1. **Advising Student Veterans:**
   Theory and Practices
   2016 National Academic Advising Association Conference

2. **Overview**
   - “Why should I care?”
   - “Who’s our population?”
   - Military/Veteran Education Programs
   - “What is Academic Advising?”
   - Theories and Approaches of Advising
   - Models for Advising Student Veterans
   - Implications for Advising Practice

3. **Why Should I Care?**
   - 1,016,664 individuals used some VA educational benefit during FY-2015, resulting in $12.3 billion in benefits payouts to individuals and educational institutions
   - Veterans Administration (VA) is making a concerted effort to research and determine best practices for guiding student veterans from service through graduation
     - Million Records Project (Student Veterans of America)
       - 51% of veterans sampled were able to earn a post-secondary degree or certificate
       - Almost 90% of the sampled veterans earned associate degrees or higher, with many going on to progressively higher levels of education (Cate, 2014)

4. **Who’s Our Population?**
   - Service Member: an individual who is part of one of the five armed services or the two non-military services (USPHS or NOAA Commissioned Corps)
   - Veteran: an individual who has been discharged or released from the military under other than dishonorable conditions
   - Retiree: an individual who has retired (20+ years) or been retired (medical, etc.) from the military
     - Not all veterans are retirees, but all retirees are veterans!
   - Dependent: an immediate family member of a service member, veteran, or retiree
     - Dependent Spouse—husband or wife
     - Dependent Child

5. **Military Education Programs:**
   Tuition Assistance (TA)

6. **Military Education Programs**
   - Spouse Benefits
     - My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) Scholarship
       - Workforce development program that provides up to $4,000 of tuition assistance to eligible military spouses.
Open to spouses married to service members in pay grades E-1 to E-5, W-1 to W-2, and O-1 to O-2
• Helps military spouses pursue licenses, certificates, certifications or associate degrees necessary to gain employment in high demand, high growth, portable career fields and occupations

7 Veterans Education Programs
• Chapter 33 – Post 9/11 GI Bill
  – Provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days.
  – May transfer some or all of entitlement to dependents if sponsor is on active duty
• Chapter 30 – Montgomery GI Bill
  – Available to active duty members who enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces, and paid $100 per month for 12 months.

8 Veterans Education Programs
• Chapter 31 – Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
  – For veterans with a disability rating greater than 20%
  – Assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs
  – Provides comprehensive rehabilitation evaluation to determine abilities, skills and interests
  – Offers assistance with post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical or business school

• Chapter 1606 – Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve
  – Provides education and training benefits to eligible members of the Selected Reserve, including the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, and the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard

9 Veterans Education Programs
• Chapter 1607 - Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
  – Ended effective Nov. 25, 2015
  – Some eligibility through November 25, 2019

• Chapter 35 –Dependents Educational Assistance Program
  – Awarded to dependents of:
    • A veteran who died or is permanently and totally disabled as the result of a service connected disability. The disability must a rise out of active service in the Armed Forces
    • A veteran who died from any cause while such permanent and total service-connected disability was in existence
    • A service member missing in action or captured in line of duty by a hostile force
    • A service member forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power
• A service member who is hospitalized or receiving outpatient treatment for a service
cconnected permanent and total disability and is likely to be discharged for that disability.

10 □ Education Benefits

11 □ THEORIES IN ACADEMIC ADVISING
Advising Student Veterans: Theory and Practices

12 □ “What is Academic Advising?”
• Involves engaging students to think critically about their academic choices and make effective
plans for their education (Schulenberg & Lindhorst, 2008)
• “...depends on valid explanations of complex student behaviors and institutional conditions to
assist college students in making and executing educational and life plans.” (Creamer, 2000)
• An interdisciplinary endeavor created from:
  – Student development theory
  – Cognitive development theory
  – Psychosocial theory
  – Career development theory
  – Decision making theories
  – Adult development theory
  – ...and many others

