Changes in Academic Advising and Its Impact on Advising Professionals

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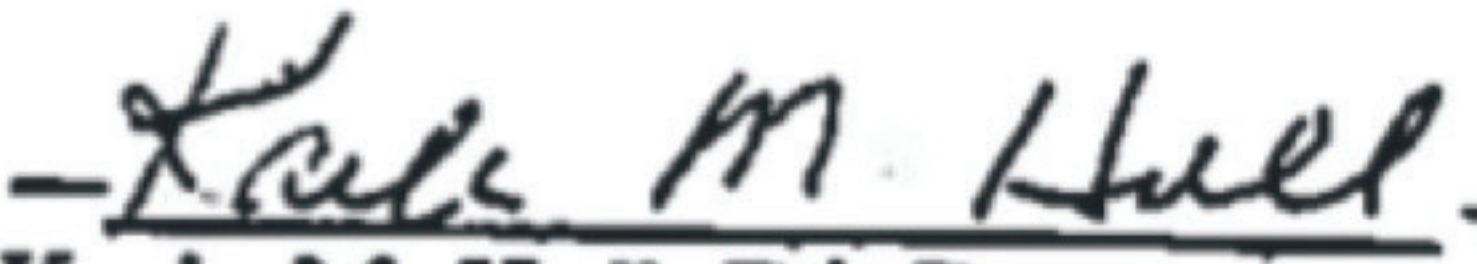B. F. A, Valdosta State University, 2009

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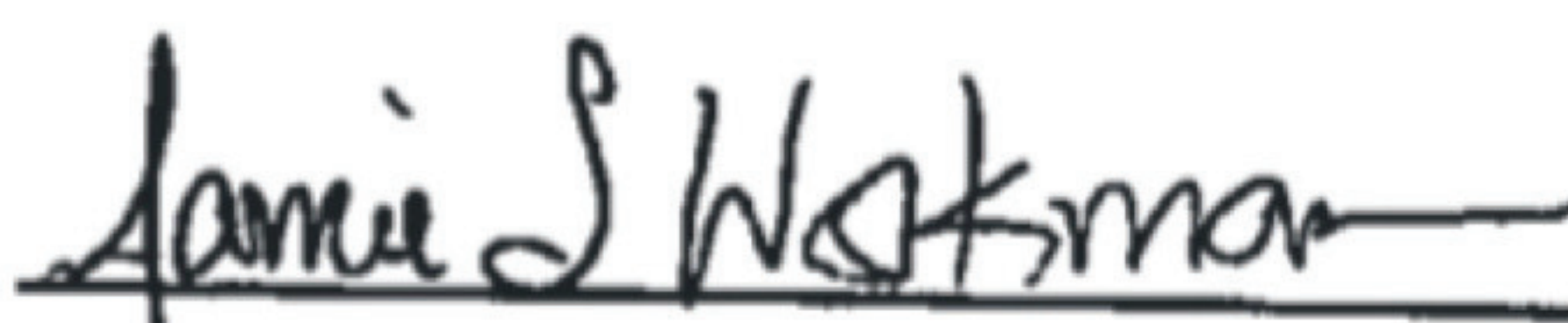
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This dissertation is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Public Law 94-553, revised in 1976). Consisten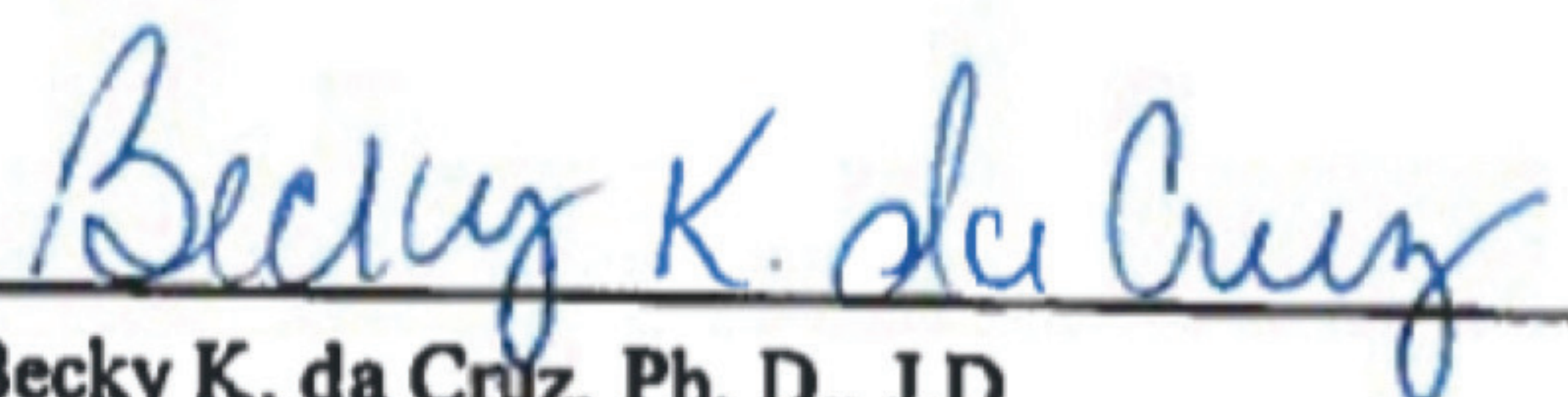t with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of the material for financial gain without the author's expressed written permission is not allowed.

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ABSTRACT

This is a basic qualitative interpretive study that explores the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to fulfill their job requirments, job satisfaction and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. Nine academic advising professionals were interviewed in order collect their perceptions of how the job of an advisor has changed over the years and how those changes impact advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction.

Participants of this study reported four primary change factors they claim to have experienced in their time as professional advisors. Those changes are: (a) development of the three-tiered system in which advisors are given a specific title of Academic Advisor I, II, or III upon being hired, and allows greater opportunity for career advancement in the field of advising, (b) transition from prescriptive advising practices to developmental, (c) increased use of technology including the shift from hand-written filing systems to computer-based filing systems, as well as the development of Predictive Analytics Software and other software used by professional academic advisors, and lastly (d) the development and implementation of state and federal initiative like CCG/CCA/ Fifteen to Finish in order to increase student retention and graduation rates in higher educational institutions.

It was further determined that the impact of these changes do effect job satisfaction and advisor retention because with these changes, comes increased work loads and constant need for adaptation to keep up with current demands placed on academic advising professionals. By identifying change and its impact, this study was able to determine specific factors that contribute to the satisfaction and retention of qualified advising professionals as a result of the four identified changes: (a) the ability to work with students, (b) the availability of staff job satisfaction surveys and how the institution and/or the advising center respond to the information collected from the satisfaction surveys, (c) effective communication, (d) job recognition for academic advising professionals, (e) availability of career advancement opportunities and the attainability and frequency of promotional opportunities, and (f) leadership.

Through the discussion of these themes, this study identifies specific changes advisor's are experiencing and the impact of those changes on the daily job functions of an academic advisor, then further addresses specific factors that impact job satisfaction and advisor retention as a result of the changes they are experiencing.

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This dissertation journey has been quite the adventure! I always knew I wanted to obtain a doctoral degree, but maybe under estimated what it would truly take to accomplish this goal in my life. Throughout this process, I have experienced many highs and lows. I hate to admit how many times I almost quit yet, I was lucky to have constant support from my friends and family to keep going and to not give up! I love you all and can't even begin to describe how blessed I am to have the best tribe of friends and family on my side through out this task and in life! In addition, I would like to thank my team of professors and university staff who coached me, guided me, and never gave up on me as I worked to complete this dissertation, even though it took me forever to get done. It was nice to have a group of educators that knew I could do it, reminded me of that regularly, and helped me reach my goal to get my doctorate degree! So to the friends, family and committee members, I would like to thank all of you for your encouragement regarding degree and encoraugement in my life! I hope each of you know that I couldn't have completed this without you all and I will forever be grateful to everyone who has been there for me along the way!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iv

v

viii

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Sustaining the recruitment, admission, and retention of college students is vital to

the economic capital needed for 21st Century institutions of higher education. Demand

for higher rates of student retention has increased dramatically due to initiatives like

Complete College America (CCA) and Complete College Georgia (CCG) that

recommend institutional funding should no longer be based on enrollment, but on

graduation rates (Complete College America, 2013). The focus of this initiative is to

increase graduation rates by 60% across the United States by the year 2025.   This will

pose challenges for institutions of higher education when approximately 22% of first-year

college students do not return for their sophomore year (Morrow & Ackermann, 2012).

Thus, institutions of higher education are developing strategic plans to increase student

retention in an effort to ensure financial viability in the coming years (Webster &

Showers, 2011).

For several decades, researchers have linked successful academic advising to

higher rates of student retention. According to Noel (1978), academic advising helps

students be successful on campus, and therefore is a primary factor when it comes to

student retention. In 1987, Tinto reported that successful student retention programs are

a direct result of effective advising. Metzner (1989) conducted a freshman-to-sophomore

1

retention study that reported students who received quality advisement had retention rates 25% higher than those students who received sub-standard advising, and 40% higher than those that had no academic advising at all. About a decade later, Anderson (1997) emphasized the key role of an advisor's impact on student retention in higher education. He pointed out that students seek motivation as they work towards educational goals; advisors provide motivation through informed advisement. Cuseo (2003) references all of this research to explain the importance of hiring, training, rewarding, and retaining staff, in order to increase the quality of advisement offered in the higher educational setting. Cuseo argues further, that when quality advisement is present, student retention will increase (p. 18).

In light of Cuseo's (2003) research many college and university advising departments are re-evaluating their academic advising models and implementing changes in academic advisor responsibilities. Originally, academic advisors had informational and prescriptive roles. Overtime, there was a shift towards a developmental approach to advising that called for a more formal relationship between the academic advisor and student. Not only did this change the way advisors did their job, it created more responsibility for academic advisors who were now expected to spend much more time with each student.

Models of Advising

According to Appleby (2001), a variety of different academic advising approaches, styles, and models have been adopted and implemented. In the late 1960's and into the early 70's, academic advising practices were highly prescriptive and sought

to deliver quality information to advisees as efficiently, and quickly as possible. This advising approach was referred to as prescriptive advising and primarily consisted of academic advisors giving schedules to each student to ensure the proper courses were taken to reach graduation. The prescriptive approach shifted into a more developmental approach as researchers and practitioners realized most students preferred to have more of a relationship with their academic advisor (Crookston, 1972). In the developmental approach students and advisors work together in the academic planning process. The primary change for advisors was that they were no longer delivering information to the student, instead, in the developmental advising model information flows in both directions to allow for a more collaborative relationship (Crookston, 1972).

Academic advising techniques advanced further with the development of different academic advising models. Advising models are stylized techniques grounded in a specific approach such as prescriptive or developmental. Examples of the most common advising models include, but are not limited to: intrusive/proactive advising and appreciative advising. According to Varney (2007), the intrusive advising model, later referred to as proactive advising, was created in the mid-seventies and defined by the work of Robert Glennen. This model fuses counseling and academic advising into one model and is grounded in developmental advising theories. Appreciative advising, as described by Bloom and Martin (2002), is a model that blends positive psychology and academic advising, and is rooted in the organizational development theory of appreciative inquiry.

Attrition of Professional Academic Advisors

The University of Arizona's Academic Advising Task Force II (UAAATF, 2010) states, "Given that it takes at least one year for a new advisor to become fully trained and to experience the full ebb and flow of an academic year, the risk to institutional integrity that can accompany elevated levels of turnover in advising personnel should be a reason for concern. " (p. 6). Retaining a student costs far less than recruiting a new student. This same concept can be applied to retaining professional academic advisors. An academic advisors' salary, possibility of advancement, and job responsibilities, all impact whether or not they feel satisfied with the job (Yip, Goldman, & Martin, n.d).

In efforts to raise awareness about issues in academic advising, advisors began to develop academic advising task forces. University of Missouri-Kansas City (Hathaway, et. al., 2012), The University of Texas at San Antonio (Bench et.al., 2010), and the University of Arizona (UAAATF, 2010) individually published their annual task force reports. Each task force served as an advocate for academic advising and pointed out major issues within the field. All three task forces noted that high turnover of academic advisors was an issue and addressed ways to decrease staff attrition including increased recognition of advisors with rewards processes, and the establishment of a more structured career ladder for academic advisors.

Universities rely on competent advisors to assist in the retention of students. Although academic advising can be a highly rewarding career, according to those that

work in the field, the demands of the job and low pay associated with the position are factors leading to turnover as advisors seek careers elsewhere (Bramlett-Epps, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

According to Peach (2013), the evolving profession of academic advising deserves recognition as it continues to focus on increasing student success and retention. Advisor roles and responsibilities change as new theories, techniques, and student retention strategies are created. With any change, comes a reasonable amount of staff turnover. The problem begins when the amount of staff-turnover goes beyond reasonable.

Literature from Bramlett- Epps (2002), Drake (2011), and Worley (2014) clearly establish the costly issue of staff-turnover in advising. This same pool of research suggests strategies on improving staff retention issues in advising. For Example, Drake proposes that rewards and appreciation can increase advisors job satisfaction and staff retention. Bramlett-Epps interviewed academic advisors directly to determine better ways of retaining them in the field. In this research, the problem of staff retention in academic advising is confirmed and various strategies to overcome this problem are discussed.

There is a need for research that examines how recent changes impact the ability of academic advisors to adapt to changing job expectations and responsibilities, their ability to effectively advise students, and their persistence in the profession. This study will provide insight into the aforementioned issues.

Conceptual Framework

Academic advisors typically have the first serious and continuous interaction with students in a higher education setting (Gordon & Habley, 2000). This interaction establishes a connection that greatly increases the chances of retaining a student until they reach graduation (Astin, 1993). With the current focus on student retention, the role of the academic advisor has been expanded. As the advising profession changes to meet the demands of student retention efforts, institutions need to understand the impact of those changes on the professional advising workforce.

Advisors' roles have changed with the development of new advising approaches or models, and the implementation of tools such as the electronic early alert system used to increase student retention. With each change there have been parallel adjustments to academic advisor's job expectations, responsibilities, and practices.

This study will be guided by the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The CBAM provides a conceptual framework for understanding academic advisors' perceptions of the changes they are experiencing in their profession. The Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) was designed to assess an individual's experience during the process of change (Hall & Hord, 2011; Loucks & Hall, 1979). Once the impact of the changes are clear, change implementers can begin to make efforts to target the specific needs of those dealing with the change. Examples of major changes specific to the advising field will be outlined in Chapter 2.

Hall (1974) and Hord (2011) identified patterns within the change process. After conducting studies with different organizations experiencing change, they identified

foreseeable and highly complex patterns that are present for individuals undergoing the change process. These patterns provide the basis for ten principals of change. The first principle is that change is learning. In the field of academic advising, changes have resulted in requirements for advisors to learn new approaches and master new technologies.

The second and third principles respectively are: change is a process not an event, and the school is the primary unit for change. In the case of this study, the primary unit for change is the advising unit in higher education institutions. The fourth principle is that an organization will adopt a change, but individuals implement the change. In this study, the focus will be on understanding the perceptions of academic advising professionals who are implementing changes.

The fifth and sixth principles are: interventions are the key to the success of the change process, and appropriate interventions reduce resistance to change. The seventh principle of change according to Hall & Hord (2011) is that leadership is essential to the long-term change process. The final three remaining principles of change are: facilitating change is a team effort, mandates can work, and the context influences the process of learning and change.

Hall (1974) developed two scales, an individual's Level of Use and an individual's Stages of Concern. These scales were developed to assist change implementers in understanding how an individual is implementing a change, and what types of concerns are creating barriers for full implementation of the change. Semi-Structured, individual interviews will be used to develop an understanding how advisors

are adapting to the changes in their field. The CBAM will provide a framework for analyzing those perceptions.

<center>*Purpose*</center>

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession.

<center>*Research Design*</center>

A basic qualitative interpretive approach will be used in this study to assist the researcher in understanding how individual participants make sense of a situation (Merriam, 2001). For the purposes of this study, the use of basic qualitative interpretive approach will gather the perceptions of academic advising professionals by conducting semi-stuructured interviews in order to determine how changes within the profession of academic advising impact academic advisors' experiences on the job, their ability to use the advising model preferred by their institution, and their overall job satisfaction.

Research Questions

Specific research questions for this study are as follows:

RQ1: In what ways has the job of the academic advisor changed over the years?

RQ2: What is the impact of changes in the role of the academic advisor on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction?

RSQ 3: What contributes to satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advising professionals?

<center>8</center>

Data Collection

I will be interviewing six academic advisors and three administrators, from three different types of higher education institutions, including a large research institution, a medium-sized four-year liberal arts institution, and a two year college. In addition to interviews, I will analyze the academic advising syllabi, academic advising mission statements, and academic advising policies and procedures for all three institutions. These documents will provide an understanding of the context of academic advising at each institution, and components of these documents will be used during the interviews as a prompt for discussions of differences between institutional policies and procedures, and the day-to-day experiences of the academic advisors.

Significance of the Study

Retention of college students is a priority for institutions of higher education and initiatives promoted by Complete College America (2014) have made retention a high stakes issue. Quality academic advising can positively impact the retention of students and contribute to each college student having a successful college experience (Light, 2001). As researchers (Anderson, 1997; Glennen & Vowell, 1995) continue to identify academic advising as a key contributor to successful student retention, the job of the academic advisor assumes added pressure. Job responsibility has increased as advising practices are adopted to ensure students are retained. These changes are evident through the implementation of new practices that include the use of new academic advising models and approaches, and the use of predictive analytics. As occupational duties

change, the retention of academic advisors seems to be an issue that needs to be addressed as thoroughly as the issue of student retention (Bramlett-Epps, 2002).

Academic Advising Task Forces have been established to address the issue of the increased attrition of professional academic advisors (NACADA, 1987; UAAATF, 2010). It is critical for institutions of higher education to understand issues and challenges faced by professional academic advisors in order to create environments that will support the university's goal of retaining students. According to Nutt (2003), institution are taking notice of the value of academic advisors in regards to student retention, persistence, and graduation. In order to take that value a step further, institutions could benefit from understanding how change impacts the daily experiences of professional academic advisors. Findings from this study can also highlight what measures can be taken to retain academic advisors.

Limitations

This study is restricted by certain limitations. As the primary researcher, it is important to point out that I am also a professional academic advisor. I will implement validity checks to maintain the integrity of the study, and to assure that my personal bias does not impact the results. These validity checks will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter III and include triangulation and respondent validation. The interviews of nine academic advising professionals will provide insights about the profession of academic advising, but will not be generalizable. Although these professionals will be experienced advisors, selected from three different types of higher educational institutions, the results may not generalize to other geographic locations, institutions or individuals.

Definition of the Terms

For the purposes of this study, terms will be defined as follows:

Academic Advising Administrator: Academic advising administration consists of assistant directors, associate directors, and directors of higher educational advising units. These administrators are typically responsible for departmental budgeting, assessment, reporting, professional development for advisors, staffing, and continuing to professionally grow themselves (Borns, 2007)

Academic Advisor Recognition: Advisor recognition from the administration or institution recognizing an academic advisors exemplary work on the job (Drake, 2008).

Appreciative Advising: An academic advising model consisting of six different phases that an advisor works through with students. According to Bloom et. al (2008) Appreciative Advising is basically the "intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials" (p. 1).

CCG: Complete College Georgia (Complete College America, 2014)

CCA: Complete College America (Complete College America, 2013)

Developmental Advising: Advising style in which an academic advisor seeks to develop a mentoring relationship with students that will enable them to continue to develop personally, academically, and professionally after the formal advisor- advisee relationship has ended (Appleby, 2001).

Faculty Academic Advisor: Faculty academic advisors are faculty members who

11

are assigned responsibility of advising students in addition to primary responsibilities of their position as a faculty member. They were established to keep a close relationship with the student inside and outside of the classroom (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997).

NACADA: National Association for Academic Advising (NACADA, 2016)

NACADA Core Values of Academic Advising: A copy of the Core Values of Academic Advising is provided to the reader in Appendix A to offer an in depth example of the expectations placed upon academic advisors by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA, 2004).

Predictive Analytics: Software that allows an academic advisor access to student information in conjunction with general information about past institutional graduation averages, including but not limited to: GPA, average grades made in foundational and major related classes, credit hour completion, withdrawal rate, course grades, etc. The main goal of predictive analytics software is to provide information needed to prevent a student's academic decline by using the statistical information mentioned above to develop an early warning system (Education Advisory Board, 2015).

Prescriptive Advising: An academic advising style that includes the delivery of accurate academic information to as many students as possible, as efficiently as possible (Appleby, 2001). The ultimate goal of the prescriptive advising approach is to get student to graduate on time by telling them exactly what courses to take to keep each student in line with graduation requirements.

Proactive Advising: Formerly known as intrusive advising is an approach that "incorporates intervention strategies mandating advising contacts for students who otherwise might not seek advising" (Miller & Murray, 2005, p. 1).

Professional Academic Advisor: For the purposes of this study, professional academic advisors are employed full-time and are not classified as faculty. A professional academic advisor's primary responsibilities are advising students (Bramlett-Epps, 2002).

Staff Retention: Staff turnover prevention within an organization or institution (Worley, 2014).

Student Retention: Process of retaining students each year from the time of matriculation to the time of graduation. (Cuseo & Farnum, 2011)

Organization of the Study

In this chapter I have outlined the conceptual framework of my proposed qualitative study. The purpose, goals, and research questions for this study are included as well as a discussion on the significance of the study. Chapter 2 will include a review of literature related to the history of academic advising and current issues for academic advising professionals. In Chapter 3 the qualitative methodology for this study will be described.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two includes a review of relevant research that supports the foundation of

this study. The research outlined in the chapter will include the following topics: a

history of academic advising, an overview of approaches and advising models, and how

demand for student retention is increasing the demands placed on academic advisors.

History of Academic Advising

Academic advising has strong American roots that trace as far back as the early

eighteen hundreds at Kenyon College, in Gambier, Ohio. At that time students were

given the opportunity to choose a faculty member to work with, who would in turn assist

the students in determining which courses were to be taken that would lead to graduation

(Harrison, 2004). Institutions such as Harvard University adopted the practice of

academic advising in the late eighteenth century and the profession has been growing

ever since. At that time in the history of higher education, faculty members often lived

on campus with the students, and served as holistic advisors working closely with

students inside and outside the classroom environment in an effort to retain and graduate

students. Not only would they guide students academically, but with life choices as well

(Brubacher & Rudy, 1997).

In the early 1900's enrollment numbers in higher education institutions began to increase dramatically due to the growth of the American population. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (Synder, 1993), "the first decade of the 19th century only showed a 50% increase in higher education student enrollment, followed by an additional 68% enrollment increase the second decade, and an additional 84% between 1929-1930" (p. 65). With increased enrollment, the culture of higher education shifted, and the relationships between faculty and students began to change. Students sought more academic guidance, course planning advisement, and in some cases career advice. As a result, faculty responsibility shifted to meet the demands from students, and structured advising groups were created. Some faculty were charged with course planning based on specific areas of study while other faculty were assigned responsibility of vocation-based advisement as it related to academia, all of which were prescriptive in nature, and designed to map out students' journey to graduation (Gordon, 1992).

In the 1970's academic advising became even more formalized as a result of record breaking student enrollment rates and student demand for improved academic advising (Cook, 2001). This demand brought great attention to the field of academic advising causing higher education administration to focus on the improvement of the academic advising process. By 1972, the prescriptive advising technique that involved robotically delivering schedules to one student after another was beginning to be replaced by the developmental advising approach. According to both O'Banion (1972) and Crookston (1972) developmental advising would not only assist students with academic

planning, but would teach students to thrive in a higher education environment and excel toward graduation completion.

Due to the changes in academic advising during the seventies, the need to establish efficiency in the field of academic advising became a critical issue, which led to different advising models (Gillispie, 2003). By 1979, The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) was established to enhance the ability of academic advisors to share ideas and research topics related to academic advising. Within the first year of its establishment, NACADA had 429 members and the number of advising centers and professional academic advisors began to increase nation-wide.

Throughout the eighties and into the nineties the field of academic advising continued to grow. The NACADA Journal was created, providing academic advisors access to current theories and research about the field. Annual NACADA conferences were held to provide opportunities for advising staff to increase professional development. By 2000, NACADA membership grew to 6,200 academic advisors including full-time academic advisors, faculty advisors, and academic advising administrators (Cook, 2001).

Gordon (1992) and Dunn (2000) examined American societal trends and their impact on college students. Gordon (1992) predicted that specific non-educational forces would impact the way students approach higher education and technology advances would begin to change the way advising was conducted. Gordon's (1992) research accurately predicted that academic advising practices would include advanced technology such as predictive analytics, advising software, and the skills to not only advise students

academically but, also prepare them with a realistic worldview once they graduate.

These new practices are examples of how the job expectations of academic advisors have changed over the years.

<div align="center">*Organizational Structures for Academic Advising*</div>

According to Celeste F. Pardee, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at University of Arizona, there are three main organizational structures that characterize advising departments across the country: decentralized, centralized, and shared (2000). Pardee states that decentralized advising departments are characterized by a model in which faculty members serve as advisors for the institution. This structure was much more popular in the early years of academic advising. Although some smaller institutions still use a decentralized organizational structure, the majority of institutions have shifted to a shared structure that includes supplementary, split, and dual models.

