10th Annual Academic Advising Conference

Empowering Students to Navigate the Seas of Change

Hosted by The University of Texas at San Antonio
October 6, 2017
Norris Conference Center
Keynote Speaker:
Sonny Melendrez

Sonny Melendrez began his career as a broadcaster at age 19, while attending University of Texas at El Paso. He gained national recognition when he was named Billboard Magazine’s National Radio Personality of the Year (twice).

Next stop was Los Angeles, where he entertained on some of America’s greatest radio stations, including, KIIS, KMPC and KFI and was tapped to host the Disney Channel’s children’s television series, “You and Me, Kid!”.

Sonny received a Grammy nomination for his creation of the children’s version of worldwide anthem, “We Are the World,” benefitting USA for Africa.

He was inducted into the Texas Radio Hall of Fame in 2003 and is included in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame as one of the “Top 100 Radio Personalities of All-Time”.

Sonny has been named Inc. Magazine’s Socially Responsible Entrepreneur of the Year and The City of San Antonio named The Sonny Melendrez Community Center, on the city’s West Side, to honor his tireless work, benefiting disadvantaged families and youth.

It is estimated that he has raised over 100 million dollars in money, goods and services for charities, locally and nationally, during his career.

Sonny has hosted and/or delivered keynotes at thousands of events worldwide, including the White House Hispanic Heritage Awards (7 times) in our nation’s capital.

As an inspirational keynote speaker, he shares personal stories and his message of “The Unstoppable Power of Enthusiasm!” at conferences and universities.
Schedule at a Glance

Registration & Networking
7:30am – 8:30am

Welcome and Keynote Speaker
Sonny Melendrez
8:30am – 10:00 am

Concurrent Sessions 1
10:10am – 11:10am

Concurrent Sessions 2
11:20am – 12:20pm

Lunch & Networking
12:20pm – 1:20pm

Concurrent Sessions 3
1:30pm – 2:30pm

Network Break
2:30pm – 3:00pm

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Full Schedule

Registration & Networking
7:30am – 8:30am

Welcome and Keynote Speaker
Sonny Melendrez
8:30am – 10:00 am

The Unstoppable Power of Enthusiasm!
Enthusiasm is an emotional muscle we use to “turn on” our excitement for any goal. There are 3 elements necessary for this dynamic to work: Belief, Vision and Gratitude. Enthusiasm is a necessary ingredient for meaningful success. While we cannot always control the world around us, we do have the ability to manipulate how we feel about ourselves, toward others with the emotional environment we choose to create. Moreover, our positive attitude and actions serve to teach and encourage those we influence.

Concurrent Sessions 1
10:10am – 11:10am

Magnolia Room
Between Two Worlds:
Examining Survivor Guilt Among African Americans in College
Terrica Watkins
University of Texas at San Antonio

There is a saying that success often comes with a price. For first-generation African Americans who decide to enter college, success may come with the price of losing valuable relationships with friends and family from back home, internalizing racism within the African American community, carrying the baggage of Survivor Guilt, or leaving “behind” people and experiences of your neighborhood in pursuit of educational attainment. One of the challenges affecting student persistence and retention rates among African Americans may result from Survivor Guilt. According to The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, “completion rates for African Americans continue to be low at 43%
compared to White students’ completion rate of 63%” (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2007).

This presentation will address the following: (1) characteristics of first-generation African American college students; (2) an outline of survivor guilt and its effects on African Americans personal and academic persistence; and (3) a description of Victor Frankl’s logotherapy and how academic advisors can implement it as a means of empowering African American students to effectively navigate through survivor guilt.

**Pecan Room**

**How to Sink Your Ship:**

*A Step-by-Step Guide to Failing as an Academic Advisor*

Alex Corbyn and Jason Krueger
Texas State University

Ever wonder how to be the worst academic advisor you can be? We hope not! In this presentation, we will share step-by-step instructions on how to accomplish completely failing as an academic advisor by ignoring NACADA’s new Core Competencies Model. By rejecting the model’s informational and relational components, you will not have the knowledge and skills needed to guide students’ growth and success. As experienced advisors and new advisors alike are not immune to making mistakes, this interactive presentation aims to reinforce the best advising practices by emphasizing what not to do. Advisors will work through scenarios to identify unconscious errors and discover ways to avoid them by applying the Core Competencies Model.

