

The State of Advising

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

UTSA Advising team,

It has been a year of adjustments, change and finding balance. Mid-May will mark our one year anniversary of the new UTSA Advising structure. We made great strides in strengthening the culture of advising towards a proactive and collaborative relationship with our students.

As we move forward in enhancing our resources such as Degree Works, we are enabling the students to be proactive in their engagement towards their academic success. I want to commend all of you for validating, testing and now ensuring that all exceptions and substitutions are entered so we can move forward with activating this resource for our current and new Roadrunners.

In keeping with our forward momentum, we need to begin thinking about how we will work with our next cohort of Roadrunners. We should individually reflect on helping the students understand the role of academic advising and how we support their academic success. We will strive to support our students in a holistic, trusting and collaborative relationship.

In the weeks to come, I will provide some data with regards to the previous cohort to help us set goals for their future success.

I look forward to working with you all to achieve our vision and mission for UTSA Academic Advising. —*Barbara Smith, Executive Director of Advising*

DIRECTORS BRAINSTORM TO ACTION

In October 2014, the Advising Centers Directors' Council (ACDC) conducted strategic meetings to develop practices that will improve advisor morale and advising student services. As a result of the meetings the directors were able to improve processes resulting from the reorganization, reduce advisor workload, and increase advisor salaries.

Outcomes from the brainstorming meetings included a new master list of major codes by catalog, ideas for how to mitigate high caseloads in the event of advisor vacancies, and streamlined referrals to advising centers by International Programs. Advisor turnover has been significantly reduced since the announcement of the \$8,500 increase to Academic Advisor I starting salary to \$38,500. In addition, this newsletter was developed as we feel communication with advisors is imperative to the success of the Academic Advising organization at UTSA.

The ACDC is proud to report the above achievements, however there is still more work to be accomplished. Next on our agenda is to brainstorm ideas on outreach to particular student populations (e.g. 45/90H, FYE), standardize the add process for all departments, and to create a system for graduation candidates to have priority on class waitlists. —*Amanda Eischen, MPS Advisor I*



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ON THE HORIZON: SUMMER—FALL 2015

June 1 through August 6

Tuesdays: FR OR Pre-advising

Wednesdays: FR OR Advising
Appointments

June 15– Summer Grad App
Deadline; summer audits
continue

June 11, 25– TR Orientation

July 15– Fall Grad App
Deadline; fall audits continue

August 14– International OR

August 15– Saturday
Advising 9 AM to 1 PM

August 17– Rowdy Day

August 18– First Day of
Class

October 16– UTSA Advising
Conference



New Advisor Training Graduation, February 2015 (left to right): Tara Ryan, Melissa Blanton, Dainon Deviney (USSTS Training Coordinator), Manny Flores, Sarah Sanchez, Connor McBrearty, Karl Fisher, Margie Dettloff, and Jay Wilson.

Not pictured: Anna Boyer, Amanda Eischen

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

The UTSA Advising Community welcomes its newest team members. These are the advisors hired since November 2014 (by center):

Arts & Humanities (AHUM) – Anna Boyer

Business Studies (BUS)– Margaret “Margie” Dettloff, Tara Ryan

Downtown (DT)– Connor McBrearty

Engineering (EGR)– Melissa Blanton

Interdisciplinary Education (IDED)– Karl Fischer, Jaylon “Jay” Wilson

Life & Health Sciences (LHS)– Margaret Garcia, Monica Perryman

Math & Physical Sciences (MPS)– Amanda Eischen, Manuel “Manny” Flores and Adrianna Solis

Student Placement (STPL)– Sarah Sanchez, Janaia Harris, Albert Lopez (not to be confused with LHS Albert Lopez), Natasha Sankovich, Daniel Arriaga, Damaris Ibarra and Terrica Watkins

Social Sciences (SOSC), Honors (HON) and Health Professions did not have any vacancies this semester.



WHO’S HONORING US NOW?

Matt Keneson (AHUM) received the Rising Star award, as a new staff employee who has made significant contributions to advising and the University community. Indeed, Matt has innovative ideas and has made significant contributions through cooperation, initiative, and his take-charge attitude. This talented employee has volunteered to assist when and where needed especially as part of the Academic Advising Council.

Stephen Cheney (HON) was the recipient of the 2014-2015 Student Government University Life Award for Outstanding Academic Advisor.

Heather Castro (BUS) won a College of Business Staff Excellence Award and will be honored on April 30, 2015.