Supplementary Organizational Structure for Advising

In a supplementary model, students are assigned to a departmental advisor; however, there is a university-wide center that deals with transfer students and general inquiries. Most private institutions use a supplementary model for their advising centers.

Split Organizational Structure for Advising

Split models are often used in public institutions where there is a centralized advising unit assigned to a specific population, including but not limited to: first year students, at-risk students, and pre-major students preparing for professional programs. Faculty advise students who are not assigned to the centralized unit.

Dual Organizational Structure for Advising

The Dual model is very similar to the split structure; however, in this structure students will move out of the centralized unit of advising as soon as they declare their specific major of study or complete introductory studies and are now taking upper-division courses in their major (Oertel, 2007).

Centralized Organizational Structure for Advising

The centralized structure includes both full-time professional advisors and faculty advisors in one academic or administrative unit (Pardee, 2000). Regardless of the structural set up of the academic advising department, advisors are still held to the same level of excellence when it comes to serving students. Many schools in the state of Georgia have made the shift to more centralized and shared models to provide students with easier access to advising resources.

Both Pardee (2000) and Oertel (2007) indicate the organizational structure of advisement centers is often determined based on contextual issues unique to the institution. For example, it may be challenging to implement a decentralized model in a large four-year public institution, where the quantity of students may make it more likely that students slip through the cracks and impacting their chances of being retained. This example supports why decentralized models are the most uncommon among majority of higher educational institutions. According to an American College Testing (ACT) study from 1998, only 28% of 754 institutions utilized this type of model. On the other end of the spectrum, two year colleges tend to lean more towards a centralized advising center because it works best for their populations, while four year models lean towards a split or shared organizational structure (Oertel, 2007).

18

Academic Advising Approaches

An academic advising approach is a set of guidelines that govern the format in which advising is delivered within an academic advising unit. Within an advising approach there are elements of different styles of advising including prescriptive and developmental. These styles are combined in various ways to create advising models. Advising centers adopt models that closely align with an institutional mission and strategic plan. Examples of well- known advising models include proactive advising and appreciative advising. Each approach comes with its own definition and principles that guide the advising unit.

Prescriptive Advising

The purpose of the prescriptive advising style is to deliver accurate information to as many students as possible in as efficient a manner as possible (Appleby, 2001). It is also known for being the oldest advising style (Lowenstein, 1999). The ultimate goal of prescriptive advising is to get students to graduate on time by telling them exactly what courses will help them meet graduation requirements. Prescriptive advising does not focus on building relationships, instead, information flows one-way, from advisor to student, in the form of creating a schedule. It is unnecessary for an advisor to explain to their advisees why they must take certain classes, other than that these courses are required for graduation. Unfortunately, this leads the advisor to come off as unapproachable and very little trust is ever gained between the advisor and advisee (Crookston, 1972).

19

Developmental Advising

In developmental advising, an academic advisor seeks to create a mentoring relationship with students that will support them in their personal, academic, and professional development after the formal advisor-advisee relationship has ended (Appleby, 2001). Unlike prescriptive advising, this style is based on building the student-advisor relationship in efforts to allow information to flow in both directions to increase student success. Collaboration between the advisor and student is encouraged, so that a trusting relationship can be built. Therefore, this advising approach requires more of a time commitment to enable the relationship to be established between the student and the advisor.

According to Appleby's Dimensions of Developmental Advising (2001), one of an advisor's most important roles is to enable advisees to comprehend the rationale behind the classes they will take and the way these classes are sequenced. Thus advisors function under the assumption that students are more likely to involve themselves in classes they know will enable them to accomplish their goals.

Proactive Advising

Proactive advising was formerly known as intrusive advising (Glennen, 1975). Proactive advising takes developmental advising one step further to help advisors reach out to students. Today some academic advising centers use proactive academic advising to build structures that incorporate intervention strategies mandating advising contacts for students who otherwise might not seek advising (Miller & Murray, 2005). Examples of this outreach might include telephone campaigns designed to remind students to come in

for advisement, to inquire about a student's intent to register, or to encourage students to schedule an advising appointment.

Proactive advising can be utilized for special populations like first-year freshman students. According to Earl (1987), 33% of the college freshmen at the time did not return for a second year of college. His study pointed out that advising plays a direct role in retention and he argued that implementation of proactive advising increases retention rates. His research found that institutions implementing this form of advisement noticed an increase of student retention over the course of three semesters. Since his research, National student retention rates have continued to increase at colleges and universities across the country as a result of increased academic advising standards and implementation of new advising models, including but not limited, to proactive advising (Postsecondary Education Opportunity, 2002).

Belcheir (1999) conducted a study at a large public university in which he surveyed students randomly across 21 classes at the institution with a total return of 890 surveys. Results from the study suggest that 51% of the students felt that the advising center adequately met their needs while an additional 11% said the current advising center more than adequately met their needs. Overall, the students preferred the proactive approach.

Proactive advising is a blend of the best qualities of prescriptive advising and developmental advising (Earl, 1987). With that said, execution of this style can also be time consuming for the advisor. Not only must they be prepared to provide quality and

informed advising when face-to-face with the student, they must also be available for student outreach opportunities to keep the student coming back for future advisement.

Appreciative Advising

Appreciative advising was developed by a team of advisors, led by Jennifer Bloom (2008). This particular model of advising "harnesses the power of the organizational development theory of appreciative inquiry and the positive psychology literature to provide a framework for increasing advisor and student success" (p.1). It is perhaps the best example of a student-centered approach built upon aspects of the developmental approach of advising.

Appreciative advising is a fairly new concept within the field of academic advising; however, research has been conducted indicating that appreciative advising works. Truschel (2008), states that surveyed students supported the use of this model and responded positively to appreciative advising. Truschel's study focused on 112 undergraduate students who obtained less than a 2.0 grade point average within their first 30 credit hours at a comprehensive public regional university. Each of these students voluntarily agreed to participate in multiple appreciative advising sessions, and then were surveyed regarding their experience. Students reported that they felt as though they were listened to, and felt they were receiving a second chance at academic success.

When the appreciative advising model is adopted by academic advising centers, students gain a positive perception of academic advising. Appreciative advising focuses on delivering a high quality of advisement to the student (Hutson, et. al. 2014). Therefore, student satisfaction rates with this approach tend to be higher. Students often

return to advisement without being prompted regardless of mandatory holds, and retention rates are higher thereby leading to higher graduation rates.

One example of appreciative advising from a study done by Saunders and Hutson (2012), described the use of a "success contract" used in conjunction with advising students in academic jeopardy. Results from that study showed that 62% of the participants improved academically and regained good academic standing. A comparable study was also conducted in which students on academic probation took an appreciative advising-based success course. Over the semester 41% of the participating students were able to gain good academic standing by the end of that semester (Hutson and He, 2011).

One thing to keep in mind about appreciative advising is that this style is, at times, difficult to execute due to the amount of time needed to implement the model with fidelity. Although appreciate advising can reach students and increase student retention, additional advisor responsibilities can impact the proper implementation of this model (Truschel, 2008). Implementation of this model might necessitate an increase in the number of advisors or a reduction in other role expectations. The current budget crises faced my many universities make it unlikely that additional money will be spent to hire more academic advisors, yet many institutions will still attempt to implement the appreciative advising model.

Student Preferences for Advising Styles

Hale, Graham, and Johnson (2009) conducted a national survey to determine undergraduate preferences regarding academic advising styles. Four hundred and twenty-nine undergraduate students responded to the following questions: style of

23

advising used by their current advisor, preferred style of advising (developmental or prescriptive), and overall satisfaction with the advising experience. Results showed that 79.8 percent of the students surveyed identified their advisor as using a developmental style of advising. Furthermore, 95.5 percent of the students reported that they prefer developmental advising over prescriptive. The findings also showed that those students who received their preferred style were more satisfied with the advising process. This study is an example of how the once predominant style, prescriptive advising, has adapted into the now preferred developmental style of advising.

Smith (2002) studied 34 first-year students that participated in one of four focus group discussions at a large university. Students discussed their perception of the academic advisor's role, their preferences for academic advising style/approach between prescriptive or developmental, and their experiences with advisement. Unlike Hale, Graham, and Johnson's (2009) research, the students within Smith's study said they initially preferred a prescriptive style of advisement. Further discussion within the focus groups revealed that the first-year student participants viewed their academic advisor in the same light as their high school guidance counselor. The expectation was that the academic advisor should "just give us classes" according to the students. Furthermore, they described their first experiences with advisors as "logistic" which infers a more prescriptive approach rather than developmental. On the other hand, the students did express that the academic advisors were "personable" which could allude to a more developmental outlook.

When Smith followed up with the students after several more advising sessions, some of the student perceptions seemed to shift. As students became more experienced with college, their understanding of what their academic advisor could offer, and expectations of the advisor changed, and a more developmental style was appreciated and recognized by the student. Overall, Smith was able to conclude that as first-year students, prescriptive advising was preferred over developmental. However, as students spent more time with advisors, they began to prefer the developmental style of advising.

Academic Advisor vs. Faculty Advisor

Early in the field of academic advising, faculty members were the only academic advisor students were exposed to while in college. As enrollments increased, many colleges and universities began hiring full-time academic advisors to ease the load for faculty. In 2011, NACADA conducted a national survey which revealed that the average caseload of full-time academic advisors can vary depending on the institutional size. A small institution may have a 233 to 1 student to advisor ratio. A medium sized institution can have a student to advisor ratio of 333 to 1. At a large institution the ratio can be as high as 600 to 1 (Carlstrom, 2013). These ratios are typical for full-time academic advisors whose primary purpose is to assist students with academic planning.

There are distinct differences between academic advisors and faculty advisors including differences in job responsibilities, differences in training, differences in advising styles, and difference in career ladders.

Differences in Job Responsibilities

Toutkoushian & Bellas (1999), collected data from 14,614 full-time faculty, and reported that faculty allocate their time in three areas: teaching, research, and service. In 2016, it is still the case that faculty members spend the majority of their time in those three areas, and that these areas are reviewed for promotion and tenure decisions. In recent years, faculty who are advising students may have the added responsibilities of learning to use advising and predictive analytic software.

According to McMahan (2008) an academic advisor is expected to perform duties well beyond registering students for classes. Their duties may include teaching, advanced student outreach, reporting, and event planning for students. Additionally, many professional academic advisors evaluate credits including home institution and transfer credits, interpret degree evaluations and requirements, assist students with career planning, and monitor student registration events (McMahan, 2008). Academic advising requires a balance of keeping students first, maintaining records, registration, and much more (Drake, 2011).

Differences in Type of Advising Style

Prescriptive advising is frequently used by professors with high advisee volume and limited time to spend on each student. The priority is to see a large number of students and get them registered for classes. This style specifically focuses on addressing the main issue at hand, offering advice, and moving on to the next student (Crookston, 1994). There is simply no time to cover anything else in the advising session. As

26

reported above, advising is not the primary job responsibility for faculty and thus time spent on advising is limited.

In contrast, most professional academic advisors use a developmental advising approach (Hale, Graham, & Johnson, 2009). Unlike the prescriptive approach, developmental advising offers a deeper relationship with the student and takes more time. Advising is the primary job responsibility for academic advisors and thus an area in which they devote a considerable amount of their time.

Differences in Training

King and Kerr (2005) concluded that faculty advisors produce educational benefits for students as well as economic benefits for the institution, but the NACADA survey (2011) emphasizes there are limited training opportunities for most faculty advisors. Even on campuses that offer advisor development programs, if attendance is not mandated or rewarded, faculty participation may be low (NACADA survey, 2011).

Full-time academic advisors are typically expected to have completed a master degree in a related field including but not limited to: higher education, college student personnel, counseling, or human services (McMahan, 2008) because the level of degree helps the academic advisor to gain a better understanding of the university system and student expectations. McMahan (2008) further describes that academic advisors are expected to have some kind of experience in the field, and graduate assistantships often establish a foundation of experience for professional academic advisors.

In additional to educational expectations, academic advisors are expected to obtain additional training and certifications based on the institution in which they work.

According to McClelland, Moset, and Waterreus (2008) "Utah Valley University developed a new advisor certification program using NACADA resources, Council of the Advancement of Standards in Academic Advising, and a collaborative professional development process that assists advisors to begin their work at the college with a sufficient foundation of knowledge and skills in advising. " (p. 1) Additional trainings are customized each year to help the academic advisor grow professionally as they gain experience year to year.

In 2011, NACADA began to outline paths for professional academic advising certifications based on the Institution for Credentialing Excellence, three level credentialing system (Miller, 2011). The three levels include workshop completion, curriculum-based certificates, and professional certification. Now individual institutions can partner with professional certifying entities to determine what certification will be required of their academic advisors to help them develop professionally. Examples of popular certifications and trainings for academic advisors include but are not limited to: NACADA's Summer Institute, Graduate Certificate in Academic Advising, and Career Development Facilitator Credentials (Miller, 2011).

Differences in Professional Career Ladders

Faculty have clearly established advancement opportunities, moving from instructor to assistant professor, and from associate to tenured full professor status (Holmes, 1982). Most academic advisors do not have a clear ladder for advancement, so adding extra responsibilities can cause resentment and be a possible cause for staff turnover. In a national survey conducted by NACADA (2011), 22 percent of colleges use

28

full-time professional advisors, while 18 percent use only faculty advisers. The majority

of colleges and universities use a combination of professional and faculty academic

advisors. It should be pointed out that rarely do faculty members advise in the critical

first two years of college, when students are more likely to transfer or drop out (Selingo,

2014).

Academic Advising: Key to Student Retention

According to Anderson (1997), "Academic advising is the key to student

retention. The best way to keep students enrolled is to keep them stimulated, challenged

and progressing toward a meaningful goal. The best way to do that--especially among

new students--is through informed academic advising" (p. 1). When students get advised

regularly throughout their time in college it is proven that retention and graduation rates

increase.

National student retention rates have increased since the early eighties at colleges

and universities nationwide as a result of increased academic advising standards

(Postsecondary Education Opportunity, 2002). Beal and Noel (1980) surveyed 947

colleges and universities nation-wide and captured student retention practices in higher

education. This study found that academic advising was not up to par with student

expectations, and was therefore reported as the number one reason students were not

returning the following year (p.103).

Later in the same decade, Astin (1985) launched a national survey targeting more

than 200 four-year higher educational institutions. Approximately twenty-five thousand

freshmen students were followed across a four-year span, beginning at the time of their

enrollment in fall 1985 and continuing through 1989. Specific data regarding retention of students and academic performance were obtained from each institution along with information from student questionnaires acquired at the beginning of their college career and continuing for four years. This study found that any form of advisor-student interaction regarding the academic process, such as course planning, greatly improves the student's chances of successful academic development. This finding suggests that when students are involved with their academic planning, under the guidance of an academic advisor, the chances of being retained from yea-to-year improves.

Metzner (1989) found similar information in a longitudinal study of freshman to sophomore transitions in a public university. He reported that first year freshman students who rated academic advising as "good" withdrew at a rate 25% lower than those who had inadequate advising experience, and 40% lower than those who reported no advising at all.

According to Habley (1994), the connection between the student and the advisor begins as soon as students step on campus for their orientation. It is this initial connection, followed by ongoing interaction between advisor and student that provides the student with consistency. Consistency and stability keep students seeking advice from their academic advisor throughout the year, so it is important to establish trust and build rapport with the student early on to keep them coming back. According to the ACT 2004 Annual Report, quality advisement can effectively assist students in selecting programs and courses that help them to stay on track to graduation and achieve academic and career goals (2004). Retention experts like Tinto (1999, 2010) and Astin (1985)

emphasize the importance of consistent interaction with academic advisors as a tool for increasing retention and graduation rates.

Complete College America

Results of studies on the relationship of academic advising to student retention, coupled with economic pressure to retain students, and national initiatives like Complete College America (CCA) have influenced institutional decisions to shift the responsibility of student retention efforts to full-time academic advisors. Complete College America (CCA) began as a nonprofit organization back in 2009 with a focus on equal opportunity for all American students seeking a career certificate or college degree. Leaders in CCA emphasized that although college enrollment skyrocketed in the past three decades, graduation rates have remained the same.

CCA launched a national initiative to address the discrepancy between enrollment and graduation rates. Institutional enrollment and graduation statistics are reported for all 28 state participants of CCA (2009). In light of this information, a federal policy was established that would tie higher education funding to an institution's graduation rates, rather than enrollment numbers. In the context of this study, this will be referred to as the CCA federal policy.

Many states participating in CCA, adopted state policies aligned with the CCA federal policy. The CCG (Complete College of Georgia) state policy states that the University System of Georgia (2014), paired with the Technical College System of Georgia, will work together to increase the number of graduates while maintaining the quality of education provided in the state. The state of Georgia created an action plan to

31

respond to the rising demand for workers with at least a bachelor's degree in the work force (Complete College Georgia, 2014). According to the state institutional data provided to CCA, the average time it is taking a student to earn a degree in Georgia is as follows: a two-year associates degree is taking approximately 3.6 years to complete, a four-year non-flagship degree takes about 4.9 years for a student to graduate, and it is taking students earning a four-year flagship/research degree an average of 4.4 years to graduate. Furthermore, students are taking an additional 15.7 extra credit hours, on average, that are not related to requirements for their degree.

A singular initiative that has come out of the CCA and CCG policies is "15 to Finish" (Complete College Georgia, 2014). This initiative is designed to change the definitions of "full-time" status in higher education institutions. According to policies from Federal Student Aid, an Office of the United States Department of Education, full-time status is currently considered 12 credit hours. Students who register for the full-time course load then become eligible for financial aid, assistance they would not receive otherwise. The criteria for the Federal Student Aid definition of full-time status includes enrolling in 12 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters, and an additional 6 credit hours in the summer to complete the 30 credit hours needed per year. Thirty credit hours per year, over the course of four years, equals the 120 credit hour required for degree completion. Unfortunately, many students think that since they are registered for 12 credit hours, and are considered full-time that they are on track for a standard four-year graduation. They may not realize they will have to complete summer credit hours to achieve graduation in four years (Complete College America, 2013).

The CCA is advocating a change from the previous full-time status of 12 credit hours to 15 credit hours, thus the "15 to Finish" initiative was created (Complete College America, 2014). Implementation of these initiatives has trickled down and caused university and college systems to restructure student retention efforts. Academic advising is at the forefront of student retention; therefore, new federal and state policies like CCA and CCG along with singular initiatives like "15 to Finish" can have a direct impact on the work responsibilities of an academic advisor. Not only is there an expectation that students be advised in ways that prevent them from taking unnecessary credit hours, but there may be a need for more intrusive, preventive advising to ensure that students continue to be academically successful with this increased course load.

Predictive Analytics in Academic Advising

Universities including Georgia State University, Arizona State University, and University of Texas at Austin confronted CCA and CCG policies head on in efforts to increase their graduation rates and protect their funding. In the cases of these specific institutions, the academic advising staff blends a proactive advising approach with the use of predictive analytics software. This software gives the academic advisor access to student information in conjunction with general information about past institutional graduation averages, including but not limited to: GPA, average grades made in foundational and major related classes, credit hour completion, withdrawal rate, course grades, etc.

This software, also referred to as Student Success Collaborative (SSC), provides information needed to prevent a student's academic decline by using the statistical

information mentioned above to develop an early warning system (Education Advisory Board, 2015). Alerts will be brought to the attention of the academic advisors in the case a student is not academically in line with the averages of past graduates at any given point. For example, a pre-nursing student will have specific GPA requirements and pre-requisite courses they will have to meet in order to be considered for acceptance into the Nursing Program. The predictive analytical software, SSC, displays that pre-nursing's student academic progress right alongside that of a past graduate who successfully pursued, and graduated with the same degree. When the student falls short of previous successful averages, alerts will be sent to allow an academic advisor to reach out to the student and make efforts to get the student back on track. Overall this software allows advisors to use past institutional statistics to help guide current and future students to graduate successfully.

Based on the case study conducted by Education Advisory Board beginning in 2012, Georgia State University implemented a pilot run of the SSC predictive software. Between 2012 and 2014, the university has increased its graduation rates by 3% and estimated additional tuition revenue of three million dollars in 2014 alone. It is clear that predictive analytics software can be used as a tool to help academic advisors manage their caseload to increase student retention. So much so that universities like Arizona State and University of Texas at Austin has followed suit. An additional eight schools from across the country are also following in the footsteps of these pilot schools in efforts to increase graduation rates (Complete College America, 2014).

Implementation of a data-driven advising approach can be very time consuming unless the right software is used to make the process more streamline. In cases where institution lack data- analytic software, advisor are typically held responsible for collecting and reporting data to keep up the more proactive model of academic advising (Education Advisory Board, 2015). This can hinder the amount of time that an academic advisor can spend with students, and as important as it is to increase the quantity of students seen, we do not want to increase quantity at the cost of decreasing quality of advisement.

The Profession of Academic Advising

The initial effort to get academic advising viewed as a profession began nearly thirty years ago when Gordon, Swenson, Spencer, Kline, Bogenschutz, & Seeger (1988) all serving the 1987 NACADA Task Force, conducted a nationwide NACADA survey that was sent to 1,000 members and had a 72% response rate. This survey sought to identify academic advising job details and determine advisor attitudes toward advising as a profession at the time. The outcome of this survey showed that 84% of the respondents identified academic advising as a profession.

In contrast, Wilensky (1964) defined the following criteria as necessary for being considered a profession: services are provided for a specific group of consumers, specialized training is provided to individuals working within the field, and the services that are offered cannot be provided by anyone other than those experts. For example, counselors and doctors must be licensed to practice their craft, have obtained specialized training and education to pursue their professions, and provide specific services that can

only be provided by a trained expert in a given field. Given Wilenski's definition of a profession, academic advising would not be considered a profession since the services offered can be performed by other professionals such as faculty.

More recently other researchers have come to the conclusion that academic advising is not a profession. In 2009, three different academic advising professionals Habley (2009), Kuhn & Padak (2008) presented articles supporting the concept that academic advising does not meet criteria to be considered a profession. Shaffer, Zalewski and Leveille, (2010) are in agreement that academic advising is not a profession. After historical analysis of the field of academic advising in comparison to societal standards of occupations and professions, they determined determined that specific strategies including improving advisor education and implementation of credentialing would be necessary in order for society to view academic advising as a profession.

In 2013, the status of academic advising as a profession was studied by Adams, Larson, & Barkemeyer. They polled academic advisors from 6 of the 10 different regions within the NACADA system at a series of regional conferences from 2012 through 2013 with a total of 187 respondents. The participants were asked a variety of questions based on society's view of what a profession is, with the goal of determining whether academic advisors viewed their occupation to be worthy of professionalization and to better understand if academic advisors themselves would advocate for academic advising as a profession.

Fifty-six percent of the respondents agreed that it is necessary for academic advisor to have a post-secondary level of education or higher. When asked if academic advisors provide a necessary service to a vulnerable population that is heavily reliant on academic advising experts 89% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Ninety-five percent of the respondents agree that the practice of academic advising should have a standardized list of tasks for which academic advisors are responsible. In addition, 67% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that academic advisors should be involved in research and publication, curriculum assessment and development, and accreditation processes within their institution (Adams, Larson, & Barkemeyer, 2013).

 Research mentioned above from Adams et. al. (2013) does show that academic advisors would advocate for the future development of the academic advising field and they discuss certain practices that can help boost academic advising to the status of a profession. On the other hand, research shows that the majority of those working in the field view the job as a profession already. A recognized professional status could make the job more appealing and could potentially impact one's intentions to remain in the field of academic advising.

Career Advancement

The majority of adacemic advisors seeking career advancement in the field would be forced into an administrative role (Iten & Matheny, 2008). Iten & Matheny (2008) point out tthere are some institutions that are beginning to recognize academic advising as a profession, and have established academic advising career paths. They presented several examples of universities who have established career paths for academic advisors.

According to Iten & Matheny (2008), the Director of Advising in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota, hires academic advisors as assistant academic advisors who move up to associate and senior academic advisors based on years of experience. This hierarchical structure provides advisors with a clear path to advancement, and comes with a pay increase as they advance to the senior advisor position.

Iten & Matheny (2008) reported another example of an institution that developed a career path for academic advisors. They state that the Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising Center at the University of California Riverside, was worried that the center would lose good academic advisors seeking promotion to other departments in higher education, due to the lack of advancement within academic advising. The solution was the creation of an academic advising task force that was able to implement three levels of academic advisors distinguished by educational qualifications, professional development, and responsibilities. This solution not only allowed advisors to better understand the expectations of their positions, but enabled the institution to provide greater resources to the advising team. Students attending the institution reported being much more satisfied with the organizational structure of advising as a result of these changes. Although Iten and Matheny (2008) presented several examples of institutions adopting a career path for academic advisors, the majority of advising centers do not have such a system.

Salary

In 1987, the NACADA Task Force sought to gain a better understanding of the work-life of academic advisors. Based on results of a nationwide survey including approximately 720 respondents, the average academic advisor salary at the time ranged from $15,000 –$30,000 (Gordon, Swenson, Spencer, Kline, Bogenschutz, & Seeger, 1988). A recent NACADA study (2015) stated the average national annual income for an academic advisor is $43,546. The salaries for academic advisors have not increased substantially in the last thirty years, yet job expectations have increased dramatically.

