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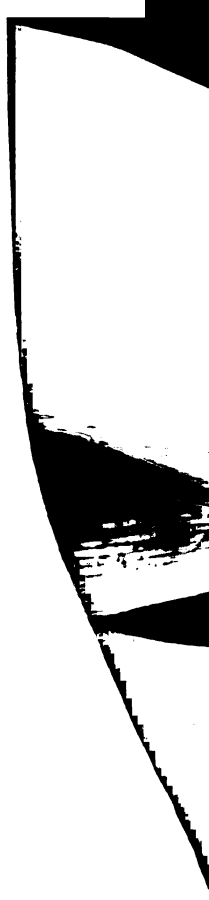

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES THAT FRAME ADVISING PRACTICE

By

Jamie S. McClintock Brenner

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES THAT FRAME ADVISING PRACTICE

By

Jamie S. McClintock Brenner

Academic advisors come to the field from a variety of educational and experiential backgrounds suggesting that they apply theories apart from or in addition to student development theory in their practice. This exploratory study to learn which theories advisors reported applying in practice was completed with a qualitative research design including semi-structured interviews, grounded theory data collection techniques, and template coding in data analysis. All advisors in the sample reported applying theoretical perspectives to practice. The theories that they applied included developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, intrusive advising, advising as service, advising as advocacy, advising as caring, advising as motivating, and advising as teaching. The practices inspired by these theories include asking reflective questions, raising particular topics, keeping certain records, explaining how or why things work in a certain way, learning particular information, and requiring students or advisors to complete certain tasks. Advisors varied in the clarity with which they expressed theory, describing it explicitly, implicitly, or tacitly. Formal training or education intertwined with lived experience to influence advisors' perspectives of their practice. Recommendations relate to advisor training, professional development opportunities, and potential options for future research regarding application of theory to advising practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was unable to dedicate this dissertation to one person because so many people played important roles in encouraging me to fulfill this dream. These acknowledgements include just a few. I was able to pay tuition to attend Michigan State University in the Fall of 2001 because my great-aunt Dorothy Iantha "Babe" Belt, not having children of her own, generously bequeathed a modest inheritance to all of her nieces and nephews. My parents, Charles and Susan McClintock, have always supported the completion of the degree through several adversities. They emphasized that the hard work, disappointments, and time would be well worth the effort. The opportunity to complete the highest degree in a field was not something to take lightly nor a gift to reject without appropriate effort to see it through. I would never have finished this degree without the support of my husband, Daniel Brenner. He sat next to me and listened quietly as a friend as I reacted to the news that I had not passed one of my comprehensive exam questions. When he moved to Philadelphia for graduate school and I stayed in Michigan, he refused to talk to me on the phone until I had completed work on my proposal each day. He also understood the long evenings spent in my office writing the dissertation as he waited patiently at home to have dinner together.

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Finally, I would like to thank each of the advisors who took time out of their practice of advising to speak with me about who they are and what they do. Throughout the process of analyzing data, I enjoyed reading their words and learning from their experiences. Since they shared their perspectives of advising with me and allowed me to

summarize the patterns in their practice, my eyes have been opened to new ways to view my work and that of my colleagues. I consistently encounter further evidence supporting the observations and experiences of the insightful advisors in this study. I am honored to have been able to give a voice to their experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since the founding of higher education in the colonial period in the United States, faculty and staff have guided undergraduate students through their studies by providing advice regarding coursework, co-curricular activities, and career preparation (Nutt, 2000). Despite this long history of practice and an increasing professionalization of the field, academic advising has not developed a theory of its own to inform new professionals and current practitioners or to provide a foundation for research in the field (Hagen, 2005). In its history, the field of academic advising borrowed student development theory, grounded in social science, as its theoretical basis. By doing so, the field ignored research and theories from other disciplines and fields and left out faculty from other backgrounds who could both advise students and research the field. In response to this shortcoming, current work to develop a theory of advising emphasizes collaboration of a variety of theories instead of the development of one universal, overarching theory (Hagen, 2005). However, very little work has concerned itself with the theories that advisors may already be applying to their practice. This study investigated which theoretical perspectives currently frame academic advisors' practice with undergraduate students and how these perspectives vary among advisors.

History of Academic Advising

In *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* (2000), Frost provides an overview of the history of formalized academic advising which extends from the 1800s. Johns Hopkins created a system of academic advising before 1900, and "[b]y the late 1930s almost all institutions had formalized advising programs" (p.8). Faculty's

increased emphasis on research in the early 1900s separated them from students and necessitated the reliance upon professional advisors to meet student needs. During the late 1940s, academic affairs units oversaw advising. After the 1950s and 1960s, advising continued to develop in its own right as the faculty remained focused on research and as student populations grew. Professional advisors began to meet with students to determine course schedules as well as discuss educational, career, and life goals. The formation of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in 1979 provided a professional organization for the field.

During the 1970s and into the 1980s, new understandings of the impact of involvement in academic and co-curricular activities on college student success and the promotion of developmental advising emerged. Involvement emphasizes the impact that a student's investment in his/her college experience has upon development (Astin, 1984). The developmental advising approach takes into consideration the new understandings about the effect of the entire college experience on students' learning and aims to address all issues in a student's life, academic and otherwise, to assist the whole person to grow academically, professionally, and personally (King, 2005).

These new approaches to understanding a student's experience in college shifted focus to the impact of experiences external to the classroom, including academic advising. Nutt writes in *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook*, "Often the one-to-one relationship between the student and advisor is the only opportunity a student has to build a personal link with the institution; it thereby has a profound effect on the student's academic career and on the student's satisfaction with the institution" (2000, p. 220). Most students meet with an advisor at some point in their college careers to discuss

graduation requirements and course scheduling at a minimum. While the students are engaged in their advising session, academic advisors can contribute to student success by addressing the current major issues in higher education directly with the student, including retention of at-risk students and job placement of graduates (Steele & McDonald, 2000; McCalla-Wriggins, 2000).

Despite the theoretical movement toward the developmental approach to advising in the 1970s and 1980s, the field did not change much in practice, and, in the mid-1980s, student surveys and published reports "identified advising as one of the weakest components of the undergraduate academic experience" (Frost, 2000, p.11). Pascarella and Terenzini released further findings about the impact of involvement in the college experience on students' cognitive and social development in the early 1990s (1991). These findings supported the belief that programs outside the classroom can positively influence students' intellectual involvement and development, but, again, according to Frost, the field of advising did not change considerably. In the mid-1990s, the *NACADA Journal* revisited the developmental advising approach and determined that not enough had been done in the field to adopt theories and research into practice (Frost, 2000).

Today, the field of academic advising is becoming increasingly professionalized as evidenced by the creation of the National Association of Academic Advising in the 1970s and the continued development of graduate programs in student affairs and higher education that train advisors (Hagen, 2005). In 2006, NACADA's president identified the development of the next generation of advisors as a main focus of the organization (Huber, February 2006), furthering the professional development of the field. Some of the most recent research on academic advising has focused on development of a theory

for the practice, which will solidify standards for the field and unify practitioners (Hagen, 2005). The modern outcomes desired from advising continue to focus holistically on the student's academic, professional, and personal development and life planning (Grites & Gordon, 2000). NACADA solidified a modern definition of advising through the Concept of Academic Advising in 2006. The statement was compiled by a task force upon review of multiple definitions of advising and inclusion of input gathered from NACADA members at regional conferences. According to the Concept of Academic Advising, "academic advising has three components: curriculum (what advising deals with *[sic]*), pedagogy (how advising does what it does), and student learning outcomes (the result of academic advising)" (NACADA, 2006).

Academic Advising Theory

According to Peter Hagen, guest editor of the *NACADA Journal*'s Fall 2005 special edition focusing on advising theory, certain characteristics of the field of advising necessitate a new focus on theory. With an increasing number of graduate programs that train student affairs professionals, academic advising ought to focus on academic inquiry to complement its long history of practice. This new focus ought to include the development of theoretical models of advising. In its history, the field of academic advising borrowed student development theory, grounded in social science, as its theoretical basis (Hagen, 2005). The Spring 2009 special edition of the NACADA journal presents historical articles from 30 years of the existence of a national association for academic advising. Among these seminal articles are three focusing specifically on developmental advising, one-third of the total number of historical articles (Crookston, 1994 (1972)/2009; Grites & Gordon, 2000; O'Banion, 1994 (1972)/2009). Pairing

student development theory with advising is logical given the language of the Statement of Core Values of the National Academic Advising Association that identifies enhancement of student learning and personal development as the purpose of academic advising (NACADA, 2004). One hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of academic advising states that, in part, "advisors succeed at influencing student choices and actions depending on their knowledge of . . . students' developmental and maturational levels . . ." (Creamer, 2000, p.20). A seminal work in the field of academic advising, O'Banion's 1972 "An Academic Advising Model" states that, in order to perform one of the five steps of the academic advising process (exploration of life goals), an advisor is "required" to have "knowledge of students' characteristics and development" (O'Banion, 1994(1972)/2009, p. 84). Thus, an understanding of psychosocial, cognitive-developmental, and typological theories of student development is key to effective advising. Psychosocial theories address the process of identity development, cognitive-developmental theories focus on how individuals make meaning and come to know, and typological theories, which do not specifically describe a process of development, explain personality and its impact on learning (Creamer, 2000).

The application of these theories to advising is referred to as developmental advising. First described by Crookston in his discussion of advising as teaching (1994(1972)/2009), developmental advising focuses on student growth and the student's understanding of the connection between education and life, of how to set goals and make a plan to achieve them, and of the extension of life beyond college (Kramer, 2000). Ender and Wilkie (2000) classified these broad outcomes under the themes of academic competence, personal involvement, and developing or validating life purpose. Achieving

these outcomes requires an on-going relationship between advisor and student that includes both support and challenge. Crookston (1994(1972)/2009) specifies the aspects of advising that make it developmental and similar to teaching. The advisor and student share responsibility for problem-solving and evaluation in a relationship based on trust and respect in which they focus on potential and growth.

The literature regarding advising models and theory overwhelmingly emphasizes developmental advising. In addition to focusing on developmental advising, literature often compares it to prescriptive advising (Abel, 1988; Broadbridge, 1996; Brown & Rivas, 1992; Brown & Rivas, 1994; Burton & Wellington, 1998; Carberry, Baker, & Prescott, 1986; Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009; Daller, Creamer, & Creamer, 1997; Ender, 1994; Fielstein, et.al., 1992; Fielstein, 1994; Frost, 1990; Frost, 1993; Gordon, 1994; Gordon, 1995; Grites, 1994; Grites & Gordon, 2000; Gruber, 2003; Hemwell & Trachte, 1999; Jordan, 2000; King, 1993a; Laff, 1994; McAuliffe & Strand, 1994; Miller & Alberts, 1994; Novels & Ender, 1988; O'Banion, 1994(1972)/2009; Peterson & McDonough, 1985; Polson, 1994; Ramos, 1994; Rankey, 1994; Ryser & Alden, 2005; Schein, Biggers & Reese, 1986; Schneider & Meier, 2000; Sedlacek, 1994; Shane, 1981; Smith & Downey, 2003; Spokane, 1994; Strommer, 1994; Winston, 1994).

This focus on developmental advising includes three of the nine historical articles presented in the Spring 2009 special edition of the *NACADA Journal* (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009; Grites & Gordon 2000; O'Banion,1994(1972)/2009). Other literature has discussed an engagement model of advising (Yarbrough, 2002), intrusive advising (Abelman & Molina, 2001; Abelman & Molina, 2002; Austin, Cherney, Crowner, & Hill,

1997; Backhus, 1989; Garing, 1992; Jeschke, Johnson, & Williams, 2001), an advising model specifically for on-line practice (Pevoto, 2000), a counseling liaison model of advising (Kadar, 2001), application of the Learning Partnerships Model to advising (Pizzolato, 2006), a model of advising based on the ethic of care (Holmes, 2006; Williams-Perez, 2006), open option advising (Beatty, Davis, & White, 1983), application of the integrated model of student growth to advising (Peterson & McDonough, 1985), and application of the Student Learning Imperative (SLI) to advising (Kuh, 1997).

Empirical research regarding academic advising, including dissertation studies in higher education, has more frequently addressed advising models rather than advising theory or the theories behind the models of practice. This research often focuses on student perceptions of or satisfaction with particular advising models and also often focuses specifically on developmental advising (Beasley-Fielstein,1986; Broadbridge, 1996; Brown, 2005; Childress, 2003; Demetriou, 2005a; Eckhardt, 1992; Edelnant, 2006; Fielstein, 1987; Fielstein, 1992; Knedlik, 2003; Legutko, 2006; Matosian, 1999; Moody, 1996; Neale, & Sidorenko, 1988; Vowell, & Karst, 1987; Winston, & Sandor, 1984).

Although students have frequently evaluated advising models, some literature has incorporated advisors' perceptions. Some studies captured both advisors' and students' opinions or perceptions, including Andrepont-Warren's (2005) inclusion of advisors and students in the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), a normed survey tool grounded in the developmental approach to advising that can be used to evaluate the process and outcomes of academic advising, and Wood's (2002) inclusions of advisors and students in a survey regarding advisors' use of developmental or prescriptive advising. Other studies have focused entirely on advisors (Culp, 1994; Daller, Creamer, & Creamer,

1997; Frost, 1993; Holmes, 2004; Mahon & Dannells, 1998; Moser & Chong, 1995; Sims, 2006; Steele & Gordon, 2001). NACADA also has commissioned member surveys throughout its existence (Leonard, 2004; Lynch, 2002; Lynch & Stuckey, 2001; Polson & Cashin, 1981). None of these studies has addressed theoretical perspectives of advisors, and those that focus on models of advising still limit their review to developmental approaches grounded in student development theory.

Other empirical research in the form of dissertation studies in higher education has used advisors as subjects and has focused on more than just developmental vs. prescriptive advising. Recent dissertations regarding advising that have addressed advising models or theories by studying the advisors themselves include work regarding specific advising approaches or models (Holmes, 2004; Williams-Perez, 2005), faculty advisors (Waters, 2001), and advisors' thoughts about students and the advisor's role (Hampton, 1991; Lynch, 1998; Spiers, 2000).

Generally, researchers and practitioners have presented normative models for how advising ought to be and have reviewed how advisors behave in practice as viewed through a model selected by the researcher. Most of the models addressed in the literature have a foundation in student development theory or in the social sciences more generally. By focusing on advising approaches built upon student development theory, the field has ignored research and theories from other disciplines and fields and has left out faculty from other backgrounds who could both advise students and research advising (Hagen, 2005). Although some research regarding academic advising has uncovered influences of advisors' practice, researchers have not specifically investigated the

theoretical perspectives that advisors themselves have adopted and with which they currently frame practice.

In response to these shortcomings, current work to develop a theory of advising emphasizes inclusion of a multiplicity of theories instead of the development of one universal, overarching theory (Hagen, 2005). In Fall 2005, the National Academic Advising Association published a volume of its refereed journal focused entirely on academic advising theory. The volume includes both analogical theories that explain advising in relation to a different concept with which the audience is already familiar and normative theories that suggest an ideal advising approach. The analogical theories illustrate advising through discussions of friendship (Rawlins & Rawlins, 2005), a strengths-based lens (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005), philosophy (Jackson, 2005), Socratic self-examination (Kuhtmann, 2005), social norms theory (Demetriou, 2005b), and conflict theory (McClellan, 2005) respectively. The normative theories suggest an ideal for advising centered around teaching (Lowenstein, 2005), learning (Hemwall & Trachte, 2005), and educating (Melander, 2005), respectively. The recommendation of the guest editor is that the field of advising should embrace multiple perspectives and support differences in approaches to understand better the breadth of the field of academic advising (Hagen, 2005).

This review of advising literature and Hagen's analysis in the special edition of the *NACADA Journal* provide evidence that advising literature lacks treatment of advising models and theories apart from developmental advising and that empirical research on advising lacks focus on advisors as subjects. Hagen explicitly recommends that the field of advising supplement knowledge of developmental advising and attempts

to formulate a theory of advising by focusing on multiple theoretical perspectives that can apply to advising practice. Additionally, the lack of advising research focusing on those who perform the practice is a gap in the literature. Expanding treatment of theories other than developmental advising is explicitly recommended by experts in the field of advising to supplement the literature, and the lack of focus on advisors as subjects is a gap in the comprehensiveness of the empirical study of advising practice. This study responds to both of these gaps by exploring the breadth of theories and perspectives applied to advising by interviewing the advisors who perform the practice.

Statement of the Problem

Although advising has become more sophisticated as a profession and its practitioners have continued to enter the field from a variety of educational and experiential backgrounds, theory regarding advising has remained focused on the student development theory embraced as an early framework (Hagen, 2005). Models of advising practice built from theory have emphasized developmental versus prescriptive approaches, but because of the diverse background of practitioners, this approach ignores the theoretical perspectives that advisors trained and working in a variety of disciplines may bring to practice (Boretz, 2006; Hagen, 2005; Stalzer, 2006). Calls for development of academic advising theory that builds on foundations other than the social sciences and student development theory prematurely move beyond investigation of influences that are already intertwined with practice. In addition, research typically has focused on student perceptions of or satisfaction with advising theories and their enactment in practice, not on the advisors' thought processes and perspectives. Thus, the literature is unclear as to

the contribution that theory, particularly those apart from developmental theory, can make to advising practice from the advisors' perspective.

Significance of the Study

As embodied in the Fall 2005 special edition of the *NACADA* Journal, the acceptance and development of multiple theories of advising is the new direction for theory in the field. The most recent discussions have encouraged advisors to reflect upon theoretical perspectives from a variety of disciplines rather than just from student development theory (Hagen, 2005). Research that has uncovered advisors' influences has not been directed toward exploration of current theory in use by advisors. This study investigated theoretical influences specifically and provides a foundation for future research and theoretical development by identifying which theoretical perspectives advisors who practice in a variety of disciplines currently use to frame their advising practice as well as describing how these perspectives vary among advisors.

Research Questions

The questions guiding this study are:

1. Do academic advisors apply theoretical perspectives to their advising practice?
2. Which theoretical perspectives do academic advisors apply to their advising practice?
3. How do these theoretical perspectives influence academic advising practice?
4. How do theoretical perspectives applied to academic advising practice vary among advisors?

Because this study focused on determining advisors' theoretical perspectives, I investigated the questions utilizing grounded theory and qualitative methods.

Key Definitions

For the purpose of constructing the empirical methods of this study, I chose to apply particular definitions for some concepts. Several different definitions of academic advising have been embraced by the field's professional association, NACADA, and compiled on its electronic clearinghouse. For the purposes of this study, I used the following definition of academic advising by Edward "Chip" Anderson included on the NACADA Clearinghouse and originally printed in *Academic Advising for Student Success and Retention*: "Academic advising is a planning process that helps students to approach their education in an organized and meaningful way " (Anderson, 1997, p.1). This definition provides a general description of the work of advising that does not lean toward any particular theoretical approach to the field. This quote is typically accompanied by the sentence, "Advising brings together all of the major dynamics in a student's life" (Anderson, 1997, p.1). Although the second sentence suggests an holistic approach to advising that the advisors in this study linked to developmental advising, I thought that the inclusiveness of the first sentence makes it an appropriate foundation on which to understand the work of advising that the advisors in this study view through a variety of frameworks. Throughout this manuscript I use "academic advisor" and "academic advising" interchangeably with "advisor" and "advising" to refer to the work described by this definition. In this study I selected only advisors who work with students around particular majors rather than advisors who work with undecided students or only students in a certain year of study. Thus, I sometimes refer to the advisors that I included in my study as "major advisors."

To guide my conversations with advisors regarding the frameworks through which they view their work, I used Hagen's definition of a theoretical perspective. Hagen defines ". . . theory as *a set of statements, principles, or ideas by which authority we make claims about things, persons, or processes in the world*" (2005, p. 3). He also states that theory can be thought of simply as the "lens through which we see the world" and our "point of view" (2005, p.3).

I utilized techniques from the grounded theory approach to research described by Strauss and Corbin (1998). "A researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind . . . . . Rather, the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process" (1998, p. 12). Specifically, what emerged from the data were the theoretical perspectives applicable to advising and other influences as defined by the advisors themselves, in their own words.

Delimitations and Assumptions

This study's scope is limited to one university. However, the university includes ten (10) colleges that offer undergraduate degrees, so advisors from a wide variety of backgrounds and work environments had an opportunity to be included in the study. I purposefully sampled the first two advisors in the study from the same college. I then used theoretical sampling, which required selection of later participants based upon initial analysis of previous interviews, to complete the sample and to ensure that I included the properties around which advisors' perspectives seemed to vary given the data that I already had collected. In an exploratory study which utilized qualitative data collection measures, it was appropriate to work with a limited sample to allow for depth of

investigation rather than breadth (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). The data were not intended to be generalized to the entire population of advisors. They could be used to suggest future qualitative studies and/or to build a foundation on which further studies with larger, entirely random samples can be developed.

Summary

Despite a long history of practice, the field of academic advising has not developed its own theory. The most current discussions of theory within the field have recommended that advisors embrace a variety of theories in addition to student development theory to guide their practice. In fact, historical literature shows that the developmental advising approach has not widely influenced practice. Research provides limited detail as to the influence that other theories have had on advising practice, if any. This study identified theoretical perspectives that advisors have adopted and used to frame their practice as well as described how these theories vary among advisors. The goal of this study is to provide a foundation of theoretical frameworks used by advisors and advisor characteristics around which theoretical frameworks vary to frame future studies of the application of theory to advising practice that rely upon a larger sample of advisors. In Chapter Two of this document I review the literature associated with the role of advising, the theories and perspectives from other fields that have been applied to advising practice, the formulation of an advising-specific theory and the empirical research that has been undertaken regarding advising practice.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature regarding the definition and role of academic advising, advising theory, student development theory, career development theory, and other theories outside the fields of advising or higher education illuminates the context of this study by providing examples of the kinds of theories already linked to advising and to advising practice. These theories may or may not be embraced by or mentioned by the participants in this study, but they offer illustration of the variety of disciplines and experiences that have been identified as impacting advising practice. Apart from work regarding theory, other literature regarding advising focuses on models or approaches for advising practice. Advising models describe the tasks and outcomes of advising deemed appropriate according to underlying theoretical frameworks (Creamer, 2000). In this study, I asked advisors about the tasks or processes with students that were inspired by the theoretical frameworks that influenced those advisors. Because of their grounding in theory, I included a review of several models that have been applied to advising in the past.

I also reviewed the structure and findings of studies whose authors focused on advisors as the subject of the research. Of important note, I included material presented throughout the entire publishing span of the *NACADA Journal* (1982-2009), the refereed journal of the advising profession, and *The Mentor* (1999-2009), an on-line, peer-reviewed journal of academic advising.

Definition of Advising

The National Academic Advising Association, the professional association for the field of advising, provides a definition of academic advising through the Concept of

Advising. Approved by the NACADA Board of Directors in October 2006, the Concept of Advising was compiled by a task force charged by the President of NACADA to provide "an association's statement on academic advising" (NACADA, 2006). Construction of the statement included review of a variety of definitions of advising and the incorporation of input from NACADA membership that was collected at regional NACADA conferences. The statement represents an attempt to present a multitude of philosophies of advising that are held by members of the organization.

According to the Concept of Academic Advising, "academic advising has three components: curriculum (what advising deals with *[sic]*), pedagogy (how advising does what it does), and student learning outcomes (the result of academic advising)" (NACADA, 2006). Curriculum includes the graduation requirements and academic programs offered at an institution but also covers the development of critical thinking and goal-setting skills and the institutions' expectations. Pedagogy refers to the methods that advisors utilize to work with students and to assess their work with a particular emphasis on the relationship developed between advisors and students. The learning outcomes of advising are related to the mission, and reflect the goals of each individual institution. They include what the institution expects students to "demonstrate, know, value, and do as a result of participating in academic advising" (NACADA, 2006).

Theory Applied to Advising

Theory Historically Applied to Advising

Student development theory and career development theory were highlighted as influences on advising practice in *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* and have been referenced extensively in advising literature as traditional approaches to

advising practice. Within these broad categories of theories, advisors have drawn from learning theory, decision-making theory, multicultural theory, retention theory, personality theory, moral development theory, and adult development theory. Sociological theory and organizational theory have also been applied to advising (Creamer, 2000). In this review of the literature, I focused on the categories of student development theory and career development theory as did the authors of *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook.*

Student Development Theory

The Statement of Core Values of the National Academic Advising Association identifies enhancement of student learning and personal development as the purpose of academic advising (NACADA, 2004). One hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of academic advising states that, in part, "advisors succeed at influencing student choices and actions depending on their knowledge of . . . students' developmental and maturational levels . . . " (Creamer, 2000, p. 20). Thus, an understanding of psychosocial, cognitive-developmental, and typological theories of student developmental is crucial to effective advising. Psychosocial theories address the process of identity development; cognitive-developmental theories focus on how individuals make meaning and come to know; and typological theories, which do not specifically describe a process of development, explain personality and its impact on learning (Creamer, 2000). Because the theoretical perspectives used by advisors to frame their practice have not been identified previously, the brief descriptions of theories of development included here are those that, according to Creamer in *Academic Advising: A*

Comprehensive Handbook, tend to be especially pertinent to the college student population with whom advisors work.

Identity development theories address various components of identity. Erikson's work delineating eight stages of development is foundational to identity theory, and the stages related to identity versus identity confusion and intimacy versus isolation are most applicable to traditional-age college students. Chickering developed seven vectors along which individuals develop their identities, which have been used frequently to support programming initiatives in universities. The vectors include developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. Marcia explained the level of crisis or commitment present in four identity states (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement), which Josselson later adapted to illuminate women's identity development. "Racial and ethnic identity development models . . . include Cross's (1971, 1995) Model of Psychological Nigrescence, Helms's (1995) Model of White Identity, and Phinney's (1990) Model of Ethnic Identity" (Creamer, 2000, p. 22). All of these models include movement through stages to development of identity. Phinney's model also pinpoints significant influences on identity development, including culture, loyalty, and kinship and the need to resolve conflict to move through the stages. Cass and D'Augelli developed theories related to gay, lesbian, and bisexual identity development. Cass views identity development through stages, but D'Augelli emphasizes the influence of the individual's interaction with the environment on the construction of identity rather than movement through set stages (Creamer, 2000).

