Academic Advising and Gender Communication

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Academic Advising and Gender Communication
A Dissertation by
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Brandman University
Irvine, California
School of Education
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Academic Advising and Gender Communication

by Sean Nemeth

**Purpose:** The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting.

**Methodology:** This study was a descriptive correlational research study utilizing archival survey data. The collected data consisted of numeric scale survey responses from 6 iterations of the annual advising assessment survey. This study examined the relationship between student-advisor gender pairing and the numeric satisfaction score provided by the student. This study was a correlational research study with 2 variables (gender of student, gender of advisor). Students *T*-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed.

**Findings:** Examination of from more than 4,000 student survey responses indicated a variety of findings. First, the data suggest that there is no difference in rated satisfaction based only on the gender of the advisor. Additionally, there is no difference in rated satisfaction based only on the gender of the student. The school that housed the student’s program of study was not a major factor in determining the satisfaction of the student with academic advising. Finally, male students have a slight preference toward a female advisor, while female students rate both male and female advisors about the same.

**Conclusions:** The study supported the conclusions that male undergraduate students have a preference for working with female academic advisors. A warm and relational advising style is even more important for males when it comes to their level of satisfaction with
their advisor. Female students do not have a preference for working with an advisor of a specific gender.

**Recommendations:** Further research is recommended to determine whether this difference was a result of direct bias of the gender, general preference, or differences in typical advising approach utilized. Researchers should consider whether satisfaction differences exist based on the traits that show maleness and femaleness of advisors, regardless of specific gender. This study focused on professional academic advisors. Future researchers should examine whether similar preferences exist within faculty or peer advising models.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

According to U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, postsecondary degree attainment will be critical to the global competitiveness of the United States (Duncan, 2012). Boosting college access and completion is vital to the future economic prosperity and civic vibrancy of your home states. That is why accelerating college attainment is not just a policy and institutional concern for academia, it is really an urgent national mission (p. 1). While the United States was once in a strong global position for degree attainment, that standing is slipping dramatically and should be a warning sign that the economic prosperity of the U.S. is at risk. Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) shows that the United States is in the top 3 countries for degree attainment for the 55 to 64 age demographic (Appendix A). However, the United States is 16th in the world for percentage of recent college graduates in the 25 to 35 age demographic (OECD, 2011).

As the United States seeks to remain competitive in the global environment, college completion rates will become progressively more critical. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), the degree attainment rate in California, while above the national average and increasing, has not kept pace with increases in the national average. In 1990, California’s bachelor’s degree attainment rate for individuals older than the age of 25 was 23.4% and 3.1% above the national average. In 2009, the rate for California was 29.9% and 2.0% above the national average. With the importance of degree attainment taking center stage on the national agenda, California will need to find ways keep pace with the rest of the country as colleges, universities, and key decision makers work to expose
more citizens to the opportunities of postsecondary education. The importance of this issue will bring more attention to student retention initiatives and the university staff members who support such initiatives.

Throughout the last several decades, as institutions of higher learning have sought ways to support the student experience, institutions have made the role of the academic advisor more and more important. This is a result of both the need to improve the student experience as well as for enrollment and cost considerations. Further, rising costs of recruiting a student to replace a retention loss plays a significant part in the financial viability of an institution (Habley, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005).

“Recruitment costs at two-year and four-year public colleges have risen at far greater rates than tuition and fees…[both recruitment costs and tuition and fees] have far outpaced the increases recorded for…more traditional economic indicators” (Habley, 2012, p. 81–82).

While a direct linkage between academic advising and student retention has not been found, the significant role that academic advising plays in retention has been recognized by many top researchers. Tinto (1987), in Increasing Student Retention, wrote, “Effective retention programs have come to understand that academic advising is the very core of successful institutional efforts to educate and retain students” (p. 16). Furthermore, it is recognized that the establishment of academic advising systems is a major factor in increasing student retention rates (Clark, 1989). Knowing that the effectiveness of academic advising has, at the very least, a pragmatic relationship with student retention should cause many institutions to look at their academic advising programs in search of ways to improve the effectiveness of this relationship.
Effective communication is a core value that is central to an effective academic advisor. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) has outlined the core values of academic advising. In this document, NACADA specifically mentions “communicating in useful and efficient ways” (NACADA, 2005, p. 1) as critical for effective advising relationships. Gender will play a key role for advisors given the changing demographics of college populations in skewing more female.

There is a great deal of research that shows the impact of gender on effective communication. Gender differences in communication create confusion between men and women. Tannen (1991) described men and women as living in different worlds and that communication between these two worlds is similar to cross-cultural communication. Further review of the literature uncovers similar findings regarding the differences in communication between genders (Gray, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Tannen, 1994) Male communication is more direct and focused on obtaining information, seeking status, or representing independence. Female communication is focused on intimacy and building connection. Women seek to exchange feelings and establish relationships. Because of these very different communication styles, men and women can experience significant discord when communicating. This discord, when applied to the field of academic advising, could create different satisfaction levels in the advising relationship based purely upon the gender of those involved in the conversation and the typical communication styles that they utilize. Because a developmental relationship between advisor and student relies heavily on the effective communication between these two individuals, it is worth exploring the impact of gender on this relationship (NACADA, 2005).
Background

Importance of Retention in Higher Education

Ultimately, high-degree attainment rates can be seen as measures of success for key constituents within the world of higher education. Students and parents are interested in degree attainment because it signifies the completion of key skills that will contribute to the employability of the student. If the student does not retain, and eventually complete their degree, the value of the student’s college experiences is significantly discounted (American Council on Education, 2013). Faculty, administrators, and staff at colleges and universities are interested in degree attainment because it is a signal of quality and success for the work being done with students. It is estimated that the cost to recruit a new student is 3-5 times the cost to retain a student (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). This is of great importance to administrators and admissions staff when considering the budgetary impact of meeting enrollment goals. Habley (2012) went further to describe the nebulous nature of capturing the impact of a given initiative on retention, especially when calculating a return on investment. Though tracking the impact of retention initiatives may be difficult, Habley believed that data to support retention policy decision making must be used, “to underscore the contention that recruitment and retention are equal partners in student success” (p. 98).

Policy makers and politicians are interested in accountability among institutions that utilize federal financial aid to support students’ pursuit of a degree and increased employability. On January 23, 2013, the National Commission on Higher Education Attainment released an open letter to college and university leaders asking them to make completion a priority. If college student attrition is left unaddressed, “it will hinder the
social mobility and impede the nation’s economic progress. This is why we have to come together as education leaders to declare that college completion must be our priority” (as cited in American Council on Education, 2013, p.7).

**Gender in Higher Education**

Since 1976, the number of females pursuing a college degree has exceeded the number of males (Aud, S., Hannes, G., & National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). That gap in female and male attendance has continued to grow with females becoming a larger part of the university population each year. Dwyer, Hodson, and McCloud (2013) found that this growing gender gap may result because males face little difference in starting salary after dropping out, while females face a significant starting salary difference of “more than $6,500 less after controlling for demographic factors” (p. 47). Other researchers point to dissonance in masculine identity and activities that are linked to higher academic performance (DiPrete & Buchmann, 2013). Regardless of the cause, the gender gap in higher education continues to widen and effectiveness of student support for female students will remain a need for future research.

Just as the college student body is becoming increasingly female, so too is the academic advising community based on recent membership trends. NACADA (2008) membership data showed that females made up 68.8% of the membership body. In 2014, that number had increased to 72.7% (NACADA, 2014). It becomes even more important to examine the impact of gender communication on this key student support service as these trends continue to change the shape of higher education.
Value of Academic Advising in Student Retention

Burns B. Crookston’s (1972) article on developmental academic advising set forth a new paradigm for valuing the academic advising relationship with students. Crookston developed the theory that academic advising was a form of teaching and could have a developmental impact on the student. Since Crookston’s seminal article, many other researchers have built upon this theory to amplify the importance of the academic advising relationship to the success of college and university students. Lee Noel (1978) wrote that students who have a positive academic advising experience hold more positive feelings toward the institution as a whole. “Academic advisors mediate the dissonance between what students expect from the educational environment and what they experience in that environment” (Habley, 1981, p. 46). Vincent Tinto (1987, 1993, 2004) drew a connection between successful academic advising and student retention on multiple occasions. Clark (1989) gave further credence to the impact that effective advising has on student retention. “A major factor in increasing student retention rates is the establishment of advising systems which take into account the developmental and academic needs of the students as well as career counseling” (p. 27).

It is important to note that there is no direct causal link between academic advising and student retention. With that said, many subject matter experts perceive advising as a key opportunity to support student retention. “Advising is a key to student retention. The best way to keep students enrolled is to keep them stimulated, challenged and progressing toward a meaningful goal. The best way to do that—especially among new students—is through informed academic advising” (Anderson, 1997, p. 7). Kuh (1997) gave further support to the impact and importance of advising, “It is hard to
imagine any academic support function that is more important to student success and institutional productivity than advising” (p. 11). John Gardner (2003) stated, “The strong relationship between level of student engagement and quality of academic advisement revealed in the latest NSSE research may be interpreted as providing additional evidence of an empirical link between academic advisement and student retention” (p. 1).

While empirical linkage is important, there is no direct causal link between academic advising and student retention. Some would argue that part of the impact of academic advising could be accomplished through students having substantive one-to-one interactions with any representative of the university. However, it is the accessibility of academic advising that makes it important to the institution’s retention efforts. “Academic advising is the only structured service on the campus in which all students have the opportunity for on-going, one-to-one contact with a concerned representative of the institution” (Habley, 1994, p. 10).

**Differences in Gender Communication**

Men and women exhibit different communication styles and view conversations in very different ways. Academic research has shown that women view conversations as a means of building relationships and of creating social connections, while men see conversation as a means of achieving specific outcomes or to exert dominance (Gray, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Tannen, 1994; Wood, 1996). According to Basow and Rubenfeld (2003), “Women tend to score higher on nurturant/expressive traits and lower than men on instrumental/active traits” (p. 187). Additionally, they found that women were more likely to provide sympathy to a friend’s problem, while men were more likely to change the subject. Women with these nurturant-expressive traits were more likely to feel helped,
rather than angered, by receiving advice on an issue. These differences in how men and women express and respond to communication traits provide further support to Tannen’s (1991) research that showed male and female communication as being similar to cross-cultural communication between individuals of different worlds. Mason (1995) described women’s communication style as being more communal, while the communication of men is more agentic. “A communal orientation involves concern with others, selflessness, and a desire to be at one with others, whereas agentic orientation is manifested in self-assertion, self-expansion, and the urge to master” (p. 143). While the title of Gray’s (1992) book *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* represents a popular phrase that illustrates differences in communication style, it is in line with research that shows a significant difference in how each gender approaches communication (Gray, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Tannen, 1994; Wood, 1996).

One key aspect of communication is the ability to influence others. Research into the confluence of gender and influence tactics has produced interesting findings. Yukl and Chavez (2002) outlined nine major influence tactics that can be used by effective leaders. These tactics range from more direct approaches such as pressure and exchange tactics to more emotional approaches such as inspirational appeal. Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin, and Marx (2007) examined the tactics utilized by different genders and found that women were perceived to use pressure tactics more frequently. Yukl and Falbe (1990) defined pressure tactics as approaches where the individual “uses demands, threats, or intimidation to convince you to comply with a request or to support a proposal” (p.133). Further, researchers have found that men and women tend to use different influence tactics (Carli, 1999; Carothers & Allen, 1999; DuBrin, 1991). However, these differences
may have been the result of different reactions to situations rather than a lack of particular tactics (Carli 1999; Carothers & Allen, 1999; Lamude, 1993).

It is clear that men and women have differences in how they communicate as well as how they influence others (Barbuto et al., 2007; Gray, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Tannen, 1994; Wood, 1996; Yukl & Chavez, 2002). These differences can have a significant impact on any relationship that relies heavily on communication, including that of an undergraduate student and her academic advisor. Since communication and influence are key factors in academic advising, it is reasonable to consider how gender may impact academic advising outcomes (NACADA, 2005).