Right: Matt Keneson upon receiving news of the Rising Star award

The following advising staff were recognized at the **University Excellence Award Ceremony** for their many years of service:

Stacy Chou, Jeff Ragsdale, Jimmy Adair, and Angie Zulaica (5 years); Phillip Casarez, Julie Fisher, Raquel Orozco, Jackie Loden, and Diana Howard (10 years); Alicia Salinas, Sarai Zamora, Monica Glover, Sylvia Mansour (15 years); Barbara Smith (20 years); and Debbie Benavides (25 years).



HAPPY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jackie Loden was recently selected as **AHUM Director**. She had been one of two interim directors, serving since September 2014.

Stephen Cheney (HON) completed the Supervisory Series.

Betsy Haddad and Albert Lopez (LHS) were both promoted to Advisor III.

Brandy Barksdale (STPL) was selected for a poster session at the NACADA Region 7 Conference on Academic Advising Compass: Navigating and Educating our Students in Uncertain Waters in *New Orleans*.

Yolanda Williams (STPL) and Shunverie Barrientez (HON) co-submitted a proposal for the NACADA National Conference and were selected as alternates: “Stack the Deck in Your Favor, Play the ‘Intrusive Advising’ Game and Hit the Jackpot”

Jeff Ragsdale & Cynthia Brown (STPL) completed the 6-week HR seminar “Leadership Series.”

Ken Schwoerke (SOSC) was recently promoted to Advisor II.

Marina De La Luz (Pre-Biology) and Marlen Mata (HON/BIO) were this month’s Instagram winners for being new Advising followers.



ADVISING CORE VALUES

Quality– Standard of excellence

Legacy– Making a difference today with tomorrow in mind

Wisdom– Understanding, insight & knowledge

Diversity– Respecting other cultures and life styles

Teamwork– cooperative effort by a group

Creativity/Innovation– Outside the box thinking, finding new ways to achieve goals

ACADEMIC ADVISING VISION & MISSION

In March 2015, the Advising Center Directors Council (ACDC) scheduled a retreat to establish a vision and mission statement for advising under the new structure.

Directors started with a set of agreed-upon core values for advising (see insert left). The group then discussed the future of advising: where we want to be and how we want to be seen by others— to create a vision statement. They also discussed what we do today, including our purpose and primary objectives, to create a mission statement.

The vision and mission drafts were presented to the Academic Advising Council on April 6 for feedback and suggestions. The aim was to have a “focus group” to ensure the entire advising team understands the intention of the statements and how each team member can support it.

The Directors met with two AAC representatives (Brad Chandler, Chair, and Matt Keneson, Chair-elect) on April 28 to revise the drafts based on the AAC comments to ensure the statements paint a clear, vivid picture of the direction of advising. The resulting statements are listed below.

Vision: UTSA Academic Advising aspires to be a leader in the advising profession, valued as an essential resource to teach students how to make sound decisions, achieve their academic goals, and engage in lifelong learning.

Mission: UTSA Academic Advising’s mission is to support the holistic development of students by cultivating trusting and collaborative relationships. Academic advisors guide students in developing meaningful, personalized pathways toward academic success.

“Advisors must be mindful of the ways in which to cultivate the relationship necessary to move from informational to relational/conceptual advising. We must challenge students to make a meaningful pathway to graduation.”

—AAC representative

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NEWS FROM STAFF COUNCIL

UTSA’s Staff Council works to continually improve university operations and the well-being of the university’s staff. The 35 members of the Staff Council serve as an advisory body, making recommendations to the president regarding the interests and concerns of staff. Members represent all the administrative areas

of the university. Charged by the president and the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System, the Staff Council addresses matters to the university community, and in particular to staff members of UTSA, and is not intended to supplant existing procedures for addressing individual grievances.

THE GREAT STAFF APPRECIATION EVENT

On Tuesday, May 12, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, the Staff Council will host an event to say “THANK YOU” to all the great staff members at UTSA. See our event page at <http://www.utsa.edu/sc/appreciation/StaffEvent.htm>.

STRIKES FOR SCHOLARSHIPS EVENT

On Monday, May 18, from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, the Staff Council will host its annual scholarship fundraising event. See our event page at <http://www.utsa.edu/sc/Scholarship/Fundraiser.htm>.

How do I get on Staff Council?

Our nomination and election period is coming soon so pay attention to your e-mail! You can self-nominate or ask someone to nominate you for a two year term! Commitments include monthly meetings and committee work so be sure to obtain your supervisor’s approval!

—Shannon Rios, USSTS Senior Program Coordinator and Staff Council Chair