Meaning-making theories describe ways of knowing. Piaget's work describing the integration of new information and experience in the process of changing cognitive structure is foundational. Perry's work acknowledges the inconsistency of development across individuals or in one individual's path to development. King and Kitchener build on both models to discuss how people make meaning regarding problems; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule focus on women's meaning-making and the unique perspectives through which women view the world; and Kohlberg emphasizes moral reasoning with a focus on justice while Gilligan looks at moral reasoning based on an ethic of care. Personality theories do not describe development, but Kolb's theory of learning, which examines how knowledge grows from experience, could be useful for advisors (Creamer, 2000).

Career Development Theory

Career development theories such as trait and factor theories, developmental career theories, decision-making theories, social learning theories, and theories of minority career development also have been applied to work in academic advising. Peterson, Sampson, and Reardon (1991) have

> . . .classif[ied] major career development theories as those that emphasize self-knowledge (such as trait and factor theory), those that integrate occupational knowledge and self-knowledge (such as Holland's [1973] theory of career choice), those that emphasize decision-making skills (such as Miller-Tiedeman and Tiedeman, 1990), those that emphasize executive processing (such as Super, 1990), those that emphasize contextual influences on career choice (such as Krumboltz, Mithchell, and Gelatt, 1975), those of ethnic awareness (such as Atkinson, Morten, and Sue, 1993, and Christensen, 1989). (Creamer, 2000, pp. 26-27)

Trait and factor theories link individual characteristics to work environments to determine fit and include works by Parsons (1909) and Holland (1973), which has been

applied to advising in the *NACADA Journal* by Reardon and Bullock (2004) and by Miller and Woycheck (2003). Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma (1951) present a developmental career theory that categorizes development regarding career into three stages moving from childhood through young adulthood. The most pertinent to academic advisors is the Realistic phase of middle adolescence to young adulthood during which individuals unite their abilities and interests and make a career choice, which includes pursuing training or education appropriate to prepare for the chosen career. Super (1990), on the other hand, suggests that career development continues through five age-related stages over the entire life. The stages into which most traditional-age college students fall are specification of career (18-21) and implementation of career (21-24). The major decision-making theory related to career development is the "lifecareer" theory of Miller-Tiedeman and Tiedeman (1990). They focus on ego development and career decision-making based on personal beliefs and knowledge. "According to [social learning] theories, career development involves the interaction of four factors: genetic endowments and special abilities, environmental conditions and events, learning experiences, and task approach skills" over the lifespan (Creamer, 2000, p. 26). Minority career development theories are based in identity models for racial/ethnic groups and follow a stage model (Creamer, 2000). These theories address only one issue around which academic advisors guide students, career development, so they are most useful as tools rather than as a broad theory of academic advising practice generally.

Theories Most Recently Applied to Advising

The most extensive recent treatment of advising theory is the Fall 2005 special edition of *NACADA Journal.* The volume includes both analogical theories that explain

advising in relation to a different concept with which the audience is already familiar and normative theories that suggest an ideal advising approach. That edition presents theories that can inform academic advising, including discussions of friendship (Rawlins, & Rawlins, 2005), a strengths-based lens (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005), philosophy (Jackson, 2005), Socratic self-examination (Kuhtmann, 2005), social norms theory (Demetriou, 2005), conflict theory (McClellan, 2005), advising as teaching (Lowenstein, 2005), advising as learning (Hemwall & Trachte, 2005), and advising as educating (Melander, 2005). Some of these new theories are based on familiar ideas. The appropriateness of linking advising to educating (Melander, 2005), including identifying advising as teaching (Lowenstein, 2005) and as learning (Hemwall & Trachte, 2005), has been embraced in the field for many years, as has the use of student development theory (Demetriou, 2005) and social science theory (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005). The other new theories build upon traditions less commonly applied in the field of academic advising including conflict studies (McClellan, 2005), the study of communication (Rawlins & Rawlins, 2005), and philosophical approaches (Jackson, 2005; Kuhtmann, 2005; Rawlins & Rawlins, 2005).

Each of these theories offers a lens through which to view advising. Advising as friendship refers to the personal relationship between advisor and student but, particularly in terms of civic friendship, as described by Aristotle, in which each individual extends good will to the other and practices this interaction through communication (Rawlins & Rawlins, 2005). Strength-based advising encourages advisors to emphasize students' strengths and to guide them in applying their natural talents to new challenges in college (Schreiner & Anderson, 2005). Jackson (2005) contends that the training philosophers

receive would be beneficial in an advising setting. In particular, courses in logic, the history of philosophy, ethics, social/political philosophy, metaphysics, and epistemology help advisors to assist students in working through problems and to understand conflicts that students encounter in decision-making, how humans come to know things and to learn, and how to deal with skepticism in the learning process. The use of the Socratic method in advising (Kuhtmann, 2005) refers to the questioning of students by the educator to develop a line of arguments that allows the student to reach the truth about a topic. The unique quality of this method in advising is an awareness of and adaptation to the context of each student, including his/her level of development, learning environments, and individual characteristics. Social norms refers to expectations and behaviors in a community. At times, individuals' understandings of typical behaviors may not match the actual behaviors in the community. The role of the advisor following a social norms approach is to accurately explain the academic expectations and the actual behaviors of students in the university community (Demetriou, 2005). Utilizing the approach of conflict resolution in advising allows advisors to mediate conflicts between students and the institution as serious as suspension and as typical as struggling to complete assignments, interact with professors or choose a major. By understanding that conflict can lead to growth, how people perceive conflict, and how people respond to conflict, advisors can better empathize with students and assist them to learn from conflict (McClellan, 2005).

Analogical theories of advising provide lenses through which to view advising that relate to concepts with which advisors are already familiar. The advising as teaching perspective contends that the advising process is similar to that of teaching, but what is

taught differs. Rather than teaching a subject, advisors guide students in learning about and understanding their entire university curriculum (Lowenstein, 2005). Advising as learning focuses on the learning outcomes that students should exhibit after participating in advising. This perspective leads advisors to develop learning outcomes for advising based on institutional missions and goals. It also enforces the importance of developing pedagogy and situations to support learning in the advising environment (Hemwall & Trachte, 2005). Advising as educating views the practice from the institutional level. It, too, focuses on developing goals for advising that connect to institutional mission, but also emphasizes the need to create an institutional environment that supports a variety of advising pedagogies and perspectives (Melander, 2005).

Newly Formulated Advising-Specific Theories

The field of advising has been open to the development of new theories of advising as well. *The Mentor* on-line advising journal out of the Pennsylvania State University sponsored a writing contest to explore what a unified theory of academic advising would require. The winning entry (Jordan, 2003) identified that a unified theory of academic advising would include a definition of the term academic advising in relation to the work done because it varies from unit to unit. Also, Jordan recommends applying social science theories to advising practice as well as looking at the outcomes of advising. She offers questions to begin the process of developing a unified theory focusing mostly on the outcome of advising for students and the institution.

Although Jordan did not fully flesh out a new theory, other advising professionals have begun to do just that. Lowenstein (1999) proposes an entirely new theory as an alternative to developmental theory called academically centered advising. Where the

developmental theory of advising identifies the content of advising as the development of the student, academically centered advising focuses on the student's interaction with the academic curriculum. Both theories encourage a collaborative style of advising which engages the student in a dialogue (Lowenstein, 1999). Church (2005) proposes to integrate appropriate aspects of prescriptive advising, the engagement model of advising, academically centered advising, developmental theory, and student-centered advising according to the situation of the student in question. The primary focus of the integrative approach to academic advising is what is best for the student and the institution. The components of the theory are:

1. A core formed by NACADA's core values and Kitchener's ethical traits: beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy, and fidelity
2. An element of prescriptive advising to convey the essentials of the curricula
3. A focus on a well-rounded education
4. Reductive advising focusing on identifying career goals or interests and arranging complementary course schedules
5. Student approval. (Church, 2005, p.3)

The approval of the student is key to the application of integrative theory because the advisor cannot utilize the appropriate aspects of the aforementioned theories without the student's involvement.

Theories from Other Fields Applied to Advising

Other theories applied to advising assume that advising is different from illustrative practices to which it is compared, but assert that the theories related to the other practices could apply to advising and be used to undergird practice. Even though their link to academic advising has been established, the breadth of their influence and application has not been investigated.

As Hagen describes in the special edition of the *NACADA Journal* regarding advising theory, advisors and theorists often compare advising to a known theory or practice to provide a familiar illustration of the concepts that underlie advising practice (Hagen, 2005). The analogies equate advising to other practices, such as teaching or customer service, and describe the similarities between the underlying theory of the illustrative practice and the concepts behind advising practice. The title of such presentations often includes the phrase "advising as" to indicate that advising is being defined in the terms of the other practice and its underlying theoretical framework. Authors have described advising as customer service (Spicuzza, 1992), as dialectic (Hagen, 1994), and as teaching (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009; Ryan 1992).

In the customer services model, advisors are the providers responding to the needs of the customer, the student. Advisors meet the expectations of students utilizing resources from the university. The customer service model is especially influential on structuring a delivery model for advising (Spicuzza, 1992). Dialectic refers to the exchange of logical arguments between a teacher and student that allows the student to arrive at the truth. In the context of advising, the truth refers to the student defining his/her goals and finding the best path to achieve them. Hagen's work raised the question of whether or not advising was an appropriate environment for this technique (1994). Crookston's seminal work that introduced the concept of developmental advising did so in the context of viewing advising as teaching. He emphasized that any interaction between students and faculty or advisors that results in growth or development should be considered teaching. The students can act as teachers in these scenarios as well. This approach highlights the need for both advisor and student to play active roles in the

advising relationship (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009). In contrast, Ryan (1992) directly compares what is known about teaching to what is known about advising to encourage experienced teachers to see the parallels and to utilize their skills and approaches from teaching to adapt their view of advising.

Some of the theories applied to advising emphasize the relationship that must be developed through the advising process. Postmodernism and chaos theory attempt to acknowledge the unpredictability of the advising relationship, but emphasize the strength of viewing each advising interaction and/or relationship as unique and change as a benefit, not a problem. Similarly, advisors following this perspective will not overlook student upset or uncertainty but will use them as reflective turning points (Beck, 1999; Stowe, 1996). Social constructivism in the advising context involves the interaction of the advisor with the student to assist the student, and at times the advisor, to learn through dialogue and social interaction. The approach complements developmental advising in those characteristics but expands the social context in which learning can take place by recommending that other individuals important to the student be brought into the conversation. This approach is especially applicable to advising of students who come from highly relational backgrounds or cultures in which individuals place great emphasis on social interaction with the community as opposed to an egocentric focus on the individual apart from the community (Kirk-Kuwaye & Libarios, 2003). Following a life coaching perspective, advisors would approach the student from a holistic standpoint, considering all elements of the student's life in the advising relationship. The approach offers steps that advisors could use to take a holistic approach. The relationship is the key to advising from this perspective, but the student dictates the direction of interactions

(Hermann, 2006). Intercultural communication theory has been linked with advising with the goal of enhancing multicultural competency in the profession. Multicultural competence refers to an awareness of cultural influence on both a cognitive and emotional level and a willingness to engage in a relationship with the student with this background in mind. Sometimes this approach requires that an advisor communicate differently than he or she usually does. Adjustments must be based on the cultural expectations of the students because behaviors that will successfully build a relationship of trust vary from culture to culture (Cornett-DeVito & Reeves, 1999). The pragmatic philosophy of advising emphasizes the flow of information and conversation between the advisor and the student that allows the student to reach his/her full educational potential. Advisors are encouraged to add new strategies to their daily activities regularly (Borgard, 1981). Total Quality Management is an approach adopted from the business sector that, in the advising context, situates students as external customers and other university staff as internal customers. The main priority of this approach as applied to advising is to meet customer expectations and in the process to prevent problems and emphasize continual improvement. This approach is most typically applied to service delivery and organizational models of advising rather than to personal interactions between students and advisors (Carter, 2000; King, 1993a; Higginson & Trainor, 1994).

Several theories from other fields that have been applied to advising practice address the outcomes of advising. Causal attribution theory considers how average individuals (i.e. individuals not trained as psychologists) identify the cause of an event, behavior, and/or outcome. In Kramer's work, he found that undergraduate advisors tended to take responsibility for positive outcomes related to their students but not for

negative outcomes. The application of causal attribution theory to advising practice led Kramer to make recommendations for the training of advisors (Kramer, 1982). The human capital approach directs advisors' attention to helping students develop human capital, assets that take the form of characteristics, skills or knowledge. Characteristics of and means for accumulating human capital include formal education, adult education, on-the-job training, health, and geographic mobility. In the context of advising, advisors can help students to reflect on how courses and experiences will enable them to develop skills that they can transfer to a variety of settings (Shaffer, 1997). Advising as learning focuses on the learning outcomes that students should exhibit after participating in advising. This perspective leads advisors to develop learning outcomes for advising based on institutional missions and goals. It also enforces the importance of developing pedagogy and situations to support learning in the advising environment (Hancock, 2004; Hemwell & Trachte, 1999; Huggett, 2004).

Other theories applied to advising consider students' strengths and empowerment of students as well as the environment with which students interact. Appreciative Inquiry focuses on strengths and the best characteristics of individuals. In the advising scenario, advisors can approach their interaction with students appreciatively by asking the students how they have successfully accomplished a goal or have overcome an adversity in the past to create a solution for a current problem or to make a plan for a current situation (Bloom & Martin, 2002; Truschel, 2007). Constructive development theory refers to a developmental process marked by increasing knowledge of one's own power to determine one's views and feelings. The ultimate stages of this perspective of development include an individual's ability to see the whole and to remove him/herself

from situations and view them from outside without the context overwhelming the individual. Because individuals rarely reach these stages, the focus for advising is on empowering students to see their own ability to construct their feelings and reality (McAuliffe & Strand, 1994). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs asserts that basic needs such as shelter and food must be met before individuals can pursue growth and personal development. In the advising context, it was found that establishing students' safety and sense of purpose contributed to retention. Advisors can particularly play a role in helping the student to develop this sense of purpose (Brookman, 1989).

Some of the perspectives from other fields that have been applied to advising practice have inspired models of advising. As was previously mentioned, models of advising offer specific tasks and processes based on theory that can be used in advising practice (Creamer, 2000). Much of the literature regarding advising models adopted by practitioners focuses on developmental advising, the advising model based on student development theory, or on developmental versus prescriptive advising (Abel, 1988; Broadbridge, 1996; Brown & Rivas, 1992; Brown & Rivas, 1994; Burton & Wellington, 1998; Carberry, Baker, & Prescott, 1986; Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009; Daller, Creamer, & Creamer, 1997; Ender, 1994; Fielstein, et.al., 1992; Fielstein, 1994; Frost, 1990; Frost, 1993; Gordon, 1994; Gordon, 1995; Grites, 1994; Grites & Gordon, 2000; Gruber, 2003; Hemwell & Trachte, 1999; Jordan, 2000; King, 1993a; Laff, 1994; McAuliffe & Strand, 1994; Miller & Alberts, 1994; Novels & Ender, 1988; O'Banion, 1994(1972)/2009; Peterson & McDonough, 1985; Polson, 1994; Ramos, 1994; Rankey, 1994; Ryser & Alden, 2005; Schein, Biggers & Reese, 1986;

Schneider & Meier, 2000; Sedlacek, 1994; Shane, 1981; Smith & Downey, 2003; Spokane, 1994; Strommer, 1994; Winston, 1994).

Models other than developmental advising also have been associated with advising. As other theories applied to advising, many models of advising based on theory emphasize the relationship between advisor and student. The engagement model of advising emphasizes the relationship between advisor and student in which each is engaged in teaching and learning. Application of engagement theory to advising shifts the view of completing a degree to that of a rite of passage and situates completion of the degree as the ultimate outcome of the advising relationship. As a mentor, the advisor helps to initiate the student into the community of people who have completed a degree (Yarbrough, 2002). Intrusive advising focuses on a consistent interaction between advisor and student. In this approach to advising, advisors are proactive in building a relationship with students and contacting them rather than reacting to issues and solely problem-solving (Abelman & Molina, 2001; Abelman & Molina, 2002; Austin, Cherney, Crowner, & Hill, 1997; Backhus, 1989; Garing, 1992; Jeschke, Johnson, & Williams, 2001). Considering on-line advising specifically, Pevoto determined that a model of advising in cyberspace must incorporate means to build rapport electronically such as live chats with advisors and use of e-mail to convey information. Advising on-line also requires extensive use of website space to provide information, through a Frequently Asked Questions link, for example (Pevoto, 2000). Advising with a focus on caring emphasizes the relationship between advisor and student. In the caring model, advisors take on a mentorship role with students but share direction of the relationship with students. The development of trust in the relationship is critical, but concrete actions

such as preparing for advising meetings and providing accurate information can contribute to a caring relationship and to a positive student experience (Holmes, 2004). Advising with a focus on caring also can be enacted through care groups that unite students and assist them in creating community on campus (Williams-Perez, 2005).

A few models address how advisors can contribute to students' way of knowing. The Learning Partnerships Model (LPM) asserts that students must experience disequilibrium in order to reach self-authorship, the point at which they can maintain a sense of their goals or reevaluate them in the face of disequilibrium. Advisors can use the tenets of LPM to aid students in this development by validating students as knowers, situating learning in the student's experience, and co-constructing meaning with students in the learning process (Pizzolato, 2006). The Student Learning Imperative (SLI) (1996) produced by the American College Student Personnel Association has implications for advising as well as other services provided to college students outside of the classroom. In the context of advising, the SLI urges that advisors help students to explore what they have learned through participation in activities outside the classroom and to connect it to what they learn in the classroom. This view may also result in advisors participating with other campus departments to sponsor co-curricular activities where learning can occur (Kuh, 1997).

Additional models of advising based on theories from other fields address the use of trained counselors as advisors, the use of group advising, and how advisors can help students to plan. The counseling liaison model of advising connects a trained, licensed counselor from the campus counseling center to an academic department. In addition to advising students regarding department-specific course requirements, reaching out via e-

mail and phone to students who are struggling academically, and acting as a referral point to campus resources, trained counselors also can help students to address personal issues that arise over the course of the college experience (Kadar, 2001). Advising with a focus on caring also can be enacted through care groups that unite students and assist them in creating community on campus (Williams-Perez, 2006). Open option advising involves the use of a course to guide a group of undecided students through personal reflection, departmental presentations, and career evaluations to move closer to selecting a major. The focus of the open option model was on connecting students' personal interests to the major selection process (Beatty, Davis, & White, 1983). Integrative advising is a compilation of tenets from a variety of other theories applied to advising and it situates service to the student and to the institution at its core. In each advising interaction, a prescriptive component reviewing curricular requirements should be incorporated. Advising also should include an effort to direct course selection to building a well-rounded education as well as to include courses in preparation for a career goal set by the student. Finally, the student must confirm the appropriateness of the plan developed through this process, thus retaining service to the student as the core of advising (Church, 2005). Theories applied to advising have used a known entity to describe advising, have emphasized relationships in advising, have addressed outcomes of advising, have focused on student strengths, and have reviewed how advising contributes to knowing.

Advisors as Subjects

Empirical research regarding academic advising, including dissertation studies in higher education, more frequently has addressed advising models rather than advising theory. This research typically has focused on student perceptions of or satisfaction with

particular advising models and also often focuses specifically on developmental advising (Beasley-Fielstein, L., 1986; Broadbridge, 1996; Brown, 2005; Childress, 2003; Coll, 2007; Demetriou, 2005a; Eckhardt, 1992; Edelnant, 2006; Fielstein, 1987; Fielstein, 1992; Flores-Mejorado, 2008; Hernandez, 2007; Kennedy-Dudley, 2007; Knedlik, 2003; Larson, 2008; Legutko, 2006; Matosian, 1999; Moody, 1996; Neale, & Sidorenko, 1988; Pajewski, 2006; Plaine, 2007; Sybesma, 2007; Vowell, & Karst, 1987; Winston, & Sandor, 1984; Zientara, 2007). Several researchers administered the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) (Brown, 2005; Eckhardt, 1992; Edelnant, 2006; Holt, 1997), which focuses entirely on developmental vs. prescriptive advising and can be completed by students or advisors. Some research has evaluated student outcomes after application of particular advising strategies (Cotter, 2007; Miltenberger, 2007).

Although students frequently have evaluated advising models, some literature has incorporated advisors' perceptions. Some studies captured both advisors' and students' opinions or perceptions, including Andrepont-Warren's (2005) inclusion of advisors and students in the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), a normed survey tool grounded in the developmental approach to advising that can be used to evaluate the process and outcomes of academic advising, and Wood's (2002) inclusions of advisors and students in a survey regarding advisors' use of developmental or prescriptive advising. Stembera (2007) interviewed both students, mature women in particular, and advisors to examine the effectiveness of academic advising.

Because the study at hand focuses on advisors as subjects, it is important to note that other studies have focused entirely on advisors. Daller, Creamer, & Creamer's (1997) observed advisors' styles in practice to evaluate whether or not differences

between prescriptive and developmental advising are distinguishable. Frost (1993) surveyed advisors regarding their employment of developmental attitudes and practices. Mahon & Dannells (1998) reviewed advisors' attitudes toward transfer students, and Steele & Gordon (2001) collected advisors' perceptions regarding advising by e-mail. Culp (1994) reported practitioner perspectives of advising. Moser & Chong (1995) analyzed MBA advisors' rate of job satisfaction while Donnelly (2006) looked at satisfaction in a broader group of advisors. Sims (2006) discovered that advisors rated themselves as prescriptive as part of a larger study of a summer Bridge program. Holmes (2004) utilized advisors' definition of what "caring" is and how it is enacted in advising. Orgera (2007) questioned advisors in a project about what values guide student affairs practice. Nadler (2007) and Gehrke (2006) learned how advisors build relationships with students, and Kane (2007) asked advisors about their views of their role.

NACADA also has commissioned member surveys, including Polson & Cashin's (1981) survey regarding research priorities for advisors, Lynch & Stucky's (2001) survey regarding advisor roles and responsibilities, Lynch's (2002) advisor satisfaction survey, and Leonard's (2004) survey on technology in advising. None of these studies addresses theoretical perspectives of advisors, and those that focus on models of advising still limit their reviews to developmental approaches grounded in student development theory.

Other empirical research in the form of dissertation studies in higher education has used advisors as subjects and has focused on topics other than developmental vs. prescriptive advising. Recent dissertations regarding advising that have addressed advising models or theories by studying the advisors themselves include work regarding specific advising approaches or models other than developmental advising (Holmes,

2004; Williams-Perez, 2005), faculty advisors (Waters, 2001), and advisors' thinking about students and the advisor's role (Hampton, 1991; Lynch, 1998; Spiers, 2000).

Of these studies, Lynch's (1998) and Spiers' (2000) works illuminate which variables influence advisors' strategies and describe definitions and orientations that advisors have developed. Lynch's work most specifically connects to the research completed in this study because, as in this study, she utilized a naturalistic, qualitative method; she interviewed advisors using an open-ended protocol that allowed advisors to make meaning of their practice but also focused on the application of theory specifically; and she situated her research in the context of a public, land-grant university. She employed phenomenological interviewing with 28 advisors at one public, land-grant institution undergoing restructuring and reform. Lynch focused on discovering the advisors' own meaning of their daily activities. Through this process she observed that various advisors in her study viewed advising as teaching or as counseling. Some advisors applied Learning Style Theory and values clarification theory to advising. Finally, she discussed developmental advising at length and asked advisors specifically about that approach. Some advisors spoke in terms of directive (prescriptive) vs. non-directive (developmental) advising.

It is important to note that, of those who were familiar with such theories, one consciously used developmental advising because of his humanistic educational background that encouraged a focus on the whole person as does developmental advising. Another advisor was familiar with developmental advising but had not integrated it into his own work and thought that advisors took more from experience. Two other advisors felt that multiple theories should support advising work rather than developmental

advising offering the only foundation. Lynch also concluded that, if advisors did not internalize theory, they made up their own approaches based on experience. Influences from experience included their academic and professional training (one advisor pinpointed literature and theater training as influences on his perspective), student academic standing (which necessitated the completion of a contract by the students), and the number of students needing advising (which inspired the use of group advising).

In a separate dissertation project, Spiers' (2000) videotaped three faculty advisors and three student affairs advisors in advising sessions at a two-year college and then administered Stimulated Recall Interviews, with the advisors watching the videotapes and commenting on their own process of interaction with the student over the course of the appointment. Spiers' research relates to this study because of her use of grounded theory methodological techniques. She developed a grounded theory of advising as teaching that emerged from advisors' implicit knowledge, that which is gained from experience, with less influence from explicit formalized training. The two orientations within this theory are an advisor-focused content orientation concerned with providing information to students and the processes used to do so, and a student-focused process orientation concerned with aiding students to learn for themselves and moving toward a new level of understanding (Spiers, 2000).

Both Spiers' and Lynch's work incorporate advisors' practices and attitudes in discussions of theory. Spiers developed a theory of advising as teaching from her observation of and interviews with advisors. Lynch specifically asked advisors about their use of theory but limited the realm to developmental advising. My study combines their two approaches by speaking directly to advisors as Lynch did but also allowing the

advisors' preferences to flow freely as did Spiers rather than focusing on one type of theory.

Summary of Empirical Literature Regarding Advising

Generally, researchers and practitioners have presented normative models for how advising ought to be and have reviewed how advisors behave in practice viewed through a model selected by the researcher. Most of the models addressed in the literature have a foundation in student development theory or in the social sciences more generally. By focusing on advising approaches built upon student development theory, the field has ignored research and theories from other disciplines and fields and has left out faculty from other backgrounds who could both advise students and research advising (Hagen, 2005). Although some research regarding academic advising has uncovered influences of advisors' practice, researchers have not specifically investigated the theoretical perspectives that advisors themselves have adopted and with which they currently frame practice.