**Statement of the Research Problem**

Student attrition and stagnant degree attainment rates are recognized issues that can negatively impact the economic prosperity of the United States (American Council on Education, 2013). As the United States falls further behind other developed nations in the percentage of population that has completed college degrees, it risks a startling economic impact as innovation and advanced jobs could move off shore. Academic advising is one method of providing meaningful support toward improving the degree attainment rate. The Council for the Advancement of Standards (2013) wrote, “Academic advising is an essential element in the success and persistence of postsecondary students” (p. 2). Academic advising has been found to be integral to successful student retention initiatives (Noel, 1978; Tinto, 1987). “Good academic advising also provides perhaps the only opportunity for all students to develop a personal, consistent relationship with someone in the institution who cares about them” (Drake, 2011, p. 10). Additional research has shown that effective academic advising has an empirical relationship to
Student success can be accomplished through helping students to see the value of their education. Academic advising is one of the key areas that can assist students in connecting the value of what they are learning to the outcomes that the student wants to achieve (Robbins, 2014). Further, student engagement studies have connected increased student engagement to positive retention benefits (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2002). Habley (2008) identified seven key categories that should be assessed to understand student satisfaction with academic advising. Interpersonal and communication skills was one of these key categories.

Research has shown that there is dissonance in communication styles utilized by males and females. Communication differences between men and women are so stark that they can be likened to communication across different cultures (Tannen, 1991). Female communication focuses primarily on building relationships and establishing a connection, while male communication is more focused on achieving an outcome or exerting dominance (Gray, 1992; Lakoff, 1990; Tannen, 1994; Wood, 1996). Given the importance of communication in university academic advising relationships, it is imperative to examine the impact of gender communication on this experience. Understanding how to support better the female demographic during its academic career will be of utmost importance As the demographic makeup of major colleges and universities continues to skew toward females. Though research has been conducted to look at the relationship between student satisfaction with academic advising and the model in which that advising is delivered, there is little information about how the
genders of the participants impacts the relationship and ultimately the student’s satisfaction with that dynamic. Habley (1979) recommended further study on this very topic, “Further exploration of the role of advisee and advisor sex interaction should be undertaken. Such research should include the study of male-to-male, male-to-female, and female-to-female advising relationships” (p. 120). This investigation examines the role of gender on the student’s satisfaction level with their academic advising experience.

This study adds to the body of knowledge because it provides a new application for gender communication influence on a field that is heavily reliant on communication—academic advising. While certain aspects of student satisfaction with academic advising have been studied, the area of gender in academic advising has not been thoroughly examined. This study has the potential to further research in multiple areas. First, it can provide further context into the connection between student satisfaction and persistence in their program of study. Additionally, it could help to uncover more information related to gender communication and bias.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting.

**Research Questions**

Answers to the following questions will be sought to address the purpose of the study:

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male,
female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?

**Significance of the Problem**

With degree attainment rates within the United States becoming of economic importance, it will be vital to determine how students who choose to attend college can successfully complete this goal (American Council on Education, 2013). Women make up a greater percentage of the university and college population and will generally exhibit communication traits that fit within their gender role. The role of the academic advisor is to guide and support students through their academic career. Academic advising relies heavily on direct student communication. The field of academic advising could benefit greatly from a better understanding of effective communication with its students.

This study is significant in that its findings show whether certain gender pairings have an impact on the student’s overall satisfaction with their academic advising relationship. Better understanding of the communication within this dynamic can provide opportunities for retention improvements since “advising is a key to student retention” (Anderson, 1997, p. 7). This study measures undergraduate student satisfaction with the relationship with a specific assigned academic advisor. The study determines whether the gender of both the student and the advisor, and therefore the typical gender-based communication traits that they exhibit, will significantly impact the satisfaction level. The findings can benefit academic advisors who are supporting undergraduate students at postsecondary institutions throughout the United States. Understanding which
communication traits may have a positive or negative impact on student outcomes will be important to improving campus-level retention and graduation rates. Ultimately, this could help to improve national degree attainment rates, which will influence long-term economic success of the individual, state, and country.

**Definitions**

*Academic Advising Assessment Survey (AAS):* A formative assessment survey used to determine overall student satisfaction with their academic advising experience with a specific advisor. The purpose of the survey is to improve service quality, develop training, provide program development direction, and to determine alignment with the department’s mission (Habley, 2008, Nemeth, 2013).

*Centralized Advising Model:* The centralized models provide advising support from a central advising office. This office can either provide the advising service centrally or control how it is provided at other units. Accountability for the advising support comes from this central office, which typically includes a director and other staff members (Pardee, 2000).

*Decentralized Advising Model:* The decentralized models provide academic advising to a particular academic unit. Accountability for advising quality lies within the academic department. Typical models include faculty-only and satellite models (Pardee, 2000).

*Shared Advising Model:* Shared advising models combine a centralized administration with support from faculty or staff in an academic department (Pardee, 2000).

*Customer (Student) Satisfaction:* “A global evaluation of a consumption
experience relative to the discrepancy between expectations and performance” (Hunt, Geiger-Oneto, & Varca, 2012).

Developmental Advising: Developmental advising goes beyond the prescriptive aspect of course selection and involves a more in-depth advising relationship that takes the holistic student into account. “Developmental counseling or advising is concerned not only with a specific personal or vocational decision but also with facilitating the student’s rational processes, environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavior awareness, and problem-solving, decision-making and evaluation skills” (Crookston, 1972, p. 16).

Prescriptive or Traditional Advising: The student is the patient and the advisor is the doctor. When the student brings in an ailment, the advisor provides a prescription in the form of advice. If the student follows the advice, the issue will be resolved. This relationship is authority based (Crookston, 1972).

Student Persistence: “Continued enrollment (or degree completion) at any higher education institution—including one different from the institution of initial enrollment—in the fall semesters of a student’s first and second year” (National Student Clearinghouse, 2015, p. 1).

Student Retention: “Continued enrollment (or degree completion) within the same higher education institution in the fall semesters of a student’s first and second year” (National Student Clearinghouse, 2015, p. 1).

Delimitations

This study is delimited to undergraduate students from a single university that serves nontraditional students. The students were attending the Spring 1 session in 2011–2015. Students in the study responded to an annual advising satisfaction survey, selected
the name of their academic advisor, answered the overall satisfaction question, and provided gender demographics within the survey.

**Organization of the Study**

This dissertation is composed of five chapters. The first chapter gives a general overview of the background and research problem. This chapter briefly introduces the study, its research questions, and the basic methodology followed.

The second chapter is a review of the relevant literature on academic advising satisfaction and gender communication. This chapter outlines prior research studies on student satisfaction with academic advising in a college setting. It also examines the role of gender communication and its impact on similar consumer dynamics.

Chapter III addresses the research methodology and data collection. The researcher shared how the archival survey data were collected and analyzed. This chapter also addresses the validity and reliability of the survey tool that was utilized.

Chapter IV presents the analysis and results of the research. This chapter provides detailed assessment of the survey data correlations and their impact on the academic advising relationship of the student. The key findings offer insight into how students are evaluating their advising experience.

The final chapter summarizes the findings and provides insight into the implications of these findings on the field of academic advising. This chapter makes inferences into possible outcomes as a result of the research findings. The researcher also provides opportunities to build upon this study and develop possibilities for further research.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a review of relevant literature to provide background and a framework for the study. First a foundational review of academic advising is provided, including the history of academic advising, the typical organizational structures for advising units, and common delivery types of advising. Next, the process of advising is reviewed. This includes advisor behavior, student perceptions of academic advising, and effective communication within the field of academic advising. The second major area that is examined is gender communication, beginning with the differences between male and female communication. Other pertinent gender topics, such as gender bias in higher education and gender authority roles, are examined. Finally, an examination of the confluence of gender and academic advising is provided.

**Academic Advising**

McGillin (2003) wrote:

Academic advising is the single most important relationship offered to students by an institution of higher education. It is through this relationship that students will engage in a critical narrative process that will give shape and meaning to their curricular and life choices and through which they come to understand the interconnections of knowledge and the curricula. (p. 88)

**History of Advising**

Kuhn (2008) and Frost (2000) outlined three separate eras of academic advising. The first began with the establishment of Harvard College in 1636, as it set the tone for liberal arts colleges in the United States. The period from 1636 through 1870 was defined as “higher education before academic advising was defined” (Frost, 2000, p. 4). During
this period of time, students took the same courses and did not have elective opportunities or other course choices. According to Lucas (2006), the primary form of support came from tutors who had recently completed the course work successfully. Professors did not specialize in a particular topic, and it was not uncommon to for the same person to teach multiple subjects. This began to change in the 1870s when curricular electives were introduced (Kuhn, 2008). Kuhn wrote:

The broader curriculum required faculty specialization….As institutions grew in size and complexity, and as more was demanded of faculty members in the way of research and service, traditional faculty responsibilities gradually unbundled, spawning new roles and positions, one of which was academic advisor. (p. 5)

In this new model, students selected a member of faculty as their advisor to provide support and guidance through the program.

“Academic Advising as the Unexamined Activity” (Frost, 2000, p. 7) is the second era of academic advising. This period began in 1870 and ran through 1970. Harvard instituted an elective system in 1872 and created a Board of Freshman Advisers that helped students in making course choices (Thelin, 2004). Several other colleges soon followed suit and defined the role of the advisor and the expected duties (Rudolph, 1962). According to Gilman (as cited in Kuhn, 2008), the President of Johns Hopkins University gave a thorough explanation of the expected duties of an undergraduate academic adviser at his university:

The adviser’s relation to the student is like that of a lawyer to his client or of a physician to one who seeks counsel. The office is not that of an inspector, nor of a proctor, nor of a recipient of excuses, nor of a distant and unapproachable
embodiment of the authority of the Faculty. It is the adviser’s business to listen to difficulties which the student assigned to him may bring to his notice; to act as his representative if any collective action is necessary on the part of the board of instruction; to see that every part of his course of studies has received the proper attention. (p. 5)

Though institutions set these lofty expectations, many did not monitor or evaluate these advisors. “Although the concept of advising was beginning to be defined, it remained an unexamined activity” (Kuhn, 2008, p. 6). As institutions of higher learning evolved through the early 1900s, the idea of a student-centered support philosophy began to take root. The American Council on Education (1949) described this in its Student Personnel Point of View. This holistic view of student support took many aspects of the student’s experience into account—“physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually—as well as intellectually” (p. 17). The Student Personnel Point of View helped to legitimize academic advising in higher education. Following World War II, the Serviceman Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the G.I. Bill, created federal support to allow returning servicemen to attend college. The impact of this bill on enrollment at universities of all levels was dramatic. “The federal mandate of the G.I. Bill led to an influx of veterans to colleges and universities, which created immediate and long-term implications for states and localities across the nation” (Adams, 2000, p. 8). These implications included changes in population and demographics, which made faculty advising models much more difficult to accomplish. As a result, professional advisors began to appear as a means to provide students the levels of support necessary for their success.
The third era of advising began as the field of academic advising began to be the focus of research and study. Defined as 1970 to present day, the third era was called “Academic Advising as a Defined and Examined Activity” (Frost, 2000, p. 10). This era started when, “those doing advising began to compare how they conducted advising to how it was being conducted at other institutions” (Kuhn, 2008, p. 7). It was at this time when the concept of prescriptive and developmental advising was developed by Crookston (1972) and O’Banion (1972).

The modern-day view of academic advising has continued to evolve. Beginning with the first National Conference on Academic Advising in 1977, the NACADA organization has recognized the advising profession and helped to highlight research within the field of advising (Thurmond & Miller, 2006). Toni Trombley, NACADA’s first president, spoke in 1979 about important themes for the organization. These themes included “advising has measurable impact upon students…components and criteria for quality advising must and can be isolated for the purposes of research, improvement and evaluation…research is essential to discover new advising methods and to improve present methods” (Trombley as cited in Beatty, 1991, p. 8).

**Academic Advising Organizational Structures**

Habley (1983, 1997) and Habley and McCauley (1987) described the various forms of administrative and organization structure that support academic advising at numerous institutions. The original seven structures that were defined included faculty only, supplementary, split, dual, total intake, satellite, and self-contained. A faculty-only model involved advising provided solely through instructional faculty with no centralized office to support advising. Supplementary models were similar to the faculty model but
with a centralized office to provide referral and generalize support in addition to the official advising of the designated faculty member. A split model allowed an advising office to support a specific population of students (e.g., undecided), while all other students were assigned to the faculty in the given academic unit for the student’s program of study. In a dual-advising model, students were supported by two advisors. The faculty member provided support specific to the major and an advising office provided support for general education requirements and other policy requirements. A total intake model provides staff support through a centralized office until a student reaches a certain point in his or her matriculation (e.g., completion of general education requirements) and then advising is handled by specific faculty members in the student’s given major. In a satellite model, each academic unit determines its own model for providing students with advising. Finally, a self-contained model provides all academic advising through a centralized office of professional advisors.

