



Give Your Best Advice: Advising Students in Crisis

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study how academic advisors assist and advise students who have or are experiencing a crisis, by collecting best practices from advisors at two types of higher education institutions. To gain multiple perspectives, data was collected from a sample of six academic advisors with diversity in gender and race. Three participants were from the University of Dayton, a midsized private institution, and three were from Wright State University, a large public institution. The institutions serve distinct student populations; however, a consensus was evident about how students in crisis should be advised. A majority of the participants said that they feel a gap is present between academic and student affairs and would prefer more in-depth collaborations than merely individual relationship building. Based on these findings, I recommend that institutions should consider implementing workshops that help academic advisors give the appropriate response and advice to students in crisis

Disconnect between academic & student affairs

- Little to no interaction between the disciplines
- No formal trainings from departments specializing in crisis management
- Necessary professional relationships

Developing and maintaining meaningful relationships

- Being truthful
- Putting the student first
- Knowing each student and establishing a connection

Best practices for advising students in crisis

- Listen intently
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Be available
- Know the offices on campus

"I think a lot of it is listening more than anything, especially in that first stage because we are not remotely qualified to deal with a student in an actual crisis situation."

Significance of the Study

To add value and best practices for academic advisors to help serve students who may be experiencing a crisis and be able to do so in a manner that does not suggest they are not equipped to do so.

"I think that a lot of times I don't know that there is enough training for advisors to deal with issues like this."

Research Question:

How do experienced academic advisors describe their best practices for helping undergraduate students who disclose a crisis experience at Midwest higher education institutions?

Sample

6 Academic Advisors

2 Male
4 Female

2 African American
4 White

Methodology

Qualitative interviews with the academic advisors were conducted to receive narrative responses.

Future Implications

Beginning of semester workshops among student and academic affairs

Stay abreast on the literature and current trends

Create opportunities for professional development and relationship building

Select References

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