TCDA NEWSLETTER

TEXAS CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

MS. SHARETHA HICKS, M,ED, LPC
PRESIDENT, TEXAS CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (2023-2024)

Welcome to a new year at TDCA!!! As your 2023-2024 President, I am truly honored and excited to serve alongside such great leaders. My goal is to continue the incredible work started by the Past Presidents. I strive to continue to move TCDA forward into the future as a strong and vital division.

TCDA has achieved great success with providing scholarships to a well-deserved graduate counseling students. TCDA has participated and produced winners in the NCDA Poetry and Art Contest, promoting career development through artistic expression. We have also actively engaged members with monthly peer consultation, coordinated by Greta Davis and Shawn Williams.

This new season promises to be memorable as we actively engage members and potential new members with both virtual and hybrid webinars. TCDA will strive to provide more opportunities for professional counselors to share resources and experiences on diversity in counseling within workshops and webinars.

I look forward to all that we will achieve Together this year!

Sharetha Hicks
2023-2024 TCA President

Board Membership Spotlight

Symone Jones

My name is Symone Jones, I am a third year graduate student at Sam Houston State University in the school counseling program. After being an intermediate school teacher for several years I decided to transition into school counseling desiring to be more of an advocate for students. This year I started my first year as a school counselor and I am loving the connections I have made with my new students! In my leisure time I love to read novels, bake decadent desserts, and spend time trying out new places to eat all over the state of Texas. I reside in Bryan, TX and love going to the First Friday events Downtown Bryan every first Friday of the month! A fun fact about me is that I am originally from Chicago, Illinois and have lived in Texas since 2017. I am a firm believer that everything is bigger and better in Texas!!

At Work in the Classroom

BY ALEXANDRA ANDERSON
SENIOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

With increasingly competitive work environments, the need for career development is recognized among higher education institutions. In particular, Southwestern University in Georgetown, TX, which is known for rigorous liberal arts coursework, now offers students the chance to connect intellectual development to professional development through exciting new courses created by faculty in collaboration with the campus' Center for Career & Professional Development (CCPD).

For Spring 2023, psychology professor Dr. Traci Giuliano designed two psychology courses focused on career development to target students new to the field needing more career exploration support or more advanced students preparing to launch into graduate school or the world of work. She purposefully decided to offer two separate courses so she could focus on developmentally appropriate lessons for each group, a feature she says is missing from many other career courses.

"I've been wanting to offer a course like this for several years," said Dr. Giuliano. "It can be daunting to be a psychology major – not because there are too few options after graduating, but because there are so many. Most students aren't familiar with the myriad potential careers that the skills they learn as a psych major – writing, critical thinking, problem solving, data analysis and interpretation, presentation skills – make them well suited for. Research also shows that these types of courses increase retention and post-graduate success, with even stronger effects for students of color and underrepresented students."

The first-year/sophomore course focuses on introducing students to psychology and its many subfields, teaching them scientific literacy, applying psychological science to get the most out of college (e.g., learning study skills and time management skills, and developing a plan that includes major courses and high-impact experiences), and exploring career opportunities. The junior/senior course has a more practical focus and emphasizes identifying career-readiness skills as well as learning both job searching and job/graduate school-preparation skills. Among other activities, both classes included panels featuring alumni discussing their careers. "Feedback from students was uniformly positive," Giuliano said. "They loved seeing alums – some just a few years removed from where they're sitting now – so successful and happy. It gave students hope and also dramatically increased what they thought was possible for their future careers."

Spanish professor Dr. Katy Ross planned her Spring 2023 senior capstone course to focus on life design, which involves considering how students can intentionally use their Spanish skills after graduation. "I wanted students to think about how being Spanish speakers would affect them throughout their lives," she explained, "both in the workplace and outside of it." During the course, students used online tools (in Spanish) to identify strengths and values and heard from a Spanish-major alumna about her bilingual career in Mexico. Students also volunteered every week in a local elementary dual-language classroom, conducted research on how dual-language classrooms work, and presented their research at a campus symposium.

Professor Emerita of English Dr. Helene Meyers pioneered career development in the classroom at Southwestern in 2015 through her nationally recognized course Novel English Majors, profiled in the Chronicle of Higher Education, and then followed it with the course Humanities at Work.