Pardee (2000) later organized these models into decentralized, centralized, and shared models. The decentralized models provide service to students only in a particular academic unit. Advising accountability lies within that academic department. Decentralized models include the faculty-only model and satellite model. The centralized models provide advising support from a central advising office. Accountability for the advising support comes from this central office, which typically includes a director and other staff members. Shared models combine a central administrative unit with support from faculty and staff from academic units. Miller (2012) postulated that, while Habley’s seven models still exist in part on many campuses, a number of recent changes have had an impact on those models. These changes include new technologies, globalization of
students, changes in institution type, and increases in accountability. These variations can make it difficult for researchers in the field to find information on like programs Miller recommends using four key questions to help find similarities across institutions when organizational structures are confusing:

- Who is advised?
- Who advises?
- Where is the advising done?
- How are advising responsibilities divided? (Miller, 2012)

Barren and Powell (2014) added their own questions to the organizational structures dynamic by also asking, “What will be the focus of advising?” (p. 16); “When will advising occur?” (p. 16); and “How will advisors-advisees interact?” (p. 16).

**Trends in Advising Delivery**

The advising models described above outline ways in which either faculty advisors, professional advisors, or a combination of the two provide support to students. Most institutions still require all of their faculty members to provide some level of advising as part of their faculty role (Habley, 2000). Faculty advisors play such a critical role in connecting what the students are learning in the classroom to the overall academic program and the institutional mission (McGillin, 2003). Even systems that rely on professional advisors still need faculty expertise to help develop approaches that will help support the goals of the institution and the academic program. Once the only way that students received advising, recent ACT survey data show that faculty-only models of advising delivery are decreasing in frequency in favor of models that utilize professional or peer advisors (Habley, 2004). Peer advisors are students who provide organized
support to fellow students, while professional advisors are employees of the university whose primary responsibility is to provide advising support to students.

“Professional academic advisors are generally employed to devote the majority of their workday to meeting directly with students to address academic curriculum requirements, college policies and procedures, and general student development and success issues” (Self, 2008, p. 269). Recent membership data from NACADA also show a continued rise in the prominence of professional advisors (NACADA, 2008, 2014). In 2008, the ratio of professional advisors to faculty advisors was 11.5:1. By 2014, that ratio had risen to 19:1. In a 2011 Survey by NACADA (as cited in Carlstrom & Miller, 2013) with 770 institutions participating, respondents were asked to indicate the positions at their institutions that were responsible for advising undergraduates. Among the respondents, 81.6% indicated that professional academic advisors played a role in undergraduate students advising; 78.2% indicated that faculty advisors played a role in undergraduate advising. Adjunct professors, peer advisors, and other paraprofessionals made up smaller subsets of the advising population.

**Effective Advising**

In *Academic Advising for Student Success: A System of Shared Responsibility*, Frost, Association for the Study of Higher Education, and George Washington University (1991) shared three reasons why the advising relationship is important:

1. Advising, unlike most out-of-class activities, is a service provided to most students,
2. advising provides a natural setting for out of class contacts with faculty to occur, and
3. advising involves intellectual matters, the most important area of concern for students. (p. 10)
Nutt (2014) shared this understanding in the current-day view of academic advising:

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. (p. 251)

Nutt (2014) wrote further in explaining the necessary skills in effective advising. These skills include communication skills, questioning skills, and referral skills.

Communication skills are important to advisors because, “advisors must understand that listening effectively to both what their advisees are saying and what they are not saying is an essential communication skill in creating an environment of trust in the advising relationship” (p. 252). Questioning skills are also important. “Learning how to ask questions effectively in order to assist students is vitally important” (p. 253). Referral skills can only be effective when advisors have successfully listened and questioned the advisee. It is only when the advisor truly understands the issues that the student is facing that they can effectively point the student toward resources that can be of assistance.

Beyond communication skills, effective advisors also have an exceptional understanding of planning and process (Nutt, 2014). Lack of planning and process can be one of the biggest pitfalls. “Often the best intentions and well-developed skills of advisors are overshadowed by their lack of attention to the advising session itself” (p. 256). Recommendations for effective planning begin with utilizing a more proactive outreach style as students may not meet with an advisor without this type of outreach. The advisor must learn as much as possible about the student prior to the meeting. Finally, it is imperative that the advisor help the student to understand the importance of
having regularly scheduled meetings rather than quick questions in the hallway when
opportunities present themselves.

A strong process for conducting the meeting is another hallmark of an effective
advisor (Nutt, 2014). Building rapport and setting an agenda will allow a meeting to have
a strong start. Advisors “must also demonstrate effective means of ending the meeting
with appropriate summaries, collaborative goal setting, and documentation” (p. 256).

De Sousa and Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2005)
presented six key conditions that advisors can control that can have a positive impact on
student success. These conditions were based upon consistent practices across 20
universities with very different backgrounds and characteristics. The coalition was known
as Documenting Effective Educational Practices. These Documenting Effective
Educational Practices schools varied in size, location, and selectivity, among other
factors. However, they were successful in accomplishing high graduation rates and high
student satisfaction on the National Survey for Student Engagement. The six conditions
provided were:

1. Adopt a talent development approach to advising;

2. Think of advising as if it was a tag team;

3. Help students map out a path to success;

4. Focus on meaningful interactions with students;

5. Connect students to co-curricular learning opportunities, as what happens
outside the classroom influences learning inside the classroom;

6. Encourage students to seek out and learn from experiences with different
forms of diversity (De Sousa & Indiana University Center for
De Sousa and Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research points to an “improvement-oriented ethos” (p. 4) as being the key factor that helped these institutions achieve success in their academic advising model.

There are obvious connections between Nutt’s (2014) suggestions for effective one-on-one advising and the Documenting Effective Educational Practices findings from De Sousa and Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2005). Nutt discussed the importance of communication, question asking, referrals, planning, and process. Communication is important to conditions 1 and 4 of De Sousa and Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research. Question asking supports conditions 1, 3, and 6. Referrals are integral to conditions 2, 5, and 6. Planning and process are key to conditions 3 and 4. These different, yet supporting, views of effective academic advising provide key indicators as to what behaviors advisors can exhibit to support better student success.

**Advisor Effectiveness**

Understanding effective and ineffective advisor behavior in general will be an important first step before considering how those behaviors can be influenced by gender. In a qualitative study in 2003, Schlosser, Knox, Moskovitz, and Hill identified general themes for graduate students who were and were not satisfied with their academic advising experiences. Students who had positive advising experiences reported more frequent meetings with their advisor, an opportunity to select who their advisor was, a feeling of interest from their advisor, and an overall perception of being considered an
equal. Conversely, students who were unsatisfied with their advising experience, reported more infrequent meetings, were assigned their advisor without choice, felt there was little interest by the advisor in the student’s area of study, and little professional engagement (Schlosser et al., 2003).

In 2007, Jordan outlined 27 Characteristics of Effective Advisors across a broad area of skills. The list of characteristics comprised a number that were focused on communication skills. These communication focused characteristics included:

- Engage in attentive listening;
- Relate to advisees of many cultures, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds;
- Convey openness and friendliness;
- Express caring and empathy;
- Deliver hard news in a caring way;
- Serve as effective communicators;
- Ask probing questions. (p. 37)

The remaining characteristics centered around other key areas for effective advisors such as organization, knowledge, creativity, and patience.

In 2008, Habley shared 10 categories that are important for assessing the effectiveness of academic advising at the individual advisor level. These 10 categories were: “interest in advising; interpersonal and communication skills; frequency of contact; initiates contact; monitors student progress; uses appropriate information sources; appropriate referrals; knowledge of institutional regulations, policies, offerings, and procedures; available/accessibility; demonstrates a concerned and caring attitude” (p. 7). Habley went further to group these categories into three key questions. “Do they know?
Are they there? But most of all, ask do they care” (p. 9). These categories could be organized under each of the key questions as is done in Table 1.

Table 1

**Advising Assessment Categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions &amp; Sub-Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do they know?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses appropriate information sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of institutional regulations, policies, offerings, and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are they there?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiates contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors student progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available/accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do they care?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal and communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates concerned and caring attitude</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Advising Assessment Survey**

Crockett and American College Testing Program (1988) recognized the importance of measuring the effectiveness of academic advising services. His four-step process for administering an academic advising audit is one of the earliest tools for examining academic advising effectiveness. Other organizations have embraced the idea of assessment in academic advising. The Council for the Advancement of Standards (2013) called out the importance of gathering data to assess advising effectiveness. The main academic advising association, NACADA, conducts an annual assessment institute to build skill in the area of institutional assessment. Habley’s (2008) presentation, *Using Assessment to Improve Academic Advising*, was the foundation for the creation of a
survey tool called the AAS. Habley’s presentation outlined the difference between an
evaluation, which looks at the “merit, worth, and significance of someone or something”
(p. 2), and an assessment, which is focused on fostering improvement instead of
evaluating. Other research in the area of advising assessment (Aiken-Wisneiwski, 2010;
Campbell, Nutt, Robbins, Kirk-Kuwaye, & Higa, 2005) supports this approach of using
assessment as a means of improving student services.

While Habley (2008) listed several reasons that institutions should pursue
assessment, the primary reason was whether the department’s actions were aligned with
its mission. This connects with Maki (2002, 2004) and the assessment cycle, as well as
Darling’s (2010) expansion on the assessment cycle definitions. All of the researchers
(Darling, 2010; Habley, 2008; Maki, 2002, 2004) described the cycle as being based
upon foundational keys of mission and vision. They also see assessment as an iterative
process that provides time to collect data, interpret them, and implement change, before
repeating.

Under the umbrella of assessment, Habley (2008) provided multiple measures that
could be used when looking at an advising department. These measures included looking
at student satisfaction, getting input from advisors, looking at systematic indicators, and
measuring student learning outcomes. He provided specific factors to be utilized when
assessing student satisfaction: interest in advising, initiates contact, frequent contact,
communication skills, monitors my progress, referrals, knowledge, concerned and caring,
and available-accessible (Habley, 2008).

Nemeth (2013), using Habley’s foundation, worked with a committee of academic
advisors to develop the survey tool now known as the AAS. The committee began by
reviewing Habley’s initial nine assessment categories and collapsed them into five categories. While several of the categories remain (e.g., Interest in Advising, Monitors Student Progress), other were combined into a single category. Initiates contact, frequent contact, and available-accessible became level of student contact (Table 2). Knowledge and referrals were combined to create program knowledge. Communication skills were captured under Concern & Caring.

Table 2

Development of Academic Advising Survey Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Habley (2008)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Nemeth (2013)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Advising</td>
<td>Interest in Advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiates Contact</td>
<td>Level of Student Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Contact</td>
<td>Monitors Student Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors Student Progress</td>
<td>Program Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td>Concern &amp; Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned, Caring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available, Accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on these categories, the committee created an initial list of questions for each category. A question was also added to the end of the survey that captured the student’s overall satisfaction with his or her academic advising experience. The committee shared the questions with all advisors at the university for their input. As a
result of their feedback some questions were adjusted and a new category was created, Student Impressions to emphasize the responsibilities that students have in their advising relationship. The AAS was piloted with a small group of students to test its effectiveness using a 5-point Likert scale. However, the results proved difficult to interpret. Many students gravitated to the neutral 3-point option. Student comments indicated that they sometimes chose 3 because they had no experience with the category. Based on pilot responses, the committee adjusted the AAS in two key ways. First, its members added a not applicable category that allowed students to opt out of certain questions that did not apply to their experience. Additionally, they adjusted the survey scale from a 5-point to a 4-point scale, which prevented students from choosing a neutral category. The committee also conducted a factor analysis on the questions and used the results to remove redundant questions. This university has conducted the AAS annually for the last six years using the same questions and deployment methods. The results are part of the institutions internal assessment process and are used to evaluate overall student perceptions of the academic advising program and how it can be improved (Nemeth, 2013).

**Student Perceptions**

Studies have looked at how students perceive their academic advising experience. Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino (2004) found that the depth of conversation and level of care displayed by the advisor were important factors in the student’s satisfaction with the exchange. “Regardless of the particular tasks to be addressed in the advising session, an advisor needs to give specific care to establish a relationship with the advisee and convey warmth and support in this relationship” (p. 57). Additionally, Mottarella et al.
found that female students felt the academic advising relationship was more important than male students did. Further, among students who had prior experience with an advisor, there was a preference for a female advisor. Overall, the importance of warm and supportive relationships is highlighted. “The depth and personal nature of the advising relationship contributes the most to student satisfaction with their advising” (p. 59).

