

# The State of Advising

## A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you and congratulations for making the decision to be an academic advisor. This profession helps others recognize the importance of academic advising. It is amazing to see the impact that you are having not only with your students, but with your colleagues here and at other institutions. I applaud you for incorporating the new technology into your advising practice. As a result, we have moved towards being more paperless; being more proactive in our advising; and making it easier for students to track their progress toward degree completion. At a recent meeting with SGA, it was great to see that over 90% of students have used Degree Works, which most indicated their academic advisor showed them.

We continue to see great progress in our implementation of the EAB-SSC Collaborative platform. Advisors conducting the six pilot campaigns are finding the many tools/resources very useful. There will be some new features added, which will include the ability to save multiple watch lists. We will grant access to the platform next month to conduct trainings starting in the spring for all advisors not currently conducting pilots. Later this month, we will begin working with the EAB on the development of "Campus," their next tool, which will enable students to schedule appointments online and will enable advisors to move forms to route electronically; record notes and emails; and track transactions for reports and monitor students, including the referrals made to other campus offices. The goal for next fall is for an advisor to only have to utilize EAB-SSC and Degree Works, with the exception of utilizing Banner during registration time or to look at a scanned transcript in Web Extender.

The UTSA Academic Advising Conference served as a great professional development opportunity. I want to thank Jennifer Uranga, Philip Casarez and the entire conference committee for their dedication and commitment to making it happen. The comments received on the overall conference evaluation shows the impact it had on those attending.

*"It was a wonderful conference and I always look forward to professional development opportunities that are close by and affordable. I am looking forward to next year."*

*"This conference was awesome! The keynote speaker was very motivating.... I really enjoyed the breakout sessions... [they] were informative and generated very thought provoking discussions.... I felt energized and motivated to... apply it to my personal and professional life."*

*"The selected presentations were great. I learned things that I can apply to my job even though I have been in advising for over 15 years."*

I encourage you to remember the key points Dr. Charlie Nutt shared at the Alamo Area Regional College Access Summit: (1) Adopt a Talent Development Approach to Advising; (2) Make Advising a Tag Team Activity; (3) Help Students Map Out a Path to Success; (4) Make Every Interaction Count; and (5) Focus on Culture Sooner than Later.

It is everyone's commitment and dedication that is making UTSA Academic Advising the best for our students and a model for other institutions in Texas and beyond. Have a wonderful holiday break! I wish you a blessed Thanksgiving with your family and friends.

—Barbara Smith, Executive Director of Advising



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Welcome New Staff .....	2
AAC Interest Groups .....	2
EAB/SSC Pilot Program.....	2
Engage Pilot Program .....	3
Happy Announcements.....	3
Conference Pictures .....	4

## EVENTS: DEC 2015-JAN 2016

**Dec 3**– Advising Monthly Meeting; Transfer Orientation

**Dec 4**– FR/FT Orientation

**Dec 12**– Commencement: COE, COLFA, UC (10 am); COA, COEHD, COS (4 pm)

**Dec 13**– Commencement: COB, COPP (2 pm)

**Dec 16**– Advisor Appreciation Workshop

**Dec 23**– Holidays and Skeleton Crew begin

**Jan 4**– International Orientation

**Jan 7**– Advising Monthly Meeting

**Jan 8**– Internat'l OR appts

**Jan 9**– Saturday Advising

**Jan 11**– Class begins



**New Advisor Training Graduation, October 2015**  
 (left to right): Jenaia Alcastar (STPL), Natasha Sankovich (STPL), Margaret Garcia (LHS), Damaris Ibarra (STPL), Sara Guajardo (STPL intern), Cheryl Truett (BUS), Lauren Smith (BUS), Kevin Canada (SOSC), Terrica Watkins (STPL), Monica Perryman (LHS), Daniel Arriaga (STPL), Albert Lopez (STPL), and Dainey Deviney (USSTS)

## WELCOME NEW STAFF!

The UTSA Advising Community welcomes its newest members, hired since March 2015:

**Arts & Humanities (AHUM)**– Mickie Tencza

**Business Studies (BUS)**– Lauren Smith, Cheryl Truett

**Life & Health Sciences (LHS)**– Margaret Garcia, Brittany Horton (Admin), Monica Perryman

**Social Sciences (SOSC)**– Kevin Canada, Zinthia Garza (Admin)

**Student Placement (STPL)**– Jenaia Alcantar, Daniel Arriaga, Damaris Ibarra, Albert Lopez, Natasha Sankovich, Terrica Watkins

**USSTS**– Catarina Rodriguez (Admin Manager)

**DT, EGR, IDED, MPS, Honors and UHPO** did not have any vacancies.

## AAC OFFICERS & INTEREST GROUPS

### 2015-16 AAC OFFICERS:

Chair: **Matt Keneson (AHUM)**

Chair-Elect: **Brandy Barksdale (STPL)**

Secretary: **Miranda Swain (AHUM)**

Parliamentarian/Historian: **Leah Stoddard (LHS)**

### GENERAL UPDATES:

Notes from AAC meetings are available in the AAC folder on the I:drive. Also, any ideas, questions, or concerns can be directed to the AAC email ([AAC@utsa.edu](mailto:AAC@utsa.edu)) or the [Anonymous Suggestion Form](#).

### INTEREST GROUPS:

The AAC's Interest Groups initiative began at the end of September with the Kickoff and 1<sup>st</sup> group meetings. The aim is to involve more advisors in decision-making and hope to have a positive impact on

advising through strategic planning. Each group will develop a plan for their assigned topic and then work to implement their recommendations.