Dr. Meyers created a for-credit course because she believes career development should be integrated into the curriculum. "Students need time and sustained guidance in this area," she said. Like Dr. Giuliano, she noted that "students are at different stages and therefore need different things," so she provided different options for assignments such as the final project in the Humanities at Work course, including the choice of a reflective essay on next steps or the development of a website or portfolio. For one course activity, Dr. Meyers' Novel English Majors students shadowed professionals in fields of interest – including grant writers, archivists, food bloggers, bookmobile librarians, and stockbrokers – and "not only learned about jobs that many never knew existed, but also worked through their fear of cold-calling and cold-emailing strangers," Dr. Meyers explained.

In addition to academic department career courses, the Southwestern CCPD offers a course during the second half of each semester, which may particularly benefit students who drop a class with which they are struggling. Designed as a retention initiative, the course allows students to earn back some of the dropped credits to remain full-time students while simultaneously providing major/career exploration and career management skills – often helpful for addressing the very difficulties that prompted the drop.

Other Southwestern courses – even those focusing primarily on discipline-specific content – embed career development activities. For example, First-Year Seminar courses can include a module on self-assessment for major and career exploration, presented by the CCPD. The Foundations of Business course includes a personal portfolio assignment in which students conduct informational interviews with alumni or other professionals whose careers interest them. "Teaching students – many of whom are socially anxious, introverted, or just plain not used to talking to other adults they don't know – to network and to push themselves outside of their comfort zones pays huge dividends," Dr. Giuliano explained about informational interviews, which she also included in her courses.

In the third semester German class, students produce a German resume appropriate for a summer job or internship abroad. "They work with actual job postings," German professor Dr. Erika Berroth explained, "and explore traditions and innovations, such as the now outdated expectation that dates of birth, religious affiliation, and marital status be shared on a resume." Students also practice asking and answering interview questions in German. "Many students found this project to be a valuable introduction to actual application processes for study or internships abroad, or for scholarships and fellowships," Dr. Berroth said.

The benefits of curricular career development experiences are clear, Southwestern faculty noted. "Students tended to feel more confident about their post-SU lives and better able to articulate the significant marketable skills provided by their interdisciplinary education," said Dr. Meyers. Dr. Giuliano added that, importantly, empirical data support the effectiveness of these career classes, as students reported statistically significant improvement in many domains after the courses she taught. "They are better able to articulate their skills to employers, craft a strong resume and conduct a comprehensive job search," she concluded, "as well as more comfortable networking and more confident in their interviewing skills." Thus, these additional courses on career development appear to be making significant contributions to Southwestern University students' careers, future success, and overall wellbeing.

Springing Forward: Asset-Based DEI Career Programming

BY DR. TREVOR MCCRAY
K-16 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

While Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices have become the norm in today's employer trainings, university programming, and legislative agendas, it has remained a deficit approach practice. For this article, deficit approach is defined as a way of thinking and implementing from vantage points that showcase historically marginalized groups negatively (i.e., unmotivated, inadequate support, limited education). Although DEI practices and frameworks are legally being challenged many people remain interested in finding ways to implement best practices, especially within career services, effectively. This article seeks to provide an asset-based framework known as Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005) as a preventive measure to combat deficit ideologies. Through this framework, career services practitioners can employ holistic programming that speak to various student identities and different forms of capital students possess.

Typically, we associate forms of capital through the standard lens of social and cultural capital. Generally, capital can be defined as accrued assets (funds or networks) by an individual or entity. These forms of capital subsequently lead to the origins of deficit approaches and historical underpinnings hindering the success of affinity groups, which affects the intentions of inclusivity and affirmative frameworks—often influenced by the conditions of the standard way to construct programs and curriculums. However, Yosso (2005) offers various forms of capital that speak to the development of students throughout their life span. Yosso (2005) specifies six types of cultural wealth—Familial, Social, Aspirational, Navigational, Linguistic, and Resistant capital. Throughout the interconnectedness of each capital, asset-based attributes are associated with the individual's overall development regardless of race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Individuals are ultimately giving strength and power to things acquired through one's life. Speaking truth to what students know and what they possess within themselves aids in their self-efficacy and authorship when investing in their college-to-career transition.