Susan Bramlett-Epps, a doctoral candidate at East Tennessee State University, focused her dissertation on the work life of professional advisors (2002). She conducted interviews with 18 academic advisors. When participants were asked the question "Do you think you are appropriately compensated for the work you do as an advisor", the majority of participants expressed dissatisftion with the compensation they received, especially in regards to the amount of experience and education required for the position.

Job Satisfaction

The importance of job satisfaction has been specifically examined in research for years. Beyth-Marom, Gorodeisky, Bar-Haim, and Godder (2006) discuss this important work regarding the job satisfaction among tutors in an Israeli University. In their study, researchers determined that job satisfaction is directly related to staff turnover, as well as absenteeism, low performance, and consistency. There were two variables: job importance and job richness. Results indicated that 42% of the respondents believed job satisfaction had an impact on consistency of the employees, in this case tutors. Most

importantly, the study showed that employee satisfaction can impact the quality of services provided to students seeking assistance. Much like the tutors in the Beyth-Marom et. al (2006) study, academic advisors are often the only consistent interaction a student will have with student services personnel, thus it is likely that job satisfaction for academic advisors can impact the students they serve (Habley, 2004).

As mentioned by Gregory (2011), companies often focus on production and income and less on the employees and customers. In the case of academic advising, the quantity of students seen is parallel to production numbers within a company. Unfortunately, other parallels are present because advisors' needs, as well as the students, can be overlooked in the process of trying to increase advisement numbers. A Gallup study from 2005, showed that businesses with higher employee satisfaction have an 86% higher customer rating, and 76% success in lowering turnover rate (Branham, 2005). If these findings are applied to academic advising, ensuring advisors are satisfied with their job can lead to greater student satisfaction, higher quality advisement, greater student retention, and less advisor turnover in the field.

Studies have also been done to identify why people are satisfied and dissatisfied with their jobs. According to Bozeman and Gaughan (2011), individual reactions to job experiences are impacted by many factors. Salary, possibility of advancement, and the work itself were just a few factors pointed out as impacting job satisfaction.

Sagayarani (2013) surveyed 42 employees within a training and development company and concluded that a high rate of employee retention is directly related to staff satisfaction. The purpose of Sgayarani's survey was to give employees a safe place to

express their views on multiple issues that may impact satisfaction. Specific areas addressed within the survey included, but were not limited to: company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, working conditions, recognition, advancement, achievement, and responsibilities. Overall, 50% of the employees were satisfied with their jobs and recommendations included: improvement of work environment to increase productivity and implementation of reward system.

According to Ned Donnelly (2009), satisfied professional advisors tend to obtain their satisfaction from working directly with students. Donnelly's study utilized online surveys, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups to determine job satisfaction among full-time and faculty advisors. Of the 4,917 NACADA advisors solicited to participate in Donnelly's *Survey of Advisor Satisfaction*, 1,913 survey responses were returned via email to determine the study's results. Based on Donnelly's findings, not only can it be inferred that academic advisors desire student interaction, but their job satisfaction is increased based on this interaction as well. When advisor responsibilities (apart from student interactions) begin to grow too much, the interaction with students can be impacted.

It is clear that a satisfied advisor is more likely to effectively perform the day-to-day responsibilities of their position, thereby leading to greater efforts in the advising process on behalf of the students (Yip, et. al., n.d). In theory, a satisfied advisor will provide a great experience for the student.

Academic Advising Appreciation and Recognition

When an academic advisor is asked the question: "What do you enjoy about your position as an academic advisor?" the typical response reflects the advisor's desire to help students. It is often made clear by academic advisors that the reward of the job comes specifically from interactions with students. According to Bramlett-Epps (2002), the majority of her participants started their answers with the fact that they liked working with students in one-way or another.

The Value of Student Recognition

As mentioned previously, student recognition happens often. Holly Hart, the editor of *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal* from 2001 to 2005, highlighted unedited excerpts from the journal's writing competition that took place in 2001 entitled, "Excerpts from the Journal's Writing Competition" (2002). One question from the writing competition was: "How is academic advising different from teaching, personal counseling, and career counseling?"

Christopher Gregory, an Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Education and the Director of the advising center at Framingham State College, responded to the writing prompt by saying, "Academic advising is rewarding for me because I teach and counsel. " He went on to further state that, "What's important is that I, the advisor, plant the seeds of possibilities through instruction and guidance, which is what advising is all about. " (p. 4)

Another academic advising professional, Kristi Williams, the coordinator of academic advising at Louis & Clark College, said, "Trying to pinpoint what makes some

of my encounters with students more rewarding and exciting than others, I realize that these are times when I am truly a teacher because the students are active learners" (p. 7). Both of these professionals highlighted the fact that interactions with students were highly rewarding.

Institutional/Supervisory Recognition

The idea behind institutional/supervisory recognition is to reward outstanding academic advisors who go above and beyond their assigned duties. The reward need not necessarily be pay raises. One example could be as simple as naming an academic advisor of the month and have that advisor featured in the campus newsletter (Drake, 2011).

After researching American academic advising systems, compiling company records, and collecting other public records via the internet, Baakile Matshegwa of University of Botswana, conducted a study that determined that academic advising plays a pivotal role in the functionality of University of Botswana (2010). The study found that the university recognizes the importance of advising at the institution, but has provided little recognition for the services. It was determined that academic advising deserves as much recognition as other important departments on campus and recommendations were made as to how the university can improve the advising services in general. One of the main recommendations was that the institution should consider offering incentives for quality advisement. Those incentives do not need to be strictly monetary. Alternatives to monetary rewards were mentioned such as guaranteed parking or consideration for

promotion as incentive that can highly motivate academic advisors (Matshegwa, 2010).

It was also determined that professional development training could help academic

advisors at University of Botswana feel knowledgeable and confident, thereby potentially

increasing the quality of advisement. These suggestions are now being implemented at

University of Botswana in an effort to clarify advisor responsibilities, reduce workloads,

and overall assist with increasing the institution value place on academic advising at the

institution.

Thomas Fairburn, an academic advisor at Ontario College of Art and Design, was

featured in *The Mentor's* article in 2002 "Excerpts from the Journal's Writing

Competition. " He stated: "Despite the lengthy history of academic advising (its formal

implementation traceable at least to the late 1820s, when a program was introduced at

Kenyon College), and its easily documented development (an even rudimentary Internet

search will elicit more than 17,000 sites), the profession still struggles in the shadows for

recognition and respect. " (p. 3). Fairburn's statement strongly supports the idea that

academic advisors feel undervalued, and perhaps the implementation of more reward

systems and incentives, like the ones mentioned by Matshegwa, can help fulfill the

desires of academic advisors to have their work be appreciated within the higher

education system.

Although both types of recognition are supported in literature, the main difference

between student recognition and institution/supervisory recognition is the fact that

student recognition happens on a regular basis. On the other hand, very few articles

demonstrate examples of institutional/supervisory recognition actually taking place take, and more often suggests that it should be implemented.

The topic of recognition or reward for advisors has been discussed for over thirty years. Larsen (1983), indicated there was little to no reward for the delivery of quality academic advising at the time. Brown & Larsen (1983) created a questionnaire that was administered to a total of 1,367 faculty and staff including: faculty members with advising responsibilities, staff advisors, and department chairs with advising connections or responsibilities. A total of 541 surveys were completed and returned for a 40% response rate overall. The specific breakdown of the total participant sub groups were as follows: 62% staff advisors, 60% chairs, and 35% faculty.

Ninety-two percent of all participants agreed that academic advising should be regarded as a significant part of the institutions mission and 55.2% strongly agreed with that statement. When asked specifically to respond to the statement "Is academic advising adequately rewarded at your institution?" responses from each sub group were as follows: 62% of the advisors, 47.7% of faculty, and 40.8% of chairs strongly disagreed with the statement. Participants were asked whether academic advising was considered in the determination of promotion and tenure. Again, advisors strongly disagreed with that statement at a rate of 71%, where chairs strongly disagreed at a rate of 36.2% (Brown & Larsen, 1983). These results are an example of the disconnect between staff and administrators. Staff indicated that there are not enough rewards and/or value placed on academic advising while a much smaller rate of administrative chairs felt the same way as the staff.

45

In 2008, NACADA surveyed 8,769 NACADA members classified as professional academic advisors, faculty academic advisors, and academic advising administration. According to Gordon, Habley, & Grites (2008) 1,969 completed the NACADA survey. When asked "What one change could help your unit or your institution's recognition and reward of advising? ", participants responded with the following: more support for professional development activities including both monetary support and supervisor support, clear constructs of a career ladder for those that seek to move up in the field, the need for administration to value both advisors and academic advising, and the need for the institution to respect academic advising. (p. 402).

According to the research of Epps (2002), Habley (2004), and Sofranko (2004), academic advisors felt undervalued and identified receiving little recognition for their work as academic advisors. Based on results of their research it can be argued that a pattern can be seen that demonstrates a continuous lack of recognition for academic advisors as of the early 2000's. In 2009, Ned Donnelly of the University of Cincinnati surveyed 4,917 NACADA members regarding their level of job satisfaction as an academic advisor, 1,913 members responded.

Donnelly specifically asked his participant to respond to the following statement: "my contributions are formally recognized". Results showed that 33% of the participating academic advisors either disagreed or strongly disagreed when asked the question "my contributions are formally recognized". On the other hand, 44% agreed or strongly agreed with that survey questions. It can be argued that Donnelly's study captures an improvement in the way academic advisors are rewarded and recognized for

their efforts; however, still shows, like past research, there is room for improvement when it comes to rewarding and recognizing academic advisors.

Further suggestions of recognition include ideas like comp time for academic advisors who spend extra hours working on office related events like orientation. It was suggested that those rewarded for such good work could be recognized at graduation and convocation ceremonies, or even featured on an "Advisor Wall of Fame" located in a centralized area of the campus (Drake, 2008).

It is clear that there is a need for rewards and recognition for advisors. Unfortunately, although a NACADA (2008) survey provided evidence that many institutions are beginning to recognize and reward academic advisors for their hard work, higher education has much farther to go in order to make academic advisors feel appreciated for the work they do. According to Drake (2008), when academic advisors feel a sense of appreciation they feel more satisfied with their jobs. Gregory (2011) supports this notion, but adds that employees will consider advancement opportunities rather than seek a new job if they are able to successfully manage their current workloads.

As changes occur in the field of academic advising, greater value is being placed on academic advisors because of their impact on student retention, persistence to graduation, and overall increased graduation rates (Nutt, 2003). Through recognition and reward processes, institution can take that appreciation a step further and demonstrate their appreciation for what academic advisors do for the institution. The more they feel that sense of appreciation and value, the more motivated a worker could be to perform

47

better. According to Kathleen O' Connell, academic advisors should be valued, rewarded, and provided with professional development opportunities related to the field of academic advising (2010). It is through these processes that academic advising administration and other higher education administration can help to ensure that students receive quality advisement and are retained until graduation. O' Connell continues by stating "If advising is not perceived to be an important activity by chairs and deans, faculty and staff will not place much value on their advising either. " (p. 1).

According to Thurmond & Miller (2006), NACADA does offer academic advising recognition on a national level. However, the institutional and advising center based appreciation is lacking and has proven to be an area of concern in the field (Tuttle, 2000). The discussion of rewards for academic advisors has been a topic of discussion and research since Brown and Larsen's early work in 1983. Drake (2011) stated that advisors' sense of appreciation and value is still a concern today and a way that institutions and supervisors can let their academic advisors know they are valued is through the implementation of reward systems.

O'Connell (2010) suggests that these rewards should be peer-reviewed, hold the same level of importance as teaching and research based recognitions, and be publicized to highlight exemplary work of any outstanding academic advisor. Incentives can be very meaningful to academic advisors and offer the encouragement they need to bring their quality of advisement to the next level.

Drake (2011) stated that academic advising positions have become more complex than ever before. As advising responsibilities and expectations increase, it is important

for advisors to be rewarded in order to avoid burnout and keep the professionals feeling as though they are making a difference. According to Peach (2013), NACADA's executive office released a statement in 2012 stating that academic advisors are rewarded very little for their exceeding efforts with students. Little rewards for great service was explained as a "mistake, because good advising, like good teaching, or publication of research, needs to be recognized" (p. 1).

<center>High Turnover Rates for Academic Advisors</center>

This issue of high turnover rates in academic advising has been a concern dating back to the late 1980's. At the 1986 NACADA Region 3 Conference, keynote speaker, Wes Habley, stated that 75% of the original members of NACADA were no longer members and of those 75% two thirds were no longer members because they left the field of academic advising. According to Rosenthal (1989) many academic advisors at that time were unclear of the future of academic advising and felt as though they were in a position that was not going anywhere. Information of this nature is what prompted NACADA to begin tasks force in 1987 to address concerns about academic advising.

Presenters Steele and Gardner held a roundtable session at the 1999 NACADA National Conference entitled "Advisor Retention," in which the issue of advisor turnover was re-visited. The goal of this session was to speak directly to the attending academic advisors regarding their concerns as academic advisors. Dialogue amongst the roundtable participants' yielded information that high turnover of academic advisors was an issue that each participant had experienced. This discussion led the group to establish a list of how high turnover rates can negatively impact an institution. This list included

<center>49</center>

lack of consistent information to provide to students, low morale among advisors, cost of hiring and training a new advisor, and the potential reduction in the quality of advising within an advising center. Although participants in this roundtable established advisor turnover as a wise-spread issue, and identified a list of ways that high turnover rates negatively impact an institution, they did not discuss how changes in advising could impact turnover rates.

Anderson (1997) reported on the efforts of one large research institution to launch a new academic advising initiative based on research pointing to quality academic advising as the key to student retention. A year and a half after this initiative was launched, out of the 55 positions filled by advisors in the new unit, 26 advisors left. That brings the total percentage of turnover in this one example to 47.27%.

Many years later, Worley (2014), an academic advisor for a school of business at a large university expressed similar concerns about high turnover rates in his advising department, reporting that he has seen 3 out of 7 advisor leave their position for various reasons within one year. Further data collection yielded that his particular advising center was losing one advisor per year.

In the Academic Advising Task Force II (UAAATF, 2010) final report published for the University of Arizona (UA) the problem with advisor turnover was highlighted. UA created an Academic Advising Task Force that is focused on improvements for the professional academic advising staff, that lead directly to an increase in staff-retention, in order to impact student retention.

50

According to Deeds (2012), average staff turnover costs are about 150% of the individual's salary. If the average salary of an academic advisor is $30,000 per year, the cost to the institution for losing that staff member could be anywhere from an extra $15,000 to $20,000 dollars on top of the staff's salary because of the additional costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training a new employee. This information reinforces what NACADA members pointed out during the Steele and Gardner Roundtable session in 1999. Thus it can be argued that advisor turnover is a continuing issue.

Summary of Literature

The research discussed in this chapter provides a foundational understanding of the history and progression of the academic advising field. Research highlighting increased institutional focus on academic advising as a critical tool in the retention of students was presented. A review of academic advising models, student preferences for particular models, and differences in the nature of faculty and full-time advisor roles was discussed. A case was made that there is increased pressure and responsibilities for academic advisors in spite of limited salary increases, non-existant career ladders, and infrequent recognition for academic advisors in most institutions. Additionally, it is clear that the issue of attrition in the academic advising field continues to be a serious threat to institutional plans for student retention and graduation.

In Chapter III, I will present the methodology that will guide this study as seek to understand how academic advisors perceive the differences in their roles and responsibilities and reflect on the nature of those changes as they relate to advising styles

and persistence in the field. Chapter IV will include the results of this qualitative study, and in Chapter V, I will discuss my findings and make recommendations based on the perspectives of the participants in this study.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. This chapter includes information on the research design, data collection methods, and analysis of data.

Research Design

I used a basic interpretive qualitative methodology. According to Merriam (2001), basic interpretive qualitative research is designed to assist researchers in understanding how individual participants make sense of any given situation. In this study, I explored the perceptions of professional academic advisors as they reflect on their experiences and the changing nature of their jobs.

The research questions for this study were:

RQ1: In what ways has the job of the academic advisor changed over the years?

RQ2: What is the impact of changes in the role of the academic advisor on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction?

RSQ 3: What contributes to the satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advising professionals?

Setting

This study included participants residing in three different institutions in one southeastern state. Interviews took place in two ways: in-person and remotely, depending on logistics (ability of researcher to travel for the interview) and on participant preference. For those that were interviewed in-person, I traveled to locations agreed upon prior to the interview. For those that were interviewed remotely, the participant chose a preferred technology for the interview via Skype or phone. Prior to the interview, email correspondence was used to set up the time of the interview and I initiated each interview at the agreed upon time utilizing the agreed upon technology.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling to interview 6 currently employed, full-time, academic advisors, from 3 different higher educational institutions in the southeast. One institution is a large four-year research institution, one is a medium-sized, four-year liberal arts institution, and the other is a two-year college. All of the institutions had centralized or shared advising centers or units. Additionally, I interviewed 3 academic advising administrators, one from each institution. Each academic advising administrator was vetted to ensure they were in a supervisory position such as a director, associate director, or assistant director, and that they also advised students. Participants and institutions remained anonymous for the purposes of this study to protect the integrity of the study, the participants, and the institutions.

Sampling and Selection Procedures

Specific criteria for selection of academic advisors was two or more years of experience in the job. This amount of experience ensured that the academic advisor had been exposed to any new changes resulting from the CCG/CCA Initiative, but also that they had worked in the field prior to implementation of these initiatives.

Criteria for academic advising administrators was 7 or more years in the field. Most administrative jobs require five or more years of experience to apply to the position. By ensuring 7 or more years of experience the participants will have spent enough time in the administrative position to be familiar with the job.

Prior to sending invitations I reviewed online profiles (publically provided by each institution) of each academic advisor and administrator to ensure they met the participation criteria previously mentioned. Invitations were then be sent to the 9 participants with the most experience in the field after their online profile has been reviewed. Once participants have accepted the invitation, further correspondence occured to confirm experience in the field, and set up time and modality for each interview.

Data Collection

The data for this study was be gathered through document review and semi-structured interviews with each participant. I began data collection with a review of key advising documents for each institution. This provided context to inform my questions and allow for additional probes during the interviews.

Approval to Conduct the Study

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was attained from the three

participating institutions as well as from Valdosta State University prior to initiating the

study (See Appendix B for IRB Approvals).

Consent to Participate

Each participant was sent an invitation to participate in this study. An example of

the email used to solicit participation can be found in (Appendix C). As the researcher

and conductor of the interview, I read the consent document (Appendix D) at the

beginning of each interview. Consent for this study was achieved once participants

agreed to begin the interview process. To protect anonymity, each participant was

assigned a pseudonym at the time of the interview.

Document Analysis

I reviewed the following information for each of the three institutions: academic

advising mission statement, academic advising syllabus, advising policies and

procedures, hiring qualifications and employment expectations, and academic advisor

employee handbook. This information provided institutional context for the interviews.

Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview protocal (See

Appendix E and F). The interviews lasted between 45-90 minutes. All interviews were

recorded digitally using Macintosh voice recording software. This software is secure and

saved recordings to both the actual private computer, and a separate back up hard drive so

that there is no chance of accidental streaming or public sharing. Both the computer and

back up hard drive were password protected to keep data secure in case the loss or theft.

I took notes during each interview for clarification purposes and to maintain the integrity of the data.

Once recorded, each interview was transcribed. I will save each recorded interview session for the designated time frame of three years as required by the IRB, once that time frame has passed, each of the recordings will be permanently erased from the secure hard drive.

Interview Questions for Advisors

The interview protocol for academic advisors was generated from literature related to the roles, rewards, and satisfaction of academic advisors, as well as from my personal experiences as an academic advisor (See Appendix E). The interview questions were designed to capture participants' descriptions of their current job, any changes in role or expectations for that job, and their satisfaction with the job. Participants were given documents from their institution. They were asked to compare their typical day in the job with the institutional documents that describe job expectations.

The interview protocol included questions regarding participants' preferred style of advising and the ideal environment and tools needed to execute these preferences. Additionally, they were asked their opinion about policies or initiatives that impact their preferred style of advising, and whether those institutional policies or initiatives impact the quality of advising offered at their institution. Finally, advisors were asked to share their career intentions and future goals.

Interview Questions for Academic Advising Administrators

The interview protocol for academic advising administrators focused on the academic advising administrators' role in assisting his/her unit to adapt to changes in the field (Appendix F). Administrators were asked to share their perception of whether or not their staff appeared to be satisfied with the job, and factors that impact that satisfaction.

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Data Analysis

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The analysis of data for this study involved a three-level coding process for the interview data and a review of relevant advising documents as they relate to the information gained from the participants.

Analysis of Interview Data

After interviews were conducted, transcribed, and checked for accuracy, I began my analysis of the data by using an open-coding method which consisted of reading the transcript line-by- line, and identifying and coding the concepts found in the data. Once this was completed I used axial coding to organize the concepts and make the concepts more abstract. Finally, I used selective coding to focus on the main ideas and developed them into major themes. Open, axial, and selective coding are recommended by Creswell (2009). Both Merriam (2001) and Patton (2001) refer to data analysis for a basic interpretive approach as an inductive process that renders descriptive results. I was able to obtain descriptive results in my study through the interview process and document reviews.

Document Analysis

Participants' institutions of employment have public documentation available regarding the following information: academic advising mission statement, academic advising syllabus, advising policies and procedures, hiring qualifications and employment expectations, and academic advisor employee handbook. A review of these documents triangulated information gathered from the interviews and provided unique contextual information about each institution.

Academic advising mission statement. An academic advising mission statement is an advising center's way of formally and publically announcing their goals and values within any given advising department. A potential academic advising candidate may refer to an advising center's mission statement to determine if their personal goals are in line with the institution they are seeking employment. This documentation was explored to determine if the mission statement presented to the public is an accurate representation of the practices of the advising center as described by the participants.

Academic advising syllabus. An academic advising syllabus is an outline typically used for students to help identify and differentiate academic advisor and student responsibility in the advising process. Academic advising syllabi was examined to determine the advising center's expectations of their academic advisors when it comes to direct interactions with students. This information was examined as to it's congruence with participants' perceptions.

Advising policies and procedures. Consideration of the written advising policies and procedure provided insight to the daily operations of an academic advising center.

Hiring qualifications and employment expectations. Documentation of posted job descriptions, hiring qualifications, and preferred hiring qualification helped identify what advising centers were looking for in a potential employee. This information was used to determine if there was an alignment of stated expectations versus actual job responsibilities as perceived by the participants.

Academic advisor employee handbook. Employee handbooks outline the policies and procedures of the advisement center, an outline of what employees can expect when working, and guidelines to be followed while working the position. According to legalflip.com, employee handbook often includes, but is not limited to the following: employee orientation procedures, definitions of employment, information about pay and benefits, expectation about conduct and disciplinary processes, and often a contract element in which an employee signs that they agree to follow the code identified in the handbook ("Employee Handbooks – An Overview," 2016). This type of documentation was reviewed to determine if academic advisors daily practice is in line with identified job expectations.

In efforts to accurately understand academic advisor's perceptions, documentation from each represented institution was analyzed and compared within each institution and across institutions. This analysis compared advisor's actual practices on the job to written expectations represented in the public documentation.

Validity and Trustworthiness

When conducting qualitative research it is imperative that the researcher be aware of validity threats and how those threats can be addressed in order to maximize the value

of the study (Maxwell, 2012). Maxwell also pointed out that we must always be aware of alternative explanations for the data. I kept these suggestions in mind and memoed regularly as my data was collected and analyzed.

In order to increase the credibility of this study, certain procedures were followed. I used triangulation and respondent validation (Maxwell, 2012). Use of these validity measures were chosen intentionally because they helped to address the possible threats specific to this study. Validity threats that impact this study, along with the chosen method to address those threats are listed below.

Respondent validation. Maxwell (2012) describes respondent validation as intentionally seeking feedback regarding your data. Respondent validation was implemented to enable participants to review all transcripts of the interview. This was done to allow participants to confirm that their voice was represented accurately. This process also allowed correction of any misrepresented information which occured in the process of transcribing interviews and interpreting data. Transcribed interviews were provided to each participant electronically via email. Each participant was instructed to review and respond via email with any changes or edits to the material. This process is also referred to as member checking by other researchers including Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Triangulation. During purposeful sampling in this study, academic advisors and administrators were chosen from three different types of higher educational institutions. One institution was a large four-year research institution, one was a medium-sized, four-year liberal arts institution, and the other was a two-year college, all of which had

centralized and or shared advising centers or units. This decision to have multiple types of institutions was intentional in order to be able to examine perspectives from different academic advising environments and obtain triangulation across settings and participants. Along with being able to compare perspectives from different types of institutions to strengthen validity of the study, documentation from each institution was reviewed in order to identify if there is any differentiation between written policies and procedure versus actual practice. Not only did this maximize options for triangulation, but also strengthened the amount of rich data collected for the study. Comparing the perspectives of administrators as well as advisors, and the cross-institutional perspectives provided additional triangulation of the data.

Researcher Interviewer

I am an academic advisor that sought to build a career in the field. I had everything to gain from increased retention practices and further development of reward systems and incentives that help recognize exemplary academic advisors. I would benefit from any positive change that could potentially occur as a result of this study. I needed to be aware of this bias so that it did not impact how I represented the voices of my participants throughout the study, specifically other advisors with similar or dissimilar intentions as my own.