Forty-three advisors signed up to be a part of the five interest groups: **Advisor Experience, Communication & Outreach, Policies & Procedures, Special Populations, and Technology.**

Each group has facilitators that will help guide the groups' efforts: **Mickie Tencza** (Advisor Experience), **Daniel Arriaga** and **Terrica Watkins** (Communication & Outreach), **Matt Keneson** and **Jaimie Carrington** (Policies & Procedures), **Chad McFadon** and **Sarah Sanchez** (Special Populations), and **Kenneth Schwoerke, Amanda Garcia,** and **Stephen Cheney** (Technology).

—Matt Keneson, AAC Chair (AHUM)

## EAB-SSC PILOT PROGRAM

UTSA recently purchased the Student Success Collaborative (SSC) from the Education Advisory Board (EAB) to develop strategies and tools to improve retention and graduation rates. This program combines technology, consulting, and analytical data to enable advisors to take a more proactive approach by providing data to facilitate student discussions and actions towards their success.

SSC uses a proprietary predictive model that identifies at-risk students and an analytics engine that isolates systemic barriers to degree completion. SSC also provides powerful communication and workflow tools so that institutions can identify, reach, and monitor students while accessing rich data to measure intervention effectiveness.

Since Spring 2015, numerous offices have been collaborating to fine-tune this powerful tool for UTSA. This fall 2015, several Advising Centers are conducting a pilot program to identify best practices for the Advising Community. These centers are Engineering, Student Placement, Life and Health Sciences, Arts and Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Education. Advisors will actively work their pilot groups within the SSC platform to give feedback to Consultants and University Administrators.

—*Sylvia Mansour, IDED and Monica Glover, DT*

## CAMPUS CARRY LISTENING SESSIONS



On behalf of Staff Council, thank you to all who attended these sessions! We appreciate the feedback and ideas to help make our campus as safe as possible.

Sessions were well-attended and many ideas were brought to the table.

Additional questions, concerns, and comments can be directed to the Campus Carry website, [www.utsa.edu/campuscarry](http://www.utsa.edu/campuscarry).

Please share with anyone who might benefit from this information as we begin to form policy and training surrounding this legislation.

—Shannon Rios, USSTS



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## ACT ENGAGE PILOT PROGRAM

Starting in Fall 2014, incoming freshmen were required to complete the ACT Engage assessment as part of Freshman Orientation. Advisors were expected to discuss the results, including one strength and weakness with students either during the orientation advising appointment or during the follow-up appointment prior to spring registration in November. However, this proved difficult to accomplish since both of these appointments were filled with pressing information that needed to be shared prior to registration.

In an effort to better utilize this assessment, a pilot program started in October 2015. Each Advising Director was given a group of 25 new freshmen to contact. The Directors will use the students' reported strengths and weaknesses to start a discussion about how their first semester is going. The aim is to foster students' development and ensure successful completion of the first year. Directors will meet with these students twice in the fall and twice in the spring, ensuring students are aware of and utilizing available resources (e.g. tutoring, SI, FYE peer mentors, Career Services).

Once the program is complete, students and Directors will be asked for feedback to revise the program before opening it up to all assigned advisors and students in Fall 2016.

*“Challenges in life can either enrich you or poison you. You are the one who decides.”*  
—Steve Maraboli, *Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience*



## HAPPY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congratulations to **Betsy Haddad (LHS)** who gave birth to Holly Haddad, born on May 22, 2015. Congratulations to the Haddad family! Upon her return to work, Betsy assumed the responsibilities of the new Advisor IV in LHS.

Likewise, congratulations to **Julie Fisher (AHUM)** and **Karl Fisher (IDED)**, who welcomed son Ian Patrick Fisher on 5/12/15! Upon her return to work, **Julie** was invited to join the Music departments new advisor committee.

**Amanda Garcia (USSTS)** also added to the UTSA family, when she welcomed baby Alyssa on August 25, 2015! We look forward to Amanda's return on November 17!

**Debbie Benavides and Matt Keneson (AHUM)** presented at the UTSA Advising Conference on stress management and on influencing change as an advisor, respectively. **Matt** continues to serve on the GRIP Cross-Campus Team. Also in AHUM News, **Miranda Swain** will begin the MS program in Health and Kinesiology in Spring 2016. **Anna Boyer** will serve as a program reviewer for NASPA.

Special thanks to the UTSA Advising Conference co-chairs, **Jennifer Uranga (DT)** and **Phillip Casarez (LHS)**, for their hard work throughout the year to keep the conference going another year! See some of your favorite participants on the next page.

**Yolanda Williams (STPL)** and **Shunverie Barrientez (HON)** co-presented on intrusive advising at the NACADA National Conference in Las Vegas in October 2015.

**Shannon Rios** and **Andrea Kraus Lozano (USSTS)** presented at the UTSA Advising Conference on the use of Schlossberg's Transition Theory in advising.

# UTSA Advising Conference October 2015

**UTSA**



DISCOVERING BALANCE IN ADVISING



**Left: Your Conference Committee**

**Below: AAC Chair Matt Keneson, Checking in**



**Enjoying the Keynote**



**Networking**



**Breakfast Conversation**



**Right: Conference Chairs Jennifer Uranga and Phillip Casarez with Keynote Speaker, Dr. Bennie Lambert**



**Thanks to everyone for making this conference such a great success!**