Implications for Career Services Practitioners

The benefit of this framework is that it offers a blueprint for Career Services practitioners to expand their palate of inclusive programming. With current legislation targeting the elimination of DEI development and programs, we must, as practitioners, pivot to other asset-affirming models or frameworks that will allow our work to be broadened to impact our students. Asset affirming can be defined as an ideology that inspires, influences, and engages one's strengths and accrued capital. In addition, along with DEI panels and network sessions, practitioners could consider service-based programs that enable students to learn and connect with various forms of capital they may be unaware of. By advancing our lens on programming, it could offer a move toward an asset-affirming framework that is cutting-edge in this new era.

Recommendations

All too often, as practitioners, there's a desire to be inclusive with practices with little to no structure or organization that guides the work that's done. However, utilizing this form of assets-based work could provide the following: (1) cutting-edge frameworks that advance inclusive programming (i.e., service projects, family engagement, financial assistance for internship), (2) inspires critical conversations during event planning (challenge programs implementation and potential impacts and/or broaden the conversation to be holistic based on student identity demographics), (3) more niche opportunities for employer partnering, and (4) expanding the one-off DEI programs that have plagued our profession for the last few years.

Join TCDA's Resource Committee

TCDA is looking for motivated individuals to assist with the Resource Committee. The Resource Committee will help create career related content for specific career issues and populations. These issues include career exploration, career development, and job search strategies. Resources for specific populations may include resources for working with veterans, international candidates, specific age groups and educational levels, individuals with disabilities, individuals who identify in the LGBTQ+ population, individuals returning to work after a leave of absence, and many more! If you are interested in contributing, please email nicole.noble@ttu.edu.

The following are a few recommendations for the implementation of assets-based concepts:

1. Identify frameworks that align with the students, staff, and university stakeholders. This intentionally allows for models to fit the organization's preferences and styles.

2. Partner with researchers outside your organization that contribute to this line of research. For instance, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, their Center for Workforce offers programming, webinars, and statistical data, that allow practitioners and scholars to make informed decisions while understanding the needs of historically underrepresented groups and frameworks that could advance the daily practices of your operation.

3. One DEI programming does not equal one size fits all! Those are ok, but we want them to be more efficient. Implementing assist-based frameworks requires more leg work but offers a greater return on investment.

If there's investment on the front end, there's a greater reward on the back end. Choosing something that's an asset prevents deficit thinking and the will to pull others up; instead, it allows your work to pull on individuals' strengths and successes rather than their historical circumstances.

Reference

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Membership in TCDA will assist you in:

- Staying up-to-date on current career and career counseling/coaching trends.
- Networking and exchanging ideas with other professionals who work in a variety of settings: schools, private practice, corporate, college, and non-profit.
- Serving your client population in the professional manner you desire.
- The opportunity to get involved!
- As counselors and mental health professionals, we ALL deal with career issues in some way for the populations we serve. Getting involved with TCDA will enable you to expand your knowledge and your services.
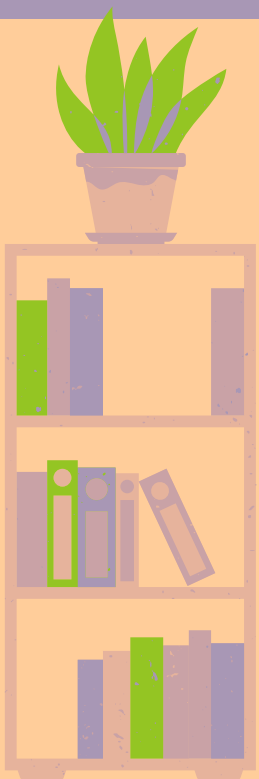
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Integrating Career Development into Academic Advising

BY CONDOA PARRENT

Students make choices during college that influence their careers. Many students, however, report that their academic advisors do not integrate vocational topics into their advising discussions (Center for Postsecondary Research, 2018; Strada & Gallup, 2017). When academic advisors respond to surveys, they validate students' self-reported experiences and acknowledge that they do not often address or assess career concerns during advising conversations (Troxel & Kyei-Blankson, 2020).

Omissions of career topics during academic advising are concerning for a number of reasons. For example, research shows some marginalized students express a desire for career information. For example, low-income students want to assess the financial return that they can anticipate after they earn their college degrees (Perna & Ruiz, 2016). Students who value collectivism want to know how they can use their degrees to advance the well-being of their communities (Anderson et al., 2012). When students perceive that their learning is valuable, relevant, and meaningful, they are more likely to persist toward their career goals (Lent, 2020).