Summary of the Literature Review

In this chapter, I reviewed literature regarding advising theory and models as well as research focusing on advisors as subjects. The field of advising has not developed its own theory, so it has borrowed from student development theory, career development theory and, more recently, the fields of philosophy, the social sciences, communications, conflict studies, and life-coaching to inform practice. These theories have been linked to advising, but empirical research has not extensively determined their use in practice. Much of the empirical research on advising has captured students' perceptions of and attitudes about advising and about the developmental model of advising in particular.

Research focusing on advisors as subjects has included observation of advisors' styles, surveys of advisors, and qualitative conversations with advisors. Most of these studies have focused on a particular approach to advising. A few other empirical studies have used a qualitative approach, including video-taping advising sessions and interviewing advisors to learn advisors' meaning-making regarding their daily activities and to create a theory of advising as teaching through a grounded theory approach. Despite expanding the study of advising to include advisors as subjects and incorporating theories and models outside the realm of student development theory, these studies do not explore the variety of theory already applied by advisors in their practice.

Chapter Three of this document explicates the methods that I used to learn the theories that advisors reported utilizing in their practice. The chapter describes the qualitative approach to research and how it applied to this study and reviews the grounded theory techniques used in this study. It includes sampling techniques and the description of the final sample as well as the consent procedures followed in this study. Chapter Three also includes an explanation of semi-structured interviews and their use in this study and a description of the template coding data analysis method and its application in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

This study aimed to provide a voice for academic advisors regarding their theoretical influences. I employed a qualitative approach that incorporated grounded theory techniques of data collection and analysis. These perspectives emphasized reliance on the participants' meaning-making, so I was able to adjust my inquiry based on participant input to include non-theoretical influences. Semi-structured interviews provided the framework for conversations with 11 advisors at a large Midwestern research university.

Research Questions

The questions guiding this study were:

1. Do academic advisors apply theoretical perspectives to their advising practice?
2. Which theoretical perspectives do academic advisors apply to their advising practice?
3. How do these theoretical perspectives influence advising practice?
4. How do theoretical perspectives applied to advising practice vary among academic advisors?

As I progressed through interviews, I decided to expand the pursuit of perspectives that advisors applied to their practice by including non-theoretical influences on their work. One respondent was hesitant to participate because she thought that she did not apply theory and would not be a useful addition to the study. In order to avoid the possibility of intimidating advisors, I began introducing the study in terms of influences more generally rather than just theoretical influences. In addition, asking advisors broader questions

about influences generally uncovered language that linked to particular theories even if advisors did not name the theories specifically. Thus, an additional research question was:

5. What influences how advisors work with students?

Institutional Context

I conducted my research in reference to the population of academic advisors of undergraduate majors at a large Midwestern research university. Founded in the mid-1800's, it adopted the mission of a land-grant university funded under the Morrill Act. At the time of this study, it was home to approximately 35,000 undergraduate students within a total of approximately 45,000 students (University Newsroom, October 6, 2006). Fourteen colleges and an affiliated law school constituted the university, and ten of those colleges offered undergraduate academic majors including seven professional colleges and three core colleges. These colleges provided "more than 200 programs of study" (University Newsroom, October 6, 2006). Advising within majors was decentralized at the university so it was overseen by the College or by each department within those Colleges respectively.

Methodology

I desired to understand the complex thought processes of academic advisors, so qualitative analysis was appropriate for this study (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). Because my aim was to identify and describe advisor influences for the first time, this study involved exploratory research. Following are explanations of the nature of exploratory research, of topical qualitative analysis, and of grounded theory techniques utilized in the process of this study.

Exploratory Research

The distinctive uses of exploratory research are identification of qualities in a subject and explanation-generation, and it also allows for effective description of subjects both qualitatively and quantitatively. Exploratory research is conducted when the researcher wants to identify qualities in the subject, often for the first time, rather than assess the subject's relationship to predetermined variables. Exploratory research can elicit qualitative and quantitative descriptions of its subjects (Crabtree & Miller, 1991). In this study I identified the advisors' interpretations of experiences, their influences, and how the influences affected advising practice for the first time. I also desired to accomplish interpretive explanation-generation by "discover[ing] relationships, associations, and patterns [of influences on advising practice] based on personal experience" of the advisors (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p. 7).

Topical Qualitative Research

This study evolved as topical qualitative research because of the focus on a selected topic within the exploration of a loosely bounded sample (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). The advisors in this study acted as a set of multiple cases, however, I collected data about a specific topic, the influences of their advising practice, rather than reviewing all qualities of each case. The sample, although limited to Academic Specialist-Academic Advisors at a large Midwestern research university, was loosely bounded because it evolved based upon preliminary analysis of initial interviews.

Grounded Theory Techniques

Grounded theory techniques provided the structure for data collection and data analysis in this qualitative study. Grounded theory, as defined by Strauss and Corbin

(1998), refers to "theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process" (p. 12). In grounded theory research, the researcher does not test an idea through the research but discovers ideas from the data that will ideally more accurately represent "reality" than a preconceived theory might (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.12). Researchers must be open to the multiple ideas that can emerge from the data. Grounded theory techniques need not result in the development of a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and I did not intend to develop a theory of advising from this study. In this study it was appropriate to use these techniques that emphasize the development of ideas from data because I intended to gather information about the application of theory to advising based on advisors' experiences rather than to test a preconceived list of theories. In this study I relied upon the grounded theory techniques of theoretical sampling as well as open and axial coding. The specific application of these techniques is explained in the following sections.

Theoretical Sampling and Initial Analysis

Sampling based upon analysis of previously collected data is called theoretical sampling. The purpose of theoretical sampling is to collect data until all of the variation around the topic of interest has been identified and new cases do not provide further variation in properties of the topic (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Theoretical sampling is an especially appropriate technique to use when doing exploratory work because the researcher can direct later data collection toward the most significant areas as suggested by the data, thus, pursuing data deemed especially significant by the population being studied. The sample is complete when the categories have become saturated, "when no new information seems to emerge during coding, that is, when no new properties,

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dimensions, conditions, actions/interactions, or consequences are seen in the data" or when collecting more data would appear "counterproductive," with little theoretical return for the collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 136).

I interviewed only Academic Specialists-Academic Advisors at a large Midwestern research university who advised undergraduate majors. I studied advisors who worked with students in academic majors because they had the opportunity to see the entirety of the degree program from first year to graduation including coursework, experiential components, career exploration processes, and the process of identity development. Because of the breadth of their advising responsibilities, from first year to graduation, it was possible that major advisors would have explored their approach to a variety of the issues that typically arise in advising sessions. Thus, how they framed practice could provide insight into the usefulness of various theories regarding a broad spectrum of advising concerns. I limited the population to those advisors with the rank of Academic Specialist-Advisor because their primary function at the university was to advise rather to teach or to work in outreach programming. "Normally, academic specialists are assigned to duties and responsibilities performed by faculty members but with a more narrow scoop and focus" (*Academic Specialist Handbook,* n.d.,, p 35).

The academic advising category includes individuals who provide advisement on course options and other academically related maters *[sic]*. These academic specialists have responsibilities in an academic department, school or college or in a unit that serves University-wide populations (e.g., Supportive Services, Undergraduate University Division, Honors College). These persons typically:

- provide advice on course and curriculum selection;
- monitor students' programs;
- recommend certification for graduation;
- maintain contact with advisors in other units;
- provide incidental information on the relationship between course selection and career options;
- refer students, when necessary, to other units in the University for assistance with educational, career and personal concerns;
- participate in activities devoted to the retention of students within University programs;
- provide assistance and guidance to students reentering programs;
- may be involved in instructional activities associated with classes, labs and seminars;
- participate, as required by the unit, in professional development activities, both on and off campus, including conferences, workshops and seminars to enhance the ability and knowledge to perform as an advisor;
- participate in department/school, college and University level committees;
- make a significant professional contribution by making scholarly presentations: present papers, lectures or workshops on campus or beyond related to academic advising or training;
- assume leadership roles involving the coordination, supervision and training of new academic advisors. (*Academic Specialist Handbook*, n.d.,, p 35-36)

The grounded theory technique of theoretical sampling required that I began interviews and then analyzed the data before sampling more respondents from the advising population, not including the original respondents. Each subsequent sample selection was based upon influences and characteristics that appeared to impact advising practice in previous interviews.

I compiled a list of the population of Academic Specialists-Advisors through multiple steps of internet research. I reviewed the websites for each college that housed an undergraduate major and recorded the names of individuals identified as advisors. I also viewed the websites of individual departments in colleges in which advising was not

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centralized in the college and recorded the names of advisors. As a staff member in the College of Social Science, I had access to a list of all of the current advisors in that college. I reviewed each name from my population list through the People Search function on the university website to determine if the advisors were employed as Academic Specialists-Advisors. I created separate lists including only Academic Specialists-Advisors for each college.

I made my initial sampling choices in response to recent critiques of advising theory. In his discussion of the historical application of student development theory to advising, Hagan (2005) explained that in the growth of the field of advising, advisors tended to adopt student development theory in their advising work because they were introduced to it through Student Affairs degree programs or as Students Affairs practitioners. Hagan also pointed out, however, that advisors had been trained in a variety of academic fields apart from Student Affairs. He asserted that the field of advising could benefit from the peaceful coexistence of multiple theories of advising because of the breadth of experience and background of the practitioners (Hagen, 2005). In order to learn if advisors from backgrounds other than Student Affairs drew on their own academic training when advising, the main characteristic across which I categorized my population was field of highest degree.

In the initial selections for the sample in this study, I choose two advisors from the same college so that I could control some structural variables while comparing the impact of different fields of highest degree. Their college consisted of a mixed model of centralized full-time advisors who worked out of the Dean's office and faculty advisors who worked out of academic departments and fulfilled other faculty duties beyond

advising. Because I wanted to limit my sample to full-time advisors, selecting the first two advisors from one college that had a centralized full-time advising structure provided control of the department culture and of some structural characteristics of the advising context so that I could focus on the influence of the highest degree. I selected one advisor who had a masters degree related to Student Affairs and was completing a Ph.D. in Higher Education, Natalie, and one advisor whose master's degree was in Social Work, Michael.

I e-mailed Natalie and Michael inviting each of them to participate in the study. I attached the consent form to the e-mail for their review. The letter to the advisors requesting their participation is available in Appendix A of this document, and I have included the consent form in Appendix B. The first two advisors whom I invited to participate agreed to do so. I expanded the sample after the initial interviews through theoretical sampling.

To continue theoretical sampling I had to identify characteristics of the advisors that influenced the theoretical perspectives that they applied to advising. This approach required that I complete some analysis of the interviews as I administered them. I completed a preliminary review of the interview transcripts to identify emergent themes. I chose this approach primarily to facilitate the identification of influences that would suggest how to proceed with theoretical sampling. By identifying which theories, people, experiences, concepts, and structures influenced the respondents' advising, I learned what characteristics I should seek in my sample. In order to determine the point of saturation, which indicated the achievement of a sufficient sample, I had to make comparisons between the influences identified by the initial respondents and those mentioned by the

later respondents. This process represented the initial open-coding phase of analysis. In their text regarding doing qualitative research, Crabtree and Miller (1992) included a study by Willms, Johnson, and White regarding physician's health promotion activities that explained this approach as the first step in developing a codebook for template analysis. They labeled large portions of interview text with broad codes and then reevaluated only those segments of text for more detail and to develop subcodes.

I began by simply reading the first two transcripts and highlighting passages that referred to advising influences. I then catalogued the influence, any theory cited with it, associated language that suggested a particular theory, and the impact on advising practice as well as the line numbers from the transcript. I found that the responses readily separated into chunks of text five major influences, or emergent themes like those described by Willms, Johnson, and White: professional development activities, highest degree field/program, colleagues/department culture/department structure, context (student needs/appointment length-type), and personal experience (with advising, as an undergraduate, personality, religious beliefs). Final codes used throughout the entire study evolved from these initial issues and themes identified by dividing the text with broad codes after the first reading of the interview transcripts.

I next looked more deeply into each of the sections that I preliminarily identified to determine if any theory was referenced, which one, where the advisor learned about the theory, and how the advisor applied it to his/her advising practice. These categories paralleled the research questions in this study. Because identification of emergent themes allowed me to find data to respond to the research questions in this study, I determined that identifying emergent themes would be sufficient to continue theoretical sampling.

This approach was complimentary to the philosophy of grounded theory that undergirded theoretical sampling because, with the grounded theory approach, "a researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind . . . [but] begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). Because of the clarity of emergent themes in the data, I utilized the open-coding tools in initial analysis for theoretical sampling. Tools used to do open coding include line-by-line analysis in the early stages of coding and analysis, sentence or paragraph analysis when categories have already been established, and perusal of the document to see how it varies from previous data later in the research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

I also performed axial coding, or relating categories to subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As I moved through the interviews, it became apparent that advisors had both theoretical and non-theoretical influences and that they did not always label their theoretical influences as such. I needed to divide influences into these two categories and then into subcategories in order to capture a thorough representation of influences, including influences that shared similarities with theoretical perspectives but that advisors did not identify as theoretical. In axial coding, I began relating categories to each other and to subcategories. I created categories of theoretical and non-theoretical influences, respectively, and further divided those categories into the subcategories of specific theories and then further into associated language for each theory. In addition, I catalogued how advisors applied the theoretical and non-theoretical categories and subcategories of influences to advising practice. I began to make connections between theory and practice. These linkages were hypotheses that emerged from the data and that reflected my research questions. I reviewed the linkages later in relation to all of the data

to validate them, a task which also provided more details in the subcategories. Other connections, identified through axial coding, existed between the conditions in which influences were learned and between the theories or influences themselves. To organize the data, I created a spreadsheet which included the influences on advising that the advisors identified, the theories that the advisors described specifically, associated language that advisors may have identified without naming a specific theory, and how that influence and the theory associated with it affected practice.

Because the theoretical perspectives that the first two respondents identified grew from their graduate education, I determined to continue sampling advisors with a variety of fields of highest degree. Given the frequency with which advisors in the population identified for this study come from a Student Affairs background, in the subsequent sample, I continued to include a mix of advisors with Student Affairs or Higher Education training and those with different disciplines as their highest degree experience. It was significant to note that, even in the first two interviews, when I began by asking about theoretical influences specifically, both advisors mentioned non-theoretical influences on advising. I determined to invite advisors from a variety of departments because of the influence of department culture and training on the first two respondents. Because some colleges centralized advising for all of their departments in one unit, I chose to select advisors based on college of residence rather than department in order to include this diversity.

In Elaine's response to my invitation, she expressed concern that she would not be a good participant in my study because she was "not one to deal with a lot of theories in Higher Education." She stated in her e-mail, "I studied all the theories in graduate

school, but don't do a lot with them now." She asked, "So am I the best person for your study?" (Elaine, personal communication, March 12, 2007). Because Elaine's hesitance to be labeled as someone who actively used theory in practice and because she seemed to relegate her experience with theory to the initial time that she studied it in graduate school, I decided to approach the remaining advisors for my study with a broader focus. I was concerned that I could potentially intimidate potential participants with the focus on theory. I did not want participants to self-select out of the study because they did not feel that they actively used theory when the lack of influence of theory would be a useful finding. I no longer included the word theory in my invitation but instead explained that I wanted to learn about what influences advisors in their work. The revised invitation to advisors is attached in Appendix C. This adjustment illustrated how the researcher must be open to multiple ideas when using grounded theory techniques. It was also an example of the focus of grounded theory techniques on the subjects' interpretation of reality.

Elaine's hesitation, coupled with the strained conversation that I felt when focusing too tightly on theory in the first interviews, inspired me to approach the interviews in a broader perspective. I began thinking about the questions in terms of "What influences advising?" vs. "How does training influence advising?" or "How does professional development influence advising?" By asking broader questions, that already made up a portion of the interview protocol, such as "What do you view as the goals of advising?", "How do you define the role of advising?" and following up with "Is there anything else that influences your work?," I felt that I could gather as much information from the respondents within a more smooth conversation. I could then follow-up with

specific questions about professional development, about how their academic training influenced them, etc.

I also wondered if, because advisors may be intimidated by or feel disconnected from theory, they had reflected more on other influences of their advising work during their careers. I determined to continue considering non-theoretical influences on advising both as a way to fully uncover advisors' influences and as a way to capture as much conversation about their positions as possible in case they used language associated with theoretical frameworks, which could point to additional influences of which they may not be fully cognizant.

Because of Elaine's mention of student and field characteristics as influences on her advising, I decided to select at least one advisor from each college at the university that offered an undergraduate major in order to find diversity in the student populations with whom the advisor respondents worked. I did not attempt to interview an advisor from each major on campus because the university offered more than 200 programs to undergraduates. A sample that size would have been excessive for an exploratory study which aimed to glean details related to advising influences in a qualitative fashion rather than gauge the breadth of the impact of these influences within the entire population of advisors (Crabtree & Miller, 1992).

The spreadsheet that I used to categorize advisors' influences provided evidence to identify the point of saturation in sample selection. If I could label an influence mentioned by an advisor later in the interview process with a category name raised in an earlier interview, I determined that the later influence did not add any new information to the study. When all influences mentioned by an advisor could be categorized by the

previously identified influences, I had reached saturation. This scenario occurred after the ninth interview. The last two interviews elicited no new influences that did not fit into an already established category of influence or that required future sampling to explore. Despite reaching this preliminary indication of saturation, I continued with my scheduled interviews in order to meet with at least one advisor from each college that offered an undergraduate major. I finally included eleven Academic Specialist-Advisors in the study. Profiles of the study participants open Chapter 4: Findings.

Memos

While performing open-coding to accomplish theoretical sampling during data collection, I occasionally added a memo in a footnote in the interview transcript to describe any interpretation of the advisor's comments that had come to mind. The first advisor that I interviewed used the term "holistic" as she described developmental advising. I recorded a brief analysis of her comments because I thought it might help to define and then identify developmental perspectives in other interviews if advisors used associated language. I wrote, "She begins to define developmental advising, or is the holistic approach something different? She uses the word 'definitely' which suggests that she is certain that this description illustrates what makes her more of a developmental advisor."

Memos are "written records of analysis" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 217). They simply are representations of the thoughts going through the researcher's mind during analysis. During open coding, memos will most often be code notes which are the written product of the act of coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The first example included above represents a code note in which I began to categorize the term "holistic"

under "developmental." Most of my code notes were the categorizations that I organized in the spreadsheet of advising influences.

Theoretical notes, which summarize ideas about the data and concepts that have been identified, can also be developed during open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The spreadsheet of advising influences that I created represented theoretical notation because it began to connect the theoretical influences mentioned by advisors to their practice. I began data analysis with a template consisting of the research questions. The spreadsheet from initial analysis already included coding for the third research question: "How do these theoretical perspectives influence advising practice?" Thus, in initial analysis I was already summarizing and organizing the concepts according to the analytical template that would answer the research questions in the study. Sometimes the theoretical notes in the document with the interview transcript took the form of highlighting. I highlighted segments of text that included mention of advising influences in order to easily refer to them during later analysis. The highlighting came to represent comments from the advisor that directly related to a research question.

Operational notes include plans for future research tasks that are appropriate given the theoretical notes developed (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In addition to analytical ideas, I also included operational notes about the questions that I asked in the interviews and the flow of the conversation. These thoughts influenced how I structured later interviews. For example, in the first interview transcript, I wrote, "Am I assuming too much about what might be important by asking demographic questions, professional development questions, etc.? Should I start with 'What is your view of advising?' and branch off as they direct?" After feeling like I was pushing too hard to find theoretical

influences through asking about specific topics, I chose to begin interviews with broader questions such as asking about the view of advising. I then probed with specific questions about professional development or other particular topics as they came up, and eventually asked about the initial influences from previous interviews that I had prepared in a list.

Consent procedures and Confidentiality

Each advisor who participated in this study completed a consent form (available in Appendix B in this document) before being interviewed. They each received a copy of the form via e-mail before the interview. No respondents had any questions about confidentiality or the study itself. All of the participants signed the consent form at the time of the interview. Advisors were made aware of the option to withdraw participation in the study at any time and to refuse to answer any question or questions. Through the consent form, I explained the measures that I would take to ensure confidentiality of the data and participants including storing tapes and transcripts of audio-taped interviews in a locked filing cabinet at my off-campus, personal residence; not linking information to individuals as the analysis of the data will focus on concepts, not personal characteristics, and will not involve any names; not allowing anyone but me to see the list linking academic advisors to their interviews and destroying this list upon completion of the study; and storing all electronic versions of the research materials on a password protected personal laptop computer with back-up copies saved on a removable storage device that will be kept separate from the list of participants in a locked filing cabinet in my off-campus, personal residence. I emphasized that participation in the study was voluntary, that agreeing to have the interview audio-taped was voluntary, that refusal to

participate would involve no penalty, that participants could choose to remove themselves from the study at any time or ask that the tape-recorder be turned off at any time, and that they could refuse to answer any particular question or questions. The participants committed anywhere from 45 minutes to one and a half hours to the project for the interview. I also requested that they make themselves available to review the transcripts of the interview for accuracy.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews were the best method for learning how the subjects made meaning, in this case, as it related to advisors' approaches to their practice. I administered a semi-structured interview format because my interviews took place outside of every day activity and were aimed at collecting the advisors' meaning-making around the influences of their practice. I needed some structure to initiate the conversations but wanted to allow the advisors' voices to guide them. The respondents and I essentially created the format as we interacted around a flexible interview schedule (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). The open-ended questions in the semi-structured interview allowed me to guide the discussion as well as adapt the interview to probe into relevant topics that arose in the conversation (Singleton & Straits, 1999).

Interview Protocol

The initial interview protocol is included as Appendix D in this document. General questions about their view of advising were used for the first two participants. These questions remained pertinent in subsequent interviews with the expanded theoretical sample, and I supplemented them with a list of advising influences which I developed by doing a preliminary analysis of the first six interviews. To begin to gauge

the prevalence of the influences mentioned through the sixth interview, if they did not mention the influences on their own, I asked advisors if the experiences and perspectives on the list impacted their work. For the remaining interviews, I asked the questions from my initial interview schedule but almost entirely wrote comments and notes on the list of influences mentioned already in order to keep track of how many influences that had already been identified the later respondents were mentioning. The list of influences included literature, department approach/culture, other colleagues/training, bachelor's degree field, master's/Ph.D. degree field, personal style/preferences, student need, appointment structure, student perceptions, student demands, student year/level, student developmental level, student GPA, job experience, job satisfaction, professional development, student degree field, curriculum evolution/changes, and technology.

Each interview required about one to one and a half hours due to the length of the interview schedule. Prior to administering the interviews, I asked respondents to provide me with a copy of their curriculum vitae in order to record basic demographic characteristics regarding gender, age, racial and/or ethnic background, educational background, and professional development experience. I confirmed this information with respondents during the interview or asked it initially at that time if I had not received a vitae in advance. This information allowed me a better understanding of the composition of the sample and, ultimately, emerged as a list of influences on advising.

Data Analysis

Initial analysis involved open-coding or identification and categorization of abstract concepts in the data. This stage of analysis occurred during sampling. Once I had completed sampling and interviewing, I utilized a template approach to analysis to

delve more deeply into the data and to organize it according to my research questions. I inserted some memos into the interview transcripts, but cataloguing the influences in a spreadsheet provided a more efficient means for logging both my personal comments and abstract concepts identified in open-coding, respectively.

Detailed Analysis

In their textbook regarding doing qualitative research, Crabtree and Miller (1992) included a study by Willms, Johnson, and White regarding physician's health promotion activities that explained the approach to develop a codebook for template analysis. They labeled large portions of interview text with broad codes and then reevaluated only those segments of text for more detail and to develop subcodes. I labeled large portions of text in interview transcripts with electronic highlighting while completing theoretical sampling during data collection. I next looked into each of those sections more deeply to see if any theory was referenced, which one, where the advisor learned about it, and how the advisor applied it to their advising practice.

I completed the bulk of my detailed analysis on those segments of the interviews identified during preliminary open-coding. I also reviewed each interview in its entirety again to ensure that I did not overlook any data that was relevant to my research questions. During this second pass through the data, I identified associated language in some interviews that I had not initially highlighted. While my complete list of theoretical influences did not change from initial analysis during theoretical sampling, in some cases I expanded or changed the exact theories that each advisor mentioned or for which they mentioned associated language as a result of clarifying their meaning in a second review of their words. For example, in reviewing Michael's words, I realized that his use of the

term service was not parallel to that described by Tiffany as a perspective to be applied to advising. He was referring to advisors providing *a* service to students, not viewing advising as service. His summary of the role of advisors is ". . . doing a good service to the students of this university and providing them the best advising experience." Similarly, when reviewing the description of Appreciative Advising by Elaine, I realized that she acknowledged that she did not use the term in the same way that she heard explained in a presentation at the national NACADA conference.

> And then I went to Appreciative Advising segment which wasn't quite what I thought it would be, but I just think that it's so important for us to appreciate each other and also just to appreciate what we do for our students and realize how important we are to our students.

Since the advisor herself admits that she does not apply the approach as it is traditionally defined, I did not include the theory in my findings. She did not intend to convey that the tenets of Appreciative Advising, as it was defined in the literature, influenced her practice.

I utilized a template to organize the categories and subcategories that I developed through analysis and also used the template as a guide for analysis. I reviewed each interview with a template for each research question, respectively. As I reviewed each interview and identified new influences or evidence, I changed the coding template to include these concepts so that I could code the remaining interviews for them. The categories of influences were theoretical and non-theoretical. The subcategories were the complete list of theories identified by advisors as well as the list of non-theoretical influences.

Delimitations and Limitations

Certain delimitations structure this study, and limitations should also be noted. Purposeful choices placed parameters around this study. The small sample size was appropriate for an exploratory, qualitative study, however, it would not be appropriate to generalize to the entire population of advisors from a sample of this size. The sample was limited to one institution which allowed a focus on the individual characteristics of advisors and departmental characteristics, not institutional influences on advising, however, this choice may have limited the scope of influences on advisors.