**Live Oak Room**

**Tips and Ideas on Helping Undergraduates Maximize Their Education**

Andrew Riley
University of Texas at San Antonio

Research indicates that society is calling into question more and more the value of a bachelor’s degree. Critics of higher education within the college setting and outside it maintain the product that we are selling (the bachelor’s degree) simply is not worth the cost. The $1.3 trillion student debt load, shouldered by 44 million Americans, is no doubt a part of society’s concern. While generally enthusiastic about pursuing undergraduate education, students are sensitive to this reality, are worried, and bring their concerns to us. They are asking, “Is this degree worth the price?” “My dad says this major does not lead to gainful employment. Should I change majors?”
It is true that we are academic advisors and not financial aid officers. But there are conversations that advisors can and should have with advisees to help them see ways to leverage their educational experience during their undergraduate years and their bachelor’s degree after graduation. Attendees of this interactive presentation will leave the session equipped with several conversation starters orbiting around the question, “Other than earning good grades, how should undergraduates capitalize on their college experience?”

_Elm Room_
Charting the Stars: Using Degree Planner Flowcharts to Help Students Stay on Course
Merrideth Holub, Lauren Huff and Tarah Kennedy
Texas A&M University

As an advisor, making students fully aware of everything required of them can be tough. Working in a department with multiple majors and multiple catalogs, this can turn into a monumental task. As requirements shift from year-to-year like a stormy sea, confusion and misinformation are introduced when students ask for advice from classmates on different catalogs, or even from graduates that attended years ago. This presentation will demonstrate how to empower students to take an active role in navigating their degree using degree planner flowcharts. Flowcharts are visual representations of all of the requirements for a specific degree and catalog that provide a template for a student’s degree plan. They include helpful information about prerequisites, recommended courses for each year, and are given to students as soon as they enter their major. Digital copies stored in their student folders are updated as they progress through their degree. Flowcharts help both students and advisors by providing an immediate snapshot of the student’s progress and freeing up valuable appointment time. In a high volume office, this makes a world of difference. This presentation will cover some of the ways that we have used flowcharts to help students become more involved in planning their degree.
Concurrent Sessions 2
11:20am – 12:20pm

Magnolia Room
An Ocean of Change, A Wave of Opportunity
Sonny Melendrez

How are professionals in other professions, both related and otherwise, successfully dealing with change in the workplace? What changes will students face in the real world ahead? Change is inevitable. However, being equipped with a strong, yet flexible, mindset allows us to face each day with a healthy and positive outlook. Moreover, it allows professionals to offer wisdom, comfort and encouragement to those we serve.

Pecan Room
The Compass of Balance in Higher Education: Navigating the Seas of Introvert and Extrovert Personalities
Kalia Glover
University of Texas at San Antonio

Although Carl Jung presented his theories on personality types in 1921, only extrovert behavior, as opposed to introvert or ambivert, achieved widespread acceptance and recognition. Since the publication of Susan Cain’s 2013 book, Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can’t Stop Talking, there is increased awareness of the benefits of introversion, balancing the gifts of the extrovert for a more successful workplace environment. Sailing away from the stigmatized association with solitude and silence, introverts are learning to assert their strengths and navigate the rough seas of a world that prioritizes extrovert personalities. Likewise, extroverts are learning to appreciate the nuance of their more introspective colleagues, finding their own compass in the seemingly non-stop world of industry.

Likewise, in Higher Education, Advisors, Administrators, and Educators are expected to constantly ‘perform’ for students and co-workers alike. They must encourage, guide and motivate students, as well as act as innovative and collaborative members of a team. For introverts, it is a challenge to maintain high levels of energy for long periods of time. For extroverts, innovative ideas are lost in waves of ‘group think,’ leading to stagnation and disappointment.
Students constantly face new, life altering changes and need support from people who give from a healthy space, rather than frustration and exhaustion.