Because of my background in academic advising, I was very passionate about the topic of this study and held strong opinions regarding the subject matter. As I have served as an academic advisor, I have seen high volumes of advisor turnover and it seems

as though the constant change and lack of appreciation in the field impacted the amount of advisor turnover greatly. As much as I wanted to prove that my observations correct, I remained neutral as I collected and reported my data for this study. That was necessary to get accurate data on the subject matter.

I have also noticed that the role of the academic advisor can impact a student's success in many ways. For example, I personally prefered to blend different styles of advising in order to assist students. Some students did not need excess help and a basic developmental advising session was adequate to drive that individual student to success. In most cases of group advising, I believed the prescriptive approach works the best and then I would encourage students to follow up with a one-on-one session at their convenience. On the other hand, I recognized that appreciative advising would best suit a student's needs if they need a bit more support and a relationship with their advisor. Therefore, I picked, chose, and blended advising styles to meet the needs of the students. Even with my preferred advising practices, I had to follow the established procedures of the advising center in which I was employed. The institutions that I have worked for responded to the demand for increased enrollment and retention by instituting proactive advising.

In my opinion, the proactive advising approach led to a greater focus on the quantity of students that had been contacted and advised but, still encouraged follow through. However, I believe that this approach was often executed incorrectly and too much focus was put on the outreach, getting students in the door for advising, and not the

follow through with students. This fostered a system that held quantity of those advised over quality of advisement and I noticed how this negatively impacted students and pushed advisors to a state of burnout.

I desired to help each student and wanted to take my time with them. Some students may have taken 5 minutes and others may have taken an hour. As demands in the field of academic advising have changed, I have had to dramatically change how I advised. I was still trying to do my best to provide quality advisement. With all that said, I personally felt going into this study that academic advising was an undervalued silo in higher education. As strongly as I felt, and with my desire to bring awareness to my opinion, I made sure to remove my opinion from the research and allowed the participants to speak for themselves.

Summary

This basic interpretive study was informed by the perceptions of nine academic advising professionals from three different institutions. Through semi-structured interviews and a review of institutional documents related to advising, I provided rich, descriptive data that answered my research questions.

 This chapter provided details of my basic interpretive study including research questions, settings, participants, data collection, and analysis. The research questions were designed to determine how changes impact and academic advisor's job, how those changes could impact the quality of advisement of offered to a student, and if the changes and demands on academic advisor's impact advisor turnover. Data collection procedures included the use of an interview protocol and a document review. In Chapter IV, I

provided the results of the study. Chapter V includes a discussion of results and

recommendations for further research and practice.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. The first three chapters of this dissertation outlined the importance of academic advising in regards to student retention, how changes within the profession impact academic advisors' experiences on the job, academic advisors ability to use the advising model preferred by their institution and their overall job satisfaction. A literature review encompassing the history of academic advising and it's functionality within higher education, and the explanation of the basic qualitative interpretive approach used in this study were provided in the first three chapters. The findings that emerged from this qualitative analysis of data collected through semi-structured interviews and the review of key advising document from each institution, will be presented in this chapter.

Nine advising professionals were interviewed in order to identify professional advising staff perceptions regarding changes in the field of academic advising as well as to determine the impact of those changes. For the purposes of this study, pseudonyms we used to protect the identities of all the participants. Participant profiles are provided below in addition to information regarding the participants institutional and expriencial

66

details can be found in Table 1. and Table 2. All participant information has been broken down to by professional title in order to show differentiation between advisors and advising administration.

Brief Profiles of the Interviewed Academic Advisors

Brief written profiles of each of the academic advising participants are presented below. Table 1 includes demographic data for the academic advising participants.

Table 1. *Academic Advising Participant Institutional Affiliation and Experience*

Pseudonym	Type of Institution	Years of Experience
Jeff	Large - 4 Year Liberal Arts	10+ years
Jaqueline	Large - 4 Year Liberal Arts	7 years
Bette	Large – 2 Year College	10+ years
Julia	Large – 2 Year College	10+ years
Mary	Large – 4 Years Research	10+ years
Adele	Large – 4 Years Research	9 years

Jeff

Jeff identified himself as a full-time Academic Advisor III at a four-year liberal arts institution. Jeff has been advising for 10 plus years and currently advises Pre-Biology majors at a 250:1, student to academic advisor ratio. He stated that his current job satisfaction level is a 7 out of 10. He is satisfied with his job, but does plan on leaving the field of academic advising over the next 5-7 years, as he explained, he thinks the age difference between him and his advisee will begin to hinder the connection that is

necessary in the advising process. Jeff stated that he has no interest in advancing farther in the field of academic advising.

Jacqueline

Jacqueline identified herself as a full-time Academic Advisor III at a four-year liberal arts institution. She has been advising for 7 years and currently advises STEM and Nursing majors at a 300:1, student to academic advisor ratio. Jacqueline stated that her current job satisfaction level is an 8/9 out of 10. She plans on following the promotional path in the tiered system at her institution and plans to continue to advance in the field of academic advising. Ultimately, her goals are to enter an administrative advising position in the next five years and continue to advance until she reaches the title of Associate Director.

Bette

Bette identified herself as a full-time Academic Advisor I at a two- year college. She has been advising for more than 10 years and currently advises a mixed population of Learning Support, English as a Second Language, and Collegiate Level students at a 500:1, student to academic advisor ratio. She doesn't have specific majors that she advises, but explained that her population is assigned alphabetically based on student's last name. Bette stated that her current job satisfaction level is a 7 out of 10. Although she ranked her satisfaction level as a 7, she expressed dissatisfaction in certain areas of her current position and her institution as a whole and plans to leave the field in the next couple of years to pursue a career in educational consulting.

Julia

Julia identified herself as a full-time Academic Advisor III at a large two- year college. She has been advising for more than 10 years and currently advises all majors, assigned alphabetically by the students last name, at a 450:1 student to academic advisor ratio. She stated that her current job satisfaction level is a 7 out of 10. Although she is unsure of her specific plans for the next 5 years, as she doesn't know if she wants to continue in a student support role in academic advising or academic coaching. She is currently continuing to weigh her options regarding advancement opportunities in both areas to determine future career path. Julia also plans to future her education and pursue a doctorate in an educational field that will best suite her career choices.

Mary

Mary identified herself as a full-time Academic Advisor III at a large four-year research institution. She has been advising for more than 10 years and currently advises a mixed population of Undergraduate Juniors and Seniors regardless of majors at a 400:1, student to academic advisor ratio. She stated that her current job satisfaction level is a 2 out of 10. After explaining factors that contribute to her high level of dissatisfaction and burnout, she explained that she does not plan on staying in the field of advising more than another year or two and will begin to pursue a job in the corporate world that will utilize any transferable skills she has gotten throughout her years in advising.

Adele

Adele identified herself as a full-time Academic Advisor III at a large four-year research institution. She has been advising for 9 years and currently advises a mixed

population of Freshmen STEM and Social Science majors at a 400:1, student to academic advisor ratio. She stated that her current job satisfaction level is a 7/8 out of 10. She plans to follow the promotional path at her institution and continue to advance in the field of academic advising. Her overall goal in the next five years is to advance into an administrative advising role that will allow her to be involved in bettering retention, progression, and graduation rates of students at her institution.

Brief Profiles of the Interviewed Academic Advising Administrators

Brief written profiles of each of the professional advising administrators that participapated in this study are presented below. Table 2 provides demographic data for the participants.

Table 2. *Academic Advising Administrative Participant's Institutional Affiliation and Experience*

Pseudonym	Type of Institution	Years of Experience
Tanner	Large - 4 Year Liberal Arts	10 years
Suzanne	Large - 2 Year College	20+ years
Joan	Large – 4 Years Reserach	29 years

Tanner

This participant identified himself as the Associate Director of the Advisement Center at a four-year liberal arts institution. He has been in the field of advising for 10 years and currently oversees a staff made up of 12 academic advisors. Although he is

serving in an administrative role, he also has a small assigned student population from all majors in additional to his administrative duties which include, but are not limited to the following: providing leadership to the advising center, serves as a liaison to both student and academic affairs at his institution, oversees the daily operations of his academic advising center, coordinates event planning for the center, tracks and reports office statistics including number of students advised on a daily basis and retention, progression, and graduation rates of students as it relates to academic advising matters, and oversees all social media endeavors for the advising center. He stated that his current job satisfaction level is a 9 out of 10 and responded that his perception of his staff's level of satisfaction is at a 7 or 8 out of 10.

Suzanne

This participant identified herself as Assistant Director of Academic Advising at a large two- year college. She has been in the field of advising for over 20 years and currently oversees a staff made up of 4 academic advisors at her particular campus. Although she is serving in an administrative role, she also assists her staff by sharing advising responsibilities and advises and assigned caseload of about 270 students in addition to her administrative duties which include, but are not limited to the following: providing leadership to the advising center, serving as a liaison to both student and academic affairs at her institution, overseeing the daily operations of the academic advising center on her individual campus, responsible for troubleshooting and overseeing tech systems related to academic advising matters of her campus including Banner and the Student Success Collaborative Predictive Analytics System, ensures that all policies

and procedures are mirrored from the institutions main campus. She stated that her current job satisfaction level is a 1.5 out of 10; however, responded that regardless of her level of satisfaction, she perceives her staff's level of satisfaction to be at an 8 out of 10.

Joan

This participant identified herself as the Associate Director of the University Advisement Center at a large four-year research institution. She has been in the field of advising for over 28 years and currently oversees all staff and academic advisors of her institutions Advisement Center including six assistant directors, their individual teams of advisors, a team of transition advisors, as well as a team of graduation counselors. Her administrative duties include, but are not limited to the following: Overseeing, leading, and managing, advising staff for the advisement center, managing daily functions of the office and advising center, overseeing data collection and reporting, responsible for hiring new academic advisors, overseeing all training processes for new hires and promoting academic advisors. She stated that her current job satisfaction level is high and she enjoys her job; however, would not specify a rating on a scale of 1 to 10. When asked to rate her perception of her academic advisors level of satisfaction on a scale of 1-10 she stated, "It can't be rated because it varies too much. "

Themes from Participant Interviews

This study sought to answer three primary research questions by exploring the perceptions of professional academic advisors as they reflected on their experiences and the changing nature of their jobs.

The research questions for this study were:

RQ1: In what ways has the job of the academic advisor changed over the years?

RQ2: What is the impact of changes in the role of the academic advisor on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction?

RSQ 3: What contributes to the satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advising professionals?

After analyzing and comparing the responses from each participant certain themes emerged that provide suggested answers to the above questions and will be further identified and outlined in this chapter.

Themes from Interviews as Related to Research Question One

When today's academic advising professionals were asked to share their perceptions of how the field has changed since they began working as academic advisors the responses were fairly consistent across the board. Two primary themes, Roles and Responsibility of Academic Advisors and Technology Advancement in Academic Advising, emerged from the interviews with the six academic advisors.

Changes in Roles and Responsibility

The first theme that emerged from the responses of the six interview academic advisors was the major changing roles and responsibilities of academic advisors over time. The primary changes in advisors roles and responsibilities can be broken down into three categories: development of three-tiered system, increased job responsibility for academic advisors, and transition from a Prescriptive Academic Advising Approach to a Developmental Approach, and the further development of different advising models

73

including Intrusive/Proactive and Appreciative Advising that are based on developmental advising theories.

    Development of three-tiered advising system. Academic Advisor titles vary from institution to institution; however, in the last decade there has been an increased implementation of three-tiered advisor title systems in advising centers. Tanner explained the tiered system from his perspective at his 4 year liberal arts institution as follows:

> We have Academic Advisor I's, we have Academic Advisor II's, and Academic Advisor III's. The Academic Advisor III's supervise Academic Advisor II's. The Academic Advisor I is a full time position, so they [Academic Advisor III's] are expected to supervise them as well. The Academic Advisor III will not have as many students assigned to them because they have other duties, such as supervision, approving time, doing different projects, data collection for the center and pulling and completing reports for the office. You know, being in charge of different outreach events that we may have for housing or helping create the major fair event. Then, the advisor II's, they supervise the two advisor assistants we have in the office each semester, as well as assist the Advisor III's on projects and other information. They too do not have as many advisees as the Advisor I's because their responsibility is to do other projects and social media and things of that nature.

All three interviewed academic advising administrators discussed having a three-tiered system of advising titles at their individual advising centers, as well as all 6

interviewed academic advisors. Beyond the chain of command of Academic Advisor IIIs, II's and I's, the tiered system was developed to ensure more promotional opportunities for academic advisors as explained by Julia:

> The structure of our titles has changed drastically. Now we have Advisor I's, II's, and III's. An Advisor I, you just go through the motions and see students. Advisor II, you're kind of taking more on, you're taking on more of the leadership role. Then Advisor III is when people start coming to you. And asking you to problem solve, asking you for help, and having you contact a department to get something fixed. As a III, you're doing more policies with teachers, more leadership, more coaching with the other staff and helping them get to where you are, because you start off as an Advisor I, and you don't really know anything about advising. Then you gradually grow into your position. Because it's a tiered-position, one will prepare you to do the next... When you're [an Advisor] I, you're doing the job to prepare you for a II, when you're a II, you're doing the job that prepares you for a III. When you're a III, you're doing the job to prepare you for an assistant director or coordinator, and that tiered system was adopted to help us all move up if we want to.

Suzanne also commented on the three tiered system:

> We have what we call tier-leveled advising. We have Advisors I, II and III's and then we have graduation counselors. And, as you can imagine, each level has different expectations or minimum qualifications. When I was an academic adviser, we didn't have tiered advising. That meant I got into an advising position

75

I had nowhere to advance… We very intentionally went out and made it so that we could have tier-leveled advising so that instead of our advisors leaving, we would have an opportunity to promote them.

All 6 academic advisors mentioned that their advising centers had adopted the tiered system since they began to work at their individual institutions. Bette expressed concern about how the existing academic advisors were labeled upon the adoption of the three-tiered system at her two-year institution. She explained that she felt that her level of experience wasn't considered when she was given the label of Academic Advisor I. As she discussed her perception of the adoption of the three tiered system for labeling academic advisors she explained:

I really have a lot of mixed feelings about [the three-tiered system] simply because I can understand the first time person coming in, as an Advisor I, they are learning because they've never done that before. But when you've got seasoned advisors and you're still using the same classification of Advisor I and you're overlooking the experience of the advisors and you ask them to do the same level of work as those they're reporting to, and how we were informed based on salary, that's doing a disservice to the advisors. The responsibilities are the same. They don't change. They're not changing because of me being an Advisor I or this person being a II, or that person being a III. What does change by a small degree, is when a person who's a[n Advisor] II or III. A three is supervisory over a II and II's are supervisor over [Advisor] I's.

Regardless of perception, it is clear from the responses that many institutions are adopting a three-tiered labeling system for their academic advisors for many different reasons and it is in fact changing the functionality of academic advising centers. As a result of the adoption and implementation of the three-tiered system, academic advisor's job expectations are now adapting to reflect whether they are an Academic Advisor I, II, or III. This is one factor perceived by the 6 advisors interviewed that has led to the steadily changing roles and responsibilities of academic advisors.

Increased job expectations. According to the 6 academic advisors in this study, another factor leading to changing roles and responsibilities of academic advisors is increased job expectations. Whether the increased expectations are a result of the adoption or implementation of the three-tiered advising systems or technological advancements made in the field over all, current full time advisors are definitely expressing that their day to day responsibility and overall job expectations have increased tremendously.

The role of an academic advisor has not always been a full-time job. Initially, the responsibility of academic advising fell into the hands of professors who systematically and prescriptive hand off a schedule to their students each semester. Jeff, explained he had increased responsibility and increased job expectations as he has been promoted from Academic Advisors I, up to his current postion as an Academic Advisor III:

It's definitely changed over the years. Things like, more responsibilities, and… a little more stepping up, got promoted a little bit so my duties have changed. I've

taken on more supervisory positions and more departmental leadership kind of things.

In addition, some advisors spoke of an increased expectation to show leadership or take on administrative responsibilities without necessarily having a leadership title in academic advising or being promoted as shared by Adele:

I feel like job expectations have evolved tremendously and progressed throughout the nine years [I have been in advising]. When I started I was supporting other advisors, assisting with athletics and, collaborating with other advisors in a more supportive role. As I progressed through my, academic advising understanding, I've been able to develop better management skills and my leadership roles and skills.

Beyond increased job expectations that include academic advisors handling more than just the assignments of schedules and assisting students with staying on track with what they need to graduate, now academic advisors are being asked to partner with other institutional departments, including the dean's office, different colleges, and even departments including but not limited to Financial Aid, Office of Academic Success, and even tutoring.

Jeff went on to give a specific example of additional changes he has experienced over the years regarding his job expectations to collaborate with outside departments:

I kind of serve as the liaison between our [advising] department, the college [of math and science], and the dean's office of the college, so I work really closely with those deans…Yes, it's a requirement. You know, I'm not sure if it's in my

specific job description, but yeah, I would say it's a requirement based on the population.

Julia also explained changes in job expectations since her start in academic advising and how certain increase of job expectations may vary based on institution regardless of promotion status, as discussed by Jeff. Julia stated:

Different institutions require their advisors to do different things. Previous institutions that I worked at, the advisor was not required to do anything that dealt with academic probation standings. If the student was on a warning, if the student was on probation or supervision or what not, the advisors were not responsible for going over those policies and making sure that the students knew what they needed to do to stay in school. That was left up to The Office of Academic Success. So that is a new concept here at this institution where the advisor is responsible if a student is on probation, they are to tell them what their duties are to keep themselves in good academic standing. So that is definitely something new, that I've never dealt with, within the setting of academic advising.

An additional increased job expectation for the majority of the advisors is the requirement of teaching. Some are expected to teach freshman introductory courses as explained by Jacqueline who stated that she has been "required to teach College Academic Success Courses like, College 101, courses that help to acclimate the student to campus life, teach them about their resources, time management, and other skills they will need to hone in order to be successful in college. " Others feel as though it is their responsibility to teach students how to properly manage the ins and outs of adjusting to

79

college in the advising session as explained by Jacqueline. She discussed the changes in how the registration process is taught to students and how academic advisors and students alike may get frustrated with it, but the process has adapted in such a way to assist the student with learning the fundamentals of registration and scheduling:

So now, the students come and we make their schedule in orientation. Now, it's not necessarily pretty, meaning the students get frustrated. It's stressful for them in the process. It's stressful for the advisor. You know, we have to teach them how to do it. We have to make sure they're signing up for the right classes. We have to troubleshoot with them. You know, all in the time span of an hour, roughly. So it's not necessarily pretty. Um, a lot of times, new advisors come in, and they're like, 'Why do we do it like this?' And I'm like, 'I know this isn't fancy and pretty and it looks messy, but this is better than what we used to do. ' I've seen the evolution.

Bette explained how, not only has she taken on the responsibility of teaching, she too has had to monitor and coach her population of students on academic success and partner with faculty to ensure the success of her population. She explained as follows:

I've had this specific population of learning support ESL students and they were the one I advised. They were the ones that I monitored, the ones that I reached out and made contact with on issues relative to their progress and academic performance. I also made regular contact with faculty to ensure to success of my students in the classroom and would even teach certain courses for those groups

80

of students directly to ensure their success. Now I work with all collegiate level students and monitor my population the same way.

Therefore, it can be determined that teaching has become a major component of the job expectation of an academic advisor and can be considered a change that has impacted academic advisors day to day roles and responsibilities.

Transition from prescriptive to developmental advising. Although not directly stated by all advisors, each participant discussed natural transitions away from the prescriptive approach to advising that was once standard, to a more developmental approach as explained by Jacqueline:

When I first started advising, we actually used to choose course numbers with students. We would, they would come into our office. We would tell them what they needed, and then we would spend 15 minutes making a schedule with them. I found, and most of us found the process to be tedious, time-consuming, and not necessarily helpful. It took so much time. We would sit with the students and be like, 'Okay, so you have English Tuesday/Thursday at 11 o'clock. Now we need to choose your math. Okay, can't choose that one because that one's conflicting so we need to choose another one. ' It was such a time s-, for lack of a better word, time-suck. That was, like, actually creating their schedule, which they need to know how to do it on their own. We as advisors are supposed to help them know what classes to take and, and make sure they're on track to graduate and they're taking the courses that will progress them in their major, not necessarily choose the specific time. Um, and so that was something we were doing, and now

81

we don't do that at all anymore because that took away from the time that we could be doing things like, 'How are your grades? Uh, how are you doing? Are you homesick? Are you getting involved?' You know, like, we can have conversations, developmental conversations like that in lieu of this tedious process that they need to learn to do on their own anyway.

The transition to a more developmental advising approach has led to a "better balance of challenging the student and maintaining a supportive environment for the students" according to Jacqueline's experience and also shows an efficiency in academic advising transitioning from a prescriptive approach to developmental. She further stated:

I've seen an evolution in terms of by the time the students leave, although they're stressed out, they're a little frazzled; they understand the process of making a schedule. They've learned a lot and we're developing these critical thinking skills from day one. So that when they get here in the Fall, they understand why their schedule is the way it is. Instead of it just being spoon-fed to them. So that's been a shift that I've loved even if it is a little more involvement on the advising side. So most of the changes that I've seen in this profession here at this university have been positive.

Use of Technology in Academic Advising

In addition to changing roles and responsibilities of academic advisors leading to changes in the advising field over time, each of the interviewed participants also explained major changes have occurred regarding the development and implementation of technology in academic advising and how that has changed the way advising offices

82

function overall. Primary changes regarding the use of technology in academic advising includes the transition from "handwritten filing systems to computer based files" and digital filing systems have led to "universal shared databases" and the development of "predictive analytic software. "

Handwritten filing system to computer based filing system. Many advisors interviewed in this study explained that handwritten files or student records housed in filing cabinets are now a thing of the past thanks to digital technology that allows university wide sharing of student files and progress towards graduation as clearly explained by Jacqueline:

> We used to do it all on paper. We used to write out every single course we suggested. We would hand-write the notes. It was all kept in paper files in a filing cabinet. When a student would come, someone would physically go get the student's file (laughs). That seems so Stone Age now 'cause now it's all in the computer. Now, every single thing we talk with the student, every single class we recommend, the discussions we had, if we make any recommendations for campus resources, it's all documented in various computer systems, software's. So yeah, that's changed. Even the way we make appointments, there wasn't really an online way to do that. Now, they can still make an appointment in person or via email with an advisor, but they can also do it online. So, that's great. So it's definitely moved from paper and pencil to more digital technologies.

Adele explained her perception of the transition from handwritten files to computer-based files and the development of different technology based software's in advising:

> From a standpoint of how advising as a profession has progressed is I feel like it's exponentially progressed and advanced as a profession. In my first role in academic advising we just used Grades First as a tracking mechanism that still used paper filing. And so we had a paper file for each and every student and utilized each file as a tracking mechanism. Then going to second institution, we used Grades First and implemented more information in a database system, but it wasn't the same database that I'm using at my current institution. So that was increasing the technological knowledge and understanding and those changes have impacted the profession in a major way.

Many advisors now have digital access to student records, can see which departments the student has visited and even share digital notes with one another to ensure the student is getting the assistance they need to succeed as explained by Bette. She elaborated on this and stated that she and her fellow advisors "use technology to work together as a team, if a student comes in who has seen me previously, and I am not available, the current advisor assisting them can refer to my notes in the system to reflect on what we discussed. " She further shared "a lot of times the info discussed will be in the notes but, it is nice to ensure that the students are reiterating the same information from advisor to advisor. "

Additional technological developments that were birthed from computer based files, and discussed by many of the advising professionals, was the creation of advising logs or spreadsheets. These logs help each of the advisors monitor their assigned populations of students and are then compiled on a regular basis to allow the advising center to monitor which students have been advised and which students have not according to Mary. She stated:

> I compile each population log from the advisor on my team and compile them for upper administration. That way they can review one big master log that includes that progress of each advisor as they advise their population.

Through the experiences shared by the participants, the development of technology in Academic Advising there is a clear transitional timeline. Initially, academic advisors would file hand-written notes based on student meetings and these were typically used in conjunction with student record databases, such as Banner. Then advising ended up adopting GradesFirst Software (The original SSC), used to track the number of students advised across the Advising Center. This tracking system was also used in addition to tradition note taking, and Student Record Database. Over time tracking systems merged student record database information, tracking systems to develop Predictive Analysis software that is now referred to as SCC. These changes allowed space for notes to be collected and stored digitally while providing access to all staff and faculty throughout the institution. Hand-written notes stored in filing cabinets are a thing of the past now that Predictive Analytics Software have been widely adopted by Academic Advising Centers. Not only does this make it possible for academic

85

advisors to provide student with a customized advising experience, it also shows how technology has become such a large part of an academic advisor's job.

Predictive analytic software in academic advising. As technology became a larger part of the day to day functions of advising, the creation of Predictive Analytic Software also became a big part of how academic advisors began to do their jobs and has led to major changes in the field of academic advising. With the further development and adoption of Predictive Analytic Software, academic advisors can monitor student process and help them proactively determine their academic path based on their performance in classes.

Jacqueline described how predictive analytics software is used at her institution and how it has changed the way she does her job as an advisor:

> We use SSC Campus, Predictive Analytics Software, to look at student progress based on past student success. Essentially, the students are already kind of assessed in terms of whether they're at-risk or not when they start, and so we look at students that are more likely to not do as well based on comparing their progress to past student success rates. We try and be more aggressive with certain student who may be at risk and outreach to them. Or students that are already at-risk based on their GPA and where they are in their major. SSC does a lot of comparing and analyzing work for us, then alerts us as to which student we need to reach out to. Sometimes we, as advisors, take it a step further and take the data that SSC makes and basically delve into it even deeper. And try something with a

86

population to see if we saw an increase in GPA and retention and that kind of thing.