13 □ Psychosocial Theory and Academic Advising:
Chickering’s Seven Vectors
• Arthur Chickering- Education and Identity (1972)
  – described the use of psychosocial theories in education as “a series of developmental tasks or
  stages...” that examine the human experience of education through the lenses of psychology
  and sociology (Chickering, 1993)

14 □ The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
1 • Vector #1: Developing Competence
  – Focus on developing
    • Intellectual competence
    • Physical competence
    • Interpersonal competence
  – Student veterans generally must work to redevelop interpersonal competence as members of
    a new “team”

15 □ The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #2: Managing Emotion
  – Focus on developing
    • Flexible control and appropriate expression
    • Increased awareness and acceptance of emotions
    • Ability to integrate feelings with responsible action
– Goals for student veterans
  • Increase awareness of emotions
  • Provide opportunities to share their stories
  • Accept their emotions as normal reactions

16 The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #3: Moving through Autonomy toward Interdependence
  – Focus on developing
    • Freedom from continual need for reassurance
    • Instrumental independence
    • Recognition/acceptance of importance of interdependence
  – Goals for student veterans:
    • Help fill gaps in the student veteran's sense of interdependence

17 The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #4: Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships
  – Focus on developing
    • Tolerance and appreciation of differences
    • Capacity for intimacy
  – Goals for student veterans:
    • Help redefine their sphere of influence as larger than just those who they shared the uniform with
    • Help adapt to their new place among those who their service benefited despite the views that they hold of them or are held by them.

18 The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #5: Establishing Identity
  – Focus on developing
    • Comfort with body and appearance
    • Comfort with gender and sexual orientation
    • Comfort with self in a social, historical and cultural context
    • Self-acceptance and self-esteem
    • Clarification about who the individual is, as well as what is important to them
  – Goals for student veterans:
    • Give permission to develop individuality
    • Recognize any unhealthy actions that could adversely affect their academic performance
    • Help see and accept the validation from their professors and classmates as healthy
    • Channel that validation into the development of their self-acceptance as civilians.

19 The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #6: Developing Purpose
  – Focus on developing:
    • Ability to be intentional about direction of life and pursuits
    • Assessing/clarifying goals
• Making plans
• Persisting despite obstacles
  – Goals for student veterans:
    • Properly understand and evaluate military experience
    • Keep focus on their long-term goals rather than the short-term inconveniences of the educational process

20 □ The Seven Vectors and Student Veterans
• Vector #7: Developing Integrity
  – Focus on:
    • Humanizing values
    • Personalizing values
    • Developing congruence
  – Goals for student veterans
    • Transitioning military values of integrity to academia

21 □ Career Development Theory and Academic Advising: Holland’s Theory
• Created by sociologist John Holland in 1985
• Seeks to explain why individuals choose vocations, relating their profession to an expression of personality (Evans, 2003)
• Consists of six personality types, which correspond with six working environments
• Links the psychology of student personality to the sociology of chosen academic majors

22 □ RIASEC Personality Types and Model Environments
• Realistic: prefers hands-on, technical activities; dislike social activities and educational constraints (engineering, drafting/design)
• Investigative: prefers activities that involve exploration and prediction, dislike activities that involve persuasion and sales (natural/physical sciences, math, health sciences, some social sciences)
• Artistic: prefer activities centered around artistic, literary and musical endeavors; dislike constraints of rules and structure (fine/performing arts, languages and literature, architecture)
• Social: prefer helping and teaching tasks, dislike mechanical and technical work (history, political science, social work, psychology)
• Enterprising: prefer tasks that encourage persuasion and direction (journalism, business administration, marketing, management)
• Conventional: prefer creating/maintaining structured routines; dislike unstructured activities and innovation (accounting, paralegal studies)

23 □ ACADEMIC ADVISING APPROACHES
Advising Student Veterans: Theory and Practices

24 □ “What Kind of Advisor Am I?”
• “I want to not only assist with personal, vocational, and academic decisions, but help my students grow and develop as individuals.”
• “I want to tell my students what they should do, and expect them to follow my recommendations.”
• “I want to help my students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potential.”
25 □ **Appreciative Advising**

"I want to help my students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potential."