Researcher's Lens

At the time of data collection, I was an academic advisor at the university at which I completed this study. This role provided several benefits in the development of the study. As an Academic Specialist-Academic Advisor, I was familiar with the characteristics of that role and how advisors in that role were utilized throughout the university (i.e. as major advisors or as advisors of undecided students). I also knew many advisors personally so I was aware, to a certain extent, of the availability of advisors with a variety of demographic characteristics that would be important to address in this study, especially field of highest degree. As an "insider" in the field of academic advising and a member of the university community in which I collected data, I was aware of vocabulary and acronyms used both in the field and in the university. This knowledge allowed me to easily understand advisors' references in interviews and to respond with appropriate probing questions as well as to incorporate these references appropriately during data analysis.

I completed this study to fulfill degree requirements for a Ph.D. in Higher Education. Thus, I had a background in student development theory. This knowledge may have influenced my interpretation of advisors' language because I was familiar with many theories typically applied to academic advising practice. However, I also completed academic training at the graduate level in Sociology. Thus, in one respect, I was similar to advisors who came to the field with a background other than Student Affairs. I experienced dissonance in the beginning of the doctoral program in Higher Education as I adjusted from the Sociological perspective to the typical theories and assumptions that were used by individuals with experience in Student Affairs graduate programs or work settings. I may have shared perspectives of a variety of advisors in this study because I entered the field of Higher Education as an outsider, but I entered into research with experience related to and knowledge of student development theory. In their treatment of grounded theory methodology, Strauss and Corbin (1998) state, "Experience and knowledge are what sensitizes the researcher to significant problems and issues in the data and allows him or her to see alternative explanations and to recognize properties and dimensions of emergent concepts" (p. 59).

As it is impossible to remain entirely value neutral in research (Strauss, & Corbin, 1998), I may have brought biases related to advising and the university where the respondents and I worked to the research and interpretation of data. As an advisor myself, I had considered my own philosophy of advising and had read about and attempted to integrated into practice a variety of theoretical perspectives. In particular, I consciously employed developmental and prescriptive advising strategies in my own practice. I heard about these approaches from a classmate in my graduate program and

learned their tenets through advising literature. These approaches were especially appropriate for use in the major for which I advised. The major involved several different graduation requirements and options from which the students had to choose. The prescriptive approach was useful in the process of explaining these requirements to students. In addition, many choices within the major required the advisor to discuss and understand the student's goals and previous experiences. The developmental perspective encouraged me to consider all of the factors in a student's life that affected their college experience.

Although my research approach required that I not pursue a particular hypothesis, because of speculation within the advising literature, I anticipated that advisors would mention developmental theory as well as considered that they might mention influences from fields other than Student Affairs. In order to identify and attempt to avoid any biases that arose, I created memos as necessary during the research process to express my reactions to interviews, individuals, or data so that I could limit the influence that my own meanings had on interpretation of the data and could focus on the participants' meanings (Strauss, & Corbin, 1998).

Limitations

The data from this study was collected through interviews, rather than through observation. Thus, I relied upon advisors to accurately report their behaviors in addition to their theoretical perspectives. Another limitation relates to the advisors in the sample. All of the advisors who had earned degrees in Student Affairs had done so at the same university, the one at which the study was conducted. These limitations inspired

suggestions for future research, including integration of observation data with data from interviews and collecting data at more than one institution.

Summary of Research Methods

I approached this study as a topical qualitative study utilizing grounded theory techniques of data collection and template coding in data analysis. After I selected an initial sample of one advisor with a Student Affairs academic background and one with a different academic background, I completed the sample of academic advisors through theoretical sampling. I analyzed data throughout the collection process using open and axial coding. I utilized memos with the interview transcripts to record ideas and analysis as well as personal biases that I needed to filter before completing analysis.

All of the techniques utilized in this study supported the naturalistic approach to research by relying on the data and meanings that emerged from the participants' words to guide data collection and to direct the analysis. Chapter Four presents the two main findings of the study, which regard advisors' expression of theory, application of theory to practice, and the interrelation of formal theory and experience in the formation of advisors' perspectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Eleven advisors described their advising practice through face-to-face interviews. The information that they shared suggested that advisors used theory in their professional practice, although they expressed theoretical frameworks with different levels of clarity. The theoretical perspectives that advisors adopted inspired a variety of advising strategies used in practice. Additionally, the perspectives that guided advisors' work were influenced by both formal theory and by lived experience. The findings suggested that advising perspectives were an integration of the advisor's experience, what the tenets of a theory stated, and how theory had been used in practice. The interplay of theoretical and non-theoretical influences contributed to an advisor's approach to practice. Profiles of the eleven participants in the study begin this chapter. Evidence from their interviews follows to illustrate how theories were expressed by advisors, how theories influenced practice, and where theories were learned.

Profiles of Advisors

All of the advisors included in this study worked at a large, public university in the Midwest. I selected advisors because they represented different colleges at the university. I categorized the colleges as core colleges or professional colleges. Core colleges taught traditional college disciplines such as the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. They included the colleges of Arts and Letters, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. Professional colleges were formed around specialized study in particular occupational fields or training for certification in professional fields of work. They included Agriculture and Natural Resources, Business, Civic and International

Relations, Communication Arts and Sciences, Education, Engineering, and Nursing. All advisors in the study held the title Academic Specialist-Academic Advisor, an employment category at the university. I also knew the major in which each individual advised. Through the interviews or their *curriculum vitae,* each advisor provided their age, their gender, the field of their undergraduate degree, the field of their highest degree, the number of years they have advised, the number of years in their current position, and whether they worked full or half-time.

Natalie

Natalie was a 32 year-old woman who worked with students in a professional college, where she had advised full-time for five years. This position was her first in the advising field. She had previously worked in Residence Life. In addition to her advising duties, she also performed administrative tasks as the Assistant Director of Student Affairs for her college. She earned a degree in Education and Communications as an undergraduate and then a master's degree in Student Affairs Administration. At the time of the interview, she was in the midst of completing a doctoral program in Higher Education. Through the interview I learned that she had a child and was actively involved in Student Affairs professional associations.

Michael

Michael worked in the same professional college as Natalie. He was a man in his mid-thirties who had previously counseled individuals as a social worker before he began advising two years before the time of the interview. He held an undergraduate degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Social Work. He advised full-time. Through the

interview, I learned that he had been born in another country and that English was his second language.

Elaine

Elaine worked in a professional school where she had obtained her first advising position 23 years earlier. She still held a similar full-time advising position. At the time of the interview she was in her forties. Her undergraduate training was in Education, and she had earned a master's degree in Student Affairs. Through the interview I learned that she regularly participated in professional development opportunities in advising. She was also the advisor who, when invited to participate in the study, exhibited concern that she would not be a useful edition to the sample because she felt she did not use theory in practice.

Tiffany

Tiffany was 27 at the time of her interview and had worked in her current full-time position in a professional school for less than a year. She had advised in a major in a core college for two years prior to moving to the professional school on the same campus. She had completed two undergraduate degrees as an Honors student, in Advertising and Supply Chain Management, respectively. Her master's degree was in Student Affairs Administration. Through the interview I learned that she was married, was strongly influenced by her religious faith, and had attended several professional development conferences regarding academic advising.

Joan

Joan, a woman in her mid-50's, had advised in a core college for 5 years. She held an undergraduate degree in Medical Technology and had previously advised in that

department within the core college. She worked in the field in which she was trained for 20 years before becoming an academic advisor. Through the interview, I learned that she greatly depended upon her experience with students to inform her perspective of advising practice.

Bill

Bill advised in a professional school where he had worked full-time for 7 years at the time of the interview. He had also worked as an academic advisor at another university for 3 years previously. Thirty-seven at the time of the interview, Bill held an undergraduate degree and master's degree in Wildlife Biology. He had completed some coursework in a doctoral program in Wildlife Biology. He advised in a department in a similar area. Through the interview I learned that Bill continued to attend professional conferences in his field of training rather than in advising so that he could remain abreast of current professional issues for his students.

Evan

At the time of the interview, Evan had been advising full-time in his current position in a core college for less than a year. It was his first advising position after his graduation from a master's degree program in Student Affairs. He held an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Spanish. Twenty-seven at the time of the interview, Evan has studied abroad as an undergraduate and, in his advising, emphasized the importance of including such experiential learning opportunities.

Elizabeth

Born in another country, 32 year-old Elizabeth had been in her full-time advising position in a professional college, her first, for one year at the time of the interview. She

held an undergraduate degree in International Relations and a Master's of Business Administration from her home country. English was her second language. Through the interview I learned that Elizabeth's family was very important to her and influenced how she worked with students as did her experience as an immigrant to the United States.

Jocelyn

An advisor in a professional college, Jocelyn had been in her part-time position for two years. She had worked for the same college full-time for one year before shifting to her current position. She held a bachelor's degree in Nursing and had earned a Master's of Science in Administration. Through the interview, I learned that her faith strongly influenced her as did her mother's advice from her childhood. She was also a mother. She was in her mid-30's at the time of the interview.

Melinda

Melinda held an undergraduate degree in International Relations and a Juris Doctorate. She had also completed the bulk of a doctoral program in International Relations and intended to finish within two years. She was in her late 30's at the time of the interview. In addition to advising, Melinda performed administrative duties of an Assistant Director of Student Affairs in her core college. She had been advising for about six and a half years in her current position and had advised graduate students for a few years in a previous graduate assistantship. She cited her experience as a mother and her parents' advice from her childhood as strong influences on her advising.

Suzanne

Suzanne worked in a professional school and had done so part-time for about 13 years after teaching high school French for about 15 years. Her undergraduate degree

was in French and English and Secondary Education. She also held a master's degree in Education. She was in her 50's at the time of the interview. Through the interview I learned that her religious faith and her experience as a mother strongly influenced her.

Application of Theory

All of the advisors in the study utilized theory in the broad sense in which Hagan (2005) described it, as a "lens through which we see the world" and as a "point of view" (2005, p.3). Theories that advisors identified as being applicable to practice included developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, intrusive advising, advising as service, advising as advocacy, advising as caring, advising as motivating, and advising as teaching. Despite sharing many of the perspectives listed above, the advisors expressed their perspectives differently and learned theoretical frameworks from different sources. When advisors expressed a perspective that influenced their practice, they either named a theory that influenced their advising practice or used language that corresponded to an advising perspective to describe their view of advising. Some advisors who did not name a theory still used language that other advisors associated with specific theories. Each theoretical framework inspired multiple practices, and different perspectives sometimes inspired the same practices. Some advisors learned theoretical perspectives in a formal manner in graduate programs or at professional conferences. Other advisors adopted perspectives because of their experience working with students or from their experience as parents, as one example.

Expression of Theoretical Perspectives

Advisors expressed their perspectives in a variety of ways. In some cases, the theory applied to practice was an explicitly defined approach with a distinct name and

characteristics. In other cases, the theory applied was an overarching perspective rather than a construction of delineated tenets. I observed that advisors described theory explicitly (fully revealing their meaning without ambiguity), implicitly (making their meaning understood without stating it directly), or tacitly (indicating a perspective without expressing it). Different advisors' descriptions of the same approaches corresponded despite the difference in their expression of theory. Some theories were described at all levels of clarity while others were only explained explicitly, only implicitly, or only tacitly. Developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, advising as service, and intrusive advising were described explicitly. Developmental advising, advising as teaching, advising as motivating, and advising as advocacy were described implicitly by advisors. Theories described tacitly by advisors included developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, intrusive advising, advising as advocacy, and advising as caring.

Explicit Expression of Theory

When advisors specifically named a theory and explained what they meant by that identification, I labeled their expression "explicit." Developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, advising as service, and intrusive advising were described explicitly by advisors. Natalie introduced student development theory as an influence and detailed several characteristics of the approach. She told me about her view of advising by saying,

> If we go specifically to what I've seen in literature, I guess I would qualify myself as more of a developmental advisor. Definitely in terms of the holistic approach – understanding where a student is when I'm having the conversation and then what kind of challenge and support do they need for the next piece. Pushing them to think more broadly about what they want to do, involving that it's not just about

> course scheduling, that it's very much about what other pieces they want to take advantage of while they're here. How do we incorporate those all together?

She labeled herself as a developmental advisor and situated that influence in academic literature. She was completing a doctoral program in Higher Education so the literature to which she had been exposed included student development literature. Academic advising literature also confirmed that the developmental advising approach came out of student development theory (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009). The language that Natalie linked to developmental advising and student development theory included "holistic," "challenge and support," "push," "not just about courses," and "put pieces together." She also raised the idea of "big picture" with her emphasis on encouraging students to look at their experiences "broadly" and "incorporate those all together." She connected the idea of looking at how course scheduling and other decisions came together in the college experience as a developmental approach. Natalie provided several different phrases or words to explain the approach that she embraced that I later was able to identify in other advisors' comments.

Evan also named developmental advising as an approach that influenced his advising practice. While he identified more with the developmental approach, he explained that he used both developmental and prescriptive approaches when working with students.

> Certainly there's a happy medium. There's a blend of using both, which I try to do to the best of my ability. And just knowing where students are coming from both on a personal level because I've been through it, a professional because I'm in it, and then using those tools that I learned from Student Affairs. There's a lot of developmental theory out there. So to use that, not just prescriptive because if you follow every theory then – it doesn't work that way for every student, everybody's different.

Natalie literally identified challenge and support as Sanford's model and explained that she had used it frequently. "Sanford's challenge and support is probably a daily conversation." This was a clear example of an advisor naming a theory. She also gave an example of language that she associated with Sanford's approach. In the following quote which she shared when I asked, ". . .[H]ave you seen these kinds of approaches in other advisors who don't use the language you use to identify?", she concurred that advisors could demonstrate a particular perspective without even knowing the theory which it mirrored. This quote offered an example of where associated language appeared in the interviews.

> I think the challenge and support one is the one that, whether someone knows who Sanford is or not, I think that in nature they do it. They know that a student at this point needs some help with this piece. But then I'm going to push them to the next level and talk about this. They talk about pushing students or being there for students in the same breath .

Tiffany expressed theory explicitly when she specifically mentioned the perspective of advising as service that she encountered at a national conference.

> I brought back a few things from NACADA. My favorite session there was one called 'Advising with an Attitude of Service.' Just one of those where the little things and the attitude about the way you approach the students that come into your office and keeping in mind that it is your job. You can't treat the students like it's an inconvenience that they're there because that is why you are there. And the idea that these things that seem like going the extra mile shouldn't – that should be standard. Well I'm not going above and beyond. This should be what we're doing for students.

Finally, Jocelyn specifically named intrusive advising as an approach that had influenced her advising practice. She learned of this model through advising in-services provided through the university.

> The last one that I attended, they really encouraged intrusive advising. The whole theory of digging a little deeper. If students don't show up, email them, 'Hey what happened? Is everything okay?' So that I started to use that tool and it

> actually turned out to be beneficial because there are a lot of times that students are having challenges and either they don't know or they're embarrassed or whatever and sometimes it just takes that one little, 'Are you okay?' to get the ball rolling to find out if some other things going on.

Explicit expression of a theoretical perspective involved the naming of a framework and the explanation of its characteristics. Developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, advising as service, and intrusive advising were all described explicitly by advisors.

Implicit Expression of Theory

Some advisors named a theory but did not explain the tenets of the approach. Most of these theories were analogical in nature, in which the advisor compared advising to a known approach. Elaine demonstrated implicit expression of theoretical experience when she explained the influence of her graduate education on her use of theory in advising.

> I saw my graduate education as not necessarily gaining a lot of really significant knowledge, like somebody in a professional major would need all that entering knowledge to do their job, but just more as a understanding tool so that I could have a better foundation to help people. So it wasn't something that I felt like I have to know, where is this student in this theory base or whatever. I don't need to do that.

Developmental advising, advising as teaching, advising as motivating, and advising as advocacy were described implicitly by advisors. Elaine mentioned the developmental perspective but not a particular theorist.

> I know students are at certain levels and they have certain skill sets when they come or they don't have certain skill sets. So it kind of fits into all those theories we studied in graduate school, but I don't really think about them on a regular basis like hierarchies or whatever. I'm far enough away from graduate school that I don't think about that regularly, but I know that it's there, and I know that it's very true.

This statement illustrated how an advisor could be aware of a perspective and have it in mind while advising without knowing exact tenets of a specific theory nor taking particular actions based on the direction of a framework. Her use of the term "levels," which Natalie associated with development theory, and reference to her graduate degree in Student Affairs, suggested that she thought about developmental theory in relation to advising even though she did not mention it specifically.

Elaine also described advising as teaching and as motivating without associating those perspectives with a formal theory. She connected advising to teaching by comparing her experience teaching after completing an undergraduate degree to her knowledge of student development theory learned in a master's program in Student Affairs. "When you learn those theories, you know the different things that students go through, their evolutionary pattern per se. It really helps you to understand better how to work with students, and you are a teacher as an advisor. I truly believe that so you're teaching but just from a different perspective." She explained advising as motivating by comparing the advisor to a "cheerleader" who encouraged students through their academic program.

Melinda clearly explicated her approach to advising, which included the goal of student development. Her description mirrored developmental advising. She stated,

> I'm not at all this sort of advisor who says, 'Okay, here's a checklist and as long as you just fill out all of these checklists and cross off all these little boxes then you're going to be fine and you'll graduate.' I don't really believe in the value of that. I think that once students hit the university level they ought to be able to look at a piece of paper and figure out what they need to take next. I think certainly I've developed the attitude more as time as gone on. I really believe that advisors have a much more foundational goal or formative role in student development.

In this statement, she pinpointed the goal of her approach, which was reminiscent of the developmental advising approach because they shared the goal of student development. She also provided a description of what this approach did and did not entail that was associated with the developmental approach.

Bill expressed theory implicitly when he labeled his work as an advisor as advocacy. He clearly identified his role as advocate, which equated to an analogical theory. He articulated his role, but he had not built it from an established theory. Implicit expression of theoretical influences involved advisors clearly describing their perspectives either by relating advising to a known idea, such as advocacy, or by delineating the characteristics of the approach without naming a theory or theorist from which the perspective came.

Tacit Expression of Theory

Advisors who expressed theory tacitly did not name any theories specifically nor did they articulate any personal approach that they had developed in their practice. They did, however, use language that other advisors in the study had associated with particular theories. Theories described tacitly by advisors included developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, intrusive advising, advising as advocacy, advising as service, and advising as caring.

Joan had become an advisor after several decades in a career in health services. We spoke frequently throughout her interview about how she had changed as an advisor over time since it was not the occupation for which she had been trained. She compared her development to that of her students.

> We help students explore things within themselves. So many of them think they definitely want to go on to a professional school; we talk to them about where can we help that student achieve what they really want to down the road because they'll change from when they come in as freshmen to the time that they become seniors. As you're developing yourself and changing, the students are developing and changing too.

Suzanne did not name a specific theory or identify a general approach that she followed when advising students. She did, however, exhibit the influence of the intrusive, developmental, and service perspectives in her language. While she did not claim it as an overarching framework for her work, she clearly had acted based upon intrusive ideas, which were described in a previous interview by Jocelyn. "I try to be a good listener and I try to keep track of students – I have a list of people to watch, take a look at if they don't come in and maybe I'll generate an email and say, 'Haven't seen you, how's this going?'" She referred to these actions as being "proactive." Her expectations for college students suggested a developmental perspective that encouraged ownership by the students of their education. "And you know in some ways I think, 'They're college students, and I wish that they would be a little bit more in control of that themselves.' [T]here's kind of a fine line between hand holding, enabling and offering good advice." She also agreed that she saw her work as service when I asked her that specifically.

Michael identified the social work perspective of advocacy that he encountered in his master's program as an influence on his advising practice. He explained how it affected the way in which he advised but did not name a particular theory he embraced from the field. He began by explaining that his experience in social work had exposed him to a wide variety of issues so he was not intimidated by any problem that a student

could bring. He followed by explaining how the ideas of social work had influenced his advising practice.

> So that is one thing from social work that I think helped me a lot, also in terms of things like equality. You know things that we work on, social justice. A lot of the things that we talk about include how to be better citizens, how to be more responsible towards society. I think what I try to do with my students is not only make them graduate on time but in the process, get them to think about how they can help either themselves and/or society at the same time.

Several advisors viewed advising as caring. Tiffany described what the advisor could ideally offer to a student.

> Ideally what we're really doing is making the University a little smaller and giving them a connecting point, not a parent or a teacher, but somebody who they feel just cares a little bit about what they're doing. Advisors have the room, the knowledge, to make recommendations but also the ability to hold that back a little bit and help them make the decisions themselves instead of giving them the entire direction. We just give them the tools maybe and say, 'Go ahead and go where you're going to go' as opposed to 'I think you should go over there.'

Melinda also emphasized the need to project the sense of caring in order for students to respond. "We put the sympathetic nonthreatening face so if you're having trouble in a class or if you're having trouble with a situation, not everybody's going to go to their faculty member."

Natalie explained Sanford's Challenge and Support model and the fact that advisors use it without naming the theory. ". . . I'm going to push them to the next level and talk about this. They talk about pushing students or being there for students in the same breath . . . ." Other advisors used language that Natalie had associated with the theory. Elaine said about sophomore students in a professional major, "An advisor is a person who at that point really helps the student either push forward in the major they're in or helps them to find the best place for them at the university." Pushing, as described by Tiffany, could also refer to "tough love" in which the advisor "calls a student out a

little bit because she needs somebody to listen to her, but she definitely needs somebody to kick her in the butt a little bit." Tacit expression of theory involves using language to describe an advising approach that other advisors have associated with a particular theory.

Every advisor in the study named a theory, identified an overarching perspective that guided their practice, or used language that associated with a specific perspective. The variance in the specificity with which the advisors described their perspectives was a finding unique to this study. Developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, advising as service, and intrusive advising were mentioned explicitly by advisors. Developmental advising, advising as teaching, advising as motivating, and advising as advocacy were expressed implicitly. Developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, advising as service, intrusive advising, advising as advocacy, and advising as caring were expressed tacitly. Table 1 in Appendix E displays theories by the clarity with which advisors expressed them.

Definitions of Theoretical Perspectives

Advisors who participated in the study provided descriptions of the theoretical perspectives that they embraced. Additionally, advising literature included formal definitions of the perspectives. In this section I intended to provide enough detail about each theory identified as applicable to advising by the advisors in this study so that other advisors, who were previously unaware of these approaches, could understand the perspectives and evaluate them for their own use.

The list of theories that advisors identified and that were discussed in advising literature included developmental advising, Sanford's Challenge and Support model, and

intrusive advising. Analogical theories included advising as service, advising as advocacy, advising as caring, advising as motivating, and advising as teaching. For each theory, I began with a description of the approach according to the advisors in this study and then explained the definition of the framework from literature. I then compared the advisors' explanation to the definition from literature. I gathered the literature regarding each theory primarily from the NACADA Clearinghouse on the NACADA website (www.ksu.edu/nacada) and from *The Mentor*, an on-line journal of advising published out of Pennsylvania State University (www.psu.edu/dus/mentor). I chose these resources and publications because they were the primary venues for dispersal of advising literature, best practices, and research. They were also easily accessible to advisors who may desire to investigate theories in more depth. Anyone could search the on-line archives without being a member of the organization that sponsored them. Essentially, the literature I included in this study was what an advisor would find in a search utilizing the most obvious advising resources at their disposal. It would be likely that some advisors would not be familiar with these two resources, but they were very visible within the advising profession at the time of the study.

Developmental Advising

Advisors' explanations of developmental advising. Two advisors mentioned developmental advising specifically and three more described it in general terms as an overarching approach to their advising practice. Natalie labeled herself as a developmental advisor and used several terms and phrases including focus on the "big picture," holistic, more than classes, ownership, put pieces together, push, levels, and "where a student is" to explain what it meant to be a developmental advisor.

> Well, if we go specifically to what I've seen in literature, I guess I would qualify myself as more of a developmental advisor. Definitely in terms of the holistic approach, understanding where a student is when I'm having the conversation and then what kind of challenge and support do they need for the next piece. Pushing them to think more broadly about what they want to do, involving that it's not just about course scheduling, that it's very much about what other pieces you want to take advantage of while you're here. How do we incorporate those all together? Even if it's something that's not necessarily career driven, how do we pull in those experiences when they're having a conversation with an employer or an internship prospect or something like that. So it's looking at the big picture.

She clarified the idea of incorporating what the student wants to do by labeling it as the student taking ownership of his/her degree.

> I want them to take ownership of their degree. So all the time that I'm talking about, "You screwed up but – this is what we need to do to fix that", it's very much 'You have control on this situation so this is your chance to own up and take responsibility for your degree, for your career, whatever it is.' I know it's definitely the piece of me that wants my students to be accountable and responsible for their own degree so if I put the solution in their hand and say 'You have option A, B & C, which do you want to try and let's get there?' Then I'm saying, 'You have control of this situation and this is yours, not someone else's' and that's very developmental in my regard.

I was able to utilize the language that Natalie associated with developmental advising to identify the developmental perspective in other advisors' interviews. For coding purposes, I broke her description of developmental advising into five subcategories: holistic, big picture, ownership, not just classes, and "where the student is"/levels. I used her language of "pushing" students to identify Sanford's idea of challenge and support in other advisors' language since Natalie named that theory specifically within the context of development advising.

Two other advisors used language associated with developmental advising as the big picture and spoke of seeing how pieces fit together. They mentioned fitting classes into program and graduation requirements as well as helping students to gain perspective

regarding the seriousness of situations and solving problems that arise. Bill provided an example, "But he had gotten himself all worked up for nothing and the biggest issue is just getting the kids to calm down. We'll look at the whole picture and we'll get it worked out."

Melinda talked about developing human beings, suggesting the idea of focusing on the whole student regarding development, not just on building an academic program.

> Advising is not just degree navigation, but we're also here to help the students develop skills that will carry them through their lifetime. We're here to develop human beings, not just college degrees. And that means that we need to work with students to develop good problem-solving skills. We need to develop good humanistic skills.

Melinda linked the holistic approach to development of the student. Specifically, she emphasized skill development. By saying that she wanted to develop more than college degrees, she suggested that advisors ought to help students to develop skills beyond the academic major or even beyond the realm of academia specifically. For her, holistic meant considering skills for living generally, rather than only skills for the major or for a career.