Personal connection between advisor and advisee is less important than this warm and caring nature. The power of this warm and caring approach can be utilized to reach students who seem more difficult to build connections. “Extra effort on the part of an advisor to build deeper and warmer connections with students who are relatively less extraverted, agreeable, or conscientious will benefit the advisee-advisor relationship” (p. 59). This approach is equally effective with other nontraditional student groups such as adult learners.

J. B. Crockett and Crawford (1989), using Myers-Briggs indicators, went beyond student classifications to determine connections between student personality styles and the type of advising interaction that they preferred—prescriptive or developmental. Students who were considered more feeling or intuitive had a preference for developmental style advising. Conversely, students who were considered more thinking preferred the more direct approach of prescriptive advising.

Nadler and Nadler (1993) conducted a study of undergraduate student perceptions of their academic advisor and found that male students were more likely than female students to recommend their advisor to a friend. The gender of the advisor had a great deal of impact on student perceptions in the study. Students saw female advisors more frequently and felt they displayed more empathy. “The preference is especially
pronounced for female students, who saw their male advisers least frequently and female
advisers most often” (p.126).

Bennett (1982) looked at students’ perceptions of faculty and how they evaluated
their faculty members. Students expected and received more time and personal attention
from their female instructors than male instructors. Although students had greater
demands of their female instructors, they were more critical of them in their effectiveness
ratings.

**Communication in Academic Advising**

Communication is an important aspect of the academic advising profession. The
Council for the Advancement of Standards (2013) recommended that all academic
advisors, “foster communication that deepens understanding of identity, culture, self-
expression, and heritage” (p. 15). Chase and Chase (2007) emphasized the importance of
communication in the role of the academic advisor, “Effective communication is a
continuous and significant task for academic advisors” (p. 1). Kansas State University
(2014), the home institution for NACADA, offers a Master of Science in Academic
Advising. A required course for this program is Interpersonal Relations of Academic
Advising, which “focuses on developmental communications/interpersonal relations
skills” (p. 1). NACADA (2005) has also asserted, “communicating in useful and efficient
ways” (p. 1) is critical for effective advising relationships. “Communication skills are
perhaps the most important set of skills needed by advisors in building relationships with
their advisees” (Nutt, 2014, p. 252). Nutt lists seven specific communication skills that
will be important for advisors to master in order to be successful:

1. Establishing and maintaining eye contact with students [as culturally
2. Avoiding the inclination to interrupt students with solutions before students have fully explained their ideas or problems.

3. Being aware of body language.

4. Focusing on the content of the students’ words.

5. Focusing on the tone of the students’ words.

6. Acknowledging what students are saying through verbal and nonverbal feedback.

7. Reflecting on or paraphrasing what students have said (Nutt, 2014, p. 252-253).

Jordan (2014) described the type of communication required by advisors as an active process. “It is characterized by advisors who convey information, ideas, and feelings accurately and understand the information, ideas and feelings of the student” (p. 213). Jordan goes further in stressing the importance of communication to an academic advisor, “If advisors lack fundamental effective communication skills, they cannot perform their jobs” (p. 213). Barnett, Roach, and Smith (2006) found that providing communication microskill training to academic advisors produced increases in session effectiveness and improved the advisor-advisee relationship. Further emphasizing the importance of effective communication and academic advisors, Swecker, Fifolt, and Searby (2013) found that student retention in first-generation students increased by 13% with each advising meeting with the student and advisor.

Jordan (2014) described a number of communication skills that can impact the student and their perceptions of the interaction. These skills include self-awareness about
physical and emotional states of the advisor, as well as physical behaviors and personal biases. Advisors also need to have an awareness of the student and a willingness to observe important physical factors that can add to the conversation. Active listening, question asking, and critical thinking are other important skill sets that advisors need to foster and develop. Along with effective referral skills, these key communication components called out by Jordan also align with those shared by Nutt (2014).

**Gender Communication**

**Differences in Males and Females**

Research in masculinity and femininity picked up in the 1970s, while the differences between men and women have been a subject of study for many hundreds of years. Early research showed that women were perceived to be more relationship focused, reactive, and interdependent, while men were perceived to be more independent, proactive, and focused on outcomes (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Spence & Helmreich, 1978). Women were perceived to be friendlier (Mehrabian, 1971) and more social than men (Duran & Kelly, 1985).

Bem (1974) produced an inventory of traits that were considered masculine, feminine, or shared. The Bem Sex Role Inventory has been a research tool that continued to be used decades later (Hoffman & Borders, 2001). According to Beere (1990), the Bem Sex Role Inventory has been used widely to investigate gender role orientation. Traits that the Bem Sex Role Inventory designates as masculine include, “acts as a leader, aggressive, ambitious, analytical, assertive, independent, makes decisions easily, and willing to take risks” (Bem, 1974, p. 1). Traits that the Bem Sex Role Inventory designates as feminine include, “affectionate, childlike,
does not use harsh language, gullible, loyal, shy, soft spoken, understanding, warm, and yielding” (p. 1). Hoffman and Borders (2001) concluded that societal perceptions of masculinity and femininity had dramatically shifted throughout 25 years and that the tool had flaws in the current day. “Men and women are inappropriately defined and labeled in terms of their masculinity and femininity” (p. 52). Hoffman and Borders go further by recommending that research would be best served by “ceasing to reinforce the dichotomy between men and women” (p. 53) by exploring possibilities of shared traits within the genders. Knaak (2004) and Dworkin (2005) echoed concern about the broad categorization of all males as masculine and females as feminine.

Ridgeway (2009) theorized that gender is one of “two or three primary frames for organizing social relations” (p. 145). These frames are important structures for organizing societal relationships and behavior. Ridgeway (2009) used the idea of a common goal that requires coordination. These frames of understanding are important in accomplishing those common goals. “We need a shared way of categorizing and defining ‘who’ self and other are in the situation so that we can anticipate how each of us is likely to act and coordinate our actions appropriately” (p. 147). Glick and Fiske (1999) showed that the male-female difference is almost always a cultural category in a sociological system. Studies show that human beings quickly and without thought categorize those with whom they interact into a sex category (Ito & Urland, 2003; Stangor, Lynch, Duan, & Glass, 1992). This sort of broad categorization happens regardless of whether we meet the individual in person or virtually. When thinking about an individual that is even imagined, we will assign a gender based on the information that is available. Further, gender stereotypes and beliefs exist in contemporary society (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu,
When combining the factors of immediate gender assignment with those existing stereotypes, the result is instant expectations as to how a particular interaction may take place based on these assumptions (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).

**Differences in Male and Female Communication**

Men and women approach communication in very different ways. Research has shown that women view communication as more relational and as a means of supporting social interaction, while the male approach is focused on exerting dominance and achieving outcomes (Leaper, 1991; Maltz & Borker, 1982; Mason, 1995; Wood, 1996). “In general, women are expected to use language to enhance social connection, and men are expected to use language to enhance social dominance” (Basow & Rubenfeld, 2003, p. 183). Basow and Rubenfeld further discussed that gender typing had more influence on perceived communication than gender. Montgomery and Norton (1981) found differences in the how people perceived the communicator when controlling for gender. Women were more likely to be classified as animated in their communicator image, while men were seen as precise.

Dinnerstein (1977) discussed how male communication was a struggle with the outside world and other males, while female communication was internally focused. Popular literature highlights the difference in how men and women view conversations within relationships. Men view conversations as a way to establish and maintain status and dominance within the relationship. Women view communication as an opportunity to bond over communal issues and topics (Gray, 1992; Tannen 1991). When faced with interpersonal conversations, men are more likely than women to offer possible solutions.
to interpersonal problems as a means of avoiding deeper conversations in these areas (Basow & Rubenfeld, 2003). Academic research shows that women are less likely to use powerful speech, such as swearing or interrupting, and this may be a result of self-perception of a lower status when compared to men (Lakoff, 1976; Thorne & Henley, 1975). The lack of powerful speech can create negative impressions for women in authority roles.

**Gender and Authority Roles**

Research on leadership style points to key differences in how male and female leaders perform their jobs. Eagley, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) conducted a metastudy on leadership by gender. They identified key differences in accepted leadership style for men and women. It was more acceptable for male leaders to adhere to a more traditional leadership style that was more autocratic or directive. Conversely, female leaders were more accepted when they utilized a more collaborative leadership style that encouraged participation. Further, Eagley et al. suggested that an attitudinal bias may be at play from those being led, both male and female.

Jacobson and Effertz (1974) found that male leaders were judged more harshly than female leaders when team performance fell short of expectation. However, male followers were judged more leniently than female followers when team performance fell below expectations. A Porter, Geis, and Jennings (1983) study found that women were less likely to be seen as leaders in initial visual judgements. Participants were shown photographs of five-person groups and asked to identify the leaders within the group. When men were seated at the head of a mixed-sex group, they were identified as the leader. When women were seated at the head of the table in a similar setting, they were
ignored. Porter et al. found that these biases may be subconscious and were present even when participants had good intentions.

Additional studies by Eagly et al. (1992) found that women were more penalized than men for taking actions that were in contrast to the expectation for their gender. Women leaders were expected to take on traits that were expected of leaders (e.g., authoritative, decisive) while maintaining traits that were expected of women (e.g., showing care, being considerate). The more that women acted in contrast to their expected gender, the more they experienced prejudiced reactions from those who they supervised. Male leaders did not encounter a similar reaction.

The relationships among gender, leadership, and promotion have been studied extensively (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Carless, 1998; Druskat, 1994; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, Hohannesen-Schmidt, & Department of Human Resource, 2011). Carless (1998) found that female managers were rated as more transformational in their leadership style than male managers. Druskat (1994) also found that transformational leadership traits may be found more prominently in females. Gender stereotyping studies have focused on the comparison of descriptive components, traits that a gender does possess, and prescriptive components, traits that a gender should possess (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Vinkenburg et al., 2011). When the individuals making decisions about promotions believe that descriptive traits of women run counter to position needs or if they believe women should not display prescriptive traits, it can create situations of gender bias (Vinkenburg et al., 2011).
Gender Bias in Higher Education

Many studies in academia have found an inherent gender bias in how both males and females perceive others. Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham, and Handelsman (2012) used a double-blind study to uncover gender bias of both male and female faculty toward female undergraduate students. Faculty members saw female students as less competent and hirable, which translated to fewer mentorship opportunities and lower funding. Bennett’s (1982) study of faculty evaluations found no evidence of direct bias, but uncovered differing student perceptions of male and female faculty. Female faculty were expected to be more available and were rated more harshly when they did not live up to those expectations. Knobloch-Westerwick, Glynn, and Huge (2013) found that both male and female graduate students gave significantly lower ratings to abstracts authored by females, especially when the topics were perceived to be male-typed. When considering grant applications, peer-reviewed articles, and advising recommendations, the findings show a more difficult path for female scholars. Thompson (2015a, 2015b) found that a national selection of practicing advisors perceived female students to be less capable than male students in math and English.

Connecting Academic Advising and Gender Communication

Since 1976, the number of female undergraduate students has surpassed the number of male undergraduate students in the United States (Figure 1). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016b), the gap has widened and is projected to grow wider in the years to come. Academic advisors are primarily female. Membership demographics for the largest professional association of academic advisors, NACADA, shows that 70.2% of its members in 2011 identified as female, 20% identified as male,
and 9.8% left gender blank (National Academic Advising Association, n.d.). As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve, it will become increasingly important to understand which communication tendencies and factors have both positive and negative impact on student satisfaction with academic advising.

Figure 1. Undergraduate Population by Gender. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Total undergraduate fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status, sex of student, and control and level of institution: Selected years, 1970 through 2026*

A recent study by Thompson (2015b) found, “Advisors discount the ability of female students relative to males by statistically significant magnitudes in both mathematics and English” (p. 1). The study also found that male advisors were more likely to recommend the field of mathematics to students than female advisors. The study found that gender biases disappear when advisors are made aware of the general purpose of the study. These findings show that advisors may have biases impacting their daily work with students without their realization.
Summary

Academic advising has been a part of higher education, in some form, since the early 17th century (Frost 2000; Kuhn, 2008). The 1970s ushered in a new era of advising as a practice being studied and researched. Early research included the definition of delivery structures for academic advising (Habley, 1983, 1997; Habley & McCauley, 1987), later defined by Pardee (2000) as centralized, decentralized, and shared structures. These models still exist today, though they have adapted to changes that include new technologies, globalization of students, changes in institution type, and increases in accountability (Miller, 2012). What once was a service provided solely by faculty, the landscape of advising is changing to include both professional advisors and peer advisors (Habley, 2000, 2004).