This presentation seeks to provide extroverts and introverts with individualized strategies for maintaining levels of creative energy while engaging students. It offers faculty and staff permission to organize their workspace in a way that capitalizes their strengths.

**Live Oak Room**  
**Surviving the Procrastination Rip-Tide:**  
**Helping Students Navigate the Seas of Change on Their Path to Success**  
Yvette Morales and Deborah A. Benavides  
Texas State University and University of Texas at San Antonio

Procrastination is a widespread phenomenon in college settings. It can negatively impact student learning and graduation; thus, research has sought to understand factors that produce this behavior.

Studies show procrastination to be positively correlated with compromised academic performance, depression, and anxiety. Procrastination is not just about poor time management, but it is also about self-sabotaging tendencies, which prevent students from succeeding.

This presentation provides information and research spanning over twenty years, completed by Dr. Joseph Ferrari, the leading expert on procrastination. Using his book, “Still Procrastinating” as a guide, we will learn what stops our students from getting things done so that together we can find solutions to learn why students put things off and strategies to help students survive the procrastination rip-tide to navigate the seas to success.

**Elm Room**  
**Helping Students Navigate the Rough Waters of the First Year**  
Michelle Anguiano and D’Andrea Davila  
Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Texas A&M University – San Antonio welcomed its first freshman class in the fall of 2016. In preparation for this class, a team of academic success coaches was hired to facilitate smooth transitions for the incoming freshman class and students transferring from community colleges. Prior to comprehensive expansion, the main task of transitioning students consisted of preparing transfer students for their upper division courses, which was under academic
advising. Their buffet of services consisted of degree planning, course selections, registration and other pertinent items. With concerns of advisor to student ratio while working with a 20 minute visit limit for appointments, there was not enough time to help students get the support needed to adjust to the University and to engage. This was eclipsed by advisor workload priorities. Therefore, the academic success coaches were tasked to take on the role of helping students navigate college while supplying them with academic strategies and tools to enhance retention efforts and student success.

Both Advising and Success Coaching had to work through that first year on developing separate roles and helping the campus community understand their roles on campus. Both areas would quickly come to embrace the fact that the student population would have the opportunity to receive support services from both advisors and academic success coaches. Even though all this work may give the appearance of a superficial hand-off, Advisors and Coaches actually work together using theory-based frameworks to collaborate and align services to help students navigate the academic waters.

**Cypress Room**

*Advisors Role as Teachers - One of Many Roles*

Rafael Ochoa, Jr.

Austin Community College

In a landscape of ever changing policies, program requirements, placement scores, core curriculum and technologies; Academic Advisors now, in order to best serve students, need to further evolve into teachers of self-discovery, advocacy, exploration and those ever changing technologies that we expect our students to know and navigate to be successful.

A great deal needs to be accomplished in that first individual academic advising session. Guided Pathways proposes a path to completion of a College or University credential; however, these Pathways have points where decisions need to be made that may impact a student adversely or positively in their present and future academic pursuits.

The excellent Academic Advisor is aware of these issues and with years of experience and useful knowledge of technology, the excellent Academic Advisor can be the lighthouse to guide students safely through turbulent or calm academic waters.
I will discuss advising strategies, my role as an Academic Advisor, a Teacher and the innovations that can make it all work.

Learning Objectives:

Guided Pathways:
1) Strategies in Onboarding, Orientation & Information Sessions
2) Advisors role as Teachers
3) Meaningful use of technology

Lunch & Networking
12:20pm – 1:20pm

While you enjoy a delicious lunch catered by Norris, please be sure to take time to build connections with colleagues from universities around the state. The Conference Committee will also announce lucky winners of awesome gift baskets!

Concurrent Sessions 3
1:30pm – 2:30pm

Magnolia Room
Promoting Internships in Advising:
Helping Students Navigate to the Next Step
Bonita De Leon
San Antonio College

As advisors, we know internships can be a critical link to connecting our students to their next step while pursuing their degree. These internships hold valuable professional development opportunities and can offer students the chance to practice what they have learned in the classroom. Additionally, internships can expose students to careers they may have not considered. In this session, I will discuss the benefits of internships, identify barriers preventing students from pursuing these opportunities, and brainstorm resources we can offer students to help navigate the process. Additionally, I
will share information about internship programs such as Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program, Pathways, and Thurgood Marshall College Fund, which offer placement opportunities to college students, recent college graduates, and graduate students. I will also share insights on what governmental agencies are looking for in their interns based on my USDA fellowship experience.