Adele described her experience with predictive analytics software and how this technology has impacted her abilities as an advisor:

We're able to see [the student's educational journey] from start to finish rather than looking at a single file I put together. Or stressing because I don't know where the previous advisor's file is for the student and then just having to work with what I have. SSC lets you have multiple occurrences of outreach to the students and we are able to see this kind of development of the students' progression through the university and how advising has really worked with them.

Tanner explained the expectation for his academic advisors is to utilize SSC to ensure student progression to graduation:

I expect advisors to utilize the SSC software where we can see if a student is at risk or not, see what foundation courses they need, review grades, and review student progression to ensure appropriate and efficient advising session.

Predictive analytic software was also identified as a resource for advisors who have certain reporting and data collection responsibilities, as explained by Jeff. He stated:

At one time, it was like I had to do everything by hand, like doing everything, kind of old school, like tracking and creating spreadsheets. Now we have various software systems, especially SSC, that kind of do all that for us. The systems will

run data and we can filter information to create reports and spreadsheet for the advising center to review. Yeah, so that has definitely changed over the years.

Julia explained that she has always used the student record database, Banner, and that was the only primary software until her advising center adopted tracking and predictive analytics software. She explained:

Every institution I have ever worked at always used Banner, which is something used across the board at most institutions. Then we starting using GradesFirst, primarily for tracking which students have been advised and who they were advised by. GradesFirst, then grew into what we use now which is called SSC and it is a Predictive Analytics Software that does all the same things as GradesFirst, but also allows us to monitor student progress, digitally communicate with other staff and faculty regarding student interactions, and overall advise students more efficiently.

An explanation from Suzanne also discussed technological changes in the field in regards to adopting predictive analytics software:

Things have been changing for a while now, slowly but surely, and that is due to increased demand for RPG [retention, progression, and graduation] data. All of that is related to advising and it's up to us to capture that information for the institution since we're the ones who advise the students after all. The SSC is a predictive analytics software that serves as a resource to the advisors because it contains past and present student information and then generates that information to predict the success of any given student based on past student performances.

Basically, it is predicting if a student will graduate on time, whether or not a student is at risk of failing or not making it in their current major, whether they are behind on their major or core classes and how that will impact their progression toward graduation, things of that nature and those predictions are generated based on the success patterns of past students. All advisors are expected to use it and are trained to use the software properly. It does have some drawbacks but overall a great tool for us.

She continued to describe more about what she refers to as "drawbacks" regarding predictive analytics software. She explained her perception of how it can be helpful, can sometimes have a negative impact because it takes away from a student centered position and forces it to be data centered. Suzanne continued:

I mean, as an administrator in an advising center, I do see all the benefits of having Predictive Analytics Software. It truly is such a great tool for us as advisors. What I do see happening as we use this software more and more is an increased amount of reporting expectations on me and my team of advisors because the data is right there at your fingertips so they ask for report after report. I know have heard my advisors say they feel like data entry professionals rather than advisors sometimes. And they is this overall lack of understanding from even my direct superiors that what they are asking for in reports, requires us to pull data, but also contact students via phone or email and then confirm they got certain information, they see it as us working our student population and proactively advising but in reality we end up just bugging the student. It is just a

lot of stuff for me to ask my advisors so I share that load with them when I can, but I can see it take its toll on workload and satisfaction of my advisors and myself, honestly. I just sometimes wish we could use the software to advise and have more specific people to look at reporting and data entry duties. That's how it should be anyway, that's how it is presented, but that is not what actually happens.

Julia shared a similar concern regarding the use of predictive analytics software and it impact on her responsibilities as an academic advisor:

I definitely see the advantages of having predictive analysis software, it's a great tool to have that's for sure. Especially since I am such a data -driven advisor. I mean let's be real, you can't prove anything about retention without data. we should just be careful that our desire to push numbers, and our need to collect data, doesn't negatively impact our student centered objectives as advisors. That is easy to do when you have this much data available.

Overall, there were positive responses from the professional advisors towards the technological developments that have impacted academic advising. These changes in technology have opened the door for advisors to be able to execute the roles and responsibilities of their jobs more holistically since access to computers, and the various advising systems, are available to all those assisting students. Collaborative file sharing, detailed student records, and student progression information is located all in one place and lends a hand to collection of RPG data in an efficient and organized manor. Not to

mention, equal access to the information regardless of who is assisting the student at any given time.

Impact of Complete College America/ Complete College Georgia/ Fifteen to Finish on Advising Responsibilties

As discussed previously Statewide and Federal initiatives have been developing steadily over the past several years and are becoming a crucial part of the field of Advising. These initiatives, Complete College Georgia (CCG), Complete College America (CCA), and Fifteen to Finish, have institutions looking beyond enrollment numbers and now also have a major focus on retention and graduation rates. For the purpose of this study, questions were developed to capture the impact these initiatives are having on the academic advising professionals and their daily expectations and responsibilities. Furthermore, the results showed that CCG, CCA, and Fifteen to Finish are examples of a major change that has occurred in the history of academic advising and it does have an impact on the way academic advisors approach their jobs.

The responses among the advising professionals varied; however, almost all of them mentioned an increased pressure to make sure as many students as possible are taking 15 credit hours in Fall and Spring Semesters as a result of the implementation of CCG, CCA, and Fifteen to Finish.   Jeff shared:

> I'd say they put a little more pressure on our jobs as an advisor to do things like make sure students are taking a certain number of credit hours. Back before we had initiatives like 15 to Finish there wasn't as much emphasis on students taking full 15 credit hours each semester as long as they were enrolled for 12 credit

hours, which is considered full time. It has definitely, giving us more pressure to kind of make sure students are taking more hours.

Jeff further discussed that he has slowly learned of these initiatives over the past 5 years via staff meetings, professional development and from fellow co-workers; however, he pointed out that a higher focus has been placed on these initiatives in the past few years and specialized discussion and training has become more frequent. Jacqueline also mentioned feeling an increased pressure to register students for more credit hours. She stated:

If we're being honest, I don't like this increased push to register all students for 15 hours. That's not necessarily the best advice for my population to take 15 hours because they are taking an extremely difficult science their first semester as well as Math and English. Taking too many hours can hurt their chances of success and if they don't do well that first semester, their chances of getting into the Nursing Program is severely diminished. Not to mention, that if they take 15 hours each semester, they will run out of core classes to take before the apply to their program. So, they end up making up for not having the full 15 credit hours. It just really hurts my population so I wish these initiative could be acclimated and implemented based on major, program and degree requirements, and generally knowing what each student can handle, rather than just making a blanketed announcement that all students must take 15 credit hours.

Both academic advisors Bette and Julia discuss "a big push to implement the initiative Fifteen to Finish" however, they make great efforts to get to know their students

92

individually to discuss their comfort level with taking 15 credit hours, regardless of the

pressure they feel. Bette discussed:

> Well, you have to make the distinction between the students that you can
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> encourage to do 15, versus students who can't. I always inform the students about
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> the initiative, but make sure they know their options as well. It's about getting to
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> know your students and using common sense to advise them in a way that will
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> drive them to success, regardless of the push to implement an initiative. So, I
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> always introduce the idea to the student, and together we make a plan for success,
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> but the student should always come before the initiative.
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> Julia stated:
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> There is a big push to get students aware of Fifteen to Finish and to get the
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> students to register for 15 hours. I just think it is important to discuss the options
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> with students, review their program and degree requirements, and then move
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> forward with a plan for each of my students. I do think it is a good concept so I
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> try to encourage students who are able to handle the course load. I also
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> understand that not every student I come across is going to be equipped to one,
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> pay for 15 credit hours, and second able to do 15 hours worth of classes because
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> of their individual circumstances.

Julia later discussed the importance of being an effective advisor and how her

ultimate goal is to help the student and institution be successful. "You have to be willing

and able to adapt to the needs of your population. " Adele described feeling greatly

impacted by the implementation of the initiatives at her institution:

I definitely feel impacted by the Fifteen to Finish Initiative, Complete College Georgia and Complete College America. They all really go hand in hand with one another. My institution has really honed in to the implementation of these initiatives and we very much utilize them as much as possible. I see the impact on our students and advisor with the proactive-izing [sic] efforts to reach students and help them understand why we would be encouraging this path. I think the idea of Fifteen to Finish is beneficial to students because it gives them a guideline to follow and those that are capable tend to be very successful.

Mary has a different response regarding the impact of her advising job based on the implementation of the initiative. When asked about how these policies and initiatives impact her job she stated:

I have heard of the different initiatives Complete College and Fifteen to Finish; however, I am not that familiar with them. I mean I have always guided my student to try to complete 30 credit hours a year regardless of how they achieve that; I guide them to that checkpoint. So I don't really think the policies and initiative really impact me at all.

All academic advisors mentioned their experience of having an increased expectation to have informed discussions with their students on many different topics related to advising and educational planning, which leads to higher outreach from the advisors to the students. These experiences are also in line with what the academic advising administration had to say about how these initiatives have impacted each advising center as a whole, but also their jobs as administrators.

According to Tanner and Suzanne, policies and initiatives like CCG, CCA, and Fifteen to Finish have impacted their jobs as academic advising administrators greatly. Tanner stated:

> I think they (the policies and initiatives) impact us a lot! As an administrator, it is my job to ensure that my advisors are well trained on these policies and initiatives, and that they are advising students accurately with the policies and initiatives in mind. Then we all work together to drill this info into the student's head. It is more work on us all in a way to outreach and inform, not just students, but the rest of the institution staff and faculty.

Suzanne stated similar experiences when asked how the policies and initiative impact her work:

> It does impact us greatly, because it impacts in a way that makes you question your moral compass a bit. I know a lot of the students we deal with have families or extenuating circumstances. To advise them to take 15 hours a term would be detrimental to their success. Yet, the higher ups adopt these policies and expect our advising team to implement it and push it for all students. It is just not feasible for all students! These means a lot of extra work for me and my advisors in the way of extra outreach to inform students on what these policies and initiatives are, exactly, and then we have to work really hard to get them into our offices enough times to get to know them and advise them appropriately. Then you have to consider the student who can handle 15 hours, can they afford it? These initiatives have shifted the way we do our jobs in a way because of all that,

95

just balancing on that grey line of helping the students while respecting and
implementing the initiatives.

Joan described her experience of being impacted from these policies and
initiatives in a very different way than the other administrators. From her experience, the
implementation has given her, her advisors, and her advising center a greater purpose.
She shared:

> Everything is functioning differently now so they have impacted us quite a bit.
> Advisors have to recognize where the students are now. They have more
> responsibility to manage their populations and get to know their students and
> because of that it gives us a greater purpose in the field of advising. We're not
> just handing out schedules anymore, or looking a degree plan and shelling out the
> next set of courses.

Overall, both advisors and advising administrators explained how their daily job
expectations and responsibilities have been impacted greatly as policies and initiative like
CCG, CCA, and Fifteen to Finish have been adopted in advising centers across the state.
The majority of the advising professionals described increases in workload, including;
increased amounts of student outreach and a higher need to really get to know their
students on a deeper level in order to advise appropriately in conjunction with these
initiatives; however, their responses also capture an overall concern that student needs
and abilities should come before the implementation of these initiatives to ensure the
success of the students and institution.

Document Analysis

For the purposes of this study, each participant was asked to review two different documents from their institutions. The first document, the Academic Advising Syllabus, is a document that typically outlines the expectations of the students and advisors during the advising process, as well as describing the advising process. According to Trabant (2006), an advising syllabus is a tool used to outline the experience and relationship of advising for advisees. The participants were also asked to review their academic advising job descriptions as the second document being analyzed for this study. Both of these documents were obtained for the purposes of this study through each institution's website, human resource website, and academic advising centers websites associated with each institution. Each participant was asked to review each document and discuss its accuracy and compare whether their daily responsibilities are different or similar to what they do daily as an advisor. Following the interview process, each participant response helped confirm that changes in academic advising job expectations have occurred over time and are very different from what they once were. However, the changes are being accurately represented in both documents according to the academic advising participants in this study.

Although Bette stated that there are "small differences between what is outlined in the documents and what actually happens daily", and academic advisors Julia and Adele, described slight inconsistencies with their job description documentation, all three still describe their institutions advising syllabus and their job description as accurate overall. Each shared that even though they are finding differences, it would be difficult to capture

everything that an academic advisor does on a daily basis in one document. Especially since their duties may change based on the given environment at the time, hence the reason the term "other duties assigned" is included in each job description and the broad terminology is used in both documents. All three academic advising administrators pointed out the inclusions of the disclaimer "other duties as assigned" fairly quickly within their interview and confirmed the accurateness of both documents as well. Academic advisors Jeff, Jacqueline and Mary, more specifically stated that both the advising syllabus and job descriptions, although "broadly captured" in the documentation, was similar and accurate to the daily functions of an academic advisors.

The above responses presented that all of the advising professionals responded in a way in which they felt like they understood the requirements and expectations of their positions based on the documentation provided by their institutions. Through the document analysis portion of this study, not only can we confirm the way the role of the academic advisor has changed over the years, but we also have clear outlines, from different institutions across the state of Georgia, of expectations and responsibilities of the modern academic advisor in higher education today.

Themes From Interviews as related to Research Question Two

The following themes emerged after discussing advisor's perceptions regarding research question two associated with this study: What is the impact of changes in the role of the academic advisor on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction? The responses reported thus far, support that the role of the professional academic advisor has changed, and consistently continues to do so as advising practices

adapt to accommodate student success. As a result, the job responsibilities and expectations for academic advisors are increasing as confirmed by the above analysis documentation.

These developments are also leading academic advising professionals to seek to identify ways to ensure high-quality advisement in a field that is constantly adapting to ensure student retention, progression, and graduation. Participants shared that changes in the role of the academic advisor are having an impact on the quality of advisement for students. specifically the ideal environment, tools, and attitudes needed to provide high-quality advisement to the students at their institution. Through the participants responses regarding this theme, changes in the role were further outlined, and the advisors were able to to share their perceptions of what it takes to ensure high-quality advising in a line of work that is always changing.

Ideal Environment to Provide High-Quality Advisement

Many of the participants discussed the aspects of a specific environment needed to provide high- quality advising to students as they help them on their academic journey to graduation. That ideal environment, according to the academic advising professional interviewed for this study includes: privacy, collaboration, and flexibility.

Privacy. Several academic advisors mentioned the need for a private environment in order to provide the highest quality advising possible. Jeff responded to this question as follows:

Advising Centers must provide some kind of privacy so the students can talk to

the advisor personally without worrying about other people hearing them.

Especially now days when we are really charged with getting to know students and working closely with them to make degree plans. We don't just provide a schedule anymore; we provide support in so many areas and student need to feel comfortable talking to us about everything. We want to be able to engage in serious discussions if need be and I definitely think that privacy is needed to be able to do that.

Adele also discussed the importance of privacy to ensure a high-quality advising environment:

As an advisor, I need to be able to provide the highest level of support possible to my students so they feel comfortable and open up. Having an office, a private space, really helps to ensure they feel comfortable sharing anything I need to know in order to help them. I also think that helps support the confidentiality that you need in advising. We consider our center to follow the ideals of the Appreciative Advising Model, so we try hard to create a positive environment in which students feel free to share openly and have a truly developmental approach with our students. Privacy is so beneficial to the direction we are going in as an advising center and is needed for us to achieve high-quality advising.

Collaboration. Several academic advisors discussed the need for collaboration between advising staff, campus staff and departments, and even with students in order to ensure the highest quality of advising takes place. Jacqueline discusses "consistent support from student affairs and other offices and departments on campus with one common goal, to support students towards success and graduation" as well as "the

development of a good relationship between advisors and advisees. " According to the responses from Jacqueline, these collaborations are necessary to the creation of an open and fluid environment that is needed to guarantee high-quality advisement. Jacqueline stated:

> We're all part of a team with one common goal being the student's success. Not only do I work hard to collaborate with my fellow staff, in and outside of advising, I collaborate with students and my leadership team to make sure we're all on the same page. That collaboration really helps create a copasetic environment that is needed for us to provide high-quality advising.

> Mary discussed the need for a supportive and collaborative environment as well, she stated:

> I would like to have a supportive team. I would love to work in an environment in which I can collaborate with my co-workers and bosses when I need assistance, or want to talk about certain experiences I have faced. I think that would really improve the quality of advising at our institution.

> Tanner also shared the importance of having a collaborative environment in order to ensure high-quality advising stating that the greatest environment is a collaborative one. "We need to collaborate and work together, student and academic affairs, students and advisors, we can't all do it alone. There is too much work that needs to be done, and too many expectations, for us not to work as a team. When that happens everyone gets to high quality advising experience possible. " He explained further:

Open door policies and staff collaboration was mentioned by Suzanne, who

stated:

I have an open door policy with my staff. I want them to be able to come to me

like their students would come to them. This type of collaboration removes

confusion and helps us all to move together and adapt together as academic

advising changes over time. So, it is important to create that team environment. I

do encourage autonomy with my staff, but also want to be available to support

and collaborate as needed so they can provide the highest- quality of advising

possible.

Flexibility. Flexible scheduling was discussed by many of the advising

professionals interviewed as they discussed ideal environments for high-quality advising.

Whether it be flexibility in the way an advisor works with a student, to flexible work

schedules for advisors, to flexible appointment times and walk-in times for students,

flexibility was a major point of discussion for many of the respondents in this study.

Jeff discussed the importance of not being forced to use any tools or approach

when he is advising and how that flexibility allows him to customize his advising

sessions with each student. Julia mentioned flexibility in her response as well:

We need to have constant flexibility when it comes to seeing students. I have

realized the setting that is most conducive to high-quality advising is one that

offers walk-in sessions and appointments for students who are needing to obtain

advisement. This allows the advising center flexibility to deal with different

student issues that may come about, and again being able to be flexible and open

minded in your approach to advising because not every situation is the same.

Although each advising professional's perception of ideal environment was

slightly different, overall, the combined responses and perceptions provide a prime

example of the ideal environment needed to ensure high-quality advisement for students

when there are high expectations to continue to move toward developmental advising

styles. These environmental features include: privacy, collaboration, and flexibility. All

of these environmental needs have developed over time in response to the growing

expectations that academic advisors take a more hands-on and personal approach to

advising.

Ideal Tools Needed to Provide High-Quality Advisement

In addition to a specific environment, advisors mentioned specific tools needed to

provide high-quality advisement. The interesting results showed that all the "ideal tools"

mentioned by the participants, needed to provide the highest- quality of advising, were

related to technology.

Jeff stated that his ideal tools he uses to provide high-quality advising include

programs like DegreeWorks, Student Success Collaborative, and other predictive analytic

software. He explained how each of these programs are beneficial to helping him see the

needs of each student at a glance and can help guide the advising session successfully. In

addition, he mentioned the use of collaborative links that are shared between advisors,

institutional staff, and students. Jacqueline stated:

We invested in some great predictive analytic software that is user friendly that is helpful to providing high-quality advising. Granted we have several different software and technologies that we use, but they make our jobs so much easier and allow us to advise efficiently and accurately across the board. It is just great stuff that allows me to be the best advisor I possibly can be.

Bette also described user-friendly technology attributing to higher-quality advising:

The most ideal tools for me are the SSC and predictive analytic software we have here. But I will say, you have to be familiar with the tools and technology you're working with because we cannot provide quality advisement and share info with our students if we're not familiar with the tools. Because the different programs we have available are so user-friendly to both advisors and students, it allows a smoother process during the advising session. It just makes everything easier and gives me confidence as an advisor that I don't think I would have otherwise.

Other types of technology pointed out by Julia, include the ability to create and use Excel Spreadsheets, the ability to run and pull information from Crystal Reports, and the utilization of population logs. "These digital tools make it so much easier to track my population and help us see which students have already been advised, and which student we need to reach out to and get scheduled for advising. I am more efficient that way and in turn provide high quality advising. Reporting is everything. "

Mary also stated the ideal tool that helps ensure high-quality advising is the population log. "Not only does it help me keep track of my population, but it helps me

stay organized and I know I am not missing anyone, so I know I am providing the high-quality advising too. ”

Adele discussed technology more generally and how it helps to expedite the advising process:

The tools we have been given are all technology based. We have these huge student record databases that we can use in conjunction with predictive analytics software. They are all housed in one place, well through SSC, that is so helpful when trying to do a thorough job advising. We even have to monitors to help us compile and work through our data. It is so convenient and it can keep up and adapt to changes in the field of advising too. So I would say technology is the most beneficial, or to use your word, ideal tool needed to achieve high-quality advising.

As for the academic advising administrators, all three discussed different technological tools that contribute to high-quality advising. Each administrator stated in one way or another that advancements in technology have greatly contributed to the execution of high-quality advisement. Tanner, discussed the use of technology, “It helps us track, report, and store the data we need to be more efficient advisors. ”

Suzanne stated:

The ideal tools would be less spreadsheet, but would definitely include technology and software like SSC and other intake systems. These systems are helpful for tracking student progress academically and from an advising standpoint. Ideally, we would continue to create and use technology in order to

provide high-quality advising without having to collect data by ourselves, have

the different technologies do that part for us so we can focus on advising. I think

that is where the advising technology is headed anyway.

Education Advisorsy Board, also known as the SSC, is praised by academic
advising administrator, Joan. "This is a truly amazing tool for advisors and really helps
us to provide high-quality advising because we can set reminders for outreach purposes,
we can see all student info in one spot. It even allows us to share info regarding a student
and communicate between staff and departments. We can see the history of each student
and advise accordingly. "

With technology being the common thread regarding all the described ideal tools
by the advising professionals, we can begin to answer the question, in what ways have
changes in the role of advisor impacted quality of advising. The parallels of change were
previously established showing the field of advising shifting from what was once a
paper/pen, filing systems of student records, to a highly developed and intertwined
database of digital student records, and the use of different computer-based soft wares
and programs to access them all. As the role of an advisor adapted to adopt different
useful technologies, the need and dependence on that technology has increased and the
daily role of the advisor has changed. Yet, it is with the help and use of the different
technologies that advisors can ensure they are accurately providing high-quality
advisement.

Ideal Attitudes Needed to Provide High-Quality Advisement.

In response to the question, what is the ideal attitude needed to provide high-quality advising to student at your institution, all nine participants mentioned both advisor and student attitudes. According to academic advisors Jeff, Bette, Mary, and Adele, you cannot provide high quality advising unless both the advisor and the student have the proper attitude. Jeff specifically stated that the relationship between advisors and students should be built on a shared attitude of positivity. "I stay positive and encourage the student to take ownership over their own experience. Then they tend to follow suit with that positive attitude and help me help them. "

Tanner shared a similar perception saying "it is important that advisors and advisees to work together as a team. They have a positive attitude and shared goals in order for successful and high-quality advising to take place. " Advisor Jacqueline and advising administrator Joan also shared the perception that students must be cooperative and have an open and receptive attitude in order for advisors to help them, all the while advisors must mirror that openness to truly have an effective advising session.

From the perspective of some of the other advisors, it is important that advisors themselves maintain a professional attitude and have a great understanding of diversity and social justice, as well as be understanding and sympathetic in order to advise all types of students.

Jacqueline discussed the ideal attitude needed for high-quality advising by stating, "Advisors need a good understanding of diversity and should be sensitive to each student's individual experiences. How else can you really relate to them on their level

and advise appropriately? Sensitivity and empathy are fundamental to being a good advisor. " Bette shared from her perception it is important to not only have an empathetic and understanding attitude towards our students, but to have patience with students. "It is the only way to efficiently and effectively advise our students in a way that stays in line with the expectations of our advising center. We need to get to know them, understand their needs personally and academically, and advise the best we can with an open and positive attitude. "

Academic advisors Julia and Mary also shared similar perspectives regarding ideal attitudes needed for high-quality advising. Julia mentioned the ideal attitude is one that is "open minded and understanding of diverse students" while Mary explained the ideal attitude is "being supportive of one another and having a deep understanding that all students walk different paths and experience different things. We need to have an attitude of acceptance and inclusion. " The ideal attitudes captured from the participants reaffirms the expectations in the field of academic advising in which the advisor must really get to know students and advise holistically rather than, methodically advising based on course requirements.

Themes from Interviews as Related to Research Question Three

The following themes emerged after discussing advisors perceptions regarding research question number three associated with this study: What contributes to the satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advising professionals? Participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a scale of one to ten, with one being the lowest level of satisfaction and ten being the highest. Advisors averaged a 6.5 satisfaction

rating regarding their jobs and the advising administration rated advisor satisfaction with an average of 6.3. Themes discussed that impacted those ratings as reported by the participants included: the ability to work with students, the creation, execution, and analysis of job satisfaction surveys, the presence of effective communication, job recognition, career advancement opportunities, and leadership. Each of these themes that will be discussed have been reported to have both positive and negative impact on job satisfaction rates according to all participants of the study.

