Developing an Advising Framework
Balancing Consistency and Autonomy for a Supportive Advising System

University of Minnesota Twin Cities
NACADA 2021
Logistics for Today’s Session

Submit Questions via Chat
Submit questions via the Chat function. Presenters will respond to questions via chat or toward the end of the presentation.

Please Mute/Unmute
Remember to mute your microphones when not speaking.

Access to Session Materials
Find today’s session materials at advisor.umn.edu/resources/framework.

Closed Captioning Available
Transcription and subtitles are enabled: Go to “live transcript” where you can adjust settings, such as font size, hide subtitles, etc.
Land Acknowledgement

Before we begin, we first want to acknowledge that the University of Minnesota Twin Cities is built within the traditional homelands of the Dakota people. It is important to acknowledge the peoples on whose land we live, learn, and work as we seek to improve and strengthen our relations with our tribal nations.

We also acknowledge that words are not enough. We must ensure that our institution provides support, resources, and programs that increase access to all aspects of higher education for our American Indian students, staff, faculty, and community members.
Agenda

1. Opening and Goals
2. Background and Development Process
3. Create the Advising Framework
4. Putting the Advising Framework into Practice
5. Consultation, Socialization, and Implementation
6. Reflection Activity and Q&A
Background & Development Process
Identify the Problem: What *is* advising on our campus?

**Considerations:**

1. Our campus advising structure
2. Advisors’ individuality & autonomy
3. A quality, consistent advising experience for students
4. The history and evolution of advising at our university
5. Anticipated advising needs and trends
Find Your Team

Advising Practices Workgroup

- An organic, evolving process...
- Emerged as a collaboration between the Academic Advising Network and the Office of Undergraduate Education Advising Initiatives Staff.

How about you?

Who on your campus would be invested in the creation of an advising framework? How could you leverage their support?
Frame the Need

Our Framing Questions

1. What is working well with advising? What advising practices make a difference for students?

2. What do we ideally want students to get out of their University of Minnesota-Twin Cities advising experience? (Thinking of advising as a system vs. an individual).

3. What advising practices should be consistent in order to provide quality advising across campus while also respecting advisor individuality and distinct programmatic needs?

How about you?

How would an Advising Framework benefit your campus (or unit)? Answer in Menti!
Formulate a Guiding Methodology
How did the our Advising Practices Workgroup meet its goals?

Step 1: Develop
Step 2: Mapping
Step 3: Collection
Step 4: Identification
Step 5: Create
Step 6: Consult
Step 7: Release & Socialize
How was diversity, equity, and inclusion incorporated into the process?

Our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) guided our entire process and was explicitly addressed by the work group at each step of our methodology.

This integration approach-as opposed to a separate step within the methodology-was an intentional choice because DEI must be foundational to identifying the essential elements needed for a supportive, consistent advising experience at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.
Methodology | Step 1: Develop

Created our charge and sought consultation from key advising partners and stakeholders:

The goal of our workgroup is to create a shared framework and tools that can be used by advisors, supervisors, and advising leaders to understand effective undergraduate advising practices for the U of M Twin Cities with the hope of achieving a supportive and consistent advising experience as well as respecting autonomy and valuing differences across advising programs.

How about you?

Who needs to be kept in the loop at this development stage?
Methodology | Step 2: Mapping

Advisor Feedback * Student Surveys
Existing Data & Resources

- What is working well with advising? What advising practices make a difference for students?
- What do we ideally want students to get out of their U of M TC advising experience? (Thinking of advising as a system vs. an individual).
- How can we improve consistency and quality in advising across campus yet also respect advisor individuality and distinct programmatic needs?

How about you?

What information currently exists about advising on your campus?
Methodology | Step 3: Collection

Asked units to share how the foundational documents informed their work.

- Does your unit have methods for integrating the existing Advising Values and Philosophy into its advising practices? Examples?
- What else would be helpful for you to have in order to integrate these foundational documents into your unit's work?
- Other than these foundational documents, what would be helpful in guiding shared U of M-TC advising practices?

How about you?

What could be benefit of asking advising units how current advising documents inform their work?
Methodology | Step 4: Identification

- Identified effective practices and potential gaps
- Informed development of framework components
- Highlighted need for practice guide and sample tools.
Developing an Advising Framework
University of Minnesota
Twin Cities

Vision:
What are aspirations for advising on our campus? What is the future of advising on our campus?

