, but advising’s place within the academy. Further, those who wish to affect change need an understanding of the structures and roles that serve as obstacles and opportunities to innovation.

**Structuration theory**

- Social structures constrain and enable action
- Behaviors create and reproduce social structures (Giddens, 1984)

**Historical themes**

1. Changing social and professional roles of higher education for individuals
   a. Expansion of curriculum and student choice
   b. Increasing diversity in curricula, student backgrounds, purposes for seeking higher education
2. Increasing specialization of faculty around disciplines and increasing specialization in advising
3. Increasing attention to research, philosophy, theory, and assessment of advising

**Historical periods in the history of academic advising**

Prior to 1870, Advising undefined
- Elite education and socialization
- Discipline and manliness
- Student-faculty relationships
- Education as a public good
- Although a fleeting ideal
- Expansion of colleges and college-going population
- Increasing emphasis on “practical” learning

1870-1970, Advising defined, but (mostly) unexamined
- Need for advising recognized
- Growth of Educational Psychology
- Variation in perception among those who advise
- Importance of keeping records, following rules, and helping students navigate the institution
1970-2003, Advising defined AND examined
  ➢ Growing numbers of those who predominately advise
  ➢ Much wider diversity of students
  ➢ Increasing costs, complicated job market for graduates
  ➢ NACADA founded; growing focus on professional development and advising literature

2003-Present, Clarifying the role and purposes of advising
  ➢ Varying definitions and structures of advising
  ➢ Comparisons of advising to other fields

Works cited and further reading