Given the ethical necessity to respond to students' career needs, Tarrant County Community College redesigned their advising philosophy, practices, and positions to prioritize and integrate career development into student conversations. Prior to the redesign, students were not assigned an advisor. Case management and follow-up were not consistent practices, causing student advising experiences to vary across each campus and program of the institution.

Leaders across individual campus sites identified the need to create a strategic, intentional advising experience for all students after the chancellor identified an enduring commitment to function as one institution that was student ready and focused on serving the community. A student experience team assessed the current state of advising, researched best practices, audited current procedures, and examined technology used for advising. Their primary goal was to develop a standardized advising experience that career advisors could deliver consistently across the various colleges of the institution. The team examined what structures were currently in place to ensure advising centers were welcoming spaces that empowered students to succeed in their academic journey (passing classes, not dropping classes, enrolling semester to semester, clear understanding on how their courses align to their career goals).

The team's comprehensive analysis resulted in the Ideal 21st Century TCC Advising Model, which included the following:
- an innovative organizational structure and job descriptions that defined advisors' roles, responsibilities, and expectations,
- a collection of policies, procedures, and programmatic systems to maximize student experiences,
- an advising program syllabus that outlined the institution's philosophy, learning outcomes, advisor expectations, and student expectations — with the intention of fostering strategic and timely engagement,
- a report that evaluated future technology needs to support advising, engagement, and student success.

Senior leadership paired the new model with several innovative advising efforts that the institution is now adopting and implementing, including specialized support, professional training, caseload reconfiguration, and career services partnerships.

Specialized Support: Students have access to various staff members who provide tailored support based on the complexity of students' concerns and their readiness for support (Sampson et al., 2004). Enrollment coaches work with seniors at the high schools, bringing the admissions, testing, advising, and registration services directly to them. Success coaches support first-time students, guiding them through the sometimes-daunting task of applying to college and navigating the onboarding process. Career advisors (formerly titled academic advisors) provide advising to their assigned students from entry to completion, providing pathway and career exploration support that is paired with proactive communication and case management. Senior career advisors develop retention strategies for students who are on suspension/dismissal and need to improve their academic standing, modify their vocational goals, and progress toward completion.

Professional Training: Advisors need ongoing education and development if they are to respond to students' unique needs and the rapidly changing work world. The institution required advisors to be trained in career development when their titles changed from academic advisors to career advisors. Career advisors and senior career advisors must now earn a career service credential, specifically the NCDA Certified Career Services Provider (CCSP), within one year of employment of the college. Ongoing career-focused professional development is conducted each semester. To date, 150 staff members have earned the credential and another 50 are preparing to complete the career services exam during the summer term.

Career Advising Caseload Reconfiguration: Starting in Spring 2024, the institution will also begin to mandate check-in conversations with career advisors when students complete 15, 30, and 45 credits. The college will also implement a robust case management system for all credit bearing students that includes both appreciative and proactive career advising approaches. All currently enrolled students will be assigned a career advisor prior to registration. Career advisors will proactively contact students to share relevant information and offer support to their assigned students.

Career Counseling Resources

- NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (NCDA)
- OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK
- O'NET ONLINE
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
- CAREER ONESTOP
- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES & EMPLOYERS
- ADVANCE CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION
- TEXAS ONCOURSE

Career Pathways: The Guided Pathways approach establishes clear and concise roadmaps for students to assist them with connection, entry, progress, and completion of certificates or degrees (Johnstone, 2015). These roadmaps work to identify a clear set of courses that will allow the student to obtain a degree needed within the student's career pathway. When asked why they are enrolling in college, most students do not name a college degree, but instead often reply they are enrolling to better support their families, for a better life, or to obtain a better job. Intentionally designed career advising allows the advisor and the student to focus on the end goal of the student.

Career Services Partnerships: To enable students to achieve their career aspirations, the newly formed career advising office also fostered collaborative relationships with the career service office. Career advisors routinely refer students to career services for resume reviews, networking leads, interviewing support, and internships. Faculty also offer discipline-specific mentoring during their teaching and co-curricular activities.

Students and staff have provided positive feedback during the adoption phase of these changes. As leaders look ahead to the coming year, they are excited about the possibility to close gaps in career and academic advising conversations. The institution will continuously evaluate these changes through focus groups, surveys, and student behaviors (e.g., change of major rates, persistence). Through strategic design of advising and partnerships with colleagues across campus, the institution is creating a career ecosystem that will foster career development and engagement.

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