Advising has become an important part of the student experience because it is one of the few opportunities for students to build a one-to-one relationship with a key member of the institution (Frost, Association for the Study of Higher, ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, George Washington University, 1991; Nutt, 2014). To be effective within this role, advisors must possess communication skills, questioning skills, and referral skills (De Sousa & Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, 2005; Nutt, 2014). Beyond these communication skills, advisors must also be excellent at planning and process. In order to assess advisor effectiveness and provide appropriate training, Habley (2008) defined 10 categories and divided those categories into three key questions: “Do they know? Are they there? But most of all, ask do they care” (p. 9). Based on this information, an AAS was developed to allow students to provide feedback on Habley’s categories regarding their experience with a particular
academic advisor (Nemeth, 2013).

Other studies have looked at student perceptions of their advising experience and provided interesting results. Mottarella et al. (2004) found that the warmth of communication in the advising experience was an important factor to student satisfaction, and that when students had prior understanding of academic advising, they preferred female advisors. Crockett and Crawford (1989) found a connection between the student’s personality and their preference for prescriptive or developmental advising. Feeling students preferred developmental, while thinking students preferred prescriptive. Nadler and Nadler (1993) found that gender impacted the frequency of advising visits for students. Female students would visit male advisors less frequently and female advisors more frequently. The importance of communication within the field of academic advising is emphasized repeatedly (Chase & Chase, 2007; Council for the Advancement of Standards, 2013; Kansas State University, 2014).

Gender studies became more prominent in the 1970s. Bem (1974) developed an inventory that aided the study of gender, which was utilized in the decades that followed. Recent studies consider the binary approach of gender studies to be somewhat limited in tying masculine traits to males and feminine traits to females (Dworkin, 2005; Hoffman & Borders, 2001; Knaak, 2004). In looking at communication by gender, studies have found that women tend to communicate as a means of establishing relationships and creating social interactions while men are more focused on exerting dominance or achieving outcomes (Leaper, 1991; Maltz & Borker, 1982; Mason, 1995; Wood, 1996). Gender differences also occur in authority roles (Eagley et al., 1992). Male authority figures were expected to be more authoritarian and directive while female authority
figures were better received when they were collaborative.

Studies have found evidence of similar gender biases within higher education (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2013; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). A recent study even found gender bias among academic advisors (Thompson, 2015a, 2015b). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016b), the number of females entering college is far outpacing the number of males, with that gap continuing to increase. Recent membership data from the largest academic advising association show that the professional of academic advising is predominantly female (National Academic Advising Association, n.d.). Given the direction of this landscape, it will be important to research the impact of gender communication on the academic advising relationship.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter provides the methodology of the study, with the purpose statement and research questions outlined to provide the basis for the study. This correlational study explores the relationship between the student-advisor gender pairing and the satisfaction score from the student regarding the advising relationship. Data have been collected from 9,000 student responses across six years of annual surveys on student satisfaction with academic advising. The population and sample are identified and defined. The survey instrument and data collection procedures are outlined and detailed. Additionally, limitations of the study are described.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting.

Research Questions

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male, female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?
Research Design

This study was a descriptive correlational research study utilizing archival survey data. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined a descriptive study as “research that describes an existing or past phenomenon in quantitative terms” (p. 486). Creswell (2005) described quantitative research as, “a type of educational research in which the researcher decides what to study, asks specific, narrow questions, collects numeric (numbered) data from participants, analyzes these numbers using statistics, and conducts the inquiry in an unbiased, objective manner” (p. 39). The data collected were numeric scale survey responses from six iterations of the annual advising assessment survey (Appendix B) conducted at the institution. The nature of the survey responses made quantitative analysis more appropriate.

Creswell (2005) described correlational research designs as being useful when “investigators use the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores” (p. 325). Because this study examined the relationship between student-advisor gender pairing and the numeric satisfaction score provided by the student, a correlational approach was appropriate.

This quantitative correlational study measured the means and averages of student satisfaction with their advising experience and the gender pairing of student and advisor. Satisfaction survey data were segmented into four groups representing the student-advisor relationship (male-male, male-female, female-male, and female-female).
Population

According to Williams (2004) population is “a complete set of all individuals that meet some criteria or another” (p. 7). The population for this study consisted of four-year, private, nonprofit universities that serve undergraduate, nontraditional, adult learners. This segment includes universities such as Brandman University, University of La Verne, National University, Pepperdine University, Notre Dame de Namur University, and several others. Nonprofit universities typically have more resources than state universities to devote to student services resources such as academic advising. For-profit universities are less likely to devote resources toward activities such as academic advising because they do not have a direct link to bottom-line performance. When for-profit universities do utilize advising, it is of a more prescriptive nature. As a result, nonprofit universities will employ more academic advisors and offer lower student to advisor ratios. Because of the lower ratios, there is a greater chance for a deeper, developmental connection between students attending a nonprofit university than those who would attend other institutions. The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (2015), also known as the AICCU, lists 86 nonprofit universities throughout California in its 2015–2016 college guide. Most of these universities provide some level of academic advising by faculty or professional advisors on the campus.

Target Population

Creswell (2012) defined the target population as, “the actual list of sampling units from which the sample is selected” (p. 381). In order to have a reasonable sample size of students who would have experienced academic advising and responded to a survey regarding those experiences, schools of at least 2,000 undergraduates were considered for
the target population. The resulting target population consisted of 23 AICCU institutions that were nonprofit and served at least 2,000 undergraduate students.

**Sample**

“A sample is a subset of a population” (Williams, 2004, p. 7). Williams acknowledged that differences between populations and samples can be difficult to differentiate. “If you’d like to generalize from the individuals you’re directly studying to a larger group, you’ve got a sample” (p. 377). According to Creswell (2012), the sample is “the group of participants in a study selected from the target population from which the researcher generalizes to the target population” (p. 381).

Convenience sampling allowed the researcher to gain access to more than 9,000 individual survey responses from a single university in the target population. These survey responses were collected from six years of academic advising survey data. The responses tied a specific student, whose gender was known, to a specific advisor, whose gender was known. The use of convenience sampling can “influence the results by introducing unexpected or uncontrolled factors” (Emerson, 2015, p. 166). “The best way to reduce the influence of uncontrolled factors is to use random sampling, in which participants are randomly identified from the population of people who meet the criteria for inclusion in the study” (p. 166). Ideally, the researcher would have used academic advising survey results from multiple institutions to reduce potential bias and to increase the ability to generalize the results to the larger population. Unfortunately, the number of institutions that utilize an academic advising survey is very small. Further, the number of those that do survey academic advising and tie those survey results to the gender of both the student and the advisor is even narrower.
The sample utilized for this study consists of students at a single institution. This private nonprofit university is listed in AICCU’s 2015–2016 college guide. The university has 26 locations throughout the states of California and Washington, as well as an online campus with students throughout the United States. The university has approximately 3,500 undergraduate students enrolled each session and 6,000 unique students who will attend some portion of the academic year. Females represented 61% of the university’s undergraduate population in Fall 2014. The university is ethnically diverse—10% Black or African American, 29% Hispanic or Latino, and 45% White. The largest undergraduate age demographic grouping is 25–29 (26%), followed by 30–34 (20%), and 40–49 (17%). As this institution primarily serves nontraditional students, the student population is principally female and has a diverse representation of age groups and ethnicities (Table 3). The university provides academic advisors to the student population at a 150:1 ratio. Between 2011 and 2016, the university has employed 50 to 60 academic advisors at any one time.

Table 3

*Census Data for University Being Analyzed January Session 2011 and 2012*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2011 Undergraduate Census</th>
<th>% of 2011 Census Pop</th>
<th>2012 Undergraduate Census</th>
<th>% of 2012 Census Pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1005</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>1184</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am Indian/Alaskan</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African Amer</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Cultural</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1408</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 21</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–40</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–45</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 45</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine thousand undergraduate students who completed the annual AAS during the Spring trimester 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016. All students enrolled in the trimester were given the opportunity to respond to the survey administered via the Survey Monkey Web site. The sample includes students who completed the voluntary questionnaire regarding their satisfaction with their academic advising experience with a particular advisor.

Data from undergraduate students enrolled in the January session were collected using the AAS survey tool and students asked to rate their academic advising interactions across six advising categories as well as an overall rating on their advising experience. Survey respondents were given a list of advisors at their campus location and asked to select their advisor’s name. Additionally, students were asked to self-report several demographic factors including gender, age, ethnicity, and stage of program completion.

**Instrumentation**

Instrumentation is “the actual survey instrument to be used in the proposed study” (Creswell, 2005, p. 179). The AAS survey instrument was designed to measure student satisfaction with academic advising based on the Wes Habley (2008) presentation *Using Assessment to Improve Academic Advising*. The survey was designed to gather data to
determine the overall effectiveness of academic advising at the institutional, campus, and individual advisor level. Creswell (2005) offered four steps to constructing an instrument, “reviewing the literature, presenting general questions to a target group, constructing questions for the item pool, and pilot testing the items” (p. 160). Each of these steps was followed in the construction of the AAS survey tool. The survey tool (Appendix B) utilizes six broad categories to assess student interpretation of their advising experience. These six categories include advisor interest in advising, level of student contact, monitors student progress, program knowledge, concern and caring, and student impressions-outcomes. Additionally, the survey asks about overall satisfaction as well as several demographic questions, including gender, age, ethnicity, and stage of program completion.

Across the six categories, the survey uses 27 individual expectations that students are asked to rate on the “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” Disagree,” and “Strongly Disagree” levels. The survey was deployed utilizing Survey Monkey, a secure survey tool. Student satisfaction with each of the expectations was measured on a 4-point Likert scale, where 4 represented “Strongly Agree,” 3 represented “Agree,” 2 represented “Disagree,” and 1 represented “Strongly Disagree.” The survey was originally designed as a 5-point Likert scale but was later adapted to 4 points for reasons described in greater detail in Chapter II. According to Dittrich, Francis, Hatzinger, and Katzenbeisser (2007), one primary use of a Likert scale, “is concerned more with providing an ordering of the relative importance of a set of items, and how this relative importance might vary according to other characteristics of the individual” (p. 4). In this case, the other characteristics to be considered include the gender of both the advisor and the survey respondent.
A pilot test of the instrument was conducted in May 2010 across seven of the university’s 26 campuses. Based on the responses and respondent comments, adjustments were made to the survey prior to deploying university wide. Respondents had suggested the inclusion of a choice of N/A for categories that the student had not experienced as a part of their advising experience. This adjustment was added to the final survey tool. Additionally, a factor analysis was conducted to determine question overlap. The internal assessment committee that designed the survey reviewed redundant questions and removed questions from the survey as necessary. Once the pilot test was complete, the survey remained consistent between 2011–2016.

To achieve content validity for the survey, several focus groups were conducted with subject matter experts. These advising experts were asked to review the overall survey categories as well as the questions that were captured in each category. Qualitative data were captured from these focus group discussions and used by the steering committee to adjust and remove questions from the survey based on the feedback.

Mildred Patten (2012) defined a measure as valid “to the extent that it measures what it is designed to measure and accurately performs the function(s) it is purported to perform” (p. 61). To establish validity, the survey was reviewed by 55 academic advisors. Based on their recommendations, modifications were made to the survey. Additionally, the survey scores for overall satisfaction with academic advising was compared to the institutions bi-annual student satisfaction survey scores for academic advising by campus and tested for correlation.

Patten (2012) stated, “A test is said to be reliable if it yields consistent results” (p. 73). As the advising assessment survey has been deployed annually for three years, there
is the ability to compare multiple years of results for consistency (Table 4).

Table 4

Advising Assessment Survey Responses and Satisfaction Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Score For Overall Advising Satisfaction (4-point Scale)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,616</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,342</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,644</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Permission was granted by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Enrollment and Student Affairs to utilize the AAS survey data for the purpose of this research analysis (see Appendix C). With the approval of the university’s Institutional Review Board, all archived responses from the 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 advising assessment surveys were collected. Pursuant to Institutional Review Board regulations, all responses gathered were kept confidential and secured in a locked file cabinet. Students completed the data via Survey Monkey through a unique link tied to their student ID. Survey links were e-mailed to each student’s institutional e-mail address during week 3 of the Spring 1 session. The survey was open for responses for two weeks. Students were encouraged by their local campus staff to complete the survey. Additionally, each student was sent multiple e-mail reminders with a link to the survey.

