

# *Building Advisor Competency: Introduction to the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model*

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## Overview

In the summer of 2015, NACADA Professional Development Committee (PDC) Incoming Chair Teri Farr was tasked with leading the PDC team with looking forward into the future of the academic advising profession to identify what competencies academic advisors will need to have, how these competencies could best be articulated by the association, and how they can be used by the association to provide professional development opportunities for NACADA’s membership. Over the next 18 months, the team conducted a review of the available advising literature, spoke with subject matter experts, consulted with a wide array of NACADA constituencies, and crafted the [NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model](#). The model was approved by the association’s Board of Directors in March 2017 and made available to all advising professionals on the [PDC webpage](#). PDC members then began Phase 2 of this initiative – identification and review of NACADA resources currently available to assist academic advising personnel with competency development and capacity building.

In this [NACADA Advisor Training and Development Commission](#)-sponsored webinar, Teri Farr is joined by PDC members to discuss the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model**. They will share some of their experiences with the model’s development process, the thoughts underlying its framework and core competency areas, and the ongoing project of resource identification and development.

## Pre-Webinar Activity Suggestions

Review the information available on the two Core Competencies-related webpages:

- <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies.aspx>
- <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/About-Us/NACADA-Leadership/Administrative-Division/Professional-Development-Committee/PDC-Advisor-Competencies.aspx>

## Possible Questions for Post-Webinar Discussion

- Conceptual component:
  - Have you examined your own identity and the role it plays in your advising practice?
  - How do your values guide your advising practice?
  - How does our institution provide professional development opportunities to teach advisors on how to apply theory to advising practice?
  - As an institution, how do we share and encourage different advising approaches and strategies?
- Informational component:
  - How do academic advisors at our institution learn
    - our institution's history, mission, vision and values?
    - about legal guidelines, including privacy regulations and confidentiality?
  - As an institution, how do we disseminate changes to policies, procedures, curriculum changes, etc. to our advising community? Is there an option to utilize technology to support the dissemination?
  - What resources does our institution utilize to update academic advisors on the characteristics of emerging populations and ever-changing campus and community resources?
- Relational component:
  - Have you written a personal philosophy of advising statement? How does that statement help you with goal setting and maintaining day-to-day decisions?
  - Do you have techniques that you use to build rapport?
  - How have you been successful at building a network of collaborators? Are there challenges to building a network?
  - How do you take the examinations of your own identity as part of your advising practice and map them to being intentional about inclusive communication? Are there any techniques that you employ for self-assessment to ensure inclusive communication?
  - What are some of the skills you employ to help students articulate how they came to a decision in addition to the development of problem-solving skills? How do you ensure that students are integrating their learning in your advising interactions?
- General
  - Do you have an advising syllabus that clearly outlines learning outcomes? How is that shared with your advisees and other stakeholders?
  - As a result of watching today's presentation, can you think of ways to adopt the Core Competencies into your everyday advising practice?
  - What training and/or development programs does our campus offer for academic advisors? Does our program cover the conceptual, informational, and relational components of the Core Competencies for academic advising?
  - Do you anticipate any resistance on our campus to adopting the Core Competencies framework and applying it to our current training and development offerings?

## References and Resources

Pillars of Academic Advising Webpages – <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars.aspx>

- Concept of Advising – <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/Concept.aspx>
- Core Values of Advising – <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreValues.aspx>
- Core Competencies – <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies.aspx>
- CAS Standards – <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CASstandards.aspx>

NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Guide (PG23) – Available at <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Product-Details.aspx?ProductsDetails=yes&ID=PG23>

*What is Academic Advising?: An Introduction to the Field* (PG22) – Available at <https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Product-Details/ID/PG22.aspx>

Habley, W.R. (1995). Advisor Training in the Context of a Teaching Enhancement Center. In R. E. Glennen and F.N. Vowell (Eds.) *Academic Advising as a Comprehensive Campus Process*. (p 76). (National Academic Advising Association Monograph Series, no. 2.). Manhattan, KS: National Academic Advising Association.