**Pecan Room**
*Increasing Communication in a Decreased Amount of Time*

Julie Zehnpfennig, Caroline Streicher, Gina Escamilla and Sarah Drennan
Texas State University

Given time constraints, limited resources, and the sheer size of student caseloads, we are often unintentionally forced into a prescriptive model of academic advising. Students come into appointments with a vast array of questions and expectations of what all can be accomplished in one advising session. Often times advisors become one of the only administrative connections students make. This makes it critical to not only provide them with accurate advising for timely degree completion, but also to engage with them on a personal level to discuss their goals and professional development along with directing them to useful resources that aid in supporting a successful college career. In this session, a combination of shared research, informational videos, and lively group discussions will be used to share readily applicable strategies that promote quality and effective advising within the limited time available to us. Advisors will leave with tools and resources that use both indirect and direct communication methods to create a memorable advising experience with your students.

**Live Oak Room**
*DACA: Its Effect on Students*

Manuel X. Zamarripa
Institute of Chicano/a Psychology

This presentation will give an overview of the developmental effects of discrimination on Latinx adolescents and young adults, specifically as it relates to the recent DACA decision and ICE Raids. Signs of acculturative stress and trauma symptoms related to academic success, career development, and overall well-being for college students will be explored.
Elm Room
Advising Students on the Right Math Path
Francisco Saucedo, Jr. and Elladean D. Lopez
Northwest Vista College

Advising students on the correct math path is important to ensure that students are taking the correct courses towards graduation. Math could be daunting for some students; thus, they tend to wait to take their math courses until they get close to graduation. This can be problematic for students who have been tested or placed in pre-college math courses. Participants will learn how the Northwest Vista College (NVC) math department and advising department collaborated to ensure that all students are enrolled in the correct math course. The presentation will discuss ways to advise students about math readiness along with STEM and NON-STEM math courses. Participants will learn how NVC advisors incorporate advising math with first time in college students.

Cypress Room
Fishing for Time: How to Increase Office Efficiency with Electronic Forms and a Modified Schedule During Peak Times
Merrideth Holub, Lauren Huff and Tarah Kennedy
Texas A&M University

Do you find pre-registration time to be the most dreaded time of the semester because you know you will be overwhelmed with students and an ocean of seemingly endless tasks? Keeping your head above water seems to be the only goal for each day. In this session, we will share how we utilized an online form system to accommodate our student’s requests in a fool-proof, organized manner, and how we analyzed our daily schedules to restructure our time in order to accommodate more students during our busiest times of the year. Offering more availability to students may initially seem counterintuitive to gaining valuable minutes to your work day. However, we will share how allowing more flexibility in our schedules, and creating streamlined processes to answer requests gave us back hours of valuable time. With a few very simple tips that could be adopted anywhere, we were able to transform our pre-registration experience from hurricane season to smooth sailing.
Concurrent Sessions 4  
3:00pm – 4:00pm

**Magnolia Room**

A Blueprint for Success: Academic Advising and Retention Program for First-Year Students, from Orientation Through the First Semester of College

Jackie Loden, Anna Boyer-Chadwick, Matt Keneson, Andrew Riley, Miranda Swain, Michele Tencza and Julie Fisher  
University of Texas at San Antonio

Higher education literature strongly supports the efficacy of proactive advising strategies and programs. The presenters will discuss the creation and implementation of a pilot program based on proactively advising first-year students assigned to the University of Texas at San Antonio’s Arts & Humanities (AHUM) Advising Center. AHUM’s pilot program was developed as a blueprint for building strong relationships with our first-year students quickly, laying the foundation to maximize important learning outcomes. A comprehensive outline of this structured rubric including monthly themes, learning outcomes, outreach letters, and statistical analysis will be provided. Preliminary results will be shared and discussed during this informative, interactive presentation.