Upon collection, all six years of data were aggregated. All unique identifying student indicators were removed from the data set before being shared with the researcher. The survey asks each student to choose the name of their advisor. Students also have an option of “I don’t know” that can be selected if they cannot find the name of
their advisor. Because of the need to connect the survey responses with the gender of the advisor, all responses that are not tied to an advisor name were evaluated separately to determine if patterns exist and how they compare to the other gender groupings. The primary survey question to be reviewed was: Overall, I am satisfied with my academic advising experience. Students who did not complete this question were removed from the data for analysis. Since the gender of the student is important in this study, respondents who did not include a response to the question about gender in the demographic data were removed from the data set.

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of data analysis is, “to look at scores from a sample, and use the results to draw inferences or make predictions about the population” (Creswell, 2005, p. 186). Quantitative student satisfaction data stratified between various gender groupings (Male-Female, Male-Male, Female-Male, Female-Female) were analyzed. The null hypothesis is that if there are no effects on gender, there should be no statistically significant differences between the various gender pairings. This anonymized data were collected throughout six years (2011–2016) from roughly 1,500 students per year through a voluntary survey for a total of approximately 9,000 participants. The satisfaction scoring system was on a 4-point scale (Very Dissatisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Very Satisfied).

The initial review of the data was done to ensure accuracy, applicability to the research question, and completeness of the data set. The survey instrument data was converted into a numerical scoring value. For example, “Very Dissatisfied” was given a score of 1, while “Very Satisfied” was given a score of 4. The survey participants are
students who are all undergraduate students in various stages of their matriculation, but we also examined and normalized for their level of advancement. Survey data from early cohorts (e.g., 2011) were also correlated with matriculation status to uncover whether satisfaction with the advisor also corresponds with effectiveness of the advisor. This study was a correlational research study with six variables (gender of student, gender of advisor, level of advancement, age of student, major, matriculation). Students $T$-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed. The Students $T$-Test was appropriate for comparing means of two samples, such as gender. When making comparisons across four independent groups, such as gender pairings, the use of ANOVA was appropriate. ANOVA was a better choice than Pearson’s correlation coefficient because the gender pairings are not continuous variables where a linear relationship needed to be examined. ANOVA will allow the satisfaction score means for each gender pairing to be compared for statistical significance. The analysis showed how much of the difference is a result of random error and how much is a result of differences in their means.

**Limitations**

According to Creswell (2005), limitations point out potential weaknesses in the study. This study is limited because data was collected from a single university. Further, the AAS instrument is not widely utilized by other institutions, though many universities utilize some form of student satisfaction measurement. Because this particular university supports a nontraditional student population, the findings from this study may not be broadly generalizable to institutions focused on a more traditional student population.
Summary

The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting. Three research questions were defined for testing. The research design was defined as a descriptive correlational quantitative study. The population was defined as 23 institutions within the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities. The sample utilized for this study consists of students at a private nonprofit university listed in AICCU’s 2015–2016 college guide. This institution primarily serves nontraditional students; the student population is principally female and has a diverse representation of age groups and ethnicities. The sample includes undergraduate students who completed the voluntary questionnaire regarding their satisfaction with their academic advising experience with a particular advisor. The AAS instrument was the survey tool utilized for this study. Data collection procedures for the six years of archival survey data were outlined. This study was a correlational research study with six variables (gender of student, gender of advisor, level of advancement, age of student, major, matriculation). Students T-test and ANOVA were performed as a means for analyzing the data. The major limitation for the study was that the survey data was collected at a single university, which may limit the ability to generalize to other institutions with different student demographics.
CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose statement and research questions for the study are reviewed. An overview of research methods and data collection procedures is provided. The population and sample is outlined. A review of demographics as they relate to the data collected is provided. Finally, a summary of data analyses is presented.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male, female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

This study was a descriptive correlational research study utilizing archival survey data. The data collected were numeric scale survey responses from six iterations of the annual advising assessment survey (Appendix B) conducted at the institution. This quantitative correlational study will measure the means and averages of student
satisfaction with their advising experience and the gender pairing of student and advisor. Satisfaction survey data were segmented into four groups representing the student-advisor relationship (male-male, male-female, female-male, and female-female).

**Population**

The population for this study consisted of students that attend four-year, private, nonprofit universities that serve undergraduate, nontraditional, adult learners. The target population was students who attend California schools of at least 2,000 undergraduates. The AICCU (2015) has 86 private, nonprofit participating institutions. Of those 86 AICCU institutions, 23 are serving at least 2,000 undergraduate students.

**Sample**

The sample utilized for this study consists of undergraduate students at one private non-profit university listed in AICCU’s 2015–2016 College guide. This university has 26 locations throughout the states of California and Washington, as well as an online campus with students throughout the United States. The university has approximately 3,500 undergraduate students enrolled each session and 6,000 unique students who will attend some portion of the academic year. This convenience sample consists of students who were advised and completed an advisor assessment survey between 2011 and 2016.

**Demographic Data**

The university that serves the sample students is located on the west coast of the United States and has been serving nontraditional students since the mid-1900s. The university is a distributed system with 27 campuses located in California and Washington. Including various emphasis areas, this university offers more than 40 different Bachelor’s degree programs. The programs offered consist of typical liberal
arts, business, and education degrees. The programs with the largest student population are the Bachelor’s in Business Administration, Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership, and Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

The survey utilized was completed by students that attended the university during the January session of each year. The survey asked students to identify their specific advisor and to rate their experience with that advisor in 28 different areas. The primary question reviewed was the summary question regarding overall satisfaction with the academic advising experience (See Appendix A)

The sample population from six years of survey data consisted of 4,472 responses. Roughly 70% of the responders were female students and 30% were male students (Table 5). This ratio was consistent through the 6 years of survey data. This was representative of the sample university’s undergraduate population and slightly higher than the most recent national ratio of 62.4% female as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (2016a).

Table 5

Survey Gender Breakdown by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>Female Students</th>
<th>Male Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>74.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>71.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>70.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>69.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>67.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>69.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3137</strong></td>
<td><strong>70.15%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advisor ratios during the six-year time period also showed a 70% to 30% split between female and male advisors respectively (Table 6). This trends slightly more male
than the membership data for the largest professional association for academic advisors, NACADA. NACADA showed that 70.2% of its members in 2011 identified as female, 20% identified as male, and 9.8% left gender blank (NACADA, 2011). When looking at the overall percentage of members who reported a gender, NACADA membership remains consistent at 22% male and 78% female from 2009–2015 (NACADA, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015).

Table 6

*University Advisor Population by Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>Female Advisor</th>
<th>Male Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When survey responders identified their particular advisor, the average results showed 67% identifying a female advisor, 29% identifying a male advisor, and 4% who were unsure of their advisor’s name (Table 7). This is consistent with the available advisor ratios, though there were a few survey years that skewed more male (2011 & 2012) or more female (2015) than expected. Membership reports from NACADA during this time period have shown consistent gender demographics of 78% female and 22% male (NACADA, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015) within the overall field of advising.

Table 7

*Survey Results by Year: Advisor Gender as Reported by Student*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>Female Advisor</th>
<th>Male Advisor</th>
<th>Advisor Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

59
Since a key aspect of this research is examining the impact of a particular gender pairing on the level of satisfaction of the student, it is important to look at the number of survey responses available by pairing to insure the number of responses for each pairing will allow for significant and representative analysis. The resulting Advisor-Student gender pairings (Table 8) follow the patterns expected based on student responses and the advisor population for a given year. The female advisor to female student ratio represented the largest group and varied between 42% and 50% of total surveys, depending on the year. The male advisor to male student ratio represented the smallest group and varied between 5.5% and 10% of total survey responses, depending on the year.

Table 8

Survey Responses: Advisor-Student Gender Pairings as Reported by Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>Don't Know: Female</th>
<th>Don't Know: Male</th>
<th>Female: Female</th>
<th>Female: Male</th>
<th>Male: Female</th>
<th>Male: Male</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2057</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>4472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To make sure that the survey responses are consistent and representative of the university as a whole, it is important to review the age and ethnicity groupings of the survey group. The groupings include African American, Asian-Pacific Islander, Indian-Alaskan Native, International Student, Latino-Hispanic American, other, White, non-Hispanic, and those who left the question blank. The ethnicity and age groupings of survey responders remained consistent throughout the six years of data (Tables 9 & 10) and show consistency in these demographic areas. White, non-Hispanic made up the largest grouping and represented 46% to 54% of the population, depending on the year. Latino/-Hispanic American was the second largest population, making up 23% to 26% of the responses, depending on the year. The remaining populations each made up 10% or less individually and stayed within a few percentage points from one year to the next.

When comparing to national enrollment trends, the survey populations are more Hispanic than national averages (Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). Age groupings include those younger than 21, 5-year groupings between age 21 and 45, those older than 45 years of age, and those who left the age question blank. The age blocks of 21–25, 26–30, 31–35, and older than 45 represented the largest populations and were in a virtual tie for population percentage, depending on the year. Variance by year was a percentage point or two depending on the year and grouping. Those students younger than 21 and those who left the question blank were small pieces of the population, representing less than 2% each.
This is in contrast to recent national enrollment trend data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2016a), which showed 59.5% of students enrolled in 2014 were younger than the age of 24.
Table 9

Survey Responses: Self-Reported Ethnicity of Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>549</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic American</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

Survey Results: Self-Reported Student Age Grouping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>549</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 45</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The university has four main schools: Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, Education, and Nursing & Health Professions. Additionally, students can declare their major undecided and would not be considered a part of any of the colleges until selecting a major. Survey respondents across all colleges (Table 11) show that enough surveys were collected to consider analyses for Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and possibly Education. As a result, data were analyzed for these three schools. Undecided and the school of nursing were excluded from the analysis as a result of having too few responses for meaningful data analyses.

Table 11

Survey Responses by School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Year</th>
<th>A&amp;S</th>
<th>B&amp;PS</th>
<th>Ed</th>
<th>N&amp;HP</th>
<th>Und</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>183</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>2734</td>
<td>1363</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentation and Analysis of Data

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male, female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

In order to determine whether there is a difference in student satisfaction with academic advising based on gender, mean satisfaction scores were calculated and normalized for both advisor gender and student gender. A two-sample $t$-test assuming equal variances was utilized for both of these calculations. Knobloch-Westerwick et al.,
(2013) and Moss-Racusin et al. (2012) found instances in which ratings differed based upon the gender of the rater and the gender of the person being rated. Based on this research, it is worth examining whether similar bias can be found when rating academic advisors. Table 12 examines whether there is a difference in satisfaction based purely on the gender of the advisor. The data suggest that there is no difference in rated satisfaction based only on the gender of the advisor. The mean satisfaction levels for male (3.496) and female (3.516) advisors were very similar, with female advisors receiving a higher rating by less than .02. The difference was not statistically significant and indicates that satisfaction ratings for male and female advisors were basically the same. This suggests that the gender of the advisor does not have an impact on student satisfaction with the advising relationship. This is in contrast to research that showed gender specific bias in business management and higher education (Carless, 1998; Knobloch-Westrick et al., 2013; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012).

Table 12

*Satisfaction by Advisor Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Advisor</th>
<th>Male Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.51635514</td>
<td>3.496508922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>0.571017896</td>
<td>0.568504884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2996</td>
<td>1289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled Variance</td>
<td>0.570262173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesized Mean Difference</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>4283</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Stat</td>
<td>0.788973537</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T ≤ t) one-tail</td>
<td>0.215085572</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical one-tail</td>
<td>1.645209476</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T ≤ t) two-tail</td>
<td>0.430171143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical two-tail</td>
<td>1.960518019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 examines whether there is a difference in satisfaction based purely on
the gender of the student that is providing the rating. Moss-Racusin et al. (2012) found that female undergraduate students were given more critical scores when rated by both male and female faculty members. Bennett’s (1982) study of faculty evaluations found that female faculty members were expected to be more available and were given harsher ratings when they failed to live up to those expectations. Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2013) found that abstracts authored by female faculty members were given significantly lower ratings than those of their male counterparts. Based on this research, one might expect female advisors to be rated more critically by both male and female students, but that was not the case. There is no difference in rated satisfaction based only on the gender of the student.