Wuebker, M., & Cook, A. (2017, September). Online training for new advisors. *Academic Advising Today*, 40(3). Retrieved from <https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Online-Training-for-New-Advisors.aspx>

# ACADEMIC ADVISING CORE COMPETENCIES MODEL

At the request of the association’s leadership, the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model** (2017) was developed by the association’s Professional Development Committee. The purpose of the model is to identify the broad range of understanding, knowledge, and skills that support academic advising, to guide professional development, and to promote the contributions of advising to student development, progress, and success. It is intended that the model may be used by:

- **Primary Role Advisors** for self-assessment and evaluation, and to guide learning, career development, and advancement.
- **Faculty Advisors and Advising Administrators** to clarify academic advising roles and responsibilities, and to highlight the contributions of academic advising to teaching and learning.
- **Advising Supervisors, Managers, and Mentors** to identify strengths and areas for staff development, and to guide hiring, training, and evaluation.
- **Learning Professionals, Trainers, and Researchers** to support curriculum development, establish learning priorities, and advance scholarship in the field.

## FRAMEWORK FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING CORE COMPETENCIES

Underpinning the core competencies for academic advising and serving as the foundational elements for effective advisor training programs and advising practice are three content components – the **conceptual**, **informational**, and **relational**. An understanding of these content areas provides advisors the knowledge and skills to be effective guides for their students.

- The **Conceptual** component provides the context for the delivery of academic advising. It covers the ideas and theories that advisors must understand to effectively advise their students.
- The **Informational** component provides the substance of academic advising. It covers the knowledge advisors must gain to be able to guide the students at their institution.
- The **Relational** component provides the skills that enable academic advisors to convey the concepts and information from the other two components to their advisees.

To achieve excellence in their work, regardless of the specifics of their individual campus’ advising mission, all academic advisors must understand all three components and be able to synthesize and apply them as needed in academic advising interactions.



# CORE COMPETENCY AREAS FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

## CONCEPTUAL

Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**

1. The history and role of academic advising in higher education.
2. NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising.
3. Theory relevant to academic advising.
4. Academic advising approaches and strategies.
5. Expected outcomes of academic advising.
6. How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained.

## INFORMATIONAL

Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

1. Institution specific history, mission, vision, values, and culture.
2. Curriculum, degree programs, and other academic requirements and options.
3. Institution specific policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.
4. Legal guidelines of advising practice, including privacy regulations and confidentiality.
5. The characteristics, needs, and experiences of major and emerging student populations.
6. Campus and community resources that support student success.
7. Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles.

## RELATIONAL

Core Competencies in the **Relational component** (skills academic advisors must demonstrate) include the **ability to:**

1. Articulate a personal philosophy of academic advising.
2. Create rapport and build academic advising relationships.
3. Communicate in an inclusive and respectful manner.
4. Plan and conduct successful advising interactions.
5. Promote student understanding of the logic and purpose of the curriculum.
6. Facilitate problem solving, decision-making, meaning-making, planning, and goal setting.
7. Engage in ongoing assessment and development of self and the advising practice.

For more information about the **NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model**, please visit [nacada.ksu.edu/resources/pillars/corecompetencies.aspx](https://nacada.ksu.edu/resources/pillars/corecompetencies.aspx)



# CORE VALUES



The **NACADA Statement of Core Values** reflects the many cultural and educational contexts in which academic advising is practiced globally. A diverse, globally represented task force in conjunction with the input of NACADA members contributed to the creation of the statement. By virtue of this process, this document represents the Core Values of the academic advising profession as a whole. These values apply to all who perform academic advising by any role, title, or position as educators at their institutions.



While nations, institutions, and students will offer unique circumstances, the Core Values provide guidance to academic advisors in their professional lives. Academic advisors are committed to the students they advise, their institutions, their professional practice, and the broader advising and educational community. There may be times when balancing all Core Values equally is not possible. In those instances, academic advisors are encouraged to reflect and engage other academic advising professionals in a dialogue to resolve any conflict to the best of their ability.