Mission:
What is the purpose of advising on our campus? Why do we all do what we do each day?

Values:
What is important to advising on our campus?

Learning Outcomes:
What do we want students to learn, do, and feel as a result of advising on our campus? AND what else do want students to learn as a result of advising in our unit?

Goals:
What do we hope to accomplish through advising on our campus? What do we hope to achieve on our campus? AND what else do we hope to accomplish through advising in our unit?

How do we do this in EACH of our units? (e.g., Roles and responsibilities, Training, Expectations, Skills & Methods)

Assessment: How do we gather meaningful evidence to demonstrate our effectiveness and support improvement?

• What are additional considerations for building a framework for our U of M-TC advising campus?

• Can you think of a particular advising challenge, gap, or area for improvement that this framework might help address? If so, how? If not, why not?

• What tools are needed to foster integration of these principles into advising systems, such as supervision & development of advisors?
Step 5: Create the Advising Framework

View full descriptions at advisor.umn.edu/resources/framework
Advising Framework: Snapshot of Six Sections

- **Vision**: What are you the aspirations?
- **Mission**: What is the purpose?
- **Values**: What is important?
- **University Academic Advising Goals**: What are the goals of advising?
- **Academic Advising Student Learning Outcomes**: As a result of participating in academic advising, what do we want students to know, do, and feel?
- **Core Advising Skills and Methods**: How do we execute this framework in our advising practices?
Vision and Mission

**Vision**
Academic advising at the University of Minnesota strives to encourage students' reflection, engagement, and growth within a diverse community of ideas, people, and disciplines. We aspire to be a collaborative, welcoming community that fosters students' resilience and well-being and prepares them for lifelong success.

**Mission**
Academic advising at the University of Minnesota intentionally challenges and supports students to create and achieve their academic, career, and personal development goals.
Advising recognizes and supports the diverse backgrounds, interests, and needs of the University of Minnesota student body by establishing practices and relationships that are culturally relevant and effective at addressing barriers for students and communities facing social, cultural, economic, physical, and attitudinal barriers.

**INCLUSIVE**
Recognize and support the diverse backgrounds, interests, and needs of each student

**RELATIONAL**
Develop advisor-advisee relationships that center on mutual trust and respect

**INFORMED**
Grounded in institutional data, student voices, relevant theory, and research on effective practices

**RESPONSIVE**
Flexible and adaptive to individual identities, urgent situations, and anticipated challenges

**HOLISTIC**
Student-centered, developmental, and learning-focused on the whole student

View full descriptions at advisor.umn.edu/resources/framework
Academic Advising Goals & Student Learning Outcomes

Diversity, equity, and inclusion principles are explicitly interwoven throughout the framework.

View full descriptions at advisor.umn.edu/resources/framework
Core Advising Skills & Methods

View full descriptions at advisor.umn.edu/resources/framework
Putting the Advising Framework into Practice
Integration of the Advising Framework

In order to provide strategies for the broad network of people in the advising system, three sample tools were developed for three main audiences:

- academic advisors
- advising supervisors
- advising leaders

Every member of the advising community was invited and encouraged to use the sample tools to further develop their own methods for putting the framework into practice.
Tool #1:
Conversation Chart Tool for Advisors

How advisors might use the chart:

- Provides ideas and brainstorming options for good questions to ask during an appointment
- Helpful for onboarding and training new advisors
- Provides options for appointment types and/or goals
Tool #2: Coaching Guide for Supervisors

How supervisors might use the guide:

- Provides a questions list to promote reflection and development for employees
- Can use to develop goals with employees
- Supervisors can choose questions to discuss during check-ins with staff

Note: Advisors can also use this tool for self-reflective prompts, conversations with mentors, colleagues, etc.
Tool #3: Advising Leader Tool

This tool features questions advising supervisors and leaders can use during staff meetings, annual retreats, committee meetings, etc.

They promote reflection on advising systems as it relates to the framework.

These conversation starters are designed to be easy-to-access and implement, knowing time can be a barrier.

---

LEADER TOOL

Leader Conversation Guide

With the student experience at its core, the goal of this framework is to promote intentionalality and consistency for students and advisors. We hope the Advising Steering Committee (ASC) and advising units are able to see the framework in their organizations and across campus. To promote this integration, the following lists feature questions advising supervisors and leaders can use during staff meetings, annual retreats, committee meetings, etc. These conversation starters are designed to be easy-to-access and implement, knowing time can be a barrier.

Advising Team Conversation Starters

- What do you value in our own unit’s advising system?
- How do you see our unit in the framework?
- What ideas do you have for how this framework could be put into practice in our work?
- How can we collectively continually use, adjust, and evaluate our work using this framework?
- What tools are needed to foster integration of these framework principles into our advising practices and procedures?
- How have you explained to students that your work goes beyond the transactional? How can we use the framework to explain our work to students?
- How do we articulate the value we bring to students, to academic departments, to student success? How can the framework be used to advocate for our profession and articulate our value?
- Consider how the framework could enhance advising growth, wellbeing, and autonomy. What kind of tools might foster development of these three areas?
- What advisor/advising expectations do we have for our unit specifically? How do we communicate those to students?
- Should we seek student feedback on how they experience the framework in our advising? If so, what are key questions to ask of them?

Specific questions for each section of the framework:

- Vision: Review the vision statement within the framework. In addition to this vision for advising on our campus, what are the aspirations for our team? What is the future of advising for us?
- Mission: Review the mission statement within the framework. In addition to this mission for advising on our campus, what do we believe is the purpose of advising for our students? Why do we all do what we do each day?
- Values: What do we value about advising in our unit? Do we have anything additional to add to the values in the framework?
- Goals: How do you see us achieving the goals outlined in the framework? What else do we hope to accomplish through advising in our unit?
- Learning Outcomes: How do you see students experiencing these outcomes? What else do we want students to learn as a result of advising in our unit?

Please find additional question ideas in the Putting the Framework into Practice: ‘Starting the Conversation’ section.

Note: Further general training on leading teams through decision-making is available on the Leadership & Talent Development website.
Steps 6 & 7
Consultation, Socialization, and Implementation
Communication Strategies

**Mass Communications**
Campus-wide newsletters, academic advising network listservs, etc.

**Targeted Communications**
Messages to advising leaders, specific advising groups, etc.

**Web Presence**
Created a web page specifically for the framework along with the added bonus of training and practice materials

**Meetings**
Socialized the framework with key stakeholder groups: advising supervisors, leaders, academic advising network, etc.
Training & Development Approaches

**Training Event**
Providing an overview on the background and goals of the framework along with the development process.

**Professional Development Event**
This session focused on using the framework to strengthen individual advising practices.

**Advisor Onboarding**
Incorporated into new advisor training checklists and presentations.

**Annual Orientation Training Events**
Additional virtual resources were provided to support advisors in using the frame to refresh and re-orient to the orientation experience.

**Racial Justice Training Program**
Connecting the framework to goals/outcomes of our racial justice training program.
How Did Socialization Go? Learning from Our Experiences

General Appreciation
“It was helpful to see how existing pieces were integrated with newer pieces to create a broad and complete conceptual model. The background of the framework and knowing about the work group was very valuable...The advisor tool is very useful and will be a big help for new advisor training.”

But, This Takes Time
“I feel there will be more success with integration after more time is spent getting all advisors familiar with the framework and then getting buy-in that this is something we all need to work from.”

And, We’re Burnt Out
“What else can be done to support advising leaders in creating work structures that enable advisors to do the work of the framework? ..... Something so big and foundational in 2021 when direct service advisors are just trying to make it through each workday.”
Reflection Activity
Breakout Room Conversations

Introduce yourselves and then discuss these questions:

What is the first step you would take to developing a framework for your campus? For example, who would you approach and what information would you gather?

There will be a pop-up box asking you to join your breakout room; click the blue 'Join' button to enter.
Sharing Ideas & Questions

Would a few groups share ideas or perspectives that came up during your breakout conversations?

Then... time for questions!
Thank you!

Have more questions? Get in touch!

Amanda S. Niskode-Dossett
aniskode@umn.edu

Amy Hackett
hacke079@umn.edu

Tiffany Murphy
kroe0060@umn.edu