Five advisors spoke of their conversations with students as being about more than classes. Michael stated,

> I think advisors play a very important role not only in the technicalities of academics, this is what you need in order to graduate and things like that, but also in the personal development of the student or the people that we see. I think that it goes beyond just a conversation of numbers and classes.

While Michael emphasized personal development in addition to academic and curricular guidance, Joan found, over the course of her career in advising, that she also needed to focus on resources and student success generally in addition to course selection.

> The only thing that changed on it I think, was maybe a little bit more not just what courses do they need but what help can I give them to be a more successful student. Do they have the resources? I think that's the part that I had to learn more. The hardest part about it was what resources are here that the students can use for different areas or maybe problems or that type of thing.

Elizabeth mentioned that she sometimes talked to students about "some struggle they have or experience they have" in addition to coursework. Jocelyn worked with several students who needed to navigate the process of stopping their program temporarily, for issues such as military deployment, and Melinda tied in conversations about the students' ultimate life goals. This approach to advising illustrates the developmental perspective because advisors moved beyond course selection to discuss issues that affected students' lives and growth as human beings more generally.

Two advisors concurred with the Natalie's analysis that she sometimes had to push or provide challenge and support for students to move beyond their current way of thinking or behaving. Sanford's challenge and support was a specific theory itself, but it was grounded in the developmental perspective. Thus, advisors' use of the language of "pushing" students was representative of developmental advising as well as challenge and support. The push could be to help motivate students through the major or to consider a different path as the advisor Elaine explained about sophomores in her professional program, "An advisor is a person who at that point really helps the student either push forward in the major they're in or helps them to find the best place for them at the university." The push could also help students to gain perspective about a situation or to move toward the next step in addressing a situation as explained colloquially by Tiffany. "I still call her out a little bit because she needs somebody to listen to her but she definitely needs somebody to kick her in the butt a little bit too and not let her get so

obsessively crazy about some of the stuff that she tends to worry about a lot." While both of these advisors seemed to emphasize the challenge component of this approach, the offer by Elaine to assist students to find an alternative major suggested that she also supported the process of change and growth for the student.

Three advisors expressed a developmental approach by acknowledging that students may be operating at a variety of levels. Natalie included the idea of stages in the definition of developmental advising and mentioned a particular theorist whose ideas she observed in her students' behavior.

> Understanding a student as a freshman is going to be different than a senior level, whatever you pulled out in comprehensive exams, whatever stage theory you probably used for student development, I think comes into play. There are times when I can actually quote Perry based on where a student was but it's whatever you align to.

Elaine said, "I think an advisor can play a lot of different roles. I think it depends on what level of student you're working with, what your role is." Jocelyn referred to this understanding as knowing "where a student is" much like Natalie did. Elaine referred to the adaptations made by an advisor according to a student's level. Jocelyn identified the students' needs as a variable correlated to level. "I really believe that just knowing what they need in general and then hearing them specifically and helping them come into some kind of understanding of where they're at, what they need but be compassionate about it."

Seven advisors exhibited the developmental attitude of wanting their students to take ownership of their degrees. Elaine raised the idea of the student making his/her own decisions as a desirable outcome of an advising relationship much along the lines of Natalie asking students what they wanted to do in their degree program and in life. "We help them make major life decisions but we also are responsible, in some respects, in

getting them to make their own decisions." Tiffany also desired to help students to make their own decisions as did Melinda. Joan linked to another interpretation of Natalie's questions to students about what they want to do. Joan suggested that advisors help students work toward goals that the students have chosen themselves. "You don't expect all of them to be 4 pointers and that type of thing but for their goals and what they're wanting, you ask yourself if you're making sure that if they're having a problem that we can find a solution." Additionally, she says, "I really enjoy working with the students and trying to help them get where they want to go." Evan interjected the concept of empowerment. "They need to feel empowered to have that skill to figure out and resolve those problems for themselves." Elizabeth encouraged students to do tasks for themselves. "One girl wanted to do a specialization and I asked, 'Well you need to go over there and ask what the requirements are and then put it here in your plan and then you can come back for an appointment.'" Melinda presented this same idea by opposing parents taking care of responsibilities for students. "How many times do you have a parent that calls you and says, 'Well Joe's getting a bad grade.' Well, then Joe needs to come in and talk to me, not you." Suzanne mentioned the act of "hand-holding" students as the antithesis of allowing students to "control" their degree programs in terms of auditing progression toward degree requirements. She felt that her office had not given the students enough ownership regarding that task.

Some advisors simply explained that they identified helping the student to develop as a desired outcome of their advising relationship. Michael said, "I think we also play an important role in the personal development of the student or the people that we see." Four advisors, including Michael, used the word "develop" specifically when

describing desired outcomes of their work with students. Joan noted that "the students are developing and changing." I asked, "In addition to the fact that part of your role is giving them coursework, you're saying part of your role is also helping them to develop personally as they go through college?" She agreed because she felt it was certain that students would change and that she would take the time to discuss alternatives with them if necessary. Recognizing the need for students to take responsibility in their careers after graduation, Evan stated, "We try and help them on a developmental level because when they go to work, they have to know these things." As opposed to reviewing graduation requirements with students, Melinda said, "I really believe that advisors have a much more foundational goal or formative role in student development."

Developmental advising literature. All of these components of a developmental approach reflected the early definitions of developmental advising. First described in the literature by Crookston in his discussion of advising as teaching (1994(1972)/2009), developmental advising focused on student growth and the student's understanding of the connection between education and life, of how to set goals and make a plan to achieve them, and of the extension of life beyond college (Kramer, 2000). Ender and Wilkie (2000) classified these broad outcomes under the themes of academic competence, personal involvement, and developing or validating life purpose. Achieving these outcomes required an on-going relationship between advisor and student including both support and challenge. Crookston specified the aspects of advising that made it developmental and similar to teaching. The advisor and student shared responsibility for problem-solving and evaluation in a relationship based on trust and respect in which they focused on potential and growth (1994(1972)/2009).

The levels of development that the advisors in this study mentioned tied to identity-development and meaning-making theories from student development literature that the *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* identified as applicable to advising (Creamer, 2000). Other language used to denote levels included stages and vectors. Nearly all of the identity development, meaning-making, and personality theories presented in the advising handbook included stages or levels. Natalie named a specific student development theory that she applied to practice. She stated that she observed elements of Perry's (1970) stages of development in interactions with her students. In Perry's model, intellectual development occurred along nine positions which fell into four categories: dualism, multiplicity, relativism, commitment. Early in development during the dualism phase, students saw knowledge in black and white, right and wrong. Authorities held knowledge which could not be questioned. When students had learned that multiple viewpoints could exist and there might not always be a "right" answer, they were experiencing multiplicity. At this point, they turnd to their own ideas to determine what was correct rather than to authority figures. Students in the relativism phase not only recognized that answers must be investigated rather than just accepted from authority, but they also understood that there were established reasoning methods to reach understanding. This contrasted their earlier inclination to simply accept their own opinion as true in the multiplicity phase. In the final phase of commitment, the student combined his/her experience with external knowledge to come to a decision about what s/he understood to be correct. This stage required continual adaptation of what was viewed as correct based on new information or experiences. Students could move

between phases especially when encountering new situations in addition to continuing in familiar settings or roles (Perry, 1970).

To more fully understand levels, stages, and vectors of development, advisors could consult the specific theories of Erikson, Chickering, Marcia, Josselson, Cross, Helms, Phinney and, Cass and D'Augelli regarding identify development. Piaget; King and Kitchener; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule; Kohlberg; and Gilligan addressed meaning-making for different populations (Creamer, 2000). The significance of the advisors in this study using the terms level and stage to describe students' characteristics and progress, and what ties many developmental theories together, was the idea of understanding development as a process that requires change and growth.

Advisors' explanations compared to developmental advising literature. The perspective defined as developmental by advisors in this study paralleled the original theoretical definition of developmental advising envisioned by Crookston. Advisors exhibited the developmental focus on student growth when they discussed change in students using the term "develop" specifically and when they spoke of students operating at different levels throughout their college careers. Crookston's focus on the students' ability to connect education to life appeared in the advisors' labeling of the developmental approach as holistic and, ultimately, as the development of human beings. The advisors' consideration of the big picture linked to Crookston's inclusion of concern about life after college. According to Ender and Wilke, achieving developmental outcomes required challenge and support from the advisor which the advisors in this study tended to refer to as "pushing" the student. Sanford further explored the theory of challenge and support which I explained in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

The advisors' mention of helping students to develop ownership of their degree programs related to Crookston's recommendation that advisors and students shared responsibility for the students' development. Finally, the advisors in this study referred to reviewing only curriculum as an antonym of developmental advising much as Crookston positioned prescriptive advising in opposition to the developmental approach.

Sanford's Challenge and Support

Advisors' explanations of challenge and support. The developmental concepts of challenge and support in particular were extended by Sanford. Natalie included her explanation of Sanford's Challenge and Support model, an approach that she named specifically, within the idea of developmental advising. ". . . I'm going to push them to the next level and talk about this. They talk about pushing students or being there for students in the same breath." Other language associated with this theory came from Elaine and Tiffany, respectively. "An advisor is a person who at that point really helps the student either push forward in the major they're in or helps them to find the best place for them at the university." Pushing could also refer to "tough love" in which the advisor, "calls her out a little bit because she needs somebody to listen to her but she definitely needs somebody to kick her in the butt a little bit."

Challenge and support literature. According to Sanford's initial exposition of the idea of challenge and support, it refered to the advisor's insertion of a stimuli into a student's experience which demanded that the student extend beyond his/her comfort level and grow. Challenge and support was a strategy to move students through the process of development. Sanford considered it "the job of the educator to keep

challenging this structure [that the student has created to adapt to a new situation] in the interest of growth" (Sanford, 1969, p.51-52).

Advisors' explanations compared to challenge and support literature. The advisors' descriptions of challenge and support and pushing students corresponded almost exactly to Stanford's model. Elaine assigned the challenge role to the advisor as well. It appeared to be less of an option than a requirement. The advisor "is the person" who challenges the student to grow. Natalie and Tiffany highlighted the support aspect of the theory by describing advisors as "being there" for the student and by identifying that the student still needed someone to listen to her. Sanford stated that there was a fine line between challenge that provoked a student to grow and that which caused him/her to be defensive and regress to previous structures, hence the necessity for both challenge and support. The advisors in this study mimicked all of the major tenets of Sanford's model of challenge and support even though two of those who used the language of challenge and support did not name this theory as an influence directly.

Intrusive Advising

Advisors' explanations of intrusive advising. One advisor named intrusive advising as a framework that she consciously considered when working with students, and two other advisors used language associated with intrusive advising when describing their approach to practice. Jocelyn described intrusive advising as "the whole theory of digging a little deeper, if students don't show up, email them, 'Hey what happened? Is everything okay?'" Bill talked about connecting with faculty to "follow up" on the student or emailing a student if the student hasn't made contact in a while. He also had gone to the student's class to invite him/her to schedule a meeting with him. Suzanne

also e-mailed students if she was concerned that there was a problem or a disconnection. "I try to keep track of students – I have a list of people to watch, take a look at if they don't come in and maybe I'll generate an email and say, 'Haven't seen you. How's this going?'"

Intrusive advising literature. The foundational work on intrusive advising was done by Robert Glennen and Dan Baxley in 1985 who applied it to address high attrition rates at Western New Mexico University. The approach was geared toward students who exhibited a "disinclination to voluntarily seek assistance" (Glennen & Baxley, 1985). They required students to meet with advisors several times per year and constantly monitored the students' academic programs. Generally, "Intrusive Advisement is actively concerned about the affairs of the students" (Glennen & Baxley, 1985). Its hallmarks were constant contact with advisors, monitoring of students' programs prior to the emergence of any academic difficulty, and the creation of a supportive, comfortable learning environment (Glennen & Baxley, 1985).

Advisors' explanations compared to intrusive advising literature. The advisors in this study who actively sought out the students who failed to connect themselves to the advisors seemed to be responding to a disinclination to seek assistance similar to that which Glennen & Baxley encountered. The tracking done by Suzanne demonstrated the kind of constant monitoring done through intrusive advising. Since the advisors in this study did not require students to meet with them, the advisors' strategies to reach out to the student facilitated the constant contact present with intrusive advising. While each of the advisors in this study who used language associated with intrusive advising illustrated one or a few of its components, even the advisor who learned about the theory in a

training and mentioned it specifically did not adopt the theory in its entirety. For example, none of the advisors required students to meet with them or showed evidence of tracking students before academic difficulties arose. In fact, advisors were often triggered to reach out to students because of a problem. Bill stated, "I'll start getting reports from faculty and if I'm not hearing what I want to hear, I'll email the student and say, 'Hey what's going on?'" In this case, however, the theory still had a direct impact on the daily activities of advising and how the advisors chose to structure their relationships with students.

Advising as Advocacy

Advisors' explanations of advocacy. Bill defined advising as advocacy. Three other advisors either mentioned advocacy specifically or used associated language. Bill said, "I consider myself the advocate for the undergraduates and particularly anyone in my department." To illustrate, he told the story of noticing that undergraduates were left out of a planning committee within the department, and he requested that they be invited to participate. Natalie said, "I need students to understand their own voice in all of this" and "I talk about not only working the system to their betterment but also just understanding how they fit in that big piece." Bill found himself advocating for the students while Natalie tried to show the students how to advocate for themselves. Michael and Melinda showed an advocacy approach that connected more closely to social justice but that mirrored the literature that had linked advocacy to advising. Michael came from a social work background.

> Things that we work on like social justice, a lot of the things that we talk about in Social Work, involve how to be better citizens, how to be more responsible towards society. I think what I try to do with my students is not only make them graduate on time but, in the process, how can you help either yourself and/or society at the same time."

Melinda identified her perspective as "human rights."

> I did my undergrad during the heydays of the Iran Contra Scandal and military juntas in Latin America. It was a very politicized time on campus as well and I do believe that being a college student is one of the most formative times that you have. It's just incredibly formative in terms of your beliefs and your ethos.

She felt that students on campus at the time of the interviews missed out on that influential energy of activism and intense response to world events.

Advisors' explanations compared to advocacy literature. The descriptions of advising as advocacy that emphasize social justice and human rights followed the description of advocacy from an article by Melissa Lantta about social justice and advising in NACADA's *Academic Advising Today* (2008). Lantta mentioned a need for advocacy among advisors to promote social justice and equity for students on campus, as Bill demonstrated in his example. Lantta asked advisors to adopt a more personal social justice approach by evaluating the equity of admissions and program offerings on campus. Encouraging advisors to work as activists for social justice suggested the politicized atmosphere that Melinda described. As Michael explained regarding the approach he brought from social work, Lantta also identified the heart of advisors' advocacy as the need to educate informed citizens who could "function and think critically in a democratic society." (Lantta, 2008, p. 1). Finally, she stated that "advisors can help students take action against injustice" (Lantta, 2008, p.2) much like Natalie attempted to guide students to do.

The advisors in this study who identified advising as advocacy and who advised with a social justice or human rights approach raised a perspective that had not been treated by NACADA before the time of the interviews. The interviews occurred one year prior to the publication of the article on advising as advocacy. The view of advising as advocacy, or for advisors to not only consider but promote a quest for social justice, was a cutting edge concept in advising literature and practice.

Advising as Caring

Advisors' explanations of advising as caring. Three advisors spoke of showing students that they cared as a guiding principle of their work or as a student need. Tiffany described what the advisor could ideally offer to a student.

> Ideally what we're really doing is making the University a little smaller and giving them a connecting point, not a parent or a teacher, but somebody who they feel just cares a little bit about what they're doing. Advisors have the room, the knowledge, to make recommendations but also the ability to hold that back a little bit and help them make the decisions themselves instead of giving them the entire direction. We just give them the tools maybe and say, 'Go ahead and go where you're going to go' as opposed to 'I think you should go over there.'

Evan believed that demonstrating a level of caring to the students made it more appealing to come back to him with questions.

> They know that I care, that I'm a good person. You could be somebody who just may not be approachable but still provides the student with the information so it's a command question-answer, question-answer, so like a tennis match, back and forth. But so they know and they feel comfortable enough that they can come back at any time and to feel open and free to communicate with me but also then to leave, in terms of an appointment to leave with the information they're hoping to get at any point.

Melinda also emphasized the need to project the sense of caring in order for students to respond. "We put the sympathetic nonthreatening face so if you're having trouble in a

class or if you're having trouble with a situation, not everybody's going to go to their faculty member."

Advising as caring literature. Advising as caring had been addressed in advising literature previously. "A Caring Attitude and Academic Advising" was included as an historical article in the *NACADA Journal* Spring 2009 special edition. Ford and Ford asserted that choosing to care was an attitude, but actions were necessary to show it in order to incorporate the attitude successfully into advising practice. The importance of caring rested in the fact that "[i]ndividuals agree that they like to associate with people who show a genuine interest in them" (Ford & Ford, 2009, p. 62). They also grounded their connection of caring and advising in retention statistics from the 1970's and early 1980's in which students identified a caring attitude among faculty as the highest importance in student retention. Ford and Ford highlighted many previous treatments of advising that required establishing a caring attitude or relationship as a key component of the overall advisor/student relationship. Actions that could demonstrate a caring attitude included establishing rapport, having personal conversations, smiling, being friendly, learning students' names, decorating an office to make it comfortable, facing the student when conversing, working as error free as possible, sending notes to students, and seeing students frequently (Ford & Ford, 2009).

Advisors' explanations compared to advising as caring literature. The advisors in this study mentioned many of the same components that Ford and Ford highlighted, including having an attitude plus taking actions that demonstrate it. Tiffany focused on talking about the student's dreams and concerns when she centered her advising around the student "going where you're going to go." Displaying a pleasant countenance was

suggested by Melinda who said that advisors were the "sympathetic, nonthreatening face" of the university. This face also created a safe place as directed by the advising as caring approach because, as the advisor in this study pointed out, students were not always comfortable talking to a faculty member or other university representative about some issues. Evan emphasized being available when he encouraged students to return anytime they needed to discuss issues further. He also expected himself and advisors to be knowledgeable in the work, as followed from advising as caring, because one of his goals of an advising session was to give students the information that they sought.

Advising as Service

Advisors' explanations of advising as service. Tiffany named advising as service as a framework that she consciously considered in her advising practice. She learned of this approach through a presentation at a national conference.

> You can't treat the students like it's an inconvenience that they're there because that is why you are there. And the idea that these things that seem like going the extra mile shouldn't – that should be standard. Well I'm not going above and beyond, this should be what we're doing for students.

Suzanne described the impact of being Christian as requiring a "life of service." She agreed, "Definitely" when I asked if her perspective could be considered "advising as service." While Tiffany learned of the formal approach to advising as service at a conference, she also noted the impact of her faith on everything that she did in life.

Advising as service literature. Given the results of this study, it was not surprising, then, that a treatment regarding the perspective of servant professorship came from two faculty members' reflection on the role of educators at a Christian university. They also considered the biblical idea of servant in their presentation of the perspective. In fact, the article could be found through the link "Spirituality on Campus" on

NACADA's website, the same name as a column available through the Character Clearinghouse, sponsored by Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA).

The characteristics of servant professorship could extend to any individual "that teaches or professes special knowledge" (Derrick & Jordan, 2003, p.1), which could include advisors on college campuses. To define servant, Derrick and Jordan focused on the work of Robert Greenleaf regarding servant leadership. Building on his characteristics of the servant leader, they defined a Servant Professor as "one who teaches with head, heart, and hand." Characteristics of Servant Professorship included listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people, and community.

Advisors' explanations compared to advising as service literature. Advisors who identified their approach to advising as one of service, mentioned or displayed seven of the ten characteristics of Servant Professorship within their interviews: listening, empathy, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, and commitment to people. Interestingly, some of the associated language which placed these advisors under the heading of a different theory contributes to their connection to Servant Professorship. Both advisors mentioned a desire to be a good listener. Tiffany did so within the context of explaining her approach with students who needed both challenge and support. Listening provided part of the support component. Tiffany also mentioned that advisors needed to care about their students which associated her with the perspective of advising as caring but also with the empathy component of Servant Professorship. Suzanne described herself as nurturing and as trying to be open to students which suggested a

similar characteristic. Suzanne also stated that she dealt with a variety of topics with students that extended beyond academics so she displayed awareness of integrating all life activities. Both advisors challenged their students to learn either through the challenge and support approach displayed by Tiffany or the developmental-ownership perspective illustrated by the Suzanne's comments that she " . . . wishes that college students would be a bit more in control of themselves" and advisors would do less "hand-holding." Suzanne's perspective also exhibited the conceptualization component of Servant Professorship which had the student being a partner in learning with the advisor. Her use of a proactive, intrusive approach also contributed to her being a servant professor by evidencing foresight. Both advisors used or accepted the term "service" to describe their approach, and that attitude was at the heart of having a commitment to people. Tiffany situated her desire to "love your neighbor" in her faith. Considering that they worked in professional schools, they could also be considered to display the characteristic of community as defined by Derrick & Jordan because the majors for which they advised "encourage others to become leaders in the broader global community" (2009). While the advisors who equated advising to service did not specifically mention every aspect of the perspective of Servant Professorship in their interviews, they clearly exemplified many of the characteristics of this approach.

Advising as Motivating

Advisors' explanations of advising as motivating. Elaine coined the analogical perspective of advising as motivating, but this comparison had been made in advising literature in the past. "An advisor is a motivator . . . . We are their cheerleaders." She mentioned these phrases around a comment about needing to push students which I

linked to Sanford's theory of challenge and support. "An advisor is a person who at that point really helps the student either push forward in the major they're in or helps them to find the best place for them at the university." She followed up the reference of advisor as cheerleader with a statement about students needing to learn to make their own decisions that I associated with the developmental approach that encouraged students to take ownership of their degree and of their college experience. "We help them make major life decisions, but we also are responsible, in some respects, in getting them to make their own decisions."

Motivational literature. Motivational theory was applied to the practice of advising by Jeffrey McClellan (2006). Focusing on Kegan and Lahey's (2001) treatment of motivation, he identified the task of motivation as a need to evaluate the impact of equilibrium on the student's ability or desire to learn and grow. Equilibrium was the "interaction of opposing forces", both conscious and unconscious, "that are both propelling one to move towards accomplishing the goal or solving the problem, as well as forces impeding such action" (McClellan, 2006, p.2). These forces could be intrinsic such as:

> . . . needs, wants, interests, self efficacy, aptitudes, perceptual models, knowledge, beliefs, values, and to come extent genetics or instinct. Extrinsic forces include relationships, finances, access to necessary resources, rewards or punishments, actual or perceived social consequences, and other external factors. (McClellan, 2006).

The advisor's role as a motivator was to help the student to recognize these forces and their impact on the student's ability to make decisions and grow without simply telling the student. Students could then be more open to suggestions from advisors because they

would understand their own challenges as well as how the suggestion fits into the scenario.

McClellan provided steps for this process: listen, empathize, and explore; examine conflict-safety levels; introduce conflict or safety; encourage choice; provide support. Advisors must have an attitude of openness to students and must withhold judgment and try to empathize with students and truly understand the students' view or situation. Active listening skills such as making eye contact and maintaining an open body posture could assist in encouraging students to share enough information that the advisor could understand the student's context and viewpoint. Part of what the advisor must explore was what level of new challenge the student was comfortable undertaking. If students appeared to feel safe enough psychological to disrupt equilibrium, the advisor could insert a stimuli or conflict to challenge the student to grow and change. "Common ways of introducing conflict include discussing consequences (both positive and negative), appreciative inquiry, positive visioning, goal setting, etc." (McClellan, 2006, p 4-5). If the student appeared ambivalent about change, s/he may not have enough psychological safety to respond to a challenge and grow rather than surrender to the challenge. In that case, the advisor must help the student to recognize the conflict and his/her ability to respond to it while maintaining his/her identify and ability to accomplish growth successfully. "[P]sychological safety can be augmented by helping students to clarify confusion regarding potential choices, offering assistance, and encouragement, and promising to provide ongoing support as they progress." Next, "it is important that advisers encourage [students] to make choices in accordance with their increased motivation" (McClellan, 2006, p.5). Finally, advisors must continue to provide support,

through encouragement and assistance, as the student responded to the conflict through whatever path s/he chose. Encouragement required the advisor to be sympathetic with a desire to help the student and to voice his/her confidence in the student. Advisors could assist students by using resources to which they had access to help the student achieve the goal that s/he set when s/he achieved motivation (McClellan, 2006).

Advisor explanations compared to motivational literature. Elaine incorporated many components of motivational literature into her mention of advising as motivating. Her equation of motivating to cheerleading spoke to the positive encouragement that was needed once a student set out to respond to a conflict or work toward a goal. She clearly stated that students should make their own decisions and included the nuance that advisors needed to help students, which corresponded to the overarching idea of motivation being a process in which the advisor assisted the student in recognizing his/her own context for him/herself. Elaine's language about pushing a student connected to the idea of motivation as a tool to promote growth. Without being cognizant of formal motivational theory, the advisor in this study connected many of the same ideas, drawn from her own experience, that a motivational approach would require from an advisor.

The view of advising as motivating and the application of motivational theory to advising in literature powerfully illustrated the intertwining of ideas of a variety of theories applied to advising. Associated language from developmental advising, Sanford's theory of challenge and support, advising as caring, and advising as service all appear in the tenets of advising as motivation. Elaine also connected challenge and

support and the developmental idea of ownership to her comments about advisors as motivators.

Advising as Teaching

Advisors' explanations of advising as teaching. Elaine referred to advising as teaching. "You are a teacher as an advisor. I truly believe that so you're teaching but just from a different perspective." Elaine held a bachelor's degree in education and was trained as a teacher. It seemed that she observed parallels between the career for which she was trained and advising, but her reference to a "different perspective" suggested that approaching advising was different, the content of advising as teaching was different or another aspect of the process was different.