The Statement of Core Values is reviewed periodically to ensure its alignment with current professional practices, competencies, and philosophies. NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising encourages institutions to adopt the Statement of Core Values and support the work of those who provide academic advising.

*Building Advisor Competency: Introduction to the NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model*

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Deb Dotterer, Michigan State University  
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Professional Development Committee

2015

CHARGE:

- Determine core competencies
- Articulate competencies
- Assess professional development opportunities



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Professional Development Committee



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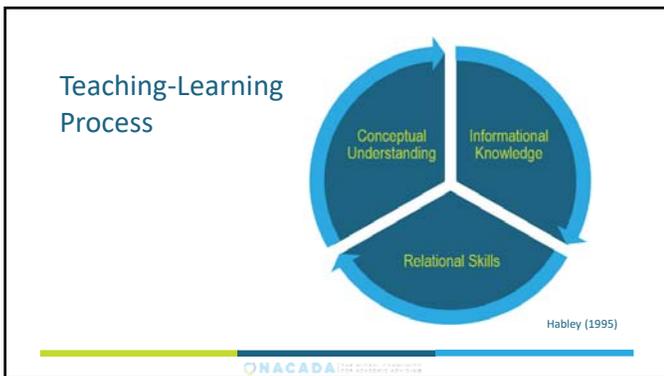
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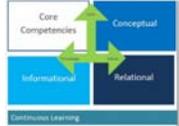
### Vetting Process

2016



First Drafts

- Basic competencies
- Competency descriptions



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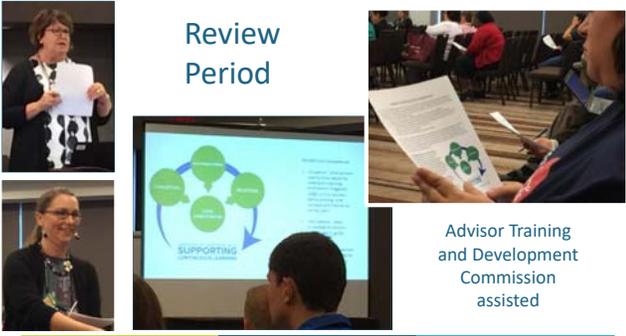
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### Review Period



Advisor Training and Development Commission assisted

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### Review Period

2017



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**NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model**

- Primary Role Advisors
- Faculty Advisors and Advising Administrators
- Advising Supervisors, Managers, and Mentors
- Learning Professionals, Trainers, and Researchers

THE GREAT COMMUNITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING  
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**Framework**

Components:

- CONCEPTUAL**
  - provides context
- INFORMATIONAL**
  - provides substance
- RELATIONAL**
  - provides skills

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*“Without understanding (conceptual elements), there is no context for the delivery of services. Without information, there is no substance to advising. And, without personal skills (relational), the quality of the advisee/advisor relationship is left to chance.”*

- Habley (1995)

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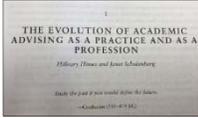
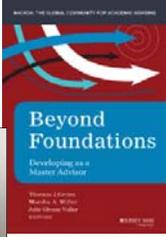
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**CONCEPTUAL**

Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**

**C1**

The history and role of academic advising in higher education

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Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**

**C2**

NACADA's Core Values of Academic Advising



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Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**

**C3**

Theory relevant to academic advising

**eTutorials**

**THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ADVISING**

An intensive-learning experience focused on foundational theories and the application of those theories into practice. This learning experience is perfect for new advisors and/or faculty and staff new to the advising profession. Veteran advisors will gain deep background and learn new approaches to serving students.

