Handing Advisors the Reins: Establishing Campus Advising Communities to Impact Change

University of Cincinnati

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Presenters

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ACADEMIC ADVISOR, CEAS
Inaugural Steering Committee
Advising Diverse Students

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STUDENT SUCCESS COORDINATOR
Inaugural Chair
Cross-College Collaboration

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ASST DIR, ADV TRAINING
Exec board Member and
Support to Community

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ASST DIR ADVISING, CEAS
Inaugural UCAADA VP tasked
with launching ACs
Goals for today’s session

- Share the model and why it worked well on our campus
- Highlight challenges and learnings
- Showcase success and key outcomes
- Explain how ACs empower front-line advisors
- Outline next steps for implementation
Context

**UC**
Public urban research university with R1 designation

Multi-campus university system: Uptown campus, Medical campus, and two regional campuses (Blue Ash and Clermont)

46,000+ students enrolled

**ADVISING**
More than 150 advisors across decentralized units

Centralized support office (administration, technology, and development)
Advising at UC

Though the core of the UC Advising Community is academic advisors, it is also inclusive of those who provide other academic or career-related support.

via Tara Warden, Asst. Vice Provost

**ACADEMIC ADVISORS - COLLEGE-BASED**
- College academic advisors provide the primary advising support to students. Some college advisors also have a specialized advising role.

**ACADEMIC ADVISORS - SPECIALIZED**
- Pathways Advising
  - Exploratory
  - Pre-professional
  - Transfer/transition
  - Dual enrollment
  - Non-matriculated
- Targeted Program Advising
  - Athletics
  - Honors
  - Natl. Competitive Awards

**RELATED ACADEMIC/CAREER SUPPORT**
- Advising & Academic Services
- Professional Practice & Experiential Learning
- Career Development
- First Year Experience & Learning Communities
- Academic Excellence & Support Services
  - Tutoring
  - Coaching
  - Supplemental Instruction
- Additional student service & student affairs programs
  - One Stop
  - Registrar
  - International
  - Gen One
  - Cincinnati Pride
  - Residence Educ. & Development
### Context

**UC**
- Public urban research university with R1 designation
- Multi-campus university system: Uptown campus, Medical campus, and two regional campuses (Blue Ash and Clermont)
- 46,000+ students enrolled

**ADVISING**
- More than 150 advisors across decentralized units
- Centralized support office (administration, technology, and development)

**UCAADA**
- Well-established (founded 1988)
- 389 members
- 11 serving on Executive Board
- Purpose: information sharing, pro dev, engagement, and advocacy
- Multiple levels of engagement (passive-active)
Formation of Advising Communities

1. Exec Board identified need
2. Formation of Vice President role to oversee ACs
3. Interest surveys to identify initial community themes and leadership interest
4. Initial AC meetings, topic surveys, and identity development
5. Mission, vision, and stakeholder conversations
6. Bylaws development

ACs operate independently
Exec Board identified need
Formation of Vice President role to oversee ACs
Interest surveys to identify initial community themes and leadership interest
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy & Procedure Intends to help all advisors to have a clear and consistent understanding of university and college policies and the procedures used to enforce these.

Our goal is to promote cross-departmental partnerships throughout the university so that, in the future, we can go beyond relating across policies and procedures to create new opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

ADVISING DIVERSE STUDENTS

Advising Diverse Students is a UCAADA Advising Community devoted to supporting advisors across campus learn best practices for supporting and working with all types of UC students.

The Mental Health Advising Community works to provide mental health information and advocacy for all members of our UC community to both enhance overall mental wellness and reduce the stigma surrounding the topic of mental health. Our goal is to progress toward an overarching, inclusive culture of care.

CROSS COLLEGE COLLABORATION

MENTAL HEALTH
Initial AC meetings, topic surveys, and identity development
Mission, vision, and stakeholder conversations

AC LEADERSHIP TEAM

AC CHAIRS & STEERING COMMITTEES

UCAADA VP

ASST DIRECTOR, ADVISOR TRAINING & PD
### Prep work survey responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Community Name</th>
<th>How are you communicating with your Advising Community members?</th>
<th>How are you tracking your Advising Community membership?</th>
<th>How often does your Advising Community plan to meet?</th>
<th>How often does your leadership team plan to meet?</th>
<th>How often are you communicating with your Advising Community members?</th>
<th>How often are you sharing responsibilities across your leadership team?</th>
<th>What questions does your Advising Community have about establishing its initial focus/plan?</th>
<th>How has your Advising Community gone about establishing its initial focus/plan?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>Twice a month (until 2 main goals are accomplished)</td>
<td>Monthly potentially</td>
<td>Weekly or more</td>
<td>Space, scheduling, notes, speaking</td>
<td>What is our charge/goal? What are our expectations?</td>
<td>Gained feedback of asks, goals, dreams of the group as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and Procedure</td>
<td>Email and calendar invites so far.</td>
<td>I have an email contact list of those who attended the first meeting or emailed with interest.</td>
<td>1x/month</td>
<td>1x/month prior to community meeting</td>
<td>Followed up first meeting with an invite and notes attached from original meeting</td>
<td>TBO or projects developed</td>
<td>Just curious to hear what other communities are experiencing!</td>
<td>First meeting was going around talking about why people were interested in community and what they hoped to see out of the community. It was quickly focused on a few common topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising Diverse Populations</td>
<td>Primarily email, monthly meeting</td>
<td>Based off the initial list from the UCAAD, responses which we have saved to OneNote. Also using emails, surveys, monthly meetings</td>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
<td>Email approx. 2x/month</td>
<td>During our meetings, we divide topics equally based on capacity and interest.</td>
<td>Vision and what does UCAAD hope to achieve through these advising communities? Do the creators of the initial community options have a definition of diverse populations? What is the expected/suggested term length for chair and steering committee? Can we have a folder in the UCAAD Teams to easily disseminate and share materials?</td>
<td>Through an initial needs analysis survey sent out to members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-College Collaboration</td>
<td>Teams and meeting invites</td>
<td>The document we shared with us as to who was interested and a sign-in sheet at the first meeting; everyone from those two lists has been added to a Teams channel within UCAAD</td>
<td>Once per month (second Tuesday of the month)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication, etc.)
Advising Communities are groups of UCAADA members who want to do more to impact sustainable change at UC. Advising Communities cultivate supportive environments for changemakers to solve problems for Advisors and their students. Advising Communities promote community building and university-wide collaboration by creating a culture of care and advocacy.
Bylaws development
What we leveraged