Advisor's explanations compared to advising as teaching literature. The literature suggested that the content of an advising lesson was what differed from traditional teaching. The idea of advising as teaching was first reviewed by Crookston in his seminal work on developmental advising (1994(1972)/2009). Crookston equated advising functions to teaching functions including "facilitating the student's rational processes, environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness, and problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluation skills" (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009, p. 78). As with his discussion of what made advising developmental, Crookston emphasized the relationship between advisor and student. "Within a behavioral context the advising or teaching function is based on a negotiated agreement between the student and the teacher in which varying degrees of learning by both parties to the transaction are the product" (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009, p. 78). He presented the prescriptive and the

developmental models of advising as "styles of relating to the student" in performing teaching functions (Crookston, 1994(1972)/2009, p. 78).

Marc Lowenstein, in an article about advising as teaching for the Fall 2005 special edition of the *NACADA Journal* regarding advising theory, referred to Crookston's description of the teaching aspects of advising as "sketchy." He branched off of Crookston's work by identifying facilitating learning as the core of advising rather than broad personal development of the student. He provided more detail on what made advising teaching by correlating seven characteristics of the excellent teacher to advising. While the excellent teacher would do the following for one course, the advisor did them for the student's entire curriculum. Following were the characteristics as applied to advising.

> The excellent advisor . . . helps students put each part of the curriculum into perspective; compares and contrasts modes of thinking found among the various disciplines; helps students sequence their learning experiences to optimize their effectiveness; brings out interrelations among disciplines and modes of thought; helping the student to discover how they complement each other; helps the student pay attention to transferable skills being developed and to focus on how various courses enhance these in distinctive ways; helps the student focus on modes of learning that are being mastered and understand that intellectual growth involves mastering a variety of learning methods; and helps the student synthesize an overview of her or his education and gain an understanding of its structure or logic. (Lowenstein, 2005, p. 69-70)

While Elaine did not describe the analogy in as much detail as was explicated in literature, she emphasized the key point that advising, while like teaching, comes from a "different perspective." She suggested that advisors taught their students but that the process was somehow different from what occured in a classroom. The literature claimed the difference as a variance in content and scope in advising as teaching.

Summary of Definitions of Theories Applied to Advising

The list of theories that advisors named were developmental advising, Sanford's Challenge and Support model, and intrusive advising. Analogical theories named by advisors as overarching views of the role of advising included advising as service, advising as advocacy, advising as caring, advising as motivating, and advising as teaching. In most cases, literature already existed tying these perspectives to advising even if the advisors in this study were not familiar with it. This fact showed that the ideas that advisors applied to their practice were not new, but that there was a meaningful connection between the theory and practice because others had independently made the connection previously. All of the theories highlighted by advisors were treated in advising literature by time of the completion of this study.

Practices Inspired by Theory

A unique finding of this study was *how* theoretical perspectives influenced advising practice. Advisors explained the strategies that they used because of the framework through which they viewed advising. Not every advisor in the study offered examples of practical implications of holding a particular perspective, and advisors did not offer examples of strategies for every theory. However, advisors provided examples of how developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support model, intrusive advising, advising as service, advising as advocacy, and advising as caring influenced their daily advising work. Advisors who explained how a framework shaped what their work applied the same theoretical approaches in a variety of ways. Theoretical influences inspired a variety of advising strategies including asking particular reflective questions, raising particular topics or planting seeds of ideas, having students make their

own decisions, explaining why or how something is as it is, maintaining certain records, building a relationship, learning related information, presenting a particular demeanor, or requiring certain information or tasks from students. Also, the impact of adopting a particular theoretical approach was not necessarily positive and advisors avoided certain strategies when applying some models.

Developmental Advising

As described by Natalie, a developmental advising approach could have a variety of components. Advisors in the study viewed a developmental approach as encouraging students to take ownership of their college experience, as considering advising as more than just recommending classes, as considering the whole student when advising, as situating decision-making within the "big picture" of the student's entire education and life, and as recognizing that students go through different levels of development, respectively. Each of these approaches to developmental advising influenced advising practice in its own way.

Ownership. Advisors who exhibited a developmental perspective that suggested that students take ownership of their degree programs accomplished this goal by having students make decisions for themselves, raising particular topics, requiring the student to research particular information or accomplish a particular task, asking reflective questions, and avoiding doing too much for the student. Natalie explained the idea of students taking ownership, "I want them to take ownership of their degree. . . . I know it's definitely the piece of me that wants my students to be accountable and responsible for their own degree."

Several advisors encouraged or required that students make their own decisions in an effort to encourage students' ownership of their college experience. Natalie explained,

> So all the time that I'm talking about, 'You screwed up but this is what we need to do to fix that,' it's very much, 'You have control of this situation so this is your chance to own up and take responsibility for your degree, for your career, whatever it is.' . . . I put the solution in their hand and say, 'You have option A, B & C, which do you want to try and let's get there?' Then I'm saying, 'You have control of this situation and this is yours, not someone else's.' And that's very developmental in my regard.

Tiffany attempted to rein in her tendency to direct students down a certain path or hand them answers because she viewed advising from this perspective. She used the example of a student asking about a specialization.

> 'What's it going to get me if I have a specialization with an International focus?' I'm like, 'Well, nothing if you don't know why you're doing it and as long as you know what that reason is, then it will be helpful because if anybody asks you why, you know where it's integrating' as opposed to actually trying to answer that for them which I think I tried to do before. You feel like you want to sell things – 'Oh, specializations are great and here's why.' And that's . . . partly from my desire to not necessarily always give them easy answers.

Evan did not want to give easy answers to students either. He even cited the example of encouraging students to do specializations by offering as much information as he could about each one and requiring the student to reflect on them and decide which was right for him/her. He would not tell them which specialty to complete. He also wanted students to be able to problem-solve on their own.

> I want to help to provide them with the critical thinking skills because it's always easy to ask people for answers and you can't always do that in life and so if it's something technical that I can help them, I share but they need to feel empowered to have that skill to figure out and resolve those problems for themselves.

Melinda also directly told students in advising conversations that she would not make decisions for them, that they had to make their own.

A few advisors raised particular topics for students to consider as a means to encourage the students to take ownership of their degree. The points that advisors highlighted tended to refer to parental involvement in students' decision-making. Natalie described the conversations that she had initiated with students.

> They're used to mom and dad telling them, 'Do this, do this, do this.' Yes, I have to have some of those conversations but I also want to turn that conversation into, 'This is yours so take this where you want it. You know this is your degree, this is your career, this is your academic experience, this is a choice you might need to make. What are you going to do as part of this?' And that is very much what I hope for students to have when they walk out of here.

Melinda also directly told students that their choices in college belonged to them and not to their parents. She made the same statement to parents. These strategies inspired by the view of developmental advising as a means to encourage students to take ownership of their college experience seemed to be used to spur students into action. Before stoking action, Elaine used discussions about parents' involvement and students' independence to gain more information about her students in an effort to ultimately encourage their ownership of their college experience. She gauged how students reacted to discussions about particular topics to answer questions that she thought advisors should consider.

> I think you have to do some discussion with them when they first come in, especially the first time and see where they're at and see how they react to discussions. Can they do things on their own? Are they more dependent on their parents? Have they reached a stage where they're ready for college decisions or college activities? Or are they still kind of in that mode of floating along and not being able to take care of themselves? You have to have some serious discussion with them and that isn't just the first time, it's each time but you learn things about your students.

In order to encourage students to take ownership of their college experience, some advisors required students to research information for themselves or do tasks on their own. Elizabeth met with a student who wanted to complete a specialization. She

required that the student meet with the specialization advisor, integrate the specialization into her course plan and then come back to meet with the primary advisor who could review the plan that the student had done herself. Melinda required that students complete tasks instead of having their parents do them and that students consider their own feelings about college paths.

> How many times do you have a parent that calls you and says, 'Well Joe's getting a bad grade.' 'Well, then Joe needs to come in and talk to me, not you.' And so one of the things that I try to do when I work with students is to try and find a way to get them to explore what they're interested in.

Advisors also asked specific questions of students to encourage them to see their power over the choices that they make in college. If students asked Melinda to help them make a decision, she would reflect the question back to them. "I try to always mirror back and say, 'Well I don't know, that's a really good idea but what do you think the consequences of that will be and what do you think will happen if we go this way as opposed to that way?'"

Suzanne tried to avoid guiding students too much in order to encourage them to take ownership of their degree. She recognized that advisors in education must pay close attention to the completion of degree requirements because students must meet all of the state requirements for certification, but she felt that her college encouraged advisors to lead students too much. "In some ways I think, they're college students and I wish that they would be a little bit more in control of that themselves. There's kind of a fine line between hand holding, enabling and offering good advice, but we do a lot of that still."

More than classes. The perspective that developmental advising should include conversations about more than just classes inspired several different advising strategies including raising particular topics, asking particular questions, keeping certain records,

learning certain information, and avoiding advising by a checklist of classes. Advisors raised particular topics with students to find out what was happening in their lives beyond academics. Natalie explained how such an appointment looks in her schedule compared to appointments that address quick questions.

> Sometimes it'll be I'll have a rash of walk-in appointments which is usually the quick questions, it's just a blip. I usually don't have the opportunity for any kind of developmental conversation, any seed-planting is out the window sometimes, but on the slow times with a walk-in appointment I can take a hour and a half because there's no one out there waiting then you can start to see that – wow, I was incredibly involved in this walk-in appointment. . . I apparently talked their entire life through in 15 minutes or more.

The developmental conversation involved "seed-planting" or consciously raising ideas the student might not have thought of and may not have needed to address until later in his/her college career. The fact that the conversation included "their entire life" suggested the breadth of topics that were addressed by an advisor in a developmental conversation, some likely raised by the advisor, others by the student. For Elizabeth, the student often raised the topic beyond their coursework. "They will come out with some struggle they have or experience they have." No matter who raised the topic that extended beyond scheduling and coursework, developmental advisors had those conversations with students.

Advisors also asked pointed questions to learn what was going on in the student's life beyond classes. Natalie provided several examples of how she consciously probed with questions to further their conversation and the student's consideration of their college experience. "I say, 'The last time we were talking about this, have you done that? What did you do this summer? What did you get involved in?" Her ability to recall

particular details from previous conversations with students stemmed from her record-keeping strategy designed to enable her to have developmental conversations.

> I'm terribly involved in my notes and that's for my own record because then when I pull it up I can say, the last time we were talking about Study Abroad, she was going to try to job shadow and she was thinking this piece and so that may be the launching point for the next piece so – and most of the advisors in the office – we're pretty extensive.

Advisors also had to stay abreast of resources available to students to be able to talk about opportunities outside of academics. Speaking about how she developed over the five years that she had advised, Joan explained having to learn information to help students consider more than just classes.

> The only thing that changed on it I think, was maybe a little bit more not just what courses do they need but what help can I give them to be a more successful student. Do they have the resources? I think that's the part that I had to learn more. The hardest about was what resources are here that the students can use for different areas or maybe problems or that type of thing.

Melinda described advising as dealing with more than just classes by describing what she avoided doing.

> I'm not at all this sort of advisor who says, 'Okay well here's a checklist and as long as you just fill out all of these checklists and cross off all these little boxes then you're going to be fine and you'll graduate and then go forth, do whatever.' I don't really believe in the value of that.

According to the advisors in this study, in order to be prepared to advise beyond simple course scheduling, advisors must maintain detailed records from appointment to appointment to remember topics of interest to students, raise issues that students should also be considering or be open to discussing what the student raises, learn the resources available on campus, and avoid focusing just on a graduation checklist.

Holistic. Advising from a holistic developmental perspective required advisors to consider everything that was going on in a student's life. Advisors did this by raising issues that might be significant to the student, asking particular questions and avoiding assuming that every student is alike. Evan raised issues with students by pointedly inviting students to come to talk about anything that was on their minds.

> And they talk about some other things that are going on in their lives that are really complex so at those points I try and pull from my developmental tool bag. 'I'm here for whatever – for anything else that you need. Remember that, if you want to come back and talk to me, close the door and we'll talk, that's fine or if there's other resources that you'll need, I'm happy to provide that.'

Melinda suggested a broader method for selecting some coursework that students might not have considered for themselves. "I always tell students they should take at least one class that will help them at cocktail parties in any way– an Art History class or a Literature class or something like that." She did this because she was thinking about the student's entire life, not just the degree. She would say to students, "Let's try and work on helping you get through school and develop interests and learn some life skills as opposed to just lock step going through a major and yes you fulfilled some requirements and now you get a degree." Because he considered each student individually and holistically, Evan avoided forcing students into the parameters of any one theory. "If you follow every theory - it doesn't work that way for every student, everybody's different. So to have that developmental background has prepared me immensely." Advisors in this study with a developmental perspective who attempted to consider students holistically offered students the opportunity to raise any issue and encouraged students to think about their college experience in terms of their entire life journey but were careful not to pigeon-hole students into particular theories.

"Big Picture". Advisors who thought it was important developmentally for students to situate their college experience in the big picture of their entire lives or to see elements of their college experience in light of the entire experience encouraged this perspective through particular questions, raising particular issues, and explaining how or why something is as it is. Natalie asked pointed questions and raised issues that she thought students should be considering.

> I have 20 more minutes left and I can use that time but also it's a matter of I don't know if they're thinking about the bigger piece. And so there's a responsibility I feel to think about the bigger piece for them. 'Hey, have you thought about new careers?' 'What are you thinking down the road?' 'Have you job-shadowed with anyone?'

Sometimes this approach caused her to hold students back from considering too big a picture, especially freshman. "I probably try to look at where they are at that moment and sometimes it's a conversation, 'What do you want to try next?' versus 'What do you want to do with your life forever?'" She talked about the freshman she had worked with that academic year. "They're thinking way, way too far in advance right now . . . sometimes then it's tapering it too, say, 'Okay, relax, let's just have the 'What's Next' conversation and then we'll see and talk about the bigger picture.'" If students were not already contemplating how their current choices fit into the bigger picture, especially regarding careers, she would raise the topic to push students to consider what their path might be. "The developmental literature is very much about me pushing them to think about the pieces because I have the liberty to have that conversation with them and they may not be thinking about it at that moment." Natalie's interactions with students to encourage them to think about the big picture intended to be inspiring and to plant seeds for future decision-making.

Bill explained how some things work to help students gain perspective about how their current issues fit into the big picture, often in an effort to calm them down rather than to excite them.

> They get themselves worked up in this frenzy that they don't need to. I had a student . . . who was all in a panic and she was freaking out because this wouldn't work. I looked at her schedule and I said, 'Just do this.' They get so worked up and so stressed out and I just try to get them to realize it's not worth the stress. I've never been in a situation where for whatever reason a student can't graduate because of one class or something like that.

He told a story of another student who thought he was failing a calculus class.

> We just got him to sit down and had him write down his scores, he was getting a 'C.' 'You're passing the class' and then once he got past that, okay no big deal. But he had gotten himself all worked up for nothing and the biggest issue is just getting the kids to calm down. We'll look at the whole picture and we'll get it worked out.

While both advisors' approaches encouraged students to step back from their current status to see the big picture, one fostered this perspective to inspire students while the other did so to relieve students' anxiety.

Levels. Several advisors adjusted their practice in consideration of the level of development which each student has reached. To respond to a student's level of development or to encourage development into the next level, advisors learned certain information, built relationships with the students, avoided certain strategies, raised particular issues, and asked particular questions. Elaine tried to learn about students' cultural backgrounds in order to work with them more appropriately, especially if they were originally from another country.

> Every student that comes in your office comes from a different perspective and comes from a different environment and has different experiences and we have a lot of, for example, international students in this college. Their life experience is totally different, and their culture makes them react in certain ways. So I try to understand what might be their cultural background. It's very difficult for a

> Middle Eastern man to walk in my office and sit down and take advice from me because that's not what he's used to. But you know sometimes we have to talk about that and sometimes they need to have a male advisor's perspective and that's not easy because we don't have very many male advisors.

Tiffany reread some of the stage theories she learned in graduate school in her student development classes so that she could keep them fresh and apply them as appropriate. Joan stated that advisors developed along with their students. Advisors needed to learn what options the students had beyond coursework as they changed their plans and developed.

> They will change; 'I know I want to do this' and by the time maybe their junior year, 'Well maybe I really don't want to do this – What else can I do?' So we discuss those kind of things – what other options they have – what would they really want to do. So that type of thing is how we develop along with them, not just like you need to have this chemistry, you need to have this math, you need to have that type of thing.

Some advisors felt it was necessary to build a relationship with students and get to know them in order to understand at which level they were operating. Elaine looked at each student individually.

> Well I think just the way I talk with students and the way I relate to students and understanding, and as I get older this becomes more and more important, that they are at various stages when they come in and you've got to take each student individually and see where they're at.

Evan used the example of a student coming into his major from another department to show how he had to get to know them because of the level of understanding that they had of his department and major.

> Probably more so with students who are new, they transfer from other departments and they become very attached, they maybe need more hand holding. I've seen the same person a couple times a week or once every week or on a more regular basis. I'm happy to do that because with 800 and some students in our department or seeing 360 or so in total on my personal level or my caseload, that's a good number, but the point is it's nice to see students, the same students or the same student on a regular basis to develop rapport.

While she considered the path of development that students were following, Tiffany avoided pigeon-holing students into a particular theory and advising based on that theory's tenets.

> I looked at some theories and there were some that I liked better than others but there's always a flaw and you can't ever say that somebody's following this path of development. So in my head I was always taking pieces anyway and putting them together or saying well if you get this you could either go this way or that way and you can't just say, well a student at this point needs 'X' because that's just really hard to go ahead and apply universally.

Joan had seen students change from when they began college to their junior and senior years so she had learned that they would often raise the issues of alternatives to their original academic or career path. In this case, the student raised the issue that was directly related to their having changed over time, but the advisor had to be prepared to respond with appropriate information.

Evan asked pointed questions to help freshmen or students early in their career learn and grow from poor performance. " 'Gosh I did so bad.' . . . 'Well, what are you going to do differently? What's your social life like? How's the transition? Learn from the experience for your next year. It's a learning curve, it's not the end of the world, you can do better and you will.'" He used the understanding that students would continue to develop to inspire them to be reflective and make changes.

Advisors who recognized that students developed and moved through stages or levels of growth responded by learning about their students and where they were developmentally, being prepared to share appropriate information at appropriate stages, and asking students to consider where they were and where they could go to inspire them to change.

Sanford's challenge and support

Advisors provided challenge and support to students by asking them particular questions, raising particular issues and building relationships with the students. Natalie said that she had conversations with students almost every day that reflected this approach. She felt that she followed this perspective when she pushed students to reflect or change. Some of the questions she used to challenge them included, "What other pieces do you want to take advantage of while you're here, how do we incorporate those all together?" and simply asking "What's next?" She also raised issues that students should be considering in order to push them to think about the bigger picture or further into the future. Especially regarding career planning, "the developmental literature is very much about me pushing them to think about the pieces because I have the liberty to have that conversation with them and they may not be thinking about it at that moment."

Tiffany built relationships with students in order to be able to have the opportunity to challenge and support them. She called "trying to connect to a student if I could in a way that was more personal" just part of her style, but it allowed her to push students while supporting them.

> Right now I have a gal who I've probably seen in my office four or five times in seven months . . . it worked for her to have somebody who would let her cry in the office and give her chocolate from the desk and to say 'Okay well what are you working on?' . . . And still call her out a little bit because she needs somebody to listen to her but she definitely needs somebody to kick her in the butt a little bit too and not let her get so obsessively crazy about some of the stuff that she tends to worry about a lot.

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Challenging and supporting students required intentional interaction whether it be pushing them with questions, raising new ideas or building a relationship over time so that they would respond to this approach.

Intrusive Advising

Intrusive advising required intentional action on the part of the advisor. Advisors who approached their work in this way asked students particular questions, required themselves or students to complete certain tasks, and maintained certain records. Bill questioned faculty and the students to stay on top of what was going on with students. "I usually follow up with faculty members – 'Is this kid coming to class? What are you hearing?' And then I'll start getting reports and if I'm not hearing what I want to hear, I'll email the student and say, 'Hey what's going on?'" Jocelyn and Suzanne, respectively, used similar follow-up questions with students. Jocelyn would often ask, "Are you okay?" Suzanne would point out that she had not met with the student in a while and inquiry how things were going. Suzanne would also maintain records regarding which students she wanted to hear from and why. If she had not seen or heard from them in a while, she would reach out and ask how they were. She was also required by her college to review each senior's transcript to make sure they were meeting all requirements and to identify missing requirements to the students. Bill would require his students to make an appointment with him if they have not met in a while, but he tried to encourage them to do it on their own.

> You need to come and see me. In many cases, in those situations, they just won't come to see me. I can't make them come and see me. Technically, I could put a hold on their record and so they couldn't enroll, but it depends on if the problem is here and enrollment is not until three months later, it's going to be too late at that point and that's the biggest issue. Sometimes I've gone to class – I can look

> up their schedule and say, okay they're in the building, I'm going to go find them. I've done that a couple times and say, 'Why don't you come and see me?'

Advising as Advocacy

Advisors who saw themselves as advocates for the students asked administrators and students particular questions, raised issues that the students or the university should be considering, built relationships with the students, and explained how and why things work as they do. Bill considered himself an advocate for students when interacting with his department administrators.

> I consider myself the advocate for the undergraduates and particularly anyone here at MSU in my department. Folks don't give undergraduates enough credit and enough thought – it's graduate students or whatever. We just recently had a fairly big review of our program and they were listing the committees meeting with this group and I'm like, 'Okay where do the undergraduates fit in here?' and the undergrads weren't included in the thing.

His reaction was to explain to the administrators why the undergraduates were important for this endeavor.

> You gotta make a slot. And they were saying, 'Well we're worried about the undergrads not showing up.' Well we'll find a way to get the undergraduates there. You can't blow them off, and that's been a typical process. The undergraduate is kind of swept under the carpet and they say we'll deal with that later but yet that's what we're here for.

Michael also considered himself an advocate for the students. This perspective came from his Social Work training which urged him to take up issues of social justice. Thus, his attitude of advocacy influenced how he represented students as well as what he wanted to educate the students about in the advising relationship. He wanted them to take up social justice issues and become advocates as well. He encouraged them through

questioning to first advocate for their own desires and needs in the decision-making process.

> I think I do a lot of open-ended questions like 'What do you like?' And then from there it's, 'Okay, I like this. I've thought of this area.' 'Okay, so what do you like about the area? What drew you to your major?' I think for some students who might be very confused about what they want to do, probably you just don't go into personal things like 'Have you thought of why it is that you're deciding that? I don't want to go against what you or your parents or your family says, but have you thought of it this way?' It's a nice balance of give and take. For example, 'Why are you going abroad? Have you realized that what you might be discovering is that there are certain skills that you didn't even know? Why did you choose this program? Is it because of advertising? Why are you traveling? Because you might find that if you like music, you could go to Vienna. Oh, had you thought of that? Had you thought of doing a university requirement in Vienna?'

With these pointed questions, he was planting seeds in his students' minds.

> And what I like to think is that, even though my questions might not be the exact point that is making the difference, that at least it's making them think in a different way of what they hadn't thought of and maybe then they go home and maybe start conversations with whomever they have to in order to kind of look more into what was said here.

In particular, he tended to raise issues and ideas of social justice because of his background.

> A lot of the things that we talk about include how to be better citizens, how to be more responsible towards society. I think what I try to do with my students is not only make them graduate on time but in the process help either themselves and/or society at the same time."

In order to be able to reach students about these issues, he felt that he must build a relationship with the students and model what he hoped they would learn.

> Establishing that constancy I think is very important, establishing that relationship with them, is very important because I don't think that people tend to deal very well with each other now. They tend to be isolated and walkmans and the this and the that, and so . . . I think that it's important for them to kind of have either role models that are there, not all the time, but like a constancy thing.

Advisors who saw themselves as advocates were influenced by this perspective in working with students, in working with administrators, and in what they wanted students to take away from the advising relationship.

Advising as Caring

According to Evan, the way to communicate a caring attitude to students was to give them the information that they needed and to build relationships with them over time by creating a safe space in the advising relationship. "They know and they feel comfortable enough that they can come back at any time and feel open and free to communicate with me but also then to leave, in terms of an appointment, with the information they're hoping to get at any point." Tiffany showed a caring attitude about students' needs by having them make their own choices.

> Ideally what we're really doing is making the University a little smaller and giving them a connecting point, not a parent or a teacher, but somebody who they feel just cares a little bit about what they're doing. Advisors have the room, the knowledge, to make recommendations but also the ability to hold that back a little bit and help them make the decisions themselves instead of giving them the entire direction. We just give them the tools maybe and say, 'Go ahead and go where you're going to go' as opposed to 'I think you should go over there.'

Advising as Service

Viewing advising as service required adopting a particular attitude which was conveyed to students through the advisor's demeanor and reaction to students. Tiffany referred to an example she heard at a conference of a student arriving at the office immediately prior to quitting time.

> It was very much a situation in which your initial reaction is, I just want to send this person home. It's 4:55 on Friday and what is he doing here? Just one of those where the little things and the attitude about the way you approach the students that come into your office is important and keeping in mind that it is your job. You can't treat the students like it's an inconvenience that they're there

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> because that is why you are there. And the idea that these things that seem like going the extra mile shouldn't – that should be standard. Well I'm not going above and beyond, this should be what we're doing for students.

Viewing advising as service did not focus solely on the interactions with students but also influenced the advisor's perspective of his/her profession as a whole.

Summary of Practices Inspired by Theory

The theoretical frameworks that informed advising practice offered a reason for adopting particular advising strategies. However, the variety of theories that advisors in this study mentioned inspired an overlapping set of strategies. Thus, many strategies were appropriate in achieving a variety of different goals in advising. Table 2 in Appendix E displays the strategies that were inspired by each theory that advisors in this study adopted. This finding also suggested that many theoretical perspectives complemented one another when put into practice. While advisors selected strategies for different reasons, they often ended up working with students in very similar ways. Table 3 in Appendix E displays lists of the questions that advisors asked, issues that they raised with students, records that they kept, things that they explained, and strategies that they avoided. These strategies could be applied in many advising situations to enact many different perspectives.