Table 13
*Satisfaction by Student Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Student</th>
<th>Male Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.47433854</td>
<td>3.523595506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>0.611028142</td>
<td>0.56597207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>3137</td>
<td>1335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled Variance</td>
<td>0.597581878</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesized Mean Difference</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>4470</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Stat</td>
<td>-1.949916166</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T ≤ t) one-tail</td>
<td>0.025624274</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical one-tail</td>
<td>1.645194586</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P(T ≤ t) two-tail</td>
<td>0.051248547</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t Critical two-tail</td>
<td>1.960494835</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male students (3.524) generally gave slightly higher satisfaction ratings than their female (3.474) counterparts. The mean score for male students was just under .05 higher, but this difference was not statistically significant. Some studies (Bryan, Krych, Carmichael, Viggiano, & Pawlina, 2005; Johnson & Smith, 1997; Kaufman, Felder, and
Fuller, 2000;) found that female students are rated more harshly in peer settings. The higher scores given by male students support these findings.

To determine whether there were differences in satisfaction among Advisor-Student gender pairs, a single factor ANOVA was calculated (Table 14).

Table 14

ANOVA—Satisfaction by Advisor-Student Gender Pairing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups (Adv:Stu)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female:Female</td>
<td>2057</td>
<td>7175</td>
<td>3.48809</td>
<td>0.598229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female:Male</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>3360</td>
<td>3.578275</td>
<td>0.506393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male:Female</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>3316</td>
<td>3.505285</td>
<td>0.57193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male:Male</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>1191</td>
<td>3.472303</td>
<td>0.559903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F_{crit}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>5.872414586</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.957472</td>
<td>3.438747</td>
<td>0.0161435</td>
<td>2.606983622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2436.91545</td>
<td>4281</td>
<td>0.56924</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2442.787865</td>
<td>4284</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that there is a difference between the four gender pairings and that the difference is statistically significant. The Female Advisor-Male Student pairing showed the highest average satisfaction (3.57 out of 4), while the Male Advisor-Male Student pairing showed the lowest average satisfaction (3.47 out of 4). Studies (Eagly & Carli, 1981; Langan et al., 2005) found favorable ratings when rating those of the same sex. Others (O’Neill, 1985) found a devaluation of scores in same-sex pairings. That the same sex pairings in this study showed the lowest satisfaction scores of the group support the latter viewpoint. The difference in average satisfaction scores for male students was more than .10, based on the gender of the advisor. The difference in average satisfaction for female students was less than .02, based on the gender of the advisor. This suggests that male students have a slight preference toward a female advisor, while female
students rate both male and female advisors about the same.

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?

The school that a student belonged to did not have a statistically significant impact when scores were analyzed by gender pairing. ANOVA analyses were performed on data from each school (Tables 15, 16, and 17). The P-value for all schools exceeded .05, indicating the results were not statistically significant to the given threshold. The school of Arts & Sciences (Table 15) is the largest population of undergraduate students and was close to having statistical significance with a P-value of .067. However, the results within this school mirror the overall results and do not provide any insight into a particular point of view specific to this school.

Table 15

*ANOVA—Satisfaction by advisor-student gender pairing in College of Arts & Sciences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts &amp; Sciences</th>
<th>ANOVA: Single Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups (Adv:Stu)</td>
<td>Count   Sum  Average Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-Female</td>
<td>1330    4624 3.47692 0.598779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-Male</td>
<td>447     1603 3.58613 0.512184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male-Female</td>
<td>638     2224 3.485893 0.62382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male-Male</td>
<td>198     691  3.489899 0.53543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ANOVA            | SS    df | MS     F     P-value  F_{crit} |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| Source of Variation |       |        |        |                 |        |
| Between Groups   | 4.181025 3 | 1.393675 2.381104 0.06772 2.608314 |
| Within Groups    | 1527.064 2609 | 0.585306 |
| Total            | 1531.245 2612 |        |
An ANOVA was performed to show differences in advising satisfaction scores across the three schools without considering gender. Advising satisfaction scores had slight differences across the three schools (Table 18), but again the P-value indicated
these differences could be random. Based on this information, the school that housed the student’s program was not a major factor in determining the satisfaction of the student with academic advising.

Table 18

ANOVA—Satisfaction by College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>2734</td>
<td>9515</td>
<td>3.480249</td>
<td>0.603891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Professional</td>
<td>1363</td>
<td>4798</td>
<td>3.520176</td>
<td>0.58311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>1206</td>
<td>3.465517</td>
<td>0.589586</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F_{crit}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1.70174</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.85087</td>
<td>1.426673</td>
<td>0.240216</td>
<td>2.997754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2649.215</td>
<td>4442</td>
<td>0.596401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2650.917</td>
<td>4444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

The purpose of this correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting. The demographics of the university were reviewed and the data collected were representative of the overall population. The data were analyzed using quantitative methods, including T-test and ANOVA. In general, male students gave higher advisor satisfaction ratings than female students. However, this finding was not at a statistically significant level, so the difference could be due to chance. The gender pairing (Advisor to Student) had a statistically significant impact on the overall advising satisfaction score. The biggest difference was for male students who saw a .1-point increase when working with a female advisor rather than a male advisor. Whether the
student was in the school of Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, or Education did not have an impact on the overall findings.
CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the study and provides key findings from the research data provided in Chapter IV. It offers a discussion of implications for action and opportunities for further research.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to identify whether there are differences in student satisfaction scores in academic advisement gender pairings in an undergraduate university setting.

**Research Questions**

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male, female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?

**Research Methods**

This study was a descriptive correlational research study utilizing archival survey data. The collected data consisted of numeric scale survey responses from six iterations of the annual advising assessment survey (Appendix B). This study examined the relationship between student-advisor gender pairing and the numeric satisfaction score provided by the student. The nature of the survey responses made quantitative analysis more appropriate. According to Creswell (2005), correlational research designs are useful...
when “investigators use the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores” (p. 325).

**Population and Sample**

The population for this study consisted of four-year, private, nonprofit universities that serve undergraduate, nontraditional, adult learners. The AICCU (2015) has 23 private, nonprofit participating institutions serving at least 2,000 undergraduate students. The sample utilized for this study consisted of students at one private nonprofit university located in California that was a part of the AICCU.

**Instrumentation, Data Collection, and Analysis**

The instrument utilized for this study was the AAS. This survey instrument uses a 4-point Likert scale across six broad categories that are key to a student’s academic advising experience. Permission was given to allow the research study to review six years of archival survey data completed between 2011 and 2016. Data analysis involved the stratification of data into four possible student-advisor gender groupings. A $T$-test and ANOVA was performed on the data and analyzed.

**Major Findings**

Communication between genders is a topic that has had tremendous impact on multiple fields, including higher education. Negative gender bias for both male and female faculty members toward female students has been found (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). Students perceive faculty differently and have different expectations of interactions based upon the gender of the faculty member (Bennett, 1982). Male and female graduate students rated abstracts significantly lower when the name attached was female (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2013). Additionally, articles with female authors
were cited less frequently than those with male authors. Online students rated faculty members with male names higher than those with female names even when the course was taught by the opposite gender (MacNell, Driscoll, & Hunt, 2015). While most individuals are not aware of these inherent biases, they do exist. Awareness can help individuals to change their behavior. Thompson’s (2015a)(Need letter designation for this source.) study showed that female academic advisors found female students less capable in math and English. When a follow-up study was conducted that made it more apparent to the participants that gender bias was being researched, these perceptions changed.

In this study, more than 4,000 survey responses were evaluated to determine whether gender had an impact on the satisfaction that students reported on their academic advising relationship.

RQ1. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising for the four possible gender pairings (male-male, male-female, female-male, female-female) of the advisor-advisee relationship at a four-year institution?

1. There was no preference present based purely on the gender of the advisor. Overall satisfaction ratings for male advisors and female advisors were almost identical with a difference in the mean of only .02 on a 4-point scale. Overall mean satisfaction ratings made by male students versus female students were also very close with male ratings being slightly higher by .05 on the same scale. However, neither difference was statistically significant.

2. Additionally, there was no preference based purely on the gender of the student. Male students generally gave slightly higher satisfaction ratings than their female counterparts, but this difference was not statistically significant.
3. Male students have preference in working with a female advisor. There was a statistically significant difference when looking at the advisor-student gender pairings. Male students rated their satisfaction level with male advisor .10 lower (on a 4-point scale) than with a female advisor. Female students saw little difference in satisfaction score based upon the gender of the advisor.

RQ2. Are there differences in undergraduate student satisfaction with academic advising when stratified by the college (Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education) at a four-year institution?

4. When stratifying the results by the three academic colleges, there were no statistical differences for gender pairings within the schools of Arts & Sciences, Business & Professional Studies, and Education.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study and the literature it is concluded that:

1. Male undergraduate students have a preference for working with female academic advisors. This preference has a positive impact on male student satisfaction with the advising relationship. That satisfaction leads to a more engaged student. Engaged students have better outcomes (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1993). This inclination to work with a female advisor is a result of either direct bias or a preference for a more relational communication style that would be expected from a female advisor. This supports the findings of Mottarella et al. (2004), which identified student preference for working with female advisors because of the warmth of their communication style.
2. Male students prefer a warm and relational advising style when working with an academic advisor. Bennett’s (1982) study of faculty evaluations did not find direct bias of students toward their faculty members. However, students did have different expectations of a female faculty member versus a male faculty member. The students rated female faculty members higher in interpersonal categories. The supposition by Bennett was that this was a result of “women’s greater perceived warmth and personal charisma” (p. 177). This perceived warmth in communication is the key to relationship expectations that male students have of their academic advisors.

3. Female students do not have a preference for working with an advisor of a specific gender. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016b), females make up the largest portion of the undergraduate student population. According to NACADA (2015), the majority of academic advisors are female. Since female students are equally satisfied with both male and female advisors, they can be placed with male advisors. This will allow greater flexibility for placement of the male students.

**Implications for Action**

Based on the quantitative data reported in this research study, further action must be taken.

1. There was a significantly higher satisfaction level for male students when working with female advisors. It is recommended that universities change how they assign advisors. Male students are typically the minority among undergraduates and female advisors are usually the majority among academic
advisor populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016a; NACADA, 2015). It is critical for an institution to assign male students to female advisors to take advantage of the increased satisfaction. This could be done by assigning incoming male students first to female advisors with capacity. The remaining female students could then be assigned to the remaining capacity across all advisors. Another option would be to allow students to choose their advisor from a list of possibilities. This would allow male students to select a female advisor if they had and were aware of their preference.

2. The training process for academic advisors is instrumental in helping advisors to take advantage of these student preferences. Institutions must use their training processes to introduce the importance of building skill in relational communication styles that are primarily associated with females. Studies show that women view communication as more relational and as a means of supporting social interaction, while the male approach is focused on exerting dominance and achieving outcomes (Leaper, 1991; Maltz & Borker, 1982; Mason, 1995; Wood, 1996). Emphasizing the importance of relational communication with advisors, especially those who are male, will improve student satisfaction with academic advising. Training must focus on creating awareness of the different styles of communication and helping male advisors become purposeful in building relationships as a foundational part of student interactions. Research has found that an improved connection between students and academic advising has positive outcomes for the student

3. Advisors must create time during student meetings to build personal connections. Holding specific meeting time for rapport building and foundational relationship setting will provide benefits to male student satisfaction with academic advising. The natural tendency of a male advisor may be to get down to business and work on resolving the issue at hand to help the student move forward. However, the student will be better served, and certainly more satisfied with the advising relationship, if time is spent building the individual relationship. Standard university processes, such as recommended meeting outlines, must include rapport building as a key piece of the agenda. Furthermore, institutions must build specific training protocols that will help advisors build skill in having these relationship-building conversations. Universities should go so far as to have specific fields in the student information system that track notes on rapport building categories. This sort of tracking will allow universities to determine who was most effective at having these types of conversations and the impact of rapport building on key metrics such as student attrition, academic success, and ultimately graduation. Requiring student notes on rapport building categories can force these types of relational conversations to happen in all advising interactions.

4. Professional organizations, such as NACADA, must further emphasize communication and rapport building with organization members. Workshops are needed that focus specifically on building student relationships and
leveraging those relationships to drive student success. NACADA must build tools to measure the quality of the advising relationship. Having quantitative data on the health of the student relationship would allow advisors to benchmark their success and to improve upon it as they try new approaches. Building resources that will allow advisors to understand how to engage in effective relational conversations with students will further the field of advising. NACADA currently offers training events on leadership, assessment, and administration. Yet, there is no organized event that focuses on building advisor skill in communicating with students. This must change. Organizations, such as NACADA, can also encourage further research into the impact of advisor soft skills on student outcomes.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Opportunities to expand on this research could focus on several areas. The study identified differences in satisfaction levels for male students based upon the gender of the advisor.