Participants Average Job Satisfaction Ratings

The interview process allowed for discussion of job satisfaction rates with each participant, what caused them to stay satisfied, and what caused them to be dissatisfied with their jobs and professional academic advisors and administrators. Very specific themes emerged regarding the ebb and flow of academic advisor job satisfaction and allows for us to address factors that contribute to increased and decreased job satisfaction in academic advising professionals and determine best practices to retain qualified academic advising professionals. In addition, the results presented contradictions between advising administrators perceptions of the satisfaction levels of their own advising staff and the actual reported satisfaction ratings of their staff.

Responses from the academic advisor participants show that they are mostly satisfied with their jobs as academic advisors with an average job satisfaction rating of 6.5 out of 10. Advisor satisfaction ratings were determined by calculating the average rating reported by all 6 academic advisor participants combined. Academic advising administrators maintained a similar level of satisfaction to their staff, with an overall

satisfaction rating of 6.3 out of 10. Advising administration satisfaction ratings were also

determined by calculating the average rating reported by all 3 academic advising

administrator participants combined.

Academic advising administrators were asked to share their perceptions as a

leader and rate their staff's level of satisfaction on the same scale of 1-10. Results

indicated that the administration believed their staff were more dissatisfied with their jobs

than the academic advisors reported. Based on the perception of the advising

administration, they rated their advising staff level of satisfaction at an average of 4.5. In

comparison to the 6.5 rating actually reported by the academic advisors regarding their

job satisfaction levels.

Academic advising administrators Tanner and Suzanne shared that they believe

their staff's level of satisfaction fell at 7.5 and 1.5, respectively. Academic advising

administrator Joan, refused to share her perception of her staff job satisfaction levels

stating " I can't rate my staff's level of job satisfaction because, from my perception

anyway, each of my advisors seem to have a varied level of satisfaction when it comes to

their position. " Therefore, the two ratings were averaged. Nonetheless, the responses

showed a slight contradiction from the advising administration regarding the levels of

satisfaction amongst the advisors they oversee everyday.

Contributing Factors to Job Satisfaction and Advisor Retention

Participants shared many factors that contribute to increased job satisfaction from

their individual perceptions during the interview process; however, those very factors can

serve to decrease satisfaction if not addressed. This portion of the results will highlight what factors the participants perceive add or take away from job satisfaction levels.

 Working with students. Four out of the six interviewed Academic Advisors mentioned broadly that they enjoy working with students when asked what factors contribute to satisfaction levels. Jeff, spoke more of students and staff overall contributing to his increased satisfaction level stating, "I get a lot out of working here, I really get along well with my students they keep me on my toes. " Jacqueline said, "I like the students I work with! I love helping them achieve their goals and getting to know them. They're are a big factor in what makes me enjoy my job! " Bette mentioned how students, in addition to staff and institution, contribute to her satisfaction level. "You know, there are certain things that could be worked on for sure, but I have great students, a very good group of advisors and supervisors to work with, and I really enjoy the institution as a whole. " She continued, "It feels good to know that my students trust me. They even come from other campuses for advisement, that helps reaffirm that I am good at my job and constantly boosts my level of satisfaction as an advisor. "

 Julia affirmed, "I love the students! I am able to maintain a great relationship with them and see their progress. It encourages me to see their progress because I know I helped guide them in a way. " However, more specific factors surfaced from all participants responses as we got deeper into the interview process showing that it takes more than just enjoying your work with students to maintain increased levels of satisfaction as an academic advisor.

Suzanne praised the work she and her advisors do with students and even mentioned how they bring joy to her and her staff; however, she shared a con regarding students and job satisfaction. She explained:

Being an academic advisor comes with much responsibility, we see students and help them reach their goals. We work with other faculty and staff to make sure students are succeeding! Without the students, it goes without saying that we wouldn't be here. With that said, it can be tough sometimes because we have to serve the best interests of the students whether they think that is what we're doing or not. Sometimes we have to tell a student who has always dreamed of being a nurse, that they didn't make the cut for nursing school and encourage them to go in a different direction. That is not easy for anyone to have to face, so imagine being the advisor to have to deliver that news to a student that you know tried their hardest. So, even though working with students brings us much joy, it can be a downer sometimes for reasons like that. As the leader of my unit, I make sure to keep an eye and ear out to make sure my advisors don't get burned out because of that sort of stuff because that can bring a advisors job satisfaction level down dramatically if they feel they are always having to put out fires or be the bad guy when it comes to working with students. I have seen it first-hand more than you would think.

In some circumstances advisors did report certain activities remove them from working with students and how that impacts their satisfaction as well.

Job satisfaction surveys. All nine participants, 6 academic advisors and 3 advising administrators shared that their institutions conduct job satisfaction surveys annually to all staff across the institution. It was explained by participants, that the purpose of those annual staff satisfaction surveys is to try to help staff members increase and/or maintain their level of satisfaction. In some cases, the participants stated that this process is helpful to increased satisfaction levels. According to the response of Adele, her institution responded to the job satisfaction survey results in a big way. She stated:

A big issue for some of us at my institution was commute issues. It really has nothing to do with advising but, still, my daily commute was well over an hour and a half every day, each way. It wasn't because I lived super far away either, but mostly because the traffic is so bad in the mornings on my route to work. It was actually an issue discussed frequently amongst our team. So when I got the chance to take the satisfaction survey, I mentioned my commute being an issue, as I am sure many others did too. they listened and an initiative was created to look into the idea of flex scheduling for advisors. I mean, were a student facing center so we needed to see if this idea would also be accomodating to our students, but it seemed to have benefits, so we moved forward with testing out the idea. Those of us with longer commutes could select a schedule that would allow us to come in earlier or later and leave work accordingly. It ended up being a win/win for us all because then working students had an available advisors later in the evenings or earlier in the mornings too. Yeah, it is the little adjustments like that, that didn't have to be addressed because my commute has nothing to do with my advising

abilities and I knew the hours when I took this job, but it was nice to see them care about an issue enough to try to help us out as staff. When you feel heard and something actually happens about an issue you have, big or small, it really helps you be happier, satisfied with your job.

In other cases, participants shared that even with the annual job satisfaction survey, results seem to go unheard or nothing is done with the results collected to help increase and/or maintain satisfaction levels. Jacqueline mentioned:

We are asked to complete job satisfaction surveys every year, yet it still seems that the creation of policies and other decisions that directly impact our jobs, and advising in general, are made from the top down regardless of what is said in our surveys. Even issues that are directly brought to the attention of advising and university leadership doesn't seem to really make a huge difference which is sad because we don't feel heard sometimes. That sort of dismissive behavior contributes to my lack of satisfaction with my job in a way for sure.

Although not all the participants mentioned these surveys in great detail, it was made clear that at least each institution makes them available for their staff. The two juxtaposing examples shared above by Adele and Jacqueline, provides an example of how they can be helpful to increasing satisfaction and actually add to decreased satisfaction as explained above.

Effective communication. Effective communicationis needed to make any process successful and more streamline. Based on the responses from our participants effective communication was a major theme that is needed to keep job satisfaction high, and when

114

communication is not effective, it can be detrimental to the functionality of an advising center, leading to lowered satisfaction and attrition of qualified academic advisors.

Jeff shared how appreciated and supported he feels when working as a team with other advisors in his department:

We all work well together and have each other's backs, which leads to clear and effective communication as a team. We can all stay on the same page and move forward together whether were doing the same old day to day stuff or learning and implementing something new. Advising can be a tough field to be in if you don't have good communication because there is so much info that needs to be covered, this job can be overwhelming and it doesn't need to be when you know what's going on.

"I am constantly learning new info about the institution, gaining new insight about different advising policies, and being introduced to new tools" said Bette, "we're learning new things everyday so thank goodness we communicate well as an advising center, or really as an institution as a whole, because if we didn't these changes could be overwhelming and cause frustration. We can avoid the frustration because we stay connected and talk about everything together. "

Julia shared a similar statement:

I actually have a very good group of advisors and supervisors that I work with. Were always here to help each other out and discuss any changes, issues, and concerns. It's a heck of a lot less stressful to get through the day to day when you have a great group of advisors that work and communicate well together. Make it

115

worth coming in everyday because you know you're not alone. I couldn't work

for any other institution, any other campus, simply because the rapport we have

on this team, the work that comes out of this group, I believe it is like no other. I

have been in higher education and advising for ten years, and I have just recently

found that with this team so it doesn't come with every job I have to say.

Tanner discussed communication directly and its impact on job satisfaction in

advising:

We work well together as a team and I think have great communication amongst

myself, my boss, and my advisors, but it can always be better. That is one thing

that my supervisor gets dinged on sometimes is communication, you know,

especially with the staff, but you know what, I am kind of that filter. So we are

always trying to find ways to make communication better. We are actually in the

process right now of creating a more streamlined way of effectively

communicating utilizing the three tiered advising system so we are all on the

same page.

Suzanne also discussed the importance of communication and teamwork. "I have

an amazing team of advisors and if it wasn't for them I would probably find another job

simply because I could do my job if we didn't work so well together. " She explains

further that advising student is a lot of hard work:

My boss will provide me information, policy changes, initiatives, and on and on, I

relay that info to my team of advisors and I have to do it accurately so they are

best prepared to execute the demands of their job correctly. Then we can all work

116

together to keep things moving along, you know. If we had poor communication, we wouldn't be able to work well together, I'd be frustrated, my advisors would be stressed out, everything would fall apart. No one should have to work in that environment, how could you? Really communication and teamwork go together with all the changes happening in our field we need to cling to that idea so we can help the students.

When communication is not effective it can have a negative impact on advisors as mentioned through some of the participant responses above. Mary shared her issue regarding lack of communication on her team and how it has significantly impacted her satisfaction with her job as an advisor. She stated:

I have been doing this job for about ten years and I have seen so many people come and go. Honestly, I know for me I would've probably left a long time ago but I need the paycheck. Communication is always one way, top down, regardless of who is working the trenches. By the time the information gets to us, we don't have enough time to efficiently and accurately do what they are asking and it is an issue that drive folks away. Bad communication is such a problem on my team specifically and we never talk about it we just struggle through and do the best we can. What a concept, let's communicate better about our bad communication. I keep hoping for things to get better, and I see other advising teams at my same advising center that don't have these issues, because they communicate and work together. At this point, I am just mentally, physically, and emotionally checked out. Of course it is more than just a lack of communication

in my case, but still, whether I stay, or leave eventually, we gotta address these problems that no one wants to talk about.

Academic advisors job recognition. Each of the 9 participants mentioned how encouraging recognition can be when it comes to staying satisfied within their positions as academic advisors. Professional advising participants reported receiving recognition in many ways and from different people including but not limited to: Departmental Recognition, recognition from their co-workers, institutional recognition, recognition from their bosses, and even student recognition. Regardless of where the recognition derives from, it really makes all the difference to an advisor working hard to get that extra pat on the back.

Jeff and Jacqueline both described the different types of recognition they have received as an academic advisor from their including peer-to-peer recognition, department recognition, and recognition from his institution. Jeff explained, "At our institution, all staff and faculty get recognized and commended for their hard work at a big yearly banquet. It is not individualized recognition or anything, but it still very nice of them to put that on for us. " He continued by describing how his peers work together to recognize certain hard working individual throughout the year:

> Staff and faculty can nominate others if they feel like they see someone going above and beyond. I enjoy the individuality of that type of recognition, one because it feels good to know that someone sees the effort you put into your job, but also being able to encourage my co-workers who are in this with me, it's fun!

118

I can also learn from my peers in this way because maybe they got recognized for

something that I can adopt in my own advising practices.

He further discussed a department wide recognition that names an academic

advisor of the month and how even getting positive emails from his students he

considered valid recognition as an advisor that makes him enjoy his job. In regards to

advisor recognition as a whole he stated:

 I do think that recognition is a big factor that helps us stay encouraged so it is

 nice to get. My institution does a great job of that in many different ways. Not

 every institution does that sort of thing either so I feel lucky to get it from mine.

 I do have mixed feelings about it though. I feel like awards, can sometimes tend

 to alienate other people, because you know there is only one person that gets the

 advisor award. It kind of makes the other 20 advisors not chosen for the award,

 wonder what they are doing wrong, but then again it can motivate them to do

 well, so there are some good things and bad things that come out of that kind of

 stuff.

Jacqueline also shared a lot of the same experiences mentioned by Jeff since they

both work at the same institution. She too describes, the annual banquet designed to

honor all staff and faculty, the departmental advisor of the month award, and the peer to

peer nomination process "to recognize advisors who go above and beyond the call of

duty" as she explains it. Overall she shared, "recognition of this kind, the awards, to me,

it really helps to raise morale and helps all of us feel valued. You know, it's just good to

have positive reinforcement for people that are working hard and not making tons of money. "

Both academic advisors Bette and Julia work in the same advising center, both discussed having good relationship with their director and peers which "leads to a more copasetic and cohesive environment" according to Bette. Julia, explained a team-like environment that "allows for positive and encouraging peer to peer recognition and even public supervisor to advisor recognition whenever possible. " Bette said:

> We all have tremendous respect for each other, we offer input for each often and as openly as possible to reinforce the positive environment we try to offer our students. We recognize each other as often as possible because we know all the hard work that goes into being a successful advisor. No one understands what we do better than we do so, who better to tell you your doing a great job than those who work side by side with you.

Both advisors shared some departmental recognition practices that include posting to "the happy board. " Bette described that "each advisor has a board in their office, when good news comes along, or if we want to write something encouraging for each other, that is the designated place for it. " Both advisors also described departmental team building events and meetings that include staff outings and things like monthly potlucks put on by the supervisors to encourage and recognize staff for all their hard work.

Institutional recognition is one area that both advisors felt could be improved.

120

"There is no recognition from the actual institution at all, I think that is why our directors work so hard to make sure we feel appreciated" said Bette. A similar response was shared by Julia, "We just don't have that here… never have really. "

Differing responses came from academic advisors Mary and Adele who also work at the same institution; however, on different advising teams. Mary stated that she hasn't really seen any supervisory or institutional recognition for academic advisors at all. On the other hand, Adele, explained her perception of institutional and supervisory recognition as follows:

I do think that there is recognition. I'm mean our institution has several staff recognition things that happen throughout the year. The institution allows for those practices to happen. More narrowly focused, but yes, were recognized. I like to believe that our institution is here for us whether they show that every day or not. I do think that there is always more that can be done in that capacity, you know, supporting staff, it is just a matter of finding what actually speak to different generations of employees.

With the contradictory responses for two advisors at the same institution, working at the same advising center, it helped to reinforce that academic advisors perceptions can vary regardless of who they work for or what institution they are employed by. As for the administrative responses regarding recognition, all three academic advising administrators, mirrored the reports of different types of recognition described by their advisors. Suzanne stated:

As a leader to my advisors, I find recognition does motivate them quite a bit. let's

be real, any positive reinforcement help people be happier. I do notice that some

folks get disappointed if they don't get recognized, so maybe that could be looked

at as a downfall at times, but overall I think we're good with supporting each

other. I think our institution has good intentions with the different things we do to

make sure everyone gets recognition, so it's all good.

Overall, advisor recognition can come in different forms but the one common

factor that the participants shared is that it does help to increase job satisfaction even if it

presents itself in small ways.

Career advancement opportunities. After interviewing the participants of this

study to determine what contributes to academic advisor's satisfaction and retention of

qualified academic advising staff, career advancement became a commonly discussed

topic amongst the academic advisors in different ways. Jacqueline and Adele were the

only two advisors that felt that career advancement was offered at their institutions and

plan to pursue any available promotions within the field of advising, until achieving their

goals of becoming advising administration.

Academic advisors Bette and Mary discussed how their dissatisfaction within

their positions have stemmed from their inability to advance within the field of academic

advising which is resulting in their desire to leave the field of academic advising in the

next couple of years. Bette stated:

I will probably leave academic advising in the next year or two. I have been in

higher education and working with student support for a long time so that is part

of it, for sure. If I am being honest, I should've realized upon getting hired at this

college, wasn't gonna work because my past advising experience wasn't truly

considered when they hired me. I was hired on with a title and salary of an

Advisor I, even though I applied for Academic Advisor II and III positions. They

made me start as an Advisor I since I had never advised at this institution before,

or that is what I was told. Part of the reason I even accepted the job was

because I was told that, the title wouldn't last for long and that advancement

happened often; however, that wasn't the case. I have applied for advancement

many times and it just isn't happening as quickly as I had hoped. First, I thought

maybe it was something I was doing wrong as an advisor, but I work hard and

have gotten good reviews from my students and supervisors. Now, I am starting

to realize that it may not so much be me at all but maybe my institution… The

advancement opportunities are just not as abundant as they are made out to be to

new hires and when there are opportunities it seems that favoritism plays a major

role in who gets the promotion. I kind of over it; however, I know I am good at

what I do and know I have lots of transferable skills that I can take elsewhere,

maybe even go into consulting with high school students or something.

Mary stated a similar complaint regarding lack of career advancement opportunity

at her institution and how being overlooked for promotions is a major factor contributing

to her dissatisfaction and desire to leave the field of academic advising all together. She

stated:

I have been here at this institution for a while as an academic advisor, and it has taken me so long to move my way up to an Academic Advisor III. Even as a III now, it seems almost impossible to advance any further and it is so frustrating and discouraging. I hear my bosses talk about how great our center is at offering advancement opportunities; but it's all just talk. They promote who they want to promote regardless of who is most qualified. I'm just burnout on trying anymore, which really makes me feel burnout with this job. So, I'm out as soon as possible, hopefully in the next year. I am just not valued here and want something new outside of higher ed altogether, maybe corporate.

The other four advisors discussed career advancement opportunities in different ways. Jeff discussed how he was able to "steadily advance from Advisor I to Advisor III at a reasonable pace" and that he is now happy in his current position and has no desire to advance any further. Julia shared the feeling of having an adequate process for career advancement over her ten year of working in the field. Julia did continue to say that she is unsure if she would be staying in advising much longer because she has been doing it for so long that she'd consider leaving for the right opportunity. "I have been doing this for a long time, " said Julia "I enjoy what I do, but might start to consider other opportunities as long as I could stay in student support. I just can't see myself finding an opportunity that would be outside of advising or something similar. "

Jacqueline and Adele both discussed there confidence in the career advancement process and both plan to continue up the ladder until they reach their goal of becoming advising administrators.

The interesting results from all three advising administrator responses in comparison to the advisors is that each administrator discussed how great the career advancement opportunities are within their centers which is slightly different from some of the advisors perspectives.

Leadership. Bette, Julia, and Mary, all reported varied levels of job satisfaction and mentioned that they have been advising professional for many years and if other career opportunities became available they would be willing to pursue them, or in Mary's case, would definitely pursue any other job opportunities that presented themselves. Mary discussed that she "feel undervalued" considering the amount of experience she has and how that coupled with the "desire for more active and and fair leadership" jas left her burnout and ready to pursue something new. Bette also mentioned lack of good leadership when discussing her treatment upon being hired. In addition she stated:

> Lack of communication from the higher- ups to our team just causes us all to have to work much harder, but at least our direct supervisor stays in the trenches with us and we have a great team so it's bearable. But upper leadership would need to be a bit more appreciative and understanding of what we actually do as advisors. Or just be better overall, if I was to consider staying here long term.

Advising administrator Tanner stated, "As an administrator, I know how important it is to be a good leader for my team. Nothing is more discouraging to an advisor than bad leadership and I can say that from experience from when I was an advisor. " This comment helps to reinforce the idea that good leadership helps to retain a

qualified advisors. Suzanne, another advising administrator shared about the importance of having strong leadership in order to retain advising staff. She stated:

> I try to be a great leader for my team because I know how frustrated I get with my leadership most of the time. I try to be the buffer between the at times, chaotic administration that tells me what to do and how I relay that to my team. I know if I experience bad leadership myself and I know how that makes me feel towards my job so I try to do the opposite of that for my team and be the best leader I can. My team seems happier for it.

The remaining participants of this study that had high satisfaction rates all shared positive comments regarding their leadership on a smaller scale with also help reinforce the theme of good leadership leading to the retention of qualified academic advisors.

As responses are reviewed, it became clear that certain aspects of the academic advising job will lead to increased or decreased satisfaction levels. Based on the responses of the academic advisors, job satisfaction has a major impact on advisors career intentions and whether or not they will be retained as an academic advisors.

Career intentions of academic advisors. As previously mentioned, advisors Jacqueline, Adele, Julia and Jeff all plan on staying in the field of advising and plan on either maintaining their current position or seeking advancement opportunities as they arise. On the other hand, advisors Bette and Mary plan on leaving their positions as soon as they can. Regardless of the intentions of the advisors, each advisor participant shared very clear factors that increased and decreased their satisfaction and it was the advisors

126

who reported the lowest satisfaction ratings that plan on leaving the field altogether.

When advising administration was asked to discuss primary reasons their advisors provided for leaving their positions, responses varied. Tanner responded that one of the primary reasons he has seen advisors leave the position is that "they are not happy with leadership. " He continued by stating, "whether it is having the wrong people in leadership or just plain bad leadership, it causes higher turnover amongst advisors. This is my third institution, so I seen and heard that to be a leading cause of advisors quitting whether they report that upon resignation or not. " Suzanne shared a similar perception with Tanner, both felt that bad leadership is a primary cause that leads academic advisors to quit. She stated:

> I would say the leading reasons that cause advisors to leave is bad leadership. It
> causes burnout and leave the advisor feeling frustrated and helpless.
> Unfortunately, we lose good advisors all the time because the higher leadership
> just doesn't know what we face everyday. I try to advocate for my team and I
> work with them very closely so they know I am one of the leaders that cares and
> will do what I can to help them. But at the end of the day, I have to pass down
> institutional policies and procedure to my advisors that come from my boss and
> even higher up. Even if there are a few good leaders that mean well, you cannot
> overcome bad leadership if they are higher up the chain than you are.

Sometimes,

> I can do enough to save them because all the leaders at this institution are not on
> the same page.

Academic advising administrator Joan responded very differently when asked the same question. She stated, "I always ask my advisors the question, why are you leaving, and the majority of the time they tell me that they underestimated what it took to be an advisor and they got burnt out. " She continued, "Or they have to leave because they choose to further their education or they are simply relocating. " She said nothing about reports of bad leadership being a reason for advisors to leave their position like Tanner and Suzanne reported.

Summary

In this chapter, the results of the interviews were presented from six academic advisors and three academic advising administrators. In addition, key advising documentation from the three different institutions in which the participants represent were presented as well.   The general coding strategy for this study allowed each participant's perception to be captured and reported for the purposes of this study. The themes were developed by taking the responses of the participants according to each interview question and analyzing key advising documentation to determine overall suggested answers to the three primary research questions sought by this study.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. Chapter 5 of this dissertation includes a discussion of the major themes as it relates to the literature outlined in Chapter 2. In addition, this chapter will address the implications of this research and how it may impact future research in academic advising along with recommendations based on the result of the research for this study to help answer the research questions:

RQ1: In what ways has the job of the academic advisor changed over the years?

RQ2: What is the impact of changes in the role of the academic advisor on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction?

RQ3: What contributes to the satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advising professionals?

Through the interview process, analysis of documentation, and participant responses themes were identified that helped to answer each of the research questions of this study. To address research questions one and two, the findings presented in this chapter answer how the job of an advisor has changed over the years and how those

129

changes impact advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction. The following themes emerged: (a) development of the three-tiered system in which advisors are given a specific title of Academic Advisor I, II, or III upon being hired, and allows greater opportunity for career advancement in the field of advising, (b) transition from prescriptive advising practices to developmental, (c) increased use of technology including the shift from hand-written filing systems to computer-based filing systems, as well as the development of Predictive Analytics Software and other software used by professional academic advisors, and lastly (d) the development and implementation of state and federal initiative like CCG/CCA/ Fifteen to Finish in order to increase student retention and graduation rates in higher educational institutions. For the purposes of this study, these identified changes are refered to as factors of change. Further discussion of these changes will demonstrate that each of factors of change impact academic practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction and creating a significantly higher workload for academic advising professionals.

Research question three is posed to determine what factors contribute to the satisfaction and retention of qualified advising professionals. Themes determined based on participant responses regarding their overall job satisfaction rating and its impact on their retention included: (a) the ability to work with students, (b) the availability of staff job satisfaction surveys and how the institution and/or the advising center respond to the information collected from the satisfaction surveys, (c) effective communication, (d) job recognition for academic advising professionals, (e) availability of career advancement

opportunities and the attainability and frequency of promotional opportunities, and (f)

leadership. For the purposes of this study the the previous listed themes will be refered to

as impact of change. Through the discussion of these themes, based on participant

responses along with the support of literature, this study shows that these factors directly

contribute to lower satisfaction levels amongst advising professionals and impact

advising staff retention rates and career intentions of advising professionals.

Interpretation of Findings

Although the identified themes have been broken down by factors of change and

impact of change, all themes were determined based on the responses of the participating

advising professionals. Once factors of change and impact of changes were identified,

strategies to maintain satisfaction and retain professional advising staff can be determined

and overall student RPG rates can be maintained and inevitably increase.

Figure 1. *Factors of Change and Impact on Satisfaction and Retention of Academic*

Advising Professionals

Figure 1. This flow chart figure provides a visual breakdown of themes identified in this study. All themes, and the presentation of these themes, are based on the responses of the participating advising professionals. This chart outlines the 4 primary factors of change experienced and identified by the participants, the impact of those changes, and how this information can be used to determine strategies that will maintain satisfaction and retain advising professionals. Overall leading to maintained and increased RPG Rates of students at any given institution.