- Support from advising administration
- Well-established university advising community (UCAADA)
- Culture of advisor professional development
- Access to shared technology (Microsoft 365)
New Member interested in The Mental Health UCAADA Community

Tomlinson, Lacey (bradley)
To: Graham, Elle (grahameo); Fishburn, Brittany (fishbubs); Alberto, Lora (drewill)

You forwarded this message on 8/25/2021 11:15 AM.
This message was sent with Low importance.

O’Toole, Jack (otoolejk)
Academic Advisor
EM Advising & Academic Services
otoolejk@ucmail.uc.edu
Group identity development themes

RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION & ADVOCACY
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Policy and Procedure &
Cross College Collaboration

Began as two separate communities but found our members had similar goals/interests

Identified initial project and saw integration with both communities
EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

Advising Diverse Students & Mental Health

Best practices in advising and at UC specifically by bringing in campus experts and collaborating with students

Adapting to needs of community by adjusting meeting format based on feedback

Create opportunities for relationship-building and establishing culture of trust and learning
Individual AC outcomes

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE & CROSS COLLEGE COLLAB**
Developed a university-wide Advising Resource Guide detailing college-specific policies and processes.

Hosted recurring coffee chats in addition to regular meetings. Created a document outlining best practices for advising various student populations.

**MENTAL HEALTH**
Strengthened culture of mental health, compiled advisor resource list, collaborated with student government to push for hiring embedded counselors, and advocated for syllabus statement.

**ADVISING DIVERSE STUDENTS**
First-ever homegrown AC approved by UCAADA membership in Feb 2021.

**APPRECIATIVE ADVISING**
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES & CROSS COLLEGE COLLAB**

Developed a university-wide Advising Resource Guide detailing college-specific policies and processes.
Individual AC outcomes

**Syllabus Statement**

**Counseling Services**

Students have access to counseling and mental health care through the University Health Services (UHS), which can provide both psychotherapy and psychiatric services. UC’s Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) provides students access to professional counseling services as well as numerous options for help online, via mobile apps, group sessions, and peer-to-peer programs. CAPS conducts free virtual consultations via the “Let’s Talk” program. Students are encouraged to seek assistance for anxiety, depression, trauma/assault, adjustment to college life, interpersonal/relational difficulty, sexuality, family conflict, grief and loss, disordered eating and body image, alcohol and substance abuse, anger management, identity development and issues related to diversity, concerns associated with sexual orientation and spirituality concerns, as well as any other issues of concern.
Hosted recurring coffee chats in addition to regular meetings. Created a document outlining best practices for advising various student populations.

ADVISING DIVERSE STUDENTS
Individual AC outcomes

First-ever homegrown AC approved by UCAADA membership in Feb 2021.

APPRECIATIVE ADVISING
Wins

▸ Maintained momentum throughout COVID
▸ Provided support and resources for advisors across campus
▸ Created new opportunities for engagement, collaboration, and growth for advisors at UC
▸ Facilitated more cross-university interpersonal interactions and relationship-building
▸ Established a pipeline for new projects, ideas, and areas of interest
▸ Successfully recruited, elected, and transitioned to the second generation of AC leaders
▸ Offered more avenues for advisor professional and leadership development (by advisors for advisors)
▸ Empowered individual advisors to impact change
Challenges and opportunities

**AC leadership team**
Group Agency
Buy-in and Value
Building the ship as we go (bylaws, structure, etc.)
Motivation to continue the work

**Individual ACs**
Low engagement from community
Deciding to pause or continue meetings/projects
How do we meet the needs of our members without feeling like a burden
Integrating new members
Leadership vacancies
ALL ACs
Elected full leadership teams

1 AC LEADER
Became an AC Chair

3 AC LEADERS
Transitioned to UCAADA Executive Board roles
Looking ahead
Goals

Individual ACs

Policy & Procedure
Cross-College Collaboration
Mental Health
Advising Diverse Students
Appreciative Advising
Goals

Individual ACs  UCAADA
Goals

- Individual ACs
- UCAADA
- University
Implementing ACs on your campus

What could you do?
Adapting the timeline for your campus

1. Identify need and how to overcome barriers
2. Identify leader/point person
3. Survey to identify Initial Community Themes and Leadership Interest
4. AC Leadership Teams Meet to develop identities
5. Mission, Vision, and Stakeholder Conversations
6. Develop bylaws or operational guidelines

ACs begin to function and adjust as needed
Now you implement!

Are there projects/things that need to be tackled that seem overwhelming for one person, continue being placed on a back burner?

Where is there organic interest on your campus?

Who are the people on your campus that want to step up but don’t want to be a figurehead?

What easily accessible technology can you leverage? (i.e. How we used MS 365, SharePoint, Flow, etc.)
Barriers

What stands in your way?
You got this!

It only takes a small group of dedicated advisors.
Thanks...

Feel free to contact us with questions!
Credits

Special thanks to Jack Miner, Tara Warden, past and present AC leaders, and UCAADA - we couldn’t have built these communities without you!

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash