The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the US Air Force Academy, the Air Force, or the US Government.
MOLLY’S PERSPECTIVES

- Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Counselor Education and Human Services, University of Dayton
- 10 years Student Development Experience
- Research foci:
  - College sophomores
  - Relationship between environment and learning
- Research at multiple small private, community college, and university settings
JULIE’S PERSPECTIVES

- The United States Air Force Academy
  - Highly selective, ~4,500 cadets
  - Academic, Military, and Athletic Mission
  - Newly created division focused on advising undeclared students and administering the FYE program.

- Colorado College
  - Small (~2000 students), highly selective, liberal arts
  - Faculty-based advising system
  - Supplementary advisor for first-and second-year students

- Doctoral Program
  - George Washington University
  - Dissertation: An Investigation of Self-Authorship, Hope, and Meaning in Life among Second-year College Students
OVERVIEW

• Quick overview of Concept of Advising: Advising is Teaching and Learning
• Explore the body of research findings specific to sophomores student
• Present Schaller’s 2005 psychosocial developmental model
• Outline Academic Advising Outcomes specific to each stage of the model
• Provide practical advising approaches
• Open the conversation to participants for other strategies
Students will:

• craft a coherent educational plan based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values
• use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals
• assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements
• articulate the meaning of higher education and the intent of the institution’s curriculum
• cultivate the intellectual habits that lead to a lifetime of learning
• behave as citizens who engage in the wider world around them
ADVISING IS TEACHING AND LEARNING: THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS....

- As a result of the academic advising experience, what are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that second-year students should achieve or realize?
- What are the advising learning outcomes specific to second-year advisees?
DISCUSSION QUESTION: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

• What unique challenges do second-year students encounter?
  • Academic
  • Intrapersonal (self)
  • Interpersonal (others)
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT CHALLENGES FOR SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS?

- One size doesn’t fit all!
- *Middle Child Syndrome*
- Burnout/ Lack of motivation
- Sick of the same old thing
- Academic dead zone—not yet declared
- Directionless
- Don’t see connections of their coursework
- Questioning relationships
- Homesickness and isolation
- Doubts about their “fit” with the institution
- Searching for a sense of self and identity
WANDERING AND WONDERING: TRAVERSING THE UNEVEN TERRAIN OF THE SECOND COLLEGE YEAR

• Focus group study
• Four stages in three aspects of their lives
• How they view:
  • Themselves
  • Their relationships
  • Their academic experiences and decisions

http://depts.washington.edu/apac/roundtable/3-11-08_schaller_on_second_year_students.pdf
PROPOSED SOPHOMORE YEAR CONTINUA

Academic Integration

Not yet considering major

Deeply Committed to Major

Following others, Withdrawing, Following Stereotypes

Purposeful in College Life

Sense of Self

Unsophisticated in selection of friends/ evaluation of relationships

Making “Friends for Life”

Social Engagement/ Quality Relationships

Schaller, 2011
RANDOM EXPLORATION

• First year of college
• Undirected, lacking reflection
• King and Kitchener’s pre-reflective stage
  • I know only what I have seen, unexamined beliefs
• Marcia Baxter-Magolda: absolute knowing, based upon authority figures, dualistic thinking
• Just tell me what to do, and usually I’ll do it
• Looking for formulas for success

WHY MIGHT A SOPHOMORE BE IN RANDOM EXPLORATION?

• Simply have not had the opportunity to reflect.
• Have not been required or encouraged to reflect.
• Have had external changes (transfer students may be very likely to go backward, to try to simply “enjoy” the experience).
• Have not had the requisite experiences to push or challenge them to be critical.
• Often have not connected with major, with campus, with social setting, etc.
FOCUSED EXPLORATION

- Some students move to this stage during the second semester or over the summer
- 53% of sophomores are transitional knowers
- Questioning: just about everything
  - Lack of direction, but feeling pressured to decide
  - Metaphor of standing on a fence
  - Desire self-exploration of interest, values
  - Looking for guidance

TENTATIVE CHOICE

- View their future and major more clearly, feel a sense of responsibility
- This stage is really important for second-year students
- Design individualized learning plans
- If students examine the options fully, engage thoroughly, and make decisions based upon internal connection, then their choices may be more aligned to their personal values and interests.

COMMITMENT

• Very few sophomores make it to this point by the end of their second year.

• They are comfortable and resolute with their choices, planning for their future, clear about what they want and how to go about getting there.

ADVISING IS TEACHING AND LEARNING: THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS....

• As a result of the academic advising experience, what are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that second-year students should achieve or realize?

• What are the advising learning outcomes specific to second-year advisees?
OUTCOMES AND PROFICIENCIES

• Outcomes or Learning Goals: What you want your advisees to know, feel, or be able to do as a result of the academic advising process

• Proficiencies: specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes your advisees need to accomplish the outcome.
OUTCOMES FOR RANDOM EXPLORATION

- Students will conduct a process of self-assessment and analyze their options in order to bring focus to their choice of a) an academic major, b) future course selection, c) appropriate study strategies, d) healthy social choices.
  - Students will assess their strengths, limitations, interests, passions, personal goals/aspirations, motivations
  - Students will collect information about the variety of options and choices
  - Students will recognize pressures or perceived expectations held for them by others.
  - Students will identify campus resources and academic support services that are available at the college/university.
LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR RANDOM EXPLORATION

• Build opportunities for students to:
  ➢ Gather information about majors and report back with findings.
  ➢ Explore the campus resources/clubs/organizations
  ➢ Actively reflect on their current experiences and choices
  ➢ Engage in assessments: strengths/interests/careers

“There is almost no long-term retention of cognitive concepts without rehearsal”
David Sousa
Author, How the Brain Learns
OUTCOMES FOR FOCUSED EXPLORATION

- Students will combine their heightened awareness of self with their understanding about the variety of options to make thoughtful decisions about a) an academic major, b) future course selection, c) appropriate study strategies, d) healthy social choices.
  - Students will reflect on their previous choices and determine if they are consistent with their current belief system.
  - Students will identify and match fields of study consistent with their interests, strengths, abilities, and goals.
  - Students will utilize campus resources and academic support services to assist them in achieving their academic and personal goals.
  - Student will eliminate options that are inconsistent with their understanding of themselves.

- Students will build practical work experience and civic skills
  - Students will engage in opportunities to work in groups/teams.
  - Students will collect information about campus, community, societal or world needs that match their interests.
LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR FOCUSED EXPLORATION

- Build opportunities for students to:
  - Engage in exploration that builds experience: service-learning, community-based research, internships, etc.
  - Re-assess and discuss decisions along the way
  - Build relationships with mentors
  - Expand their ability to work with others through group work, community engagement, clubs/orgs
OUTCOMES FOR TENTATIVE CHOICE

• Students will take ownership of and defend their choice of a) an academic major, b) future course selection, c) appropriate study strategies, d) healthy social choices.
  • Students will defend their choices as their own internally defined choices rather than externally imposed.
  • Students will explain how their choices match up with their sense of self.
  • Students will exhibit independent, future-oriented thinking.
  • Students will align their behavior with their sense of self.
  • Students will identify areas for future exploration including possible careers, study abroad, etc.
LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR TENTATIVE CHOICE

- Build opportunities for students to:
  - Engage in exploration that builds experience: service-learning, community-based research, internships, cross-cultural experiences, study abroad
  - Interact out of classroom with faculty in the major—research, attend lectures or events
  - Express themselves and defend choices
  - Set and revisit short and long term goals
  - Mentor students—FYE, residence halls
  - Assume leadership positions—majors specific or professional organizations, writing center, math tutoring center
KEY CHALLENGES

• Sophomores can seldom openly identify pressures they are feeling, therefore advisors who probe well will have the best sense of this.

• Advisors should constantly look for signs of reflection and experience that shows students have explored multiple paths and notions of future opportunities.

• Suggestions about experiences or specific goals for exploration are a part of the full college experience.

• Advisor may feel a need to “take care of the problem”, instead help students to find comfort in the discomfort.
BRINGING THEORY TO PRACTICE: EXAMPLES

Uploaded to the NACADA Conference Website:

- Sophomore Advising Reflection Questions
- Self-Assessments / Self-Attribution Tools
  - Study Skills Assessment
  - Academic Performance Self-Assessment
- Goal-setting
- Major / Interest / Skills Exploration Tolls
  - FSU Guide: Excellent!
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOPHOMORES

• Guide sophomores in ongoing, structured exploration of the world, themselves, majors, and careers.

• Engage students in self-reflection and assessment (TypeFocus™, MBTI, Holland Self-Directed Search™, StrengthsQuest™).

• Give students the responsibility for learning; act as a facilitator rather than authority figure.

• Ask guided questions and let them figure out the answers, find their own voice, take ownership of decisions.

• REFLECTION, REFLECTION, REFLECTION
ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF THE SOPHOMORE YEAR

• Feedback regarding personal strengths & interests
• Learning by doing: experiential learning, community-based research, internships, cross-cultural experiences
• Meaningful faculty-student interactions, research in desired areas of major
• Mentoring first-years and connection with their campus community; Sense of Belonging with Institution
• Opportunities to interact with students with similar interests
• Opportunities for Character and Identity development