Where Advisors Learned Theoretical Frameworks

Although multiple advisors identified the same theories as influences, they learned these perspectives on advising from a variety of sources. The sources of the theoretical perspectives that advisors identified as influential to their practice in this study included departmental culture/colleagues, undergraduate degree, graduate degree, personal style, job experience, professional development opportunities on campus and

nationally, year of the student in school, student's major, advisor's family, and religious faith. Advisors learned theoretical perspectives in formal settings and from their lived experience. Formal settings were those in which theory was read and/or taught. The name of the theory, theorists associated with the perspective and the tenets of the theory would have been explained. Formal settings included graduate degree programs, professional development opportunities, and departmental training programs. Experiences included advisors' personal experience and interactions with family, other advisors, and students. These influences directed advisors to approach advising in a particular way. All theoretical perspectives identified by advisors were learned in formal settings and through experience. In this section, examples from theories that advisors identified as relevant to practice illustrate how theory can be learned in formal settings or from practice.

Developmental advising

All of the advisors exhibited perspectives equivalent to developmental advising, but they also each described a different reason or way in which they learned of the developmental approach. An extensive selection of examples illustrated which influences inspired a developmental perspective.

Formal settings. The formal setting in which advisors learned about developmental advising was graduate school. Several advisors learned about it through their Student Affairs or Higher Education degree program. Natalie specifically identified the developmental literature that she read in her Ph.D. program as the source of her knowledge about developmental advising. The theory that Elaine took from her graduate program in Student Affairs was student development theory. It helped her to think about

levels of growth and the fact that students were situated at a certain point in development at any given time and would move through levels or stages.

Tiffany also completed a master's degree in Student Affairs Administration. She acknowledged that theoretical influences came out of the formal academic experience. Evan was another Student Affairs-trained professional who drew consciously from student development theory by taking a developmental approach in advising. This influence presented itself in his ultimate goal in a relationship with a student: to have the student develop critical thinking skills and make his/her own decisions. He worked toward this goal with students by directing questions back at them so that they could answer for themselves and requiring them to choose courses, for example.

Experience. Advisors picked up the developmental perspective as they learned through job experience and experience with students. While Bill relied on national professional development opportunities to stay current in his field, in contrast, his advising style had grown from experience working with students. Saying that she did not consider handing the student a checklist to be good advising, Melinda stated that her belief that advising plays a role in student development had developed over time. As Joan progressed in her advising career, she learned that she could not only talk to students about classes, but she had to learn the resources that would support student success as well as discuss course selection. She learned in response to the needs that students presented.

Several advisors cited student needs as having an impact on what they did in advising practice. Michael simply stated that he tried to answer the question the student came in to ask. He linked that approach with asking open-ended questions to learn more

about why a student was making a certain choice or was interested in a certain program. "I tend to be someone that maybe leaves a lot of abstract ideas in a student's mind but I try to give very clear answers to what it is that they're after."

Tiffany did not probe if students had simple questions and wanted to get answers and leave.

> Some students really want to just be in and out, and I want to try to respect that while not short-changing them. If they really just want their schedule and they don't have any other questions then I'll let them go after ten minutes if that's all we need. I try to feel that out on each person, but I certainly can take 35 minutes of a half hour appointment if somebody seems like they really need it.

She did not explain what kinds of issues would give her the "feel" that a student needed more time to talk, but she juxtaposed that feeling to a student needing only scheduling suggestions. This suggested that the longer appointments may occur in response to developmental needs in the sense of being more than just classes.

Bill encouraged students to choose their courses based on their wants and needs. "I think one of the messages that I always state when I talk to students again, these are your classes, you're taking these classes, I'm not taking [them]. If there's anything in here that you don't like, you don't want to do, you wanted to do differently, you just have to tell me." This approach could also be looked at through a developmental lens in the sense that he was asking them to take ownership of their degree by responding to their own needs. Jocelyn prepared ahead of an appointment if she knew what a student needed. For example, she could prepare a credit check if that was why the student scheduled an appointment.

Advisors' awareness of student needs often suggested a developmental approach to advising since that perspective required advisors to view the student holistically,

considering issues apart from classes that may be affecting a student's academic plans or performance. Even though the influence on advisors' practice was not theoretical, their recognition of its importance suggested a view that aligns with a particular approach or perspective.

The department culture and colleagues influenced advisors to use a developmental approach. Natalie said that a developmental approach of thinking about the big picture was part of her department's "culture." She also identified the staff meetings as a place to learn. She emphasized the focus on "the whole student." She described this emphasis, which connected to the developmental approach to advising, as "definitely part of the culture." Some approaches within the department as consistent beyond the initial training period, and training extended throughout an advisor's career in the department because they had the opportunity to meet together and learn new things and revisit the goals in the college every week.When faced with new policies, for example, "from my supervisor down" they would all ask, "What concerns do we have developmentally for students?" Joan was not purposefully trained in a developmental framework, but when she had a question about how to work with a student, she turned to other advisors and staff around campus and adopted their approaches to working with students.

Several advisors addressed different issues with students based on their year in school. Jocelyn responded to students in a developmental way as she discovered that students already in the professional program in which she advised did not come to talk to her about classes but only visited to discuss problems. The year the student was in school inspired her approach. Elaine said,

> As a freshman and sophomore advisor my role is really taking them through a transitional period; helping them to figure out what college is all about and to give

> them resources and assistance in being successful, whether that be getting them to tutoring services or taking with them about current choices; is this a good place, is this not a good place for you? All the way down to small things like should I take this class, should I not take this class, what's the best combination?

Elaine alluded to the developmental idea of treating the whole student from classes to academic support to a student's fit at the university. This consideration is inspired by the context that first-year students face.

Jocelyn had different issues to address with pre-major students than she did with students in the professional program. Once students were in the program, their questions were more technical. Even the advisor's focus was on giving the students "the tools and equip them to get done and to pass the certification exam . . . And also professional students don't come in unless there's a problem because our program is structured." Often, upper-level professional students came for advising appointments were considering stopping the program temporarily and needed to discuss their options rather than course selection or credit evaluations.

Melinda noticed a difference in advising freshman in a context like orientation, when the visit was very short and advisors saw many students per day, and students in a major at the upper level.

> You can't mess up a freshman, you just can't because they're still so much in the formative phase of their education and it's really only one semester that we're committed to at that point. And so you can't mess up a freshman, as long as you treated them kindly and with respect and you got them into something that's reasonably appropriate for their major, it's okay. I would not have the same attitude about sophomores and juniors and seniors obviously. I think that then their needs really change and what they're looking for out of you - affirmation that they've chosen the right major and that they can get a job with their major. I tell students once they hit sophomores or juniors, 'Look, if the university was seriously graduating 400 majors from a core college and none of them were employed, don't you think it would be in the paper?" So, yeah, I think you do advise differently according to what the student's level is.

It seemed that the importance of student level as it related to advising was the difference in student needs at different levels.

The student's major or a student being part of a special population also impacted how advisors worked with the student especially in terms of planning. Several advisors in professional schools identified the student's major as an influence on their advising because their students tended to bring issues of stress, upheaval, and overwhelming expectations to advising sessions. Advising for Jocelyn's major required a developmental approach because students did not have to ask what classes they should take. The major was stringently structured which resulted in few students meeting with the advisor for class advice and more students scheduling an appointment with her for issues other than course selection.

> I think that students in professional colleges, when they come to the university, are not prepared for what they're about to face more so than maybe some other majors. They are typically the highest caliber students and they just get slammed when they get here because it's a lot more difficult than they thought it would be, and they're not used to that so there is a lot of upheaval in the first year. Ninety percent of them are going to hit a brick wall somewhere and oftentimes it's going to be math which is typically their strongest subject.

Academic support and curriculum explanation became topics for advising professional students in Elaine's major. Comparing professional students to students from a major in a core college with which she worked previously, Tiffany said,

> In the professional school they pretty much know what they need to take but they're stressed out about getting in; they're stressed out about internships; they're stressed out about competing for a job. . . . In the professional school they're thinking about career for pretty much sophomore year on, 'How am I going to do this? I want this top paying job and how do I get there?'

Career development became a focus of advising in Tiffany's professional school. Jocelyn also talked to many students dealing with stress. Additionally, she advised the students who did not get accepted into her professional program.

> Generally the practice has been that we just tell them you need to figure out something else that you want to do. Make an appointment with them, we go and talk to them about it. I took the approach of, what would I want to be told or what would I want my children to be told and I would give them options where I would actually go online with them and pull off some information and just kind of look over it with them.

Other majors or student populations required a different variety of topics in advising. Joan worked with students in a traditional core college major but previously worked with professional students. She worked differently with the core college students because they had so many different options after graduation whereas professional students almost always entered similar positions after graduation. Bill had spent time counseling students out of the his professional major if they were not competitive for the field, which had a minimal number of positions available in the state compounded by a glut of applicants.

> If I get a student that says the right buzzword but their grade point is a 2.0, I still don't say, 'No, you shouldn't do this,' but I'll say, 'These are going to be the challenges that you're going to face. You're really going to have to turn your grade point average around.' Those kinds of things.

He always considered career options when advising. He advocated for internship experience so that the student would be more competitive applying for jobs or recommended against summer classes so that students could take an internship experience. He also made suggestions for a maximum number of credits per semester for students in his major because of the number of labs that they must take in the curriculum. Finally, Melinda described her students who have majors in a core college.

> They tend to be people who are more like seekers. They're trying to figure out the world around them and they're comfortable with waiting to ask, what am I going to do next until they kind of figure that part out. Until they kind of figure out what's going on in the world and why does this happen and how does this work with this? I think they're very comfortable with that. That's hard for me. I'm used to seeing to seeing freshmen and being able to say, okay, so then what are you going to do? After you're done with this, what do you see yourself doing? . . . if you asked students in a core college, 'So what are you going to do?' They go, 'I don't know, I don't know.'

When working with these students she had to address career options.

> I try to back off a little. I try to gently nudge to say, you're not surrendering who you are. You're not surrendering your ideals. You're not surrendering your ability to create and explore by thinking about it because career exploration is just that, it's exploration. It's a little bit different because hopefully at the end of the day there's benefits and a paycheck but we're not saying if you have a Philosophy degree that you're going to grow up and be a Philosopher. I mean there's not really a job market for that. So you know de facto you have to be able to explore and figure out what you want to do and you have to be creative in marketing yourself and your skills and your abilities so I try to convince students that it's all part of this same process.

Even though each major had different restrictions, opportunities, and expectations, every major, even those outside of professional schools linked to specific fields, required a discussion about career options with students.

Some advisors' undergraduate experiences influenced their perspective of advising. Natalie majored in education as an undergraduate. She developed a teaching philosophy that informed her developmental perspective of advising even though she did not transfer formal theory to her work in higher education.

> When I graduated from Undergrad with an Education Certification I had to do my teaching philosophy. When you apply to Masters and a Ph.D. you do kind of your own philosophy paper. and I don't think that my advising philosophy is separate from any of those. I could pull any of those up and probably get the same thing –

> that what I do is grounded in theory but it's definitely for the betterment of the whole student.

Melinda cited the campus atmosphere during her undergraduate study of international affairs as an influence on her approach to advising.

> I did my undergrad during the heydays of the Iran Contra Scandal and military juntas in Latin America and so it was very politicized time on campus, and I do believe that being a college student is one of the most formative times that you have. It's just incredibly formative in terms of your beliefs and your ethos.

She felt that students were lacking some of this energy on campus. She also linked her experience learning about human rights as an undergraduate to her goal as an advisor "to focus on developing humans." This view tied directly to the developmental advising approach, but she came to it not from formal theory but from experience.

Advisors' families also provided them with ideas and experiences that influenced their advising practice. Melinda credited her mother for demonstrating a developmental approach. Her strategy to turn questions back around on students so that they make their own decisions was a reflection of what her mother did with her even when she was young. "I wasn't one of those people who grew up very structured. It was, 'Well, what do you want to do?'" Melinda also based some of her interaction with students on her mother's model.

> I actually think a tremendous amount of it goes back to my mother.. . . My mom and dad both were very firm believers in raising a child a certain way. I mean I can honestly remember being very young and saying, 'Mom I'm hungry' and my mother saying, 'God helps those who help themselves. Your legs aren't broken. Go to the kitchen and get a snack.' I can remember being very, very young, certainly elementary school, and having my mother already then sit down and say, 'You have to have a college degree. You have to be able to take care of yourself. You can't ever depend on anybody else. You can't ever depend on a husband or a man or anyone else. You gotta have a degree. You gotta have a job. You gotta take care of yourself. . . . I was involved in both band and choir and my high school had experienced such drastic budget cuts that it really came down to my mom and dad sitting down and going, 'Now if you want to go to college, and you

> do, you have to give up something. What do you want to give up? What do you want to do so that you can get into college? Here's what the state universities tell us you have to have. How are you going to get there?' So it was really all my choice. I was told, 'Yes eventually you're going to this,' but how I got there was my choice. They always raised me to be a rather independent problem-solving kind of person.

Melinda agreed that the same kinds of questions that her mother asked her, she asked of her students, encouraging them to find their own way and make their own plans. This approach connected to the developmental idea of helping students to take ownership of their college experience, but the strategies that Melinda used to encourage that change come from her mother and father's parenting style.

Melinda also had a four-year-old son whom she was already asking to make his own decisions much like her mother did with her and like she did with her students.

> I have a 4-year-old right now who's starting kindergarten in the fall, and my husband and I both really fight against creating the college student robot. We don't want him to be over-scheduled. We don't want him to not be able to make decisions on his own. Even when he was 2 and 3, we started saying, 'Well I don't know, what do you think?'

In addition to questioning her students to boost their independence, Melinda tried to educate parents about this approach and encouraged them to allow their students to make decisions.

> I always say, 'What if something happened to you tomorrow? What if you were in a car accident and your daughter didn't have you to rely on? And she hasn't learned yet how to be an independent adult, what happens? Did you make provisions for guardianship for an adult? I doubt it.' And so I do try sometimes to work with parents and say, 'I'm not doing this just to make you mad, honestly. Life would be easier if you didn't call me. I'm really doing what I think is in the best interest of the student.'

What Suzanne's children had gone through at certain ages informed her advising, but becoming an advisor influenced her parenting as well.

> I've reflected more on what I knew probably students were going through in that time. And also kind of looking at them as if they were my own child and what would I want an advisor or someone working with him or her to ask and deal with. I had to clearly accept my role as an advisor as opposed to telling somebody what to do. I guess, conversely, it also made me a better parent. Being able to kind of step back a little bit from my children as independent people, that they make their own decisions and I guide and inform. Neither of my children were ever ones that could be micro-managed, they would not have allowed it. It really was helpful, sort of a give and take in both of my worlds as an advisor and as a parent. It was helpful to both worlds I think to have this job.

Some aspects of advisors' personal styles or preferences emerged as a developmental perspective. Natalie focused on what a student could do to fix a problem when they made a mistake because that was what she would want to hear from an advisor. "Don't tell me that I screwed up, I know I screwed up. I'm going to beat myself up for seven years because I screwed up. Tell me what I can do to fix this. It's very much based on how I would want to hear it." This perspective connects to the developmental approach's focus on forward movement and improvement along developmental levels.

Michael explained that his approach that advising was about conversing with students regarding more than just classes came from his natural curiosity. "I've always been very curious and very interested in things having to do with society, social topics in general, social causes, . . ." Bill described himself as "a very social, talkative person so I have to gravitate" toward "working with people." He said that his personality suited his work as he described helping students to see the big picture, a developmental characteristic.

External influences entered the college context and influenced one advisor's perspective on advising. Melinda, who also performed duties as an Assistant Dean in

addition to advising, shared several stories of working with parents and coaches in the course of advising students. Her administrative role situated her as a logical contact point for these external players, whereas someone who was solely advising might not encounter these influences, but they had affected how she advised the students. Often, the student raised the idea of involving their parent. "I think the other thing I see the most is, 'That sounds like a great idea. Hold on and let me call my mom and see what she thinks, or my coach. Let me call my coach, let me see if they'll think that's okay.'" In these circumstances, she responded,

> 'Well, you can go home and do that, but you can't do it here. You actually have to do it for yourself . . . You're not locked into a decision, unless it's the end of the add period and the class is starting in two minutes. You're not locked into a decision but here's my best advice for you. Here's what you've told me you want to do. Now if you want to go home and you want to call your mom and dad and talk about this, that's fine, but it's your choice and it's your education and not your mom and dad's.' And so, no, I don't let them call in my office ever. I just don't. And I don't want to sound like I don't think parents play an important role, I think they do, but I also think there's an appropriateness and these are adults, and they need to know that there are certain times when you do things and certain times when you don't.

This approach to the integration of parents and coaches into the decision-making process suggested a development approach focusing on encouraging the student to take ownership of their degree program. The introduction of parents or coaches seemed to offer a moment in which the advisor could teach this lesson.

The impact of student characteristics on advising practice suggested that advisors were approaching their students with a developmental viewpoint. The fact that they were considering student input in an exchange of learning and in the construction of the relationship, that they considered student feedback and student need, and that their

attention to student needs beyond coursework all represent a developmental approach to advising.

Sanford's Challenge and Support

Each of the advisors who identified Sanford's challenge and support as an influence or used language associated with the theory learned the approach from different sources, both formal and experiential.

Formal settings. Natalie and Elaine learned this perspective in graduate degree programs in Student Affairs and/or Higher Education, Natalie directly from literature to which she still refers, and Elaine in a more general way as part of the group of developmental theories that helped her to understand that students move through levels during their college career. Elaine also responded to students with a challenge and support approach because of the major and their year in school. "For sophomores I truly believe in the sophomore slump, especially in a professional program . . . An advisor is a person who at that point really helps the student either push forward in the major they're in or helps them to find the best place for them at the university."

Experience. Tiffany used a challenge and support approach because it reflected what she would want in an advisor as well as her personal style to get to know people and "to connect with a student". She told the story of a student who needed the kind of advisor who would let her cry in the office but also "kick her in the butt a little bit, too."

Advising as Advocacy

The advisors who identified themselves as advocates for the students did so for a variety of reasons as well.

Formal settings. Melinda and Michael learned this approach in their degree programs. Melinda believed that individuals should be involved in issues going on in their environments and wished students would more often be advocates for causes because of her undergraduate experience during a politicized era on campus in the 1980's. She studied Human Rights as part of her degree program in the Civic and International Relations professional school.

Michael took on this perspective through his graduate training as a social worker. He, too, encouraged students to be advocates and raised issues in advising that were important to him as a social worker.

> Also in terms of things like equality. You know things that we work on, social justice. A lot of the things that we talk about are how to be better citizens, how to be of more responsible towards society. I think what I try to do with my students is not only make them graduate on time but in the process, how can you help either yourself and/or society at the same time.

Michael also learned his theoretical viewpoints from his Social Work masters degree program. In addition to guiding him toward a social justice focus and discussions around social issues with his students, his social work training positively affected his ability to discuss many issues with students.

> So I think how social work has helped me in this role is that. I'm not afraid, whatever the person brings, that's okay because I've heard it. I've heard it all or I've seen many things that probably someone who has not been in social work hasn't so it doesn't surprise me, it doesn't scare me. I think, from what I hear from student comments, I'm someone people feel comfortable with. So that is one thing from social work that I think helped me a lot.

The influence of advisors coming from different educational backgrounds was not necessarily the application of formal theory from those fields to advising, suggested as a possibility in Hagen's editorial from the special theory edition of the *NACADA Journal* (2005). However, the more general perspective honed in undergraduate and graduate

training did influence how advisors viewed their role, built relationships with students, and raised issues in advising.

Experience. The other two advisors who identified advising as advocacy learned this approach from experience. Bill had observed undergraduates left out of planning by administrators and fought to have them included. Natalie had come to think of herself as an advocate having worked one-on-one with students for years. "Would I miss working with students if I worked strictly administration? Oh yeah. It's a reminder every day of who you are and why you're in that role and you know that you are a student advocate in every conversation you have."

Advising as Teaching and Advising as Motivating

The only advisor who mentioned advising as teaching and advising as motivating came by these approaches in two different ways.

Formal settings. Elaine was trained as a teacher in her undergraduate experience and believed that advising was a form of teaching because of her understanding of both fields.

Experience. Elaine felt that an advisor could act as a motivator based on her experience with students at the sophomore level in college when they must decide to "push" through with a professional major or select another direction. She stated that an advisor could be a "cheerleader" at that crossroads.

Advising as Caring

Formal settings. Elaine's Student Affairs' training also encouraged a certain ethos about working with students. "We're used to taking care of people. That's something most people who are in Student Affairs like to do." She presented clear

expectations and understandings of what it means to be an advisor, and she linked that to her socialization in her field through theories associated with the field.

> I think because I'm a Student Affairs professional, I'm a very empathetic person. I listen well, I understand a little bit better where college students might be at or where they may be coming from. Even though I'm not into theories, I am very into keeping up with what the current generation of students is like. What are their backgrounds? Where are they coming from? . . . I understand that Student Affairs has an important piece to understand your students. I see advisors who just think advising is, 'Tell me what I need to take, I'll do it by email and that'll be done.' I don't see that. I see us having a much more significant purpose in a student's life.

Experience. Melinda, who used language equating advising to caring, did so in direct opposition to the experience she had in law school.

> To be perfectly blunt, one of the main reasons that I hated practicing law and quit practicing law is because I really don't like most lawyers. I didn't like the people that I was with. And in Law School I didn't like other law students. They were so competitive and so driven to beat each other. We had people getting Exacto knives and cutting pages out of books and hiding books under couches . . . I found that really, really unsatisfying on just a tremendous number of levels, and I think that a lot of the people I worked with had just lost sight of the fact that there was something else out there. You didn't have to work 80 hours a week, you didn't have to be competitive and screaming and yelling at people on the telephone. You could actually treat other people like human beings and it would be okay. And so I think a lot of my beliefs really came out of that.

Part of Melinda's approach to working with students was to treat them with respect as other human beings.

Intrusive advising

The advisors who applied intrusive advising to their practice learned about this approach through experience with students, professional development opportunities on campus, departmental culture, and as a consequence of their personal style.

Formal settings. Jocelyn learned about the intrusive advising approach through an on-campus professional development in-service presentation.

> The last one that I attended they really encouraged intrusive advising. The whole theory of digging a little deeper, if students don't show up, email them hey what happened? Is everything okay? So that I started to use that tool and it actually turned out to be beneficial .

Experience. Bill learned to be intrusive with students who were struggling by working with them, and in general his advising style came from experience. Suzanne's professional school encouraged their advisors to review students' transcripts before graduation and called them in for an appointment if they were not on track to graduate. Suzanne also kept a record of students she had concerns about because of her personal experience with issues such as death of a family member and depression. She felt compelled to contact students if she had not heard from them in some time.

Advising as Service

The advisors who identified advising as service learned about this approach from a national professional development opportunity, personal style, and Christian faith.

Formal settings. Tiffany attended a presentation at the national NACADA conference about advising as service and tried to integrate the attitude into her practice. Jocelyn felt that her training as a nurse contributed to her tendency to be a helper, which I equated with an attitude of service.

Experience. Tiffany also mentioned how her personal style and faith influenced how she tried to treat students.

> For the half hour they're in your office, they're the most important person right then . . . And I think that's more of a personal, desire to love your neighbor. Every person deserves that same kind of care from a person. Love your neighbor sounds weird in a professional setting, but . . . what they need from me from me right now would translate as I'm loving them as a person and caring about them.

These comments prompted me to ask if her faith influenced her, and she replied, "Oh definitely." Her Christian faith inspired Suzanne to "a life of service" which extended

into her work as an advisor. Suzanne connected how her faith influenced her work to the idea of service. "I think, quite frankly, who I am as a Christian person, I can't separate that from who I am here." This impacted her work with students in that, "I think I try to be honest and open and available and nurturing and kind and choose my words carefully so they don't sound harsh. I think just as it informs my whole life, a lot of service."

Jocelyn said she had always been a helper so her personal style influenced her approach of service. She said she inherited the inclination to be a helper from her mother.

> My mother always told me, you need to treat others the way that you would like to be treated. Even before I got into this program, people kind of identified me as the helper because I would just help people with whatever. My mother was the same way.

I associated her emphasis on helping as an advisor with the perspective of advising as service, but this approach did not result from exposure to theory as much as from watching a model and embracing the ethic of a profession. Jocelyn said, "Everything that I do comes from my personal relationship with God." She agreed that her faith influenced her tendency to be a helper, and she considered the adage "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" when working with students.

Summary of Sources of Advising Theory

The sources of the theoretical perspectives that advisors identified as influential to their practice in this study included departmental culture/colleagues, undergraduate degree, graduate degree, personal style, job experience, professional development opportunities on campus and nationally, year of the student in school, student's major, advisor's mother, and Christian faith. Table 4 in Appendix E displays the sources where advisors learned the theories that influence their practice.

The advisors' non-theoretical influences illuminated the general perspectives with which they viewed practice. Advisors learned from experience with students that they needed to use intrusive strategies if a student hadn't been in contact recently. They committed themselves to viewing their advising as service because of their Christian call to "Do unto others as you would have the do unto you." They also learned the names and tenets of theories from graduate programs. The interplay of formal theory and experience generated advisors' perspectives.

Summary of the Findings

Utilizing advisors as subjects, I was able to glean information that had not previously been addressed in advising literature. The findings of this study confirmed that advisors applied theory to practice and revealed that they expressed theory in different ways, either explicitly, implicitly, or tacitly. This study provided a list of theories that advisors have identified as applicable to practice. The findings also included how theory influenced advising. In particular, advisors shared the strategies that they used as a result of adopting specific perspectives. Finally, a finding unique to this study was that advisors built the perspectives that influenced their practice from lived experience as well as from formal training or study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the theories that advisors identified as being applicable to advising practice and how those theories influenced practice. Three distinct and unique findings emerged. While all advisors viewed their practice through certain perspectives, they expressed these frameworks differently, more or less explicitly. Advisors adopted particular strategies in practice because of the perspectives with which they viewed advising. Advisors formed their perspectives from the influence of both formal theory and from lived experience. This chapter includes a summary of the study, conclusions that can be reached based upon the findings of the study, and implications and recommendations for advisors, advising administrators, and researchers.