1. It is recommended that a quantitative analysis using a field experimental survey be utilized to present students with hypothetical advising experiences and determine their overall satisfaction with that experience. Determining whether the satisfaction difference in this study was a result or direct bias of the gender, general preference, or differences in typical advising approach utilized will further the body of knowledge. By implying the gender of the advisor through a name and varying the type of communication presented in the survey, researchers could determine whether direct bias was at play.
2. A descriptive correlational research study should be created that asks each advisor to complete a survey that would allow a quantitative measure of his or her individual gender traits. These measures of gender could then be compared to satisfaction scores to determine if a correlation exists. Gender roles are not binary and considering whether satisfaction differences exist based on the traits that show maleness and femaleness of advisors, regardless of specific gender, would further the discussion. This more accurate and specific data on the individual advisors would improve analysis of these gender traits and their impact rather than the binary assumptions tied to a particular gender.

3. A phenomenological qualitative study should be enacted by observing student-advisor meetings and conducting follow-up interviews with those involved in the meetings. Since the most likely advising differences revolve around communication style, additional research must be done to draw more direct connection between different types of communication and the satisfaction of students with the relationship.

4. A correlational quantitative research study to determine whether a connections exists among student satisfaction with academic advising, academic performance, and student persistence is needed. Ideally, a pilot group and control group would be created where one group receives academic advising and the other does not. However, it is difficult to create a situation where it would be permissible to deny academic advising interactions to any group of students. One potential solution would be to find an institution where no
current advising takes place and pilot the introduction of academic advising to a segment of that population. To date, there is no research showing that academic advising, and more specifically satisfaction with that advising, has a direct connection to improved student performance and persistence.

5. This descriptive correlational quantitative study should be replicated with other universities with traditional student populations. The sample for this particular study consisted of nontraditional students from a private nonprofit university in California. Conducting similar studies at other types of institutions would be valuable. Since the age of students in this particular study were primarily older than 25, and the majority of currently enrolled postsecondary students are younger than the age of 25, it would be useful to understand whether a more traditional-aged student population would have a similar difference in advising satisfaction (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016a).

6. A study should be developed to focus on understanding an advisor’s natural communication style and whether that style, with appropriate training, can be adjusted to serve students better. Training was identified as a key action of this study. Creating opportunities to build rapport and build warmth in personal interactions with male students would address the differences in communication style among advisors of different genders. Using tools to test emotional intelligence of an advisor would be vital in determining the communication skill of an advisor. It would also provide advisors with feedback on specific areas where they can improve in this area. Further
research must focus on whether training to encourage more relational conversation can create behavior change. Is it possible to change these behaviors or are these traits strongly tied to an individual’s gender with no opportunity for change? Understanding whether training can effect behavior change will be incredibly useful in making sure that resources spent in this training area will yield results.

7. A phenomenological study of advisors, both male and female, with high student satisfaction scores would give needed insight into how those advisors were successful in establishing relationships and creating warmth in student connections. The study could also get input from students who were satisfied in their advising relationship and identify what aspects most contributed to their satisfaction. Analyzing the structure of the academic advising unit and the impact of gender on its perceived effectiveness is needed. This study focused on student perceptions of professional academic advisors. Since many institutions utilize faculty academic advisors, understanding whether gender pairing preferences carry over to that type of advising relationship will be valuable. The same would be true for other structural aspects of the advising relationship, such as peer advising or group advising dynamics.

**Concluding Remarks and Reflections**

Gender has an impact on all of the relationships within our lives, yet many are not conscious of how it influences us. Most people would like to say gender does not change the way that they treat an individual, but the research shows otherwise. On a more positive note, it also shows that when individuals are aware of this influence, they react
differently and show a willingness to treat people equally regardless of their gender. Throughout the course of my studies, I have seen a number of gender-related stories hit the news cycle—from transgender bathrooms, to equal pay for Hollywood actors and actresses, to the impact of gender on combat assignments in the military, to the way different cultures set gender role expectations.

I have also been more aware of how gender influences the day-to-day interactions in my professional and personal life. While I do not believe one person can be painted with a blanket statement about their communication preferences, I do find that the tendencies outlined in my review of the literature hold true. I also have found that some of my individual preferences fit this mold as well. I personally hate small talk and would avoid it at all costs. It seemed a waste of time and lacked a level of authenticity for my tastes. This fits very well into the basic concept of male communication being more transactional. What I did not understand is that there is a large portion of the population that highly values connection and the building of relationships. While I might not enjoy these brief conversations, I did want to have better relationships with those who were a part of my personal and professional life. If I wanted to have improved relationships, I needed to make time for relational conversations. To that end, this is something that has changed about my interactions. While I still detest elevator talk about the weather, I can see these conversations as bids for a better relationship. I have the opportunity in those moments to turn the topic from the benign news story of the day to a more personal topic that could further connection. Now these passing conversations are more about weekend activities, family relationships, or hobbies and interests. For me the conversations feel more authentic and for those with whom I am conversing with, perhaps I seem a bit more
authentic, too.

While I have always known that academic advising was important to the student experience and played a key role at the university, I have grown to see the value of this service as even more integral to the success of universities in the future. With the cost of college rising and degree attainment rates stagnating, it will be vitally important to help students connect their career goals with the right degree and connecting the right degree to the most efficient way to complete that program. Academic advising can be an integral cog in changing the dynamic of higher education. As a leader in academic advising at my institution, I have worked to help advisors at my institution see and understand this connection as well. I continue to push the importance of connecting to professional organizations, such as NACADA, and try to set an example for advisors by my presenting and participating. As a result, I have seen an increased interest in advisors attending and presenting at professional conferences. Additionally, several advisors have shown an interest in seeking a doctoral degree with many choosing to do research within the field of advising. The review of the literature for this study showed that the amount of research in the field of academic advising is fairly sparse when compared to other fields. It has been very fulfilling to see the work that I have been personally doing in advising start to have an impact in this area.
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Hopkins University Press.


Student_Retention_and_Graduation_July_2004.pdf


APPENDIX A

Survey Tool

1. Campus Info

Purpose of Survey

The mission of academic advising at Brandman University is to guide, support, mentor, and engage students effectively so they can accurately plan their educational experience and be inspired and self-empowered to achieve their academic, career and life goals.

Academic advising is a collaborative educational process whereby students and their advisors are partners in meeting the essential learning outcomes, ensuring student academic success, and outlining the steps for achievement of the students’ personal, academic, and career goals. This advisor/student partnership requires participation and involvement of both the advisor and the student as it is built over the student’s entire educational experience at the university. Both the student and the advisor have clear responsibilities for ensuring the advising partnership is successful.

It is our hope that your anonymous and thoughtful comments to this survey will contribute to the ongoing improvement of academic advising at Brandman University.

Sincerely,
The Academic Advising Assessment Committee

* From which campus do you receive your advising?

- Antelope Valley
- Bangor
- Crafton Hills
- Culver City
- Fairfield
- Ft. Lewis
- Fullerton
- Irvine
- Lacey
- Lemoore
- McChord
- Menifee
- Modesto
- Monterey
- Ontario
- Palm Desert
- Riverside
- Roseville
- San Diego
- Santa Clarita
- Santa Maria
- Travis
- Victorville
- Visalia
- Walnut Creek
- Whidbey Island
- Yuba City
- Yuba City- Sutter Center
- School of Nursing
- Fully Online Campus
### 32. Interest in Advising

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The time spent in my advising appointments is worthwhile.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is interested in my educational progress.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is interested in my individual educational needs.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is an advocate for my educational needs.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If needed, my advisor refers me to other resources and/or campuses and works with them to meet my educational needs.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

[Empty field]
## 33. Level of Student Contact

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can schedule an appointment with my advisor within 5 business days.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor will respond to questions or concerns within 2 business days.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor communicates information to me, including program changes, in a timely manner.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can reach my advisor by phone.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can reach my advisor by email.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:**

[Blank space for comments]
### 34. Monitors Student Progress

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My advisor contacts me when there are changes or revisions necessary to my program.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor makes me aware of important steps in completing my program.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor refers me to appropriate resources to answer my questions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor initiates contact with me to review my progress at least every other term.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

[Blank space for comments]
35. Program Knowledge

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My advisor accurately communicates University policies and procedures when needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is knowledgeable of my program requirements and explains those requirements to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor assists me in developing my long-term program goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
36. Concern & Caring

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My advisor makes an effort to know me as an individual.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is interested in my experience as a student.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor listens and responds to educational concerns.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My advisor is professional and respectful in our advising interactions.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

[Blank space]
37. Student Impressions

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your Brandman University experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that I will complete my program.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how long it will take me to complete my current program.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the requirements for my current program.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I follow my Education Plan when registering for classes.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I alert my advisor when I want to make changes to my Education Plan.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make appointments with my advisor when I have educational concerns.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

---
38. Demographics

* Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your academic advising experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I am satisfied with my Academic Advising experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please mark the appropriate program level.

- Graduate
- Undergraduate

Please mark at what stage you are in the completion of your program.

- First 2 terms
- Middle
- Last 2 terms

Gender?

- Male
- Female

Age?

- Under 21
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- Over 45
Ethnicity?

- African American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- White, non-Hispanic
- International Student
- Latino/Hispanic American
- Indian/Alaskan Native
- Other
39. Finish

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback will help guide future training for advisors.
APPENDIX B

IRB Approval

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
IRB Application Action – Approval

Date: 4/21/2016

Name of Investigator/Researcher: Sean Nometh

Faculty or Student ID Number: B00001837

Title of Research Project:

Academic Advising and Gender Communications

Project Type: ☑ New ☐ Continuation ☐ Resubmission

Category that applies to your research:

☑ Doctoral Dissertation EdD
☐ DNP Clinical Project
☐ Masters’ Thesis
☐ Course Project
☐ Faculty Professional/Academic Research
☐ Other: 

Funded: ☑ No ☐ Yes

(Funding Agency: Type of Funding: Grant Number)

Project Duration (cannot exceed 1 year): 8 months

Principal Investigator’s Address: 26 Urey Ct. Irvine, CA 92617

Email Address: nemeth@brandman.edu Telephone Number: 7146187275

Faculty Advisor/Sponsor/Chair Name: Dr. Mike Moodian

Email Address: moodian@brandman.edu Telephone Number: 

Category of Review:

☑ Exempt Review ☐ Expedited Review ☐ Standard Review

Brandman University IRB Rev. 11.14.14 Adopted November 2014
I have completed the NIH Certification and included a copy with this proposal

NIH Certificate currently on file in the office of the IRB Chair or Department Office

Signature of Principal Investigator: Sean Nemeth
Date: 4/21/2016

Signature of Faculty Advisor/Sponsor/Dissertation Chair: Mike Moodian
Date: 4/27/2016
BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
IRB APPLICATION ACTION – APPROVAL
COMPLETED BY BUIRB

IRB ACTION/APPROVAL

Name of Investigator/Researcher: Sean Nemeth

☐ Returned without review. Insufficient detail to adequately assess risks, protections and benefits.

☐ Approved/Certified as Exempt form IRB Review.

☑ Approved as submitted.

☐ Approved, contingent on minor revisions (see attached)

☐ Requires significant modifications of the protocol before approval. Research must resubmit with modifications (see attached)

☐ Researcher must contact IRB member and discuss revisions to research proposal and protocol.

Level of Risk: ☑ No Risk ☐ Minimal Risk ☐ More than Minimal Risk

IRB Comments:

Dr. Timothy Perez

IRB Reviewer: Perez

Telephone: ________________________________ Email: tperez@brandman.edu

BUIRB Chair: ________________________________ Date: 5/5/16

REVISED IRB Application ☐ Approved ☐ Returned

Name: ______________________________________

Telephone: ________________________________ Email: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________

BUIRB Chair: ________________________________

Brandman University IRB Rev. 11.14.14 Adopted November 2014
Dear Sean Nemeth:

You have my permission to utilize the archived survey data from our annual Advising Assessment Survey to complete your research study on student satisfaction with academic advising. You are also welcome to append other useful demographic info (e.g. student gender, major, age, completed credits, and whether they completed their program) to help further the research.

I look forward to reading your research once the analysis is complete.

Sincerely,
Saskia Knight

Saskia Knight
Executive Vice Chancellor
Enrollment and Student Affairs

Brandman University
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3rd Floor
Irvine, CA 92618
knights@brandman.edu
www.brandman.edu

T 949.341.1829
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