Graduate Student Advising: Strategies for Degree Progression

2015 NACADA Annual Conference, Las Vegas- Session 153
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The purpose of the program is to provide an opportunity for advisors working with graduate students to discuss several broad-based advising issues and best practices about degree progression strategies based on the literature and professional experiences. Graduate program faculty and staff advisors can feel left out of the academic advising conversation; some advising theories and approaches work across the wide range of student concerns, while others are designed specifically for undergraduate students.

Enrollment in graduate degree programs continues to grow, sustaining the need for faculty and professional staff advisors to effectively advise graduate students. The Council of Graduate Schools reported a small but sustained increase in total graduate student enrollment from 2003 to 2013 (Allum, 2014).

Three major issues graduate program advisors manage in the context of advising post-baccalaureate students are

- professional socialization,
- degree progression, and
- work/life balance.

Research about graduate student advisors indicates students have clarity about desirable and undesirable advisor characteristics. Students identified characteristics of outstanding graduate advisors in Bloom, Cuevas, Hall, and Evans (2007). In addition, research indicated that advisor behavior influences student satisfaction (Zhao, Golde, and McCormick, 2007). While much of the recent research has explored student perceptions about graduate advisors, inquiry about factors influencing degree completion is lacking. This is a great opportunity for future research!

Contact us with questions or to share your strategies:

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References


Council of Graduate Schools. www.cgsnet.org (excellent resource with publications available on topics related to graduate education, attrition, completion, benchmarking, etc.)