- Emerging philosophy that challenges advisors to:
  - "Use positive, active, and attentive listening and questioning strategies to build trust and rapport with students;
  - "Uncover students’ strengths and skills based on their past successes;
  - "Encourage and be inspired by student’ stories and dreams;
  - "Co-construct action plans with students to make their goals a reality;
  - "Support students as they carry out their plans;
  - "Challenge both themselves and their students to do and become even better" (Bloom, 2008)

26 □ **Six Phases of Appreciative Advising**

27 □ **Developmental and Prescriptive Advising**

1 Developmental Advising

"I want to not only assist with personal, vocational, and academic decisions, but help my students grow and develop as individuals."

2 • Concerns itself with
  - Aiding in vocational/educational decisions
  - Facilitating rational processes of
    - Environmental/interpersonal interactions
    - Behavioral awareness
    - Problem-solving
    - Decision making
    - Evaluation skills

3 Prescriptive Advising

"I want to tell my students what they should do, and expect them to follow my recommendations."

4 • Resembles *in loco parentis* relationship
  - Advisor "teaches;" student “learns”
  - Advisor can detach from blame is student does not follow recommendations
  - Student can assign blame to advisor rather than accept responsibility

28 □ **Dimensions of Developmental and Prescriptive Advising**

29 □ **ADVISING PRACTICES**

Advising Student Veterans: Theory and Practices

30 □ **Advising for Educational Success**

31 □ **Promoting Educational “Ladders”**

- Certificates:
  - are the fastest growing form of postsecondary credentials in the U.S.;
– have become a stepping stone to college degrees;
– can outperform two- and four-year degrees;
– provide economic payoff for those with less educational preparation; and
– For students with lower standardized test scores, certificates can provide similar wages as workers with some college experience.

32 “Laddering” from Certificate to Degree
• Students who earn a 2-year credential (degree/certificate) before transferring to a 4-year institution are more likely to complete the bachelor’s degree.

33 Integrating Appreciative, Developmental and Prescriptive Advising for Student Veterans

34 Integrating Approaches for Student Veterans

1 • Phase I: Initial Contact
  – Focus on developing student/advisor relationship
  – Discussion of admissions and academic requirements, as well as degree choices

2 • Phase II: First Semester Advising
  – Only prescriptive phase of the advisor/student relationship
  – Advisor prescribes courses based on previous college experiences, student’s goals, and pre-admissions testing
  – Student should be able to see how interests/strengths align with selected classes, and be able to attempt same alignment independently

35 Integrating Approaches for Student Veterans

1 • Phase III: Mid-Semester Review
  – “How are we doing?”
  – Focus on mutual improvement
  – Prescriptive role of advisor begins to diminish

2 • Phase IV: End of Semester Review/Registration
  – Advisor/student veteran discuss academic performance
  – Determine whether this approach is mutually beneficial
  – Co-creation of academic plan for following semester
  – Student veteran leverages advisor’s institutional knowledge with new skills

36 Implications for Practice
• Advisors should
  – Be prepared to spend extensive time getting to know their student veterans
  – Be able to recognize student veterans who
    • struggle with autonomy
    • have high levels of autonomy
  –
Academic advisors set the tone for a student’s educational experience. In the case of advisors who work primarily with student veterans, it is often our words, plans, and actions that have the greatest impact on whether our populations succeed academically and successfully transition from the military. By creating, testing, and continually improving systems that allow us to prepare our student veterans to navigate the world of academia as independent, autonomous learners, we continue to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation’s warriors.

Coby W. Dillard, BS
Military Undergraduate Advisor
Regent University Advising
cobydil@regent.edu

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