131

In addition to referencing Figure 1 as visual outline, themes will be discussed in this chapter as they directly relate to each research question. The relationship of all themes will be present in the discussion based on the identification of changes in the roles and responsibilities of advising professionals over time and how those changes impact the daily responsibilities, expectations, and satisfaction of the participants as they relate to advising staff retention. Each theme will be addressed in detail in the following sections.

Factors of Change

Development of the Three-Tiered System

In this study, the development of the three-tiered systems also referred to as hierarchical systems, were shared as a major change that has occurred in academic advising. These systems were established in order to provide advising professionals with specific titles to allow professionals advancement opportunities. All participants of this study reported having the same title structure of Academic Advisor I, II, or III at their advising centers. They explain further that upon being hired, they receive a title based on experience and can move up from there. It was reported by many participants that they agree that this system allows greater opportunity for career advancement in the field of advising. It was determined through the interview process and through the analysis of responses that the three-tiered systems have become an important change in the field of academic advising.

Advising professionals in this study directly identified the implementation of a

three-tiered system as a noticeable change during their time in the field and further discuss the impact of these changes. All participants felt that the system has given them a clear path to follow regarding the advancement process in academic advising; however, some participants reported remaining difficulties with promotion and advancement opportunities regardless of the implementation of the three-tiered system. These reports reflect the idea that a three-tiered system is helpful to establish a clear track for advancement in academic advising as discussed in the research of Iten & Matheny (2008). The result of this study; however, provides a concern that advancement opportunities are still hard to come by even with an established tiered system for advancement as reported by some of the participants.

Transition from Prescriptive Advising Practices to Developmental

As mentioned previously in this study, there has been a steady transition from prescriptive advising practices to developmental practices as advising centers move to increase RPG rates at any given institution. Academic advising professionals in this study reported feeling the effects of this transition and confirm the increase in additional responsibilities as an advisor. Many participants in this study shared that although following a developmental approach may increase workload, it is more effective for the students, lends itself to student success, and give the advisors a purpose. These responses are reinforced by many researchers including but not limited to: Noel (1978), Tinto (1993), Metzner (1989), Anderson (1997), and Cueso (2003) all of which have studied and determined that academic advising is the key to student retention and further

133

confirms that developmental and quality advising is most beneficial because the developmental approach allows students and advisors work together in the academic planning process.

Advising professionals that participated in this study shared the changes they have experienced in the way they advise and how the advising approach has shifted to be more of a two-way line of communication which mirrors the research of Crookston (1972). The participants shared a common understanding that students need guidance beyond determining what their schedule will be, they need assistance through the semester, advice on what to do if their grades are slipping, but also show consideration that students want to have independence to make choices for themselves, overall making the advising process much more development. It was reported that this also requires more effort on behalf of the advisors; however, the majority of the advising professionals reported that they enjoy developing and maintaining these relationships with their students and enjoy that aspect of their jobs despite the additional efforts.

We see additional evidence to support the adoption of developmental advising and how it helps increase RPG rates, through the development of different advising models over time which supports the participant's claims that these issues are creating change in the field of academic advising. Most of the participants reported following a Proactive Advising Model (Varney, 2007), and the few remaining describe following Appreciative Advising Models (Bloom & Martin, 2002). Regardless of the model, both models follow more traditional developmental advising practices, which not only

supports that a change has occurred but, demonstrates the impact of this change.

Participants in this study have increased efforts, altered advising practices, and modified their way of advising over time to create an engaging and collaborative relationship between advisors and students. These results confirm that a transition has occurred with purpose over time. For the purposes of this study, the research indentifies the transition from prescriptive advising to developmental as a change experienced by the participants and have outlined the impact of this change on advising practices and advisor responsibilities. Even though participants reported increased workload and having to make adjustments to their advising practices, the transition from prescriptive to development did not seem to impact the advisor's satisfaction or retention.

Overall, participant responses regarding changing from prescriptive to developmental approach is proven as they also advise based on developmental based advising models. These responses not only suggest that this specific transition has created, and continues to create, a change in academic advising, which provides us with a clear example of how the job of an academic advisor has changed over the years, but reiterate the fact that constant changes are happening in academic advising. Responses from the participants provide evidence that academic advisors are professionals that do whatever they need to in order to adapt to changes as they come along which confirms part of the impact that these changes are having on advising practices, job responsibility, and job satisfaction. Therefore, responses from the study, coupled with the literature gathered, provide an answer to all three posed research questions within this study.

135

Increased Use of Technology in Academic Advising

Increased use of technology including the shift from hand-written filing systems to computer-based filing systems, as well as the development of Predictive Analytics Software and other software used by professional academic advisors, have been heavily discussed by each participant in this study. The advising professionals of this study shared their experience from their perceptions over time; specifically making mention of how much easier their jobs are because of technology like Predictive Analytics Software. These reported developments are in line with the research from Gordon (1992) who predicted these advancements in technology in academic advising, specifically the use of Predictive Analytics Software, advising software, and the skills to not only advise students academically but also prepare them with a realistic worldview once they graduate. The participant perception's regarding technology in this study, confirm his prediction further, and specifically answer the research question for this study regarding how has academic advising changed over the years.

According to the advising professionals who participated in this study, many spoke positively about the adoption of predictive analytics software. Many explained the advantage of making decisions with the help of the Predictive Analysis Software is that advisors have an additional reference based on reported data of past student progress to help them make informed decisions regarding advice to students, future academic planning, all while sharpening their individual advising practices and approaches. Participants also shared how much more efficient they can be with population

management and tracking strategies thanks to collaborative links available online, computer-based student record databases like Banner, and through the utilization of specifically developed software for advising including software and programs like DegreeWorks, Banner, EAB/SSC, and much more. Not only do these perspectives provide evidence of change in academic advising over the years, which directly address research question number one of this study, it also shows us that the increased use of technology in advising is a mostly welcomed change that is constant.

An interesting finding was that although most participants mentioned the changes that have come along with increasing the use of technology, they also caution that these changes have contributed to increased workloads of academic advisors, including but not limited to: additional trainings, more reporting expectations and deadlines, and an increase in data-driven activities on the job that take away from student interaction, etc. With that said, almost all participants still identified some sort of technology or software when discussing ideal tools needed to provide quality advising to students. This shows that even with the development of different types of technology in academic advising being an overall helpful factor for academic advisors, the concerns of it negatively impacting aspect of advising is not to be forgotten.

Specific concerns expressed by a couple of the participants regarding this topic is that increased use of technology in advising over time, especially the increased use of Predictive Analytics Software, can cause advising to become less about the students and more about data collection; leaving academic advisors to feel that their job is more data-

137

driven than student-driven, or more specifically some advisors reported feeling like data entry professionals rather than academic advisors. The suggestion remains that with greater knowledge of student success predictions, and greater information available on that topic through Predictive Analysis, the greater the demand has become on advisors to provide data, run reports, and manage their populations through data.

What makes these warnings valid is that we have seen similar patterns before in the history of Academic Advising when recalling student retention and how insufficient advising leads to lowered student retention, and how quality academic advising is overall the key to student retention which all came to the forefront through the work of Beal & Noel (1980), Astin (1985), and Anderson (1997). It was reported that some of the advising professionals felt like they had to spend more time reporting and completing data entry and less time with students; therefore, leading to the argument that too much data entry work can distract advisors or limit their time with students and could result in lower quality advising and have a negative impact on student retention.

It was reported that advisors are spending more time on developing technology practices and software, i. e. predictive analytics software, to help meet the demands of increasing RPG demands. The history of advising, the literature, and the first-hand perceptions from this study all support that change has been a constant factor and the adoption of technology was inevitable. The patterns of change continue in order to meet the demands of many, but it is still important to keep advising student-centered especially when data on the students is so readily available according to the participants of this study.

138

Participant suggests how easily technology could overshadow direct contact with students, and for academic advisors to become data entry professionals rather than student service professionals; it could cause a regression to a more prescriptive approach to advising. Therefore, just because technology provides us with instant data, it doesn't mean we should dismiss what past research has proven that students need to be successfully retained year to year until they graduate. Keeping that in mind, academic advising professionals that participated in this study seem to be embracing the technological advancement being introduced in their field.

It is through the perceptions of the participants of this study in combination with the shared literature previously presented, that the answers to the research questions of this study are identified. The development and increased use of technology in academic advising is one major factor that was found to have dramatically changed over the last five to ten years according to the working professionals and researchers in the field of advising. The increased use of technology in the field did have an impact on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction of academic advisors according to the participant's shared perceptions and can be supported by related research. Furthermore, is through the identification of these causes and effects that we can determine ways to improve satisfaction in advising and retain qualified advisors in the profession of academic advising for the future.

Complete College America / Complete College Georgia / Fifteen to Finish

The development and implementation of state and federal initiatives like

CCG/CCA/ Fifteen to Finish have played a major role in the changing environment of academic advising in recent years as explained by all the advising professionals that participated in this study. These initiatives were created in order to increase student retention, progression, and graduation rates in higher educational institutions. Participants in this study all mentioned the changes in their position with the introduction of CCA, CCG, and Fifteen to Finish; however, most advisors reported feeling a more direct impact from Fifteen to Finish. Majority of participants in this study including advisors and administration reported feeling more pressure to register students in more credit hours per term. Prior to the implementation of Fifteen to Finish, the suggested credit hours advised for students was based on the criteria for the Federal Student Aid full-time status which includes enrolling in 12 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters, and an additional 6 credit hours in the summer to complete the 30 credit hours needed per year. Thirty credit hours per year, over the course of four years, equals the 120 credit hours required for degree completion (Complete College America, 2013). Participants shared an increased responsibility to explain this process to students, but also adds pressure to get to know all their students in order to provide an alternative option to their students who would not be successful under the parameters of Fifteen to Finish once the initiative was implemented.

In addition, the participants expressed that they felt as though the enrollment options were being taken away and that there was a big push for all students to follow Fifteen to Finish regardless of the impact on student success. It was discussed openly,

that most advisor participants felt that regardless of this initiative being mandatory, they still use discretion with each student as they advise to the number of credit hours that should be taken during each term.

The reported developments shared by this study's participants leave no questions of whether or not they lead to change in academic advising, because the creation and implementation of these policies and initiatives are elements of change themselves. A domino effect begins at this point because in order to effectively advise students, the advisor must get to know the student and this takes additional time and effort as reported by some advisors. Participants shared that they experienced an increase in student outreach expectations as a part of their daily workloads. These outreach expectations require advisors to participate in additional duties that include but are not limited to: massive calling campaigns, creating and sending personalized student emails more frequently, and multiple face to face advising sessions before an advisor can really know what enrollment path is best for the student, all as a result of the implementation of these policies and initiatives.

These findings mirror the intervention strategies of proactive advising as explained by Miller & Murray (2005), but in that research, it was also determined that these strategies do in fact lead to increased workloads of academic advisors. It was reported by many participants that the combination of an increased workload consisting of increased outreach efforts made advisors feel that they were doing unnecessary extra work, especially those who prefer Appreciative Advising over Proactive Advising.

141

Others reported that the Proactive strategies were once called intrusive for a reason and they force advisors to focus on the quantity of student advised rather than the quality of advisement offered to students throughout their time in school. Overall, causing a major impact on the advising practices and job responsibilities of the advisors, and even negatively impact their satisfaction levels.

It can also be argued that the expectation from the Complete College America, Complete College Georgia, and the Fifteen to Finish initiatives are too ambitious and put direct pressure on academic advisors to retain and graduate students or else their institutional funding is threatened (Complete College America 2013). Advising professionals understand that statistics that many first-year college students do not return for their sophomore year (Morrow & Ackermann, 2012); therefore, these goals can be intimidating to hard-working academic advising professionals who are doing all they can to retain and graduate student already. Regardless, increased pressure to implement these initiatives in order to reach set goals are being tackled by advising professionals of today. This change is leading to an increase in workload as a result of the implementation of these policies and initiatives, overall having a significant impact on advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction which helps to address research questions two of this study.

Job Descriptions and Advising Syllabus

For the purpose of this study, analysis of advising professional's job descriptions and advising center advising syllabi took place in order to determine specific changes experienced by advising professionals from the time of hire as well as changes to

academic advising expectations and duties during the advising process based on what is in the advising syllabus.

It was found that academic advisors and academic advising administration felt that both the job descriptions provided to them upon hire and the academic advising syllabi advertised to their given institutions are an accurate representation of the day to day work of an academic advisor. Discussion used in the job description that states "other duties as assigned" was a consistent topic of discussion amongst the participants. Many advisors shared that they may have additional duties with their position that were not specifically mentioned in their job description; however, because the disclaimer is included they feel that those additional duties cannot be considered outside of the scope of their daily expectations as academic advisors.

Through confirming this accurate representation of the written documentation reviewed for this study, it was found that even though the field of academic advising does encounter frequent changes, the job descriptions and academic advising syllabi are consistently updated to reflect and include any changes that occur and have a positive impact on advising practices, job responsibilities and can help to increase satisfaction when academic advisors know what to expect when they accept a job in the field.

Impact of Change

According to Beyth-Marom, Gorodeisky, Bar-Haim, and Godder (2006), job satisfaction is directly related to staff turnover. Since academic advisors are often the only consistent interaction a student will have with institutional personnel other than their professors, it can be argued that when an academic advisor's job satisfaction is low, they

will provide less quality advisement to their students and have an overall negative impact. This argument can be further supported by Habley (2004), who's research confirmed that advisor's satisfaction rates do have a direct impact on the students they serve.

In this study, participants outlined specific factors that directly impact their level of satisfaction within their positions including: their ability to work with students, availability job satisfaction surveys, presence of effective communication, job recognition, career advancement opportunities, and effective leadership. According to the participants when all of these factors are maintained satisfaction levels remain high and career intentions stay focused on academic advising. On the other hand, when these factors are neglected, it is reported that satisfaction levels are lowered and the career intentions are to leave academic advising and search for a career elsewhere.

Research question three of this study is posed to determine what factors contribute to the satisfaction and retention of qualified advising professionals. Themes determined based on participant responses regarding their overall job satisfaction rating and its impact on the retention of qualified advising professionals are discussed in the following section.

The Ability to Work with Students

Four out of the six interviewed Academic Advisors mentioned broadly that they enjoy working with students when asked what factors contribute to satisfaction levels. When looking into these responses on a deeper level some interesting findings became clear that really does link the academic advising participants of this study with what Donnelly's research found in 2009, proving that satisfied professional advisors tend to

obtain their satisfaction from working directly with students. Of the four advisors of this study who confirmed that that the work they do with students does increase their job satisfaction levels, all of them confirmed generally that working with students helps keep them motivated and they enjoy direct student interaction as a part of their daily responsibilities. The two academic advisor participants who did not mention working with students as a factor that increases satisfaction were Mary and Adele.

When looking deeper at those individuals, Mary reported the lowest satisfaction level of all six advisors, she also shared that as an Academic Advisors III, she does mostly administrative work and has many responsibilities outside of direct advising of students. In addition, she expressed that she has no desire to pursue a future career in academic advising as she is burnt out and feels undervalued. Mary's advanced level of Academic Advisor III prevents her from working with students because of the additional administrative type tasks that come along with her position. For this reason, it can be argued that her satisfaction levels could be improved if she did get more interaction with students based on the findings from Donnelly's study from 2009.

The second advisor that did not mention working with students as a factor contributing to her satisfaction level was Adele. Adele still maintains a higher satisfaction level of 7.5 (average of her reported "7/8" response from the interview) out of 10. When looking into why she may be an outlier to what research says, it became clear that Adele gets her satisfaction doing the administrative side of the job, unlike Mary. She shared that she has worked her way from Academic Advisors I up to a current Academic Advisor III position and plans to continue in the field of academic advising

until achieving her goal of advancing into an administrative goal. It can be argued that because she enjoys the administrative side as much as the student-facing side, being removed from the student interaction doesn't impact her satisfaction as much, and therefore, her satisfaction levels remain higher.

These findings can further be supported considering none of the three administrative advising participants of this study mentioned student interaction as a factor that increases their satisfaction in their position. For the purpose of this study, the research from Yip et. al. (n.d) can be applied to this study to show that satisfied advising professionals will perform their daily duties more effectively. This study supports that academic advisor's satisfaction levels on the job increase when they can consistently work with students so they end up making greater efforts on the job to be a better advisor for their students. That same concept can be applied to the effectiveness of administrators as well, supporting the idea satisfied advising administration perform at a higher level when it comes to the execution of administrative duties and overall make a great experience for the advisors they lead as well.

Job Satisfaction Surveys for Advising Professionals

The availability of staff job satisfaction surveys, and how the institution and/or the advising center respond to the information collected from the satisfaction surveys, was mentioned by many participants as an important factor that can directly impact advisors job satisfaction and career intentions. Findings from this study show, all nine participants, 6 academic advisors, and 3 advising administrators shared that their institutions conduct job satisfaction surveys annually to all staff across the institution and

each has confirmed participating in these surveys.   It was explained by participants, that the purpose of those annual staff satisfaction surveys is to try to help staff members increase and/or maintain their level of satisfaction. In some cases, as shared by Adele, the process of doing the annual staff satisfaction survey is helpful to increase her satisfaction levels because she felt as though her concerns were addressed. In other cases, as shared by Jacqueline, the process of completing her annual staff satisfaction survey left her feeling dismissed and unheard and really has no impact on increasing her satisfaction. These findings suggest that even though satisfaction surveys for staff are a common thing, they do not tend to help increase staff satisfaction if the data collected from the surveys are not reviewed and addressed.

Specific literature does confirm that when satisfaction surveys are utilized in an effective way, satisfaction levels can be raised (Sagayarani, 2013). This also offers proof of how satisfaction surveys can impact quality advisement and retention of qualified advising professionals, as captured in Employee Satisfaction Surveys from different institutions. Based on the responses collected from this study regarding staff satisfaction surveys, coupled with other similar research, it is clear that when an employee has a safe place to express what they need to be successful in their positions and what factors impact their satisfaction, they are more likely to provide higher quality work over the course of their employment.

The participants in this study explained satisfaction surveys as a way for their advising centers to gather information regarding the needs and satisfaction levels of their staff. Therefore it can be argued that though satisfaction surveys, we can determine what

147

exactly is needed to provide quality advisement and retain professional advisors in the future. Comparatively, the safe place to express needs addressed by the research of Sagayarani (2013), translates to the participants of this study as a channel to voice their needs to provide quality advisement and increased satisfaction levels. The satisfaction survey can be that channel when they are properly utilized.

In the case of Adele who shared her positive perception of what these surveys can do, we see that it is possible to improve the satisfaction of advisors by listening to what they are reporting in their satisfaction surveys and that even the smallest adjustments help advisors feel heard. On the other hand, we can also see the impact of what happens when the results of the satisfaction survey are dismissed, by looking at Jacqueline's perspective. Their opposite perspectives suggest that when the results of these surveys are reviewed and acted upon, action can be taken to make necessary modifications to increase the satisfaction of advising staff.   Ultimately, actions can be taken to ensure the continued success of the advising center staff directly addressing research question three of this study.

Effective Communication

As mentioned in Chapter IV, effective communication was established as a major theme that is needed to keep job satisfaction high based on the responses of the participants of this study. In addition, participants explained when communication is not effective, it can be detrimental to the functionality of an advising center, leading to lowered satisfaction and attrition of qualified academic advisors. This study captured responses regarding effective communication and how it contributes to an increased level

148

of satisfaction when present in the work environment and decreased satisfaction when not present. Mary shared how the lack of effective communication on her specific team is lowering her satisfaction levels and reducing her morale at work, so much so that is it leading her to feel as though she is suffering from "burnout" and is ready to leave her position in advising as soon as she can.

As also mentioned, Mary is and Academic Advisors III with 10 years of advising experience. Considering Mary's credentials, in conjunction with her direct responses regarding lack of communication, and subsequent desire to leave the profession. It can be argued that if communication was more effective, issues she is experiencing would have a chance to be addressed, and this would lead to higher morale, and perhaps even increase her satisfaction levels enough to stay in the field. After all, she has been working in the field for over a decade. When comparing Mary's specific story to research collected by Steele & Gardner during a roundtable session at the 1999 NACADA National Conference. They found that high turnover rates amongst advisors can negatively impact an institution. Comparatively, Mary reports experiencing a lack of communication, and reports extremely low morale and burnout, and identifies those factors as some of the reasons she does not plan on a future in academic advising. Mary's experiences are a predominant mirror image of what research already tells us, and supports that idea that ineffective communication directly contributes to lower satisfaction levels and lower retention rates of academic advisors and therefore, provides a great example of what can happen when an academic advisors feel lack of communication in their work environment.

All of the other participants shared their perceptions of how effective communication helps to keep their satisfaction increased and it was also reported that effective communication make their jobs more enjoyable. Findings from this study are dynamic in the fact that regardless of the negative or positive experiences reported by the participants, the responses prove that effective communication is needed to increase and or maintain satisfaction rates and retain qualified advisors.

Job Recognition for Academic Advising Professionals

During the interview process, participants were asked questions regarding their levels of job satisfaction and career intentions. Specific focus was centered on supervisory/institutional recognition for academic advisors in addition to student recognition as research already addresses that academic advisors say they feel rewarded by the student interaction alone (Bramlett Epps, 2002). The intention with this line of questioning was to emphasize any institutional and/or supervisory rewarding systems that are taking place in our advising centers today as well as determine other ways advisors feel recognized for their work. According to the responses of the participants, student recognition, supervisory recognition, and institutional recognition were all mentioned; however, the findings of this study presented that the participants experience effective recognition in additional ways including departmental recognition and peer recognition in which advisors recognize the work of their peers.

Beyond student recognition, 5 out of 6 of the academic advising professionals mentioned that they do get recognition from the supervisor in different ways, some described direct and personal recognition within the office from their supervisor. Other

150

reported how they feel their work is recognized from their superiors through staff

activities designed by their superior to thank them for their work, including but not

limited to: staff potlucks and monthly advisors of the month party's. All three of the

advising administration mentioned these similar activities as well as their way of showing

their staff they are appreciated. Institutional recognition was discussed as well from both

the advisors and advising administration. While the two advisors, and one academic

administrator, all from the same institution, reported no institutional recognition at all, the

remaining participants reported that their institutions host an annual banquet or ceremony

to recognize staff and faculty for their hard work across the institution and specific

awards such as advisors of the year are awarded. There are additional mixed reviews

from some of the advisors regarding recognition institution and the sincerity and fairness

of these recognition processes were questioned by some of the participants.

A very interesting finding when discussing types of recognition with the

participants of this study was the fact that each advisor mentioned feeling the greatest

amount of recognition from their fellow academic advisors. Advisors reported different

ways staff make efforts to recognize the work of each other in different ways. Some

mentioned how their team of advisors pass around a stuffed animal mascot as a way to

recognize the outstanding efforts of their co-workers. If an advisor receives the mascot

from a peer, it means that the advisors were seen to be going above and beyond, and it is

now their duty to pass along the mascot to a co-worker once they see that they have done

something outstanding. Another reported form of peer recognition reported is the use of

"Happy Boards. " Each advisor has a whiteboard in their office and fellow staff and

supervisors can write positive things on the board thanking the advisors for a job well done. Surprisingly, peer recognition seemed to be reported more frequently across all participants as one of the most satisfying forms of recognition outside of student recognition.

As a service-centered vocation, advising may be viewed as a field that has a built-in reward (O'Connell, 2010), but we must not overlook that the findings from this study show that academic advisors do respond to positive recognition in any capacity whether it be from students, supervisor, their peers, or the institution. These results provide insight into an area of research that has limited information available, especially in regards to supervisory and institutional recognition. Through the analysis of these results, it is clear that academic advisors do benefit and respond positively to all forms of recognition, for the most part, suggesting that advisor recognition in any capacity can positively impact advisor's satisfaction and retention of qualified academic advisors.

Career Advancement and Promotion Opportunities

The discussion of career advancement opportunities and the frequency of promotion opportunities was a major part of the responses collected in the interview process regarding advising staff satisfaction and retention. University of Texas at San Antonio (2010), University of Arizona (2010), and University of Missouri - Kansas City (2012) provide research that demonstrates the progress that has been made to develop a career ladder for those in academic advising. With that said, the participants of this study confirm that career ladders i. e. three-tiered systems, have been adopted by each of the

participant's institutions, yet some still feel that promotion opportunities are few and far between.

All 9 participants of this study discuss that their advising centers have adopted a three-tiered system and also shared where they fall in that system and how long they have been working in the field of advising to reach that title. Their additional responses regarding career advancement mirror what is reported from the literature presented in this study and therefore supports the development of tiered systems is a significant change that has occurred in advising in the last decade. According to several of the participants of this study, the impact of this change has led to positive development like the availability of more advising positions in the field; however, some still felt that even with the positive intentions and adaptations occurring overtime, career advancement remains a difficult feat and often discourages advisor from trying to build a career in academic advising.

The career intentions of the participants show that 4 out of 6 so have intentions of continuing to build a career in academic advising. When we look at the two advisors that are planning on leaving, they both shared that they have difficulty trying to advance even though their advising centers have adopted the tiered/hierarchical system. Both also feel that they have been overlooked for promotional opportunities and it has discouraged them from continuing to work in the field. Considering the responses from all 9 participants regarding career advancement opportunities and how they impact job satisfaction and career intentions for the future, findings from this study can support that when advisors are given fair and reasonable opportunities to advance their satisfaction is higher and they

153

make plans to advance in the field. When advisors are not provided those opportunities they will be much harder to retain professionally.

