



How to Enable our Student and Their Parents

# ADVISING ACROSS GENERATIONS

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# TRANSITIONING ROLES

## Traditional entry level position as a Residence Director

- Advisement of 18 and 19 year olds
  - Consisted of crisis, academic issues, and roommate problems

## Recruiter/Admissions Role

- Advisement of traditional age undergrads □ graduates AND non-traditional students
  - Consisted of career counseling, various educational pathways and offerings, and application requirements

## Undergraduate Academic Advisor (STEM Major)

- Advisement of freshmen through seniors
  - Consists of curriculum requirements for their major, financial aid requirements and eligibility, and providing resources for academic and personal support services

# YOUR ROLES

Gather in groups

- Discuss your type of advisement (what offices do you work in?)
- How have you worked with parents in the past and presently?
  - What has worked?
  - What hasn't worked?
  - What do you notice most about parents (when they call, come to an appointment, etc.)?

# ADVISING ACROSS GENERATIONS...LITERALLY

## Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

- Grandparents (and some parents) of college age students
  - Desire action oriented messaging
  - Strong personal or face to face foundation

## Gen X (1965-1979)

- Parents of our current college age population
  - Desire a conversational, approachable tone
  - Relatable examples and evidence

## Millennials (1980-1995)

- Older College Students (non-traditional) or additional degrees
- Many higher education professionals working fall into this category between the two generations of parents and students
  - Desire to the point, quick hits of info that is oriented to their interests and packaged to consumption habits

## Gen Z (1996 and later)

- Current college student population
  - Desire to be “hooked in” quickly
  - Connect the dots between their online and offline worlds

# ADVISING ACROSS GENERATIONS...LITERALLY

Let's look at personality traits...

## Gen X (1965-1979)

- Independent, resourceful, in control, and self-sufficient
- Dislikes being micro-managed and embraces a hands-off management philosophy\*
- “Gen Xers say providing for their children’s college costs is a major goal.”
- “Stealth Fighter Parents”- tendency to let minor issues go but to intervene forcefully and swiftly in the event of more serious issues in the educational setting

## Millennials (1980-1995)

- Confident, ambitious, well-educated, and achievement-oriented
- High expectations of their employers
- Known for their boomer “Helicopter Parents”

## Gen Z (1996 and later)

- Tech-savvy, pampered, praise-hungry and hypersensitive
- Haven’t had to deal with risk and consequence
- Worry about college costs: debt and finding a job

# ADVISEMENT PHILOSOPHY: PERSON

## FIRST APPROACH

People-first language emphasizes the person

- Often used in disability or diversity settings
- E.g. “a child with autism” or “a student of color”

Advisement isn't about the course they need to register for or the program they are interested in...**it's about the person and what they need**

Let them run their meeting

- “How many credits do you see yourself taking this semester?” or “How many credits will allow you to succeed this semester?”



## Let them talk...listen

- Using phrases such as:

- “how can I help?”
- “I’d be happy to help answer your questions...”
- “Tell me a little bit about your goals...”

## Based on what they’re telling you, what resources do they need?

- Prospective graduate students may be doing it by themselves, or entering school after a lengthy period of time

- Other than application requirements or connecting them with the best program for their goals, what other resources can you connect them with?
- Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Faculty

## Make them feel like they matter and meet them where they’re at

- Transferable across all generations

# SELF-AUTHORSHIP IN STUDENT (AND PARENT) ADVISEMENT

Students need to ...

- “make sense of information gained about the world in previous years, determining the path one will take, and taking steps along that path” (Magolda, 2001)
- As advisors we help to provide information to a student taking these steps through curriculum flowcharts, academic and personal resources, or financial aid information

Guiding them with information so that they can ultimately make a decision

- Providing the parents with the tools to have a conversation with their student about their academics and college experience



# MAINTAINING CONSISTENCY

Use your advisement skills across platforms

- Emails
- Face to face meetings
- Phone conversations

There should be no difference in how you “listen” and “respond”

# MATCHING COMMUNICATION & ADVISEMENT WITH GROUPS

Keep in mind the “person first” approach, consider not how you want to be treated but **how they** would like to be treated or spoken with

- How would they like to be advised in that moment?
  - What is the concern of the parent?
  - What is the concern of the student?

Our landscape is changing...

- “Parents are going from an everyday manager or agent, to a spectator in a short amount of time.” (Chronicle of Higher Education, May 2019)
- Advisors and admins roles are changing to help show the family how to change their own roles from being advisors to “guiding from the side”.
- Recognition that we are no longer just accepting the student to the university, but their ENTIRE support structure

# WRAP-UP

As advisors (in all facets), we spend a considerable amount of time developing and maintaining relationships with students (and now with parents)

Provide structure and support

Use and adapt your skill to match the student's (or parent's) need

# SOURCES

<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-gamma/are-colleges-ready-generation-z>

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Involved-Parents-Get-Their-Own/246246>

<https://danschawbel.com/blog/44-of-the-most-interesting-facts-about-generation-x/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation\\_X](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_X)

Evans, N.J., Forney, D.S., Guido, F.M., Patton, L.D., & Renn, K.A. (2010) *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*

Kent, C. & Bruk, E. (2017) *From AARP to Gen Z: Focusing communications based on audience mindsets (Ologie), Communicators in Conversation Conference-UB*