Summary of the Study

Statement of the Problem

Academic advisors are social workers, teachers, biologists, healthcare workers, social scientists, business people, and lawyers. However, the field of advising has long been influenced almost exclusively by theory from student development, an area of psychological literature that focuses on the cognitive, emotional, and identity development of college students specifically. The diverse educational and experiential backgrounds of advisors has inspired leaders and researchers in the field of advising to ponder the influence that theories other than student development and fields other than student affairs have on advising practice. Despite interest in diverse theoretical

influences in the field, advising research has not yet explored this question nor does it typically focus on advisors as subjects.

Methods

I chose to address this gap in the literature by performing a qualitative research study to gather advisors' reports of which theoretical influences affected their practice and in what ways. In addition to adding to the empirical knowledge base of the field of advising, this research gives advisors a voice to share their experience, the results of which can inform advisors' daily interactions with students. I investigated whether or not advisors actually applied theory to practice, which theories advisors applied to practice, how those theories influenced practice, how advisors use of theory varied, and what non-theoretical influences impacted advising practice. I interviewed eleven advisors chosen through theoretical sampling methods.

It is important to note that this sample from one university was not large enough to allow for generalizability of the findings to the entire population of advisors. This is typically the case in qualitative studies which focus on providing depth of detail in a few cases rather than breadth of detail across a random, representative sample. Also, I was an advisor at the university where I conducted the study. That role provided me with unique insight into the structure of and terminology used in advising at the university and aided me in understanding and interpreting the advisors' comments in the interviews. I had developed my own philosophy of advising prior to undertaking the study. I personally applied developmental and prescriptive advising strategies in my work.

Findings

This study revealed that advisors utilized theory in their advising practice. Interestingly, the findings further showed that advisors expressed theoretical influences explicitly, implicitly, or tacitly. Explicit expression was marked by the naming of a theory and description of its characteristics. When advisors expressed their perspectives implicitly, they made their frameworks understood through description or analogy but did not tie them to a formal, named theory. Advisors who expressed their theoretical frameworks tacitly used language associated with particular theories but did not articulate an overarching perspective. The theoretical practices that advisors applied to their advising practice include developmental advising, Sanford's challenge and support, intrusive advising, advising as service, advising as advocacy, advising as caring, advising as motivating, and advising as teaching. Advisors reported that the theoretical perspectives that they adopted influenced them to ask students certain questions, to raise certain topics, to keep certain records, to explain how certain processes work, to avoid certain strategies, to learn certain information, and to require certain tasks of students.

Another unique finding from this study was the fact that advisors embraced perspectives both because they had formally learned the theory and its tenets and because experience had shown that the approach was appropriate. Formal settings in which advisors learned theory included graduate and undergraduate degree programs and professional development events. Non-theoretical influences that inspired advising approaches that paralleled particular theories included department culture, other colleagues, undergraduate experience, personal style, student need, student year in college, job experience, and student's major.

Conclusions

The findings in this study addressed gaps and questions in advising literature. The lack of research regarding advisors' use of theory was addressed by asking advisors to report their perspectives, and I found that each advisor approached their practice with particular frameworks. In addition to providing new information about the application of theory to advising practice, the study confirmed the significance of development theory in practice. Hagen (2005) wondered if theoretical influences from fields other than student affairs impacted advisors' perspectives. Data from this study demonstrated that advisors' undergraduate and graduate degree fields influenced their advising but so did developmental theory. Student development theory or the developmental advising approach was useful to advisors in their practice regardless of background. In addition, the variety of educational and professional backgrounds in which advisors were trained sometimes led them to embrace the developmental perspective but also inspired frameworks different from the developmental approach. The finding that advisors incorporated formal theoretical frameworks as well as knowledge from lived experience into their perspectives of advising suggested that a multiplicity of theoretical frameworks was more useful in practice than one overarching theory. Identification of practices that advisors reported adopting because of their theoretical perspectives was also a new addition to advising literature.

Gaps in Advising Literature

Specific findings of this study were the first of their kind in advising literature. By utilizing advisors as subjects in the study, for the first time research demonstrated that advisors expressed theory more or less explicitly while it influenced practice regardless

of clarity of expression. The list of theories that advisors reported using in practice was also the first based on empirical study from the advisor's perspective. While previous literature speculated on the extent to which advisors apply theory, especially frameworks unassociated with student development theory, this study explicated which theories have been applied to advising practice and how. The connection of advising strategies in practice to specific theories was also unique in the advising literature. Previous studies typically focused on evaluating the use of one particular theory rather than the use of a multitude of theories identified by advisors and did not associate practices to the theories that inspired them. The review of the application of a multiplicity of theories identified by advisors was also unique in the advising literature because previous studies typically focused on evaluating the use of one particular theory rather. Finally, through this study I was able to compile a list of variables that appear to correlate to the application of theory to advising practice, the non-theoretical influences that inspired approaches parallel to particular theories.

Confirmation and Expansion of Advising Literature

In addition to providing new knowledge in advising literature, this study empirically affirmed existing conclusions in advising literature.

Influence of Advisor's Academic Background

The findings of the study suggested that a degree in Student Affairs or Higher Education had an influence on the advisors' knowledge of theories that apply to advising as well as on the clarity of their expression of theory applied to practice in advising. Despite the fact that Student Affairs-trained advisors stated theoretical influences explicitly more often than advisors from other backgrounds, advisors were influenced by

their undergraduate and graduate training in other fields as well. Sometimes, training in fields other than Student Affairs still inspired advisors to adopt a developmental approach to advising. Hagen's (2005) emphasis on the impact that educational backgrounds outside of student affairs and higher education could have on advising practice could be viewed as a reminder not to overlook other influences of advising. However, training in Student Affairs seemed to provide advisors with more clearly defined perspectives with which to guide their practice as evidenced by the frequency with which these advisors expressed theoretical framework explicitly. Additionally, fields other than Student Affairs sometimes led advisors to utilize a developmental framework even if they did not label it as such.

Significance of Developmental Theory

The findings in this study suggested that developmental theory remained pertinent to work with college students because every advisor in this study identified developmental advising as an influence on their practice either by name or through the use of associated language. Significantly, some of the advisors in this study learned the developmental approach through their experience with students and observation of what students needed and what strategies addressed students' needs and situations. This study provided evidence of the impact of the perspective of developmental advising on practice while expanding the knowledge-base of other theories that are applicable to advising.

Expansion of the Concept of Academic Advising

In the broader context of advising, the findings from this study illustrate the Concept of Advising. The Concept of Academic Advising commissioned by NACADA delineates the curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes of academic

advising. The Concept of Academic Advising document directly cites the influence of "theories in the social sciences, humanities, and education" on the curriculum, or content, of academic advising (NACADA, 2006). The pedagogy of the Concept of Academic Advising refers to the means used to prepare, facilitate, and evaluate the advisor/student interactions that aim at achieving the student learning outcomes outlined in the Concept of Advising. The document does not link theory to pedagogy as it does to curriculum. However, through this study, I uncovered how the theoretical frameworks adopted by academic advisors can also guide the selection of pedagogy that advisors employ in their interactions with students, thus expanding the description of the Concept of Advising.

Integration of Formal Theory and Experience

Most significantly, this study uncovered the phenomenon that advisors' experiences inspired particular overarching perspectives on practice as regularly as formal theory did. Approaches that guided advisors' practice and that paralleled the tenets of formal theories sometimes evolved from experience. Because advisors often mentioned or applied similar concepts to their practice as theories would dictate, it seemed that the practice itself and experience in the field informed theory. Especially in the case of applying existing theories rather than developing a new theory of advising, something about the practice itself sparked a connection to a theory which led to exploration of the theory which fed back to influencing practice. In the cases where advisors did not recognize their perspective as the product of theory, they provided analogical comparisons that stemmed entirely from experience in practice. The advisors in this study were so well-informed of the elements of the theories that they named or applied without always knowing the formal theory because the practice of advising

already included some components of the theories because of the nature of the practice, of student needs, of advisor personal style, etc. Advisors saw theory in action before or without having the framework to express it. Factors that inspired the adoption of particular approaches to advising included formal training such as that within graduate degree programs or professional development events. Other factors were solely experiential in nature and included colleagues' advice; student needs, especially at different years in their undergraduate curricula; the major of the students with whom advisors worked; an advisors' experience with family, including parents and their own children; personal style; and religious faith;

As was clear in these conclusions, this study provided evidence collected through research with advisors as subjects that had not been presented previously in studies about advising. It provided new information about which theories were applied to advising. It also provided empirical evidence that confirmed the pertinence of traditional characteristics of advising such as the use of student development theory in the field and the influence of training in higher education on working in the field of advising. The findings of this study uncovered the unique fact that advisors' experiences influenced their overarching perspectives just as formal theory provided frameworks for practice. Additionally, this study was significant because the findings could be used by advisors as a resource to inform their practice.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for advisors, for advising administrators, and for research on advising. This study can act as a resource for advisors

and administrators and has inspired recommendations for action for advisors, administrators, and researchers.

Resource for Advisors and Administrators

This study provided topics that could be included in training of advisors, and a justification for participation in professional development opportunities.

Strategies for Practice

While this study was not exhaustive, it provided an easily accessible list of strategies that advisors could draw from to impact their practice. Advising strategies based on theory that advisors in this study described included having the student make decisions, raising particular topics with the student as appropriate for the situation, requiring the student to research information or perform a task, asking reflective questions, experiencing a negative impact or avoiding certain strategies because of a perspective, maintaining certain records, learning related information, explaining why or how something is a certain way, building a relationship with the student, and presenting a particular demeanor to the student. The details of the advisors' stories included in this study illustrated examples of situations in which to utilize approaches and explanations inspired by theory. The stories provided the "why" and "how" of the advising strategies. The succinct categories of strategies used by advisors in this study can easily be shared and remembered. They could act as a trigger for advisors to include behaviors in their advising sessions that they learned about through the stories of the advisors in this study.

Advisor Training

The advisors in this study reported applying the following theories to their advising practice: developmental advising, Sanford's theory of challenge and support,

intrusive advising, advising as service, advisor as advocate, advising as caring, advisor as motivator, and advising as teaching. While individual advisors may explore new theories on their own to expand their perspective for practice, the list of theories that are applicable to advising may be especially useful for advising administrators responsible for training or professional development for the advisors that they supervise. Multiple advisors in the study identified training in their department or their departmental culture as an influence on their advising practice or as the source of their knowledge about advising theory. The list of theories that advisors in this study applied in practice may provide administrators with alternatives to student development theory that may expand their advisors' repertoires of theoretical knowledge. These particular theories may be especially useful because advisors have articulated their impact on practice.

Advisors in this study reported that students' characteristics, the advisors' personal characteristics, the advisors' professional characteristics, departmental characteristics, contextual characteristics, and external influences impact advising practice. The list of sources of advising theory and influences apart from theory may provide administrators with examples of what advisors can reflect upon for inspiration when addressing a challenging advising case, preparing a philosophy of advising, reviewing their work as part of a yearly evaluation process, or simply seeking opportunities for personal or professional growth. Student characteristics that inspired particular perspectives included needs, year in school, and major. Advisors' personal characteristics included personal style; family, including being a parent and feeling influence from their own parents; faith; and education, including the field of their highest degree and the field of their undergraduate degree. Advisors' professional characteristics

included job experiences such as teaching and interactions with students over the years of the advisors career in the same position or various positions or institutions. Departmental characteristics included departmental culture and colleagues' approaches. Professional development opportunities and professional literature were contextual characteristics that advisors reported inspiring particular perspectives. External influences included involvement of students' parents and involvement of athletic coaches.

The findings of this study also raised suggestions for the structure of advising training. The first suggestion was that training should be on-going. Several advisors adopted particular perspectives over time because their experience in their jobs and through interaction with students showed the usefulness of a certain approach. These findings suggested that advisors should be encouraged to continually reflect on their own past experiences as well as their job experiences. Patterns may become apparent over time and result in the recommendation of the application of a new or different approach than was initially conveyed through training of new advisors. The second training strategy that may be recommended from the findings in this study is to incorporate experienced advisors in the training process. Several advisors in the study learned perspectives and strategies from the other advisors with whom they worked. While the advisors in this study often requested their colleagues' input voluntarily, the findings suggest that it may be beneficial to require new advisors or experienced advisors to confer with their colleagues on an on-going basis to continue incorporating new ideas into practice.

Justification for Professional Development

This study provided evidence of the impact of professional development on advising practice. Advisors in this study learned theories in on-campus workshops and at national conferences and often were able to specifically name those theories after learning them through professional development opportunities. From the advisors' descriptions of what they learned through those avenues, it appeared that examples for how to apply the theory were also provided.

Future Research

The analysis of the theories that advisors applied to their practice raised new questions. What is the extent of the impact of theory on practice if the theories that are applied already have some common elements with existing relationships, strategies, etc. in advising practice? Does understanding a formal treatment of a perspective significantly aid advisors in their practice or would it significantly change practice from what was already being done? The interplay of formal theory and experience could be explored in further detail.

Recommendations

Advisors and Administrators

This study demonstrated the impact that professional development opportunities such as workshops and conferences had on advisors' practice. Although higher education budgets are often strained, the results of this study suggested that maintaining funding for on-campus or national professional development experiences may be crucial to the professional growth of advisors. Another recommendation may be for the development of "homegrown" professional development opportunities that utilize free campus

resources such as advisors, administrators, faculty, and graduate students with particular subject knowledge to expand advisors' understanding of the student population, advising theory, other theories applicable to advising, and other campus issues. This study provided evidence of the impact of those professional development opportunities on advising practice as well as material that administrators could use to implement their own professional development activities regarding theory in particular. Support for these professional development opportunities would have an impact only if advisors participate. Based on the evidence in this study of the influence of ideas learned from professional development experiences, another recommendation stemming from this study was that advisors ought to actively participate in professional development opportunities on campus, at the regional level, and at the national level.

Future Research of Advising

I recommend further qualitative investigation of particular findings from this study including advisors' use of theory in practice in various contexts. Full-time advisors could be compared to faculty advisors. Advisors from more than one institution could be included in future studies. Sampling in future studies could focus on advisors in professional schools as compared to advisors in core colleges. Future studies should incorporate follow-up interviews to delineate further the characteristics of perspectives mentioned by advisors. Further studies could be completed to examine the effect of non-theoretical influences such as field of highest degree, field of undergraduate degree, age, gender, years advising, years in current advising position, college in which advisor works, department culture, faith, major advisor works with, professional development opportunities in which the advisor participates, and advisors' relationship with his/her

parents. The results of those studies could solidify the list of variables to be incorporated in potential quantitative studies regarding influences on theoretical perspectives in advising practice.

Ultimately, I recommend the development of a large-scale quantitative study of the theoretical influences that impact advisors. This study has provided a foundation for such research by affirming that advisors use theory in practice and by compiling a list of variables that appear to correlate to the application of theory to advising practice. The interest in advising theory in advising literature and on the part of the field's professional association, NACADA, as well as the call to expand understanding of advising theory beyond developmental advising all support the recommendation to undertake a large-scale study. To facilitate access to a large population of advisors, I recommend that the National Academic Advising Association consider funding a study of their membership utilizing survey research methods to capture the breadth of theoretical influences used in advising practice. In addition, the completion of a study that spans all institutional types and that is overseen by researchers familiar with advising but outside institutions would address several of the limitations of this study. These limitations include a focus on one institution, use of a small purposive sample, and the researcher being part of the population studied. Once generalizable results have been found, further qualitative research can be conducted with a larger sample of advisors than this study includes in order to expand knowledge about application of theory to practice. This study, in and of itself, as well as future studies regarding the application of theory to advising practice share the potential to give voice to advisors' experience and to continue to influence their work by providing resources to support professional growth.

APPENDIX A

Invitation to Advisors to Participate in the Study

Dear (Advisor's Name),

My name is Jamie McClintock, and I am an academic advisor in Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science. I am also currently completing dissertation research regarding advising for the Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education doctoral program at Michigan State. Attached to this e-mail, you will find a letter inviting you to participate in my study through an interview. Please review the letter and contact me with any questions as well as with your response to the invitation. If you choose to participate, you can print out the consent form, fill it out completely, sign it, and return it to me before your interview or complete it when we meet to talk. We can communicate via e-mail or phone to schedule a time to complete the interview in a location convenient to you.

Thank you for considering participating!

Jamie McClintock, M.A.
Academic Specialist/Academic Advisor
Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science
Center for Integrative Studies
College of Social Science
Michigan State University
302 Berkey Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
Phone: 517-355-6880 / 517-862-5778
mcclin42@msu.edu

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

You are being invited to participate in this research project, *An Investigation of the Theoretical Perspectives that Frame Advising Practice* because you are an academic advisor for undergraduate students.

This research project examines the theoretical perspectives that advisors use to frame their practice. We are interested in learning what ideas influence how you advise students.

Details of Participation in this project:

> Your participation in this project will require an audio-taped one-on-one interview. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete one, one hour, one-on-one or phone audio-taped interview before May 2007. You might also be asked to respond to additional questions that are developed during data analysis subsequent to the interview via phone, via e-mail or in person. Your total participation time to complete an audio-taped one-on-one interview will be one hour at your office or at another location convenient to you. During the interview, you will be asked to discuss the theoretical framework or point of view that you bring to advising practice. Additional participation time might vary depending upon the questions added, if any, but will not exceed one hour.
>
> These interviews will be audio-taped. In agreeing to participate in this study, you are agreeing to have your interview audio-taped. You will not be asked to identify yourself during the interview, so your name will not be attached with your interview responses. To help protect your confidentiality, only the investigators will have access to the tapes which will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for which only the investigators have keys. The interview tapes will be retained for the duration of the project but will remain locked away.
>
> You will receive a copy of the interview transcript to review. You may make additions, deletions, or clarifications to the transcript before returning it within a designated period of time to the researcher for analysis. If the researcher does not receive a response regarding the transcript, the researcher will assume that you approve of the use of the transcript as it was sent to you.

Your participation is *entirely* voluntary. This means that you are free to choose whether or not you want to participate in this study, *and* you are free to withdraw your participation at *any* time without penalty. Additionally, you may refuse to answer certain questions without any penalty.

All information gathered from you will be confidential. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. You will not be asked to identify yourself during

the interview. If you would like to see results of this study, they will be made available to you upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, or if questions or concerns arise, please feel free to contact Jamie McClintock (MSU – 302 Berkey Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824, 517.355.6880, mcclin42@msu.edu) or Dr. Marylee Davis (MSU – 420 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 49924. 517. 353 .1717, davisml@msu.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please feel free to contact Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Director of the Human Subject Protection Programs at Michigan State University: (517) 355-2180, fax: (517) 432-4503, email: irb@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Thank you for your time and interest in this study.

Please indicate your voluntary agreement to participate in this study by signing below.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please indicate your voluntary agreement to participate in the audio-taped interview portion of this study by signing below.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please indicate your voluntary agreement to be contacted to answer additional questions after the initial interview by signing below. Please indicate how you would like to be contacted by circling all forms of communication that apply.

Signature _____ Date _____

Telephone (Please provide number) _____
E-mail (Please provide address) _____
In person (Please provide address) _____

APPENDIX C

Revised Invitation to Advisors to Participate in the Study

Dear (Advisor's Name),

My name is Jamie McClintock, and I am an advisor in Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science. In addition to advising, I am currently completing dissertation research regarding advising for the Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education doctoral program. Attached to this e-mail, you will find a letter inviting you to participate in my study through an interview. Please review the letter and contact me with any questions as well as with your response to the invitation. The focus of my interview is the combination of influences that impact advisors' work with students. I appreciate that this is a busy time of year for advisors. I am happy to meet before or after regular office hours to complete the interview. I would like to complete the interviews by the end of finals week, so please feel free to look ahead to the next few weeks on your schedule to determine if you will be able to participate in my study. Thank you for considering participating!

Jamie McClintock, M.A.
Academic Specialist/Academic Advisor
Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science
Center for Integrative Studies
College of Social Science
Michigan State University
302 Berkey Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
Phone: 517-355-6880 / 517-862-5778
mcclin42@msu.edu

APPENDIX D

Initial Interview Protocol

These questions will be used as a starting point in the initial 5 face-to-face or telephone interviews with a random sample of major advisors from across a large, public Midwestern university.. They are divided into demographic questions and questions about advising specifically. Initial questions are left-justified. Bulleted questions are probes or follow-up questions. Demographic questions will be asked in all interviews.

INTRODUCTION
In our conversation today I would like to learn how you view advising. I will begin by asking some basic demographic questions to better understand the composition of my sample of academic advisors.

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS
What is your gender?
What is your age?
What is your racial or ethnic background?
What is your educational background?
- Highest degree
- Discipline

What has been your involvement in professional development related to advising?
- Campus, state, regional, national conferences/trainings
- Professional associations
- Have you held an office?

VIEW OF ADVISING
How many years have you been academic advising in your current department?
- How many years have you been academic advising in total?
- (If new to advising) What did you do previous to academic advising?
    - How many years?
- Tell me about your current department.
    - Structure
        - What is the administrative structure related to academic advising?
        - What resources are available for academic advising?
    - Colleagues
        - What are their views of academic advising? How do you know?
        - What is your interaction with your colleagues like?
    - Training
        - What training is provided for academic advisors?
        - In comparison to other department employees (faculty, specialists, etc.)?
    - Environment
        - Is academic advising supported in your department? How do you know this?

- Is academic advising important to your department? How do you know this?

Tell me about your view of academic advising?

- Goals of advising
- Definition of advising
- Role of the advisor
- Where did this view come from/how did it develop?

Have you developed a personal advising philosophy either formally or informally?

- If so, tell me about it. Where did this philosophy come from? How did you develop it?
- Do you have a written copy of your philosophy? If so, may I have a copy?

Do you approach advising from a particular perspective?

- Do you frame your advising work in a particular way?
- If not, tell me about a recent appointment.
  - What issues did you discuss with the student?
  - How did you address them?
  - What made you decide to address the issues in that manner?
  - Does this approach influence a lot of your work with students?

How does the way that you view advising influence your practice of academic advising?

- How does it affect how you approach students' questions/issues?
- How have your students responded to advising? What feedback have you gotten from students?
  - What is their level of academic success/ graduation?
  - Have they given you feedback?
  - Do you do a formal assessment of academic advising?
- Has your department/colleagues commented on your approach to advising? What feedback have you gotten from your department?

APPENDIX E

Tables

Table 1: Theory by Clarity of Expression

	Theory		
Expression	**Explicit**	**Implicit**	**Tacit**
	Developmental	Developmental	Developmental
	Sanford's challenge and support	Teaching	Sanford's challenge and support
	Service	Motivating	Service
	Intrusive	Advocacy	Intrusive
			Advocacy
			Caring

Table 2 Advising Strategies by Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework	Strategy	# of Advisors
Developmental – Ownership	Have student make decision	4
	Raise particular topics	3
	Require information or task	2
	Ask reflective questions	1
	Negative impact or avoidance	1
Developmental –More than classes	Raise particular topics	2
	Ask reflective questions	1
	Maintain certain records	1
	Learn related information	1
	Negative impact or avoidance	1
Developmental – Holistic	Raise particular topics	2
	Negative impact or avoidance	1
Developmental – Big Picture	Ask reflective questions	1
	Raise particular topics	1
	Explain why or how	1
	Negative impact or avoidance	1
Developmental – Levels	Learn related information	3
	Build relationship	2
	Negative impact or avoidance	1
	Raise particular topic	1
	Ask reflective questions	1
Sanford's Challenge and Support	Ask reflective questions	1
	Raise particular topics	1
	Build relationships	1
Intrusive advising	Ask reflective questions	3
	Require information or tasks	2
	Maintain certain records	1
Advisor as advocate	Ask reflective questions	2
	Raise particular topics	1
	Build relationship	1
	Explain why or how	1
Advising as caring	Build relationship	1
	Have student make decision	1
Advising as service	Present particular demeanor	1

Table 3 Advising Strategies Inspired by Theory

Questions advisors ask students
What other pieces do you want to take advantage of while you're here; how do we incorporate those all together?
Tell me what you want to do.
How does this all fit together?
Have you thought about careers?
What are you thinking down the road?
What's next?
Have you job-shadowed with anyone?
The last time we were talking about _____, have you done that?
What did you do this summer?
What have you been involved in?
What do you like? What specifically do you like about that area?
Why did you choose _____ as your major?
Why is that the right decision for you?
If you cannot achieve your goal, is that the worst thing? Is a lower or different goal a bad thing given everything you have been through?
Had you thought of _____?
Does that major/program/etc. really fulfill you?
Where do the undergraduates fit in this program/plan/etc.?
What's going on?
What's happened?
Is everything ok?
What are you going to do differently?
What do you think will happen if you make that decision?
What's your social life like?
How is the transition?
Issues/Topics advisors or students raise
Potential careers
Parental involvement in decision-making
How to be a better citizen
How to contribute to society
Decision-making in college/Independent decision-making
Graduate/professional school
Career and major alternatives/plan B's
Student's struggles
Life skills
Records advisors keep
Extensive appointment notes with topics to revisit in future appointments
List of students with whom to stay in contact
Graduation requirements in an attachable file
Things advisors explain
How to calculate grades
Schedule/requirement alternatives

Table 3 (cont'd)

Strategies advisors avoid
Asking students to plan too far into the future
Applying one theory to every student
Handing students graduation checklists as advising
Doing too much for students/hand-holding
Information advisors should learn
Students' cultural background
Student development theory
Campus resources for student success
Alternative career options
Tasks advisors require of students and that advisors are required to do
Advising appointments
Researching a question before coming for an appointment
Making a plan before coming for an appointment
Doing task for themselves instead of relying on parents
Advisors review graduation requirements one semester prior to graduation

Table 4 Sources of Theory

Theory	**Source of Theory**
Developmental advising	Advisor's highest degree Advisor's personal style Job experience Professional development Departmental approach/colleagues Advisor's undergraduate degree Student's year in college Student's major Advisor's mother
Sanford's Challenge & Support	Advisor's highest degree Student's year in college Student's major Advisor's personal style
Advisor as advocate	Job experience Advisor's highest degree Advisor's undergraduate degree
Advising as teaching	Advisor's undergraduate degree
Advisor as motivator	Student's year in school
Advising as caring	Advisor's highest degree
Intrusive advising	Job experience Professional development Departmental culture/colleagues Advisor's personal style
Advising as service	Advisor's religious faith Advisor's personal style Professional Development

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