Leadership

Each of the 9 participants of this study shared different ways that leadership has impacted their advising practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction and how leadership becomes a factor that contributes to the retention of qualified academic advisors. Many shared their experience regarding their current leadership, while others shared past experiences, but after looking at all the data, a major common factor to lowered job satisfaction and subsequent staff turnover in academic advising is ineffective leadership.

The seventh principle of change according to Hall & Hord (2011) is that leadership is essential to the long-term change process. The findings of this study already established many issues that cause constant change in the field of academic advising and the impact of those changes. The results of this study find that leadership is a factor that impacts an advisor's satisfaction and career intentions. According to Yip et. al. (n.d), a satisfying advisor will provide a great experience for the student, because they are enjoying their job. For the purpose of this study, this literature can be confirmed and taken a step further to show that satisfied administrators will perform their daily duties effectively as well; however, their efforts will make a great experience for the academic advisors that they lead.

The two examples from literature perfectly relay a similar message to what was reported by the participants of this study. Some advisors reported having encouraging

154

and effective leadership, in some cases even in stressful times and how that has pushed

them to be better advisors, and moreover be more satisfied in their position. The findings

also provide alternative experience with ineffective leadership and how that has lead

advisors to feel unheard, undervalued, and discouraged and therefore, they are planning

on leaving the field of academic advising. These results, in addition to the supporting

literature, confirms that effective leadership is a major factor that impacts advising

practices, job responsibilities, and job satisfaction and can also directly contribute to the

retention of qualified advising staff.

Implications for Research

This study was guided by the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The

CBAM was designed to assess an individual's experience during the process of change

(Hall & Hord, 2011; Loucks & Hall, 1979). For the purposes of this study, we were able

to complete interviews to determine clear changes that were being experienced by the

advising professionals participating in this study. Those changes were identified as

follows: Development of a tiered system, transition from prescriptive to developmental

advising approaches, increased use of technology in advising, and lastly the development

and implementation of state and federal initiatives like CCG/CCA/Fifteen to Finish.

By aligning this study with the conceptual framework of the CBAM, patterns

were identified from the research within the change process and it was determined that

although workload increased and roles of advisors began to adapt to the occurring

changes, the ability to work with students, the availability of staff job satisfaction

surveys, effective communication, job recognition, availability of career advancement,

155

and leadership were reported to have the most direct impact on the advising practices, job responsibility, and job satisfaction of the participants and made a difference in the career persistence of professional advisors. Through this research, the six factors can now be identified as foreseeable and highly complex patterns that are present for those experiencing these changes first-hand and can be applied to the ten principles of change outlined in the CBAM .

The first principle is that change is learning. Academic advising professionals that participated in this study discuss that they have had to learn new job requirements, adjust to a constantly changing role and work environment, as well as learn new advising approaches and master new technologies throughout these times of change. These responses support the ideals of the first principle of change and reinforces the concept that learning is always paired with change.

The second and third principles respectively are: change is a process not an event, and the school is the primary unit for change. In the case of this study, the primary unit for change was the advising unit in higher education institutions. After further analysis throughout the study, the changes reported by the participants have occurred over time and are fairly persistent, which is in line with the second principle that states change is a process not an event and that the primary unit for change was the advising units that employee participants.

The fourth principle is that an organization will adopt a change, but individuals implement the change. In this study, the perceptions of academic advising professionals who are implementing changes have been collected and we now understand what specific

changes they have been implementing based on what their advising centers adopt. A

prime example being the development and implementation of state and federal policies

and initiatives CCA, CCG, and Fifteen to Finish which was adopted by institutions across

the state and country, but expected to be implemented by the advising professionals.

The fifth and sixth principles are: interventions are the key to the success of the

change process, and appropriate interventions reduce resistance to change. This study

provides some examples of what the advisors have experienced by way of interventions

throughout the change. Findings showed that institutions are taking satisfaction surveys,

and making efforts to recognize and reward advisors for their hard work during times of

changes. Those factors can be looked at as interventions that will help the change

process be more success and can be reviewed by advising centers as a way to not only

reduce resistance to change but to help boost satisfaction and retention rates of their

professional during times of change.

The seventh principle of change according to Hall & Hord (2011) is that

leadership is essential to the long-term change process. By reviewing the history of

academic advising we have evidence that the field is constantly making changes to better

accommodate students and increase RPG rates; however, when you place these changes

in context with the CBAM and the 10 principles of change, many factors were

determined that are essential to changes over a long term period of time. Leadership was

in fact one of those factors as discussed by the participants of this study. They shared

that effective leadership is not only helpful when experiencing long term changes but

needed to increase job satisfaction and prevent high turnover rates in the field of academic advising.

The final three remaining principles of change are: facilitating change is a team effort, mandates can work, and the context influences the process of learning and change. When applied to the context of this study, successful managing of RPG rates is a group effort amongst advising professionals. All four areas of change reported on are in sync with the responses that discussed teamwork and effective communication being a key factor to get through times of change but are also identified as contributing factors that impact advising practices, job responsibilities and job satisfaction and can also impact staff retention. Throughout all reported change from this study, mandates could be applied to help facilitate the changes advisors face on a regular basis , but since most advising professionals all share one common goal, to serve the student, that very ideal suggests that advisors are willing to learn while continuing to serve, even during times of change.

By structuring this study using the CBAM as a conceptual framework, advising professional's perceptions and experiences that were collected can now provide a successful outline of specific areas of change that advising professionals are facing today. With that understanding, it is possible to determine the specific impact of those changes as well as determine what factors will help to facilitate the process of change and improve satisfaction and retention rates in the field of academic advising. This process to identify change agents and their impact to help keep advisors satisfied on the job and

working in the field can also, arguably, positively impact student retention and overall increase RPG of students as well.

Limitations of the Study

This study is restricted by certain limitations. As the primary researcher, it is important to remind the reader that I am also a professional academic advisor; however, throughout the process of this research validity checks including triangulation and respondent validation were implemented to maintain the integrity of the study, and to assure that my personal bias did not impact the results.

Maxwell (2012) describes respondent validation as intentionally seeking feedback regarding your data. This process is also referred to as member checking by other researchers including Lincoln and Guba (1985). For this study, participants were given the opportunity to review all transcripts of their interviews, via email, after they were transcribed to allow participants to confirm that their voice was represented accurately. This process also allowed for any corrections to be made to misrepresented information that may have occurred in the process of transcribing interviews and interpreting data. It is important to make note that although email confirmation was sent by all participants to confirm receipt of the transcripts, and participants were given the opportunity to make corrections/adjustment, all responded that they were satisfied with what the transcript provided and no further corrections or adjustments were made to the direct transcripts as they were analyzed for this study.

In addition to respondent validation, triangulation was used to ensure the validity of this study. During purposeful sampling in this study, academic advisors and

administrators were chosen from three different types of higher educational institutions. This decision to have multiple types of institutions was intentional in order to be able to examine perspectives from different academic advising environments and obtain triangulation across settings and participants. Along with being able to compare perspectives from different types of institutions to strengthen the validity of the study, documentation from each institution was reviewed in order to identify if there is any differentiation between written policies and procedure versus actual practice. Not only did this maximize options for triangulation, but it also strengthened the amount of rich data collected for the study. Comparing the perspectives of administrators as well as advisors, and the cross-institutional perspectives have also provided additional triangulation of the data.

Furthermore, the interview process of nine academic advising professionals has provided specific insights regarding the profession of academic advising, however, it is not generalizable. Although these professionals are experienced advisors, selected from three different types of higher educational institutions, the results are not necessarily generalized to other geographic locations, institutions or individuals.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several findings determined throughout the process of this study, support many recommendations for future research regarding this topic, including development and use of technology in academic advising, the establishment of effective leadership practice in conjunction with the tiered advising title systems, and academic advisor recognition, just to name a few. Furthermore, this study has provided evidence that the use of technology

160

in academic advising is becoming a new norm. Not only were the participants of this study able to show that technology in the field is a major change, through their perceptions, but they also share how this change has impacted their daily responsibilities, advising practices, and satisfaction levels.

Future research could be conducted surrounding the use of technology in academic advising and its direct impact on advising practices. A study of this nature would help to determine if the advancement in technology is allowing advisors to be more efficient during the advising process and could help establish whether or not advising professionals are accurately utilizing the technology in order to provide the best quality advising. In addition, it could establish whether or not the technological advances being made are remaining parallel to advisors' ability to properly utilize the technology. If they are not, what training or intervention strategies can be developed to ensure the proper use of technology in advising occurs in the future?

Another major factor that presented in this study was the need for effective leadership in order to provide higher satisfaction levels of advising staff and quality advisement to students. With that said, recommendations for future research regarding this finding would be to focus directly on establishing whether or not advisors believe they have effective leadership from their direct supervisors and higher, but also determine the leadership skills of the academic advisors themselves based on their title within the tiered system. It was determined through this study that three-tiered systems allow advisors to move up from Advisor I, to Advisor II, Advisors III, and so on to administrative positions. With a streamlined path to follow toward administrative

positions, future research could be conducted to establish if an advisor's leadership skills are developing as quickly as they advance. It would be helpful to determine how many academic advisors experience ineffective leadership and pinpoint what leads to ineffective leadership whether it be: premature advancement and promotions without efficient leadership training, or it is current leadership feeling burnt out, etc. If effective leadership is needed in the field of advising to provide quality advising to students, keep satisfaction levels of staff high, future research could seek to determine where leadership is lacking in the field, its impact on working advisors, and its overall impact on the functionality of advising centers.

For the purposes of this study, much literature was found regarding the impact of student recognition on professional academic advisors. Although the responses from this study did identify student recognition as a positive impact on academic advisors, the participants of this study shared additional types of recognition that they value including supervisory and institutional recognition as well as recognition from their fellow advising staff. There is not much available research or past studies regarding these additional types of advisor recognition that were mentioned by the participants of this study; therefore, could be an effective area of future research. If we can establish types of recognition that advising professionals respond best to, recognition and reward systems in academic advising can be established to make a difference in advisor satisfaction and retention.

The participants of this study were intentionally chosen from different institutions across the state of Georgia and both advising staff and administration made up the pool of

participants; however, this study cannot be generalized and does not give insight to all academic advisors across the state or country for that matter. Future research could be conducted on a wider-scale to include perceptions of advisors from across the state or country in order to determine if similar change is occurring according to all professional academic advisors and advising administration.

Suggested ways to conduct this research would be to pursue this study from a quantitative approach rather than qualitative. A survey could be created based on the findings from this study in efforts to gather as much information from advisors regarding their experiences of change, the impact that changes are having on their professional practices, satisfaction levels, and persistence in the field. The survey could be sent out statewide or nationally through NACADA to all advising professionals or could be broken down based on position, institution type, advising center practices, etc., in order to gather generalizable information that can help the field progress as a whole.

Another area for future research would be to replicate this study but focus on one advising center at a time. Interview all advisors at every level and all advising administration at any given center to provide effective results that each advising center could focus on individually. Much like a consulting process. Advising centers could be studied on an individual basis with all the same study constructs. As the information is collected from individual advising centers over time, each can be compared to one another as information is collected. This would allow findings to be compared on many different levels. Information could be gathered and compared from participating centers reviewing all variables to identify generalizable information or specific variables can be

focused on regardless of geographic locations. Some examples would include but would not be limited to comparing results from a specific state or region, or even comparing results from advising centers that share similar constructs like advising approaches or models (proactive/appreciative advising) or center structure (centralized/decentralized), etc.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that major changes have occurred, and continue to occur, in the field of academic advising as a result of increased demand for higher RPG rates and student success. Participant responses were collected through the interview process, those responses were analyzed along with advising documentation to determine the overall findings of this study and to answer the three primary research questions of the study.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. Findings in this study show there were four changes that directly impacted all the participants of this study are identified as follows: the development of tiered advising systems, transition from prescriptive advising to developmental, the development of technology in advising, and the development of state and federal initiatives like CCG, CCA, and Fifteen to Finish.

Furthermore, this study was able to identify the purpose of each change reported in order to confirm the change process is in full swing for these advisors. Through the

analysis of the participants' responses regarding the purpose of all 4 changes, findings showed: the three-tiered systems were developed to help create a more consistent and clear career ladder, transition from prescriptive advising practices to developmental practices are happening in order to help students get the best and effective advising possible in order to increase RPG rates in American higher education, advanced technology is being adopted in the field to enhance the efficiency in the advising process and to help advising professionals enhance the accuracy of academic advising through data collection and analysis, and lastly the development of state and federal policies and initiatives like Complete College America, Complete College Georgia, and Fifteen to Finish were implemented to help institutions recognize that graduation rates are just as important as retention rates and offers a guideline to help institutions improve those rates across the board. Identifying the changes, and why these changes are happening, also helps to identify factors that are impacting advisors through this period of change.

Once the four changes were identified from this study, insight was provided to determine the certain factors that directly contribute to job satisfaction and retention of academic advising professionals as a result of those specific changes. The factors reported include: the ability to work with students, the availability of staff job satisfaction surveys and how the institution and/or the advising center respond to the information collected from the satisfaction surveys, effective communication, job recognition for academic advising professionals, availability of career advancement opportunities and the attainability and frequency of promotional opportunities, and leadership. Through the discussion of these themes based on participant responses, along

165

with the support of literature, this study offers evidence that these factors directly

contribute to the satisfaction level amongst advising professionals and impact advising

staff retention rates and career intentions of advising professionals.

The findings of this study identifies four specific changes reported through the

perceptions of the nine participants, as well as identifies the impact those changes are

having on the advising professionals. The primary impact of these changes on role

expectations and responsibilities of the advisor were identified through the responses

from each participant via interviews. Findings showed that these changes over time

resulted in an overall increased workload and adapted job responsibilities for advising

staff as they persistently make efforts to keep up with the changing field; therefore,

suggesting a direct impact on advising practices, job responsibility, and job satisfaction.

As a result of determining specific changes in advising overtime and establishing the

impact they are having on advising professionals, this study further identified 6 specific

factors that directly contribute to job satisfaction and retention of academic advising

professionals.

This research further suggests when the factors that directly contribute to job

satisfaction and advisor retention are adequately addressed by their individual advising

centers and institutions, it will increase the job satisfaction rates in academic advisors and

the possibility of retaining quality academic advisors will also increase. When these

factors are not addressed, results show decreased satisfaction and lowered morale

amongst advising professionals and oftentimes, those are the terms used by the

professionals when they have had enough and want to leave the field. The change aspect

in the field of advising is inevitable, but what this study shows is that advising

professionals are willing to share what they need from their students, co-workers,

supervisors, and institutions to be the best advisor. If those needs are addressed, we can

help secure retention rates of advisors and that will help increase the rates of student

retention.

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175

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APPENDIX A:

NACADA Core Values of Academic Advising (NACADA, 2004)

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising

THE STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

DECLARATION

1) Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise.

Academic advisors work to strengthen the importance, dignity, potential, and unique nature of each individual within the academic setting. Advisors' work is guided by their beliefs that students:

- have diverse backgrounds that can include different ethnic, racial, domestic, and international communities; sexual orientations; ages; gender and gender identities; physical, emotional, and psychological abilities; political, religious, and educational beliefs

- hold their own beliefs and opinions

- responsible for their own behaviors and the outcomes for those behaviors

- can be successful based on their individual goals and efforts

- have a desire to learn

- have learning needs that vary based upon individual skills, goals, responsibilities, and experiences

- use a variety of techniques and technologies to navigate their world.

In support of these beliefs, the cooperative efforts of all who advise include, but are not limited to, providing accurate and timely information, communicating in useful and

efficient ways, maintaining regular office hours, and offering varied contact modes.

Advising, as part of the educational process, involves helping students develop a realistic self-perception and successfully transition to the postsecondary institution. Advisors encourage, respect, and assist students in establishing their goals and objectives. Advisors seek to gain the trust of their students and strive to honor students' expectations of academic advising and its importance in their lives.

2) Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process.

Effective advising requires a holistic approach. At many institutions, a network of people and resources is available to students. Advisors serve as mediators and facilitators who effectively use their specialized knowledge and experience for student benefit. Advisors recognize their limitations and make referrals to qualified persons when appropriate. To connect academic advising to students' lives, advisors actively seek resources and inform students of specialists who can further assess student needs and provide access to appropriate programs and services. Advisors help students integrate information so they can make well-informed academic decisions.

3) Advisors are responsible to their institutions.

Advisors nurture collegial relationships. They uphold the specific policies, procedures, and values of their departments and institutions. Advisors maintain clear lines of

communication with those not directly involved in the advising process but who have responsibility and authority for decisions regarding academic advising at the institution.

Advisors recognize their individual roles in the success of their institutions.

4) Advisors are responsible to higher education.

Academic advisors honor academic freedom. They realize that academic advising is not limited to any one theoretical perspective and that practice is informed by a variety of theories from the fields of social sciences, the humanities, and education. They are free to base their work with students on the most relevant theories and on optimal models for the delivery of academic advising programs. Advisors advocate for student educational achievement to the highest attainable standard, support student goals, and uphold the educational mission of the institution.

5) Advisors are responsible to their educational community.

Academic advisors interpret their institution's mission as well as its goals and values. They convey institutional information and characteristics of student success to the local, state, regional, national, and global communities that support the student body. Advisors are sensitive to the values and mores of the surrounding community. They are familiar with community programs and services that may provide students with additional educational opportunities and resources. Advisors may become models for students by

participating in community activities.

6) Advisors are responsible for their professional practices and for themselves personally.

Advisors participate in professional development opportunities, establish appropriate relationships and boundaries with advisees, and create environments that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Advisors maintain a healthy balance in their lives and articulate personal and professional needs when appropriate. They consider continued professional growth and development to be the responsibility of both themselves and their institutions.

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising

THE STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising is comprised of professional and faculty advisors, administrators, students, and others with a primary interest in the practice of academic advising. With diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, NACADA members advise in a variety of settings and work to promote quality academic advising within their institutions.

NACADA provides a Statement of Core Values to affirm the importance of advising within the academy and acknowledge the impact that advising interactions can have on individuals, institutions and society.

The Statement of Core Values consists of three parts:

- Introduction

184

- Declaration

- Exposition

While each part stands alone, the document's richness and fullness of meaning lies in its totality. The Statement of Core Values provides a framework to guide professional practice and reminds advisors of their responsibilities to students, colleagues, institutions, society, and themselves.

APPENDIX B:

IRB Protocol Exemption Report

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for the Protection of Human Research Participants
PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 03429-2016

INVESTIGATOR: Ms. Brittany Baldwin

SUPERVISING
FACULTY: Dr. Karla Hull

PROJECT TITLE: *Staff Retention in Academic Advising: Perceptions of Academic Advisors.*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Category 2**. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *Your research study may begin immediately at the following institutions:*
  - *Georgia State University/Perimeter College.*
  - *University of West Georgia (06/20/2017).*

☒ *If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.*

Elizabeth W. Olphie   04/19/2017

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Elizabeth W. Olphie, IRB Administrator   Date   *Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-259-5045.*

Revised: 06.02.16

APPENDIX C:

Letter to Solicit Participation

Good day,

My name is Brittany Baldwin and I am a doctoral student at Valdosta State University, pursuing the dissertation phase of my Ed. D. degree in Educational Leadership. You are invited to participate in a study designed to understand the experiences of academic advisors and advising administrators as they reflect on the roles and responsibilities of their jobs, the pressure on academic advisors to support retention efforts, and the increased use of technology in advising centers.

I am requesting your help because you are an experienced academic advisor whose perceptions would provide valuable information about the changing roles and expectations for academic advisors. Currently, there are no studies that examine how academic advisors feel about the impact of institutional retention efforts on their jobs. Advising professionals and administrators in institutions across the nation would benefit from understanding the job from the perspective of someone who has experienced changes in job expectations.

Your participation is voluntary. Should you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to participate in a 60-90 minute interview. You may discontinue participation at any time. No personal information would be released before, during, or after the study, and pseudonyms will be used in order to protect your anonymity.

If you would like to participate in this research and are at least 18 years old, please reply to this email. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me via email at bdbaldwin@valdosta.edu. Thank you for taking time out of your very busy day to consider participating in this study.

Sincerely,
bdbaldwin@valdosta.edu
Brittany Baldwin
229.232.0011

APPENDIX D:

Informed Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Researcher's Statement

This is a request for you to participate in a qualitative research study to investigate Academic Advisor's perceptions on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession. There will be an interview process associated with this study. Your answers during this interview will guide the development and improvement of advising practices and advisors job satisfaction.

Principal Investigator: Brittany Baldwin
                                        Doctoral Student - Ed.D. Leadership
                                        Valdosta State University
                                        Valdosta, GA 31698
                                        bdbaldwin87@gmail.com
                                        229.232.0011(cell)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of professional academic advisors on changing role expectations, the impact of those changes on their ability to use the preferred advising model for their institution, and the impact of change on advisors' persistence in the profession.

Study Procedures

You have agreed to participate in a 60-90 minute interview.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Access to individual data is limited to the researcher only and will be stored on a private and secure drive. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your anonymity for the written portion of the study.

- No risks or discomforts to participants are likely.

  • Personal information will be collected for communication process between the participant and the research. No personal information will be available to anyone outside of the researcher, and will be used for the purposes of this study only. Specific communication will take place to set up an interview time, set up possible follow up interviews, elicit feedback for clarification after your interview, and share final results of the study. **Taking part is voluntary**

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions

191

The researcher of this study is Brittany Baldwin please feel free to call or email at any time. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be directed to the Institutional Review Board at your individual institution.

APPENDIX E:

Interview Protocol (Academic Advisors)

Interview Protocol (Academic Advisors)

1) Please describe your typical interaction with the students you assist on a day-to-day basis.

2) Describe any additional office duties or expectations of your position besides

   a) student advising.

3) Here is a copy of the academic advising syllabus and academic advisor expectations for your institution. Please look over these documents and help me understand how your day-to-day work is similar to these descriptions and/or different?

4) Since becoming an Academic Advisor, in what ways, if any, have your responsibilities and job expectations changed over the years?

   a) How do you feel about those changes?

5) Recently there has been an emphasis on retention and graduation through initiatives like Complete College America/ Complete College Georgia/ 15 to Finish. Please discuss the ways, if any, in which these policies and initiates impact your job as an Academic Advisor?

6) Describe your preferred advising model, style, or practice.

   a) In what ways is this style/model/practice consistent with institutional expectations for academic advisors?

7) You said you preferred _____ model of advising. Describe the ideal

   environment, tools, and attitudes needed to provide that style of advising.

8) In what ways, if any, do recent policies and initiatives impact your preferred advising style?

9)   Describe your level of satisfaction with your job.

   a) On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the highest and one being the lowest, how would you rate your satisfaction with the job.

   b)   Please explain factors contributing to your satisfaction level.

10)   In what ways does your supervisor and/ or institution recognize the work done by academic advisors on your campus?

11) What, if anything could your supervisor or institution do to increase your job satisfaction and retain you in the academic advising unit?

12)   What are your career intentions as an academic advisor? Professionally speaking, where do you see yourself in five years?

 13) What else do I need to know, to understand your experiences as an academic advisor?

APPENDIX F:

Interview Protocol (Academic Advising Administrators)

Interview Protocol (Academic Advising Administrators)

(1) Tell me about your first job as an academic advisor.

    a. What attracted you to this field?

    b. Now that you are an academic advising administrator, describe your typical interaction with the students you assist on a day-to-day basis.

    c. Please describe the typical interaction that your academic advisors are expected to have with the students they assist on a day to day basis.

(2) Describe the duties or expectations of your administrative position.

(3) Here is a copy of the academic advising syllabus and academic advisor expectations for your institution. Please look over these documents and help me understand whether the day-to-day work of your academic advisors is similar to these descriptions and/or different?

(4) In your opinion, in what ways, if any, have responsibilities and job expectations changed for academic advisors over the years?

    a. How do you feel about those changes?

    b. As an academic advising administrator, have you initiated any changes?

    c. If yes, what are they and why did you feel changes needed to be implemented?

(5) Recently there has been an emphasis on retention and graduation through

initiatives like Complete College America/ Complete College Georgia/ 15

to Finish. Please discuss the ways, if any, in which these policies and

initiatives impact your job as an academic advising administrator?

(6) Describe the advising style or approach of your unit.

(7) You said _____ is the advising practice followed by the advising unit.

Describe the ideal environment, tools, and attitudes needed to provide that style of

advising.

     a. What challenges do you face as you try to create this ideal advising

        environment for your institution?

     b. In your opinion, did your supervisor face these same challenges

        when you were an academic advisor?

(8) Describe your level of satisfaction with this administrative job.

     a. On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the highest and one being

        the lowest, how would you rate your satisfaction with the job.

     b. Please explain factors contributing to your satisfaction level.

(9) In what ways does your supervisor and/ or institution recognize the work done by

your academic advising unit?

     a. In your opinion, do your academic advisors feel valued by the

        institution? Why or why not?

b. If you were asked to recommend strategies for increasing the job satisfaction of your academic advisors, what would you recommend?

c. What factors contribute to your ability to retain qualified academic advisors?

d. What challenges do you face regarding the retention of academic advisors?

(10) Is there anything else I should know about the context of advising at your institution? If yes, please describe.