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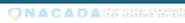
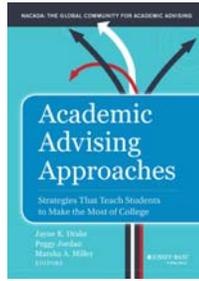
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Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**



Academic advising approaches and strategies



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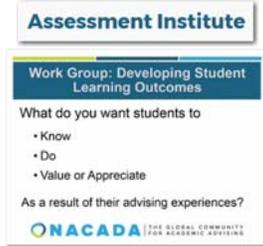
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Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**



Expected outcomes of academic advising



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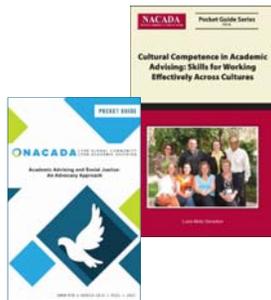
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Core competencies in the **Conceptual component** (concepts academic advisors must understand) include **understanding of:**



How equitable and inclusive environments are created and maintained



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## INFORMATIONAL

Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

### 11

Institution specific history, mission, vision, values, and culture



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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

### 12

Curriculum, degree programs, and other academic requirements and options



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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

### 13

Institution specific policies, procedures, rules, and regulations



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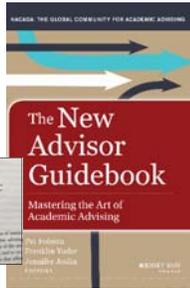
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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

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Legal guidelines of advising practice, including privacy regulations and confidentiality



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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

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The characteristics, needs, and experiences of major and emerging student populations



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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**

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Campus and community resources that support student success



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Core competencies in the **Informational component** (knowledge academic advisors must master) include **knowledge of:**



Information technology applicable to relevant advising roles

**ONACADA CLEARINGHOUSE**

**Creating a Flipped Advising Approach**  
by George Steen  
2016

Technology currently enables us to do many of our practice academic advising. A "flipped advising" approach is similar to a flipped classroom approach. The latter was developed by James Lang (2012). The idea there is for the instructor to collect questions, assignments, and resources before class, so that class time can be used to focus on class or more in-depth or hands-on activities. In a flipped classroom, students learn the content before class and use class time for more in-depth or hands-on activities.

The second key to both the implementation of the advice to use that technology is having a support system (SIS) in place to make sure that support is available for the flipped process. While there are many services that make this, most also have the capability of being able to support content and resources, so that the students can be supported in their learning and advising. For example, advisors can use web portals to provide students with the content they need to learn before class. This can be done through the SIS or through a separate system. The second key to both the implementation of the advice to use that technology is having a support system (SIS) in place to make sure that support is available for the flipped process. While there are many services that make this, most also have the capability of being able to support content and resources, so that the students can be supported in their learning and advising. For example, advisors can use web portals to provide students with the content they need to learn before class. This can be done through the SIS or through a separate system.

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**RELATIONAL**

Core Competencies in the **Relational component** (skills academic advisors must demonstrate) include **the ability to:**



Articulate a personal philosophy of academic advising

**ONACADA CLEARINGHOUSE**

**Creating a Personal Philosophy of Academic Advising**  
David Taylor  
2011

Creating a written personal philosophy of academic advising requires thought, introspection, study, and clearly communicated personal objectives for advising. It takes time and commitment by those actively participating in the field. Although not an easy or quick process, articulating a personal philosophy can and should be done by all academic advisors.

The new advisor can take heart. An advisor's personal philosophy belongs to him or her alone and can flow into the form and content that best embodies individual preferences in process and priorities for practice. Although the advisor should consider existing guidelines and include essential components, the philosophy remains his or her unique one. In addition, new advisors can expect to incorporate changes into their personal philosophy to demonstrate their increased understanding of advising, advisors, and their institutions and work. A long document, the statement of personal philosophy serves as a reference to which the advisor can return to these inspirations and incentives with the resources for creating the field. The creation and maintenance of a personal advising philosophy helps an advisor become more effective now and in the future.

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Core Competencies in the **Relational component** (skills academic advisors must demonstrate) include **the ability to:**



Create rapport and build academic advising relationships



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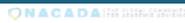
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Core Competencies in the **Relational component**  
(skills academic advisors must demonstrate)  
include **the ability to:**



Facilitate problem solving,  
decision-making,  
meaning-making,  
planning, and goal setting



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Core Competencies in the **Relational component**  
(skills academic advisors must demonstrate)  
include **the ability to:**



Engage in ongoing  
assessment and  
development of self  
and the advising  
practice



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<https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars.aspx>

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