**Pecan Room**

From Resilience to Persistence: Navigating "the Murky Middle"  
Sarah Sanchez and Brandy Barksdale  
University of Texas at San Antonio

In 2016, The Education Advisory Board (EAB) published the “Murky Middle Project.” In this publication, the Student Success Collaborative (SSC) collected historical data from over 70 public and private U.S. higher education institutions that enroll between 2,000 and 40,000 undergraduates across most four-year Carnegie classifications. This project on the “Murky Middle” focuses on students who have completed a year of college enrollment and have a cumulative GPA between a 2.00 and a 2.99.

Our objective in this presentation is to breakdown the “Murky Middle” and discuss the characteristics of this student population. Through this approach, we can identify the barriers and success factors of these
students. In addition, we will use the appreciative advising philosophies by incorporating resilience and positive psychology practices within our own advising sessions when addressing the “Murky Middle.” By understanding, these practices within advising, advisors will be able to help captain their own ship and assist in their journey from resilience to persistence.

Live Oak Room
The 21st Century Advisor: A Community-Driven Advisor Training Model
Gabriel Bermea
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

As the newest member of the UT System, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley implemented a centralized professional advising model in fall 2015. The new model called for an advisor training designed to prepare advisors to engage in an advising as teaching practice. This session will introduce the new five-week community-driven advisor training program created to enhance advisor practice in five realms: relational, informational, technological, conceptual and practical. With this new focus on advisor training and development, three primary developmental goals guide the training model: 1) expose academic advisors to the history and overall best practices in the field of academic advising; 2) ensure academic advisors are informed on university academics, policies, and regulations; and 3) aid advisors in applying theories of advising, while developing their interpersonal skills needed to engage with students in an effective and productive manner. Strategies such role play, reflective discussion, appreciative inquiry, observations and practicum experiences allow audience members to consider new ways to train and assess advisors at their institution. Results of the new training model demonstrate advisors are well equipped to address the many questions that may be asked of them, prepared to handle each case or situation with an open mind, and provide an overall positive advising as teaching experience for students.

Elm Room
Started From The Top, Now We Are Here!
Rebecca Itz
Texas A&M University

The recruitment funnel is a very challenging and rewarding obstacle to overcome. In order to pursue the Master of Financial Management, you must be admitted to one of these high impact programs offered in Mays Business
School at Texas A&M University. The programs are the Professional Program in Accounting (PPA), the Trading, Risk, and Investments Program (TRIP), and the Commercial Banking Program. In an effort to grow and serve the non-metro banks of Texas, the Commercial Banking Program started to recruit from system schools such as Prairie View A&M, Tarleton State, and Texas A&M Corpus Christi, along with targeted majors in Agriculture Economics, Agriculture Business, and Economics.

This presentation will go from the top of the recruitment funnel in strategies to graduation of our upcoming classes. This presentation will give admissions professionals, advisors, and faculty new ideas and resources to implement in their recruitment, admissions, advising, and graduation practices. As advisors are often the first point of contact for prospective students, understanding the recruitment funnel is essential. Where to obtain prospective students, how to track their progress in the funnel, and ultimately see their transition from undergraduate, to Masters, and finally graduation. Having just welcomed our first class of only MFM students, we are now recruiting for the second class to begin in spring 2018.

**Cypress Room**

**Building a Transfer-Efficient Culture: Reverse Mapping-Transfer Advising Guides with the Alamo Colleges District**

Angela Guadian-Mendez, Steven Szeszko and Stacy Ybarra Evans

Alamo Colleges

As student completion becomes an ever-increasing priority for colleges and universities world-wide, the Alamo Colleges District has begun to examine how to make the transfer process seamless for students. This session will highlight the momentous changes that were necessary to construct transfer advising guides as part of the Guided Pathways model. The Guided Pathways model is an integrated, institution-wide approach for student success that helps them clarify their career, degree goals, and pathways. This discussion will explain how reverse baccalaureate degree mapping and collaboration with faculty will bring future clarity in advising, curriculum alignment, and student support systems at the Alamo Colleges.
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