Academic Advising Approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college

Chapter 12 - Socratic Advising

Reader Learning Outcomes

**RLO1:** Describe the characteristics of the three types of student thinkers in the Socratic advising approach.

**Activity:** Break into 3 small groups. Each group is assigned a specific type of student thinker and will create a student dialog that represents the type of student thinker the group is assigned. Reconvene the large group and have each small group report out their student dialog. Ask each group to explain how the dialog represents the type of student thinker it was assigned.

**Assessment:** Each group composes a student dialog that accurately represents the characteristics of the type of student thinker assigned.

**RLO2:** Use a completed student self-reflection form to assist in initially determining the type of student thinker.

**Activity:** Break into 6 small groups. Assign groups 1, 2, and 3 a specific type of student thinker but do not share the information with the other 3 groups (4, 5, and 6). Members of the first 3 groups will work in their assigned group to complete the student-reflection form as if they were the type of student thinker their group was assigned. While this is taking place, the groups 4, 5, and 6 will brainstorm characteristics that accurately describe the three types of student thinkers. Assign each 4, 5, and 6 group to one of the 1, 2, or 3 groups.

Ask groups 1, 2 and 3 to take turns in reading their student dialogs out loud. The members of the group assigned to them (4, 5, 6) will discuss the dialog and come to a consensus on which type of student thinker the self-reflection is most closely aligned, share their decision with the group, and discuss why they selected the type of student thinker.

**Assessment:** Groups 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate they understand the types of student thinkers in the Socratic advising approach by the way they compose the student reflection form. Groups 4, 5, and 6 demonstrate they understand the types of student thinkers in the Socratic advising approach by accurately selecting the specific type of student thinker that is reflected in the self-reflection form.

**RLO3:** Use a student/advisor dialog to complete the rubric for assessing student thinking
Activity: As a homework assignment, ask the class members to write a student/advisor dialog based on a specific scenario and bring it to class. Scenarios could be: a) student on academic warning, b) exploratory student seeking assistance in selecting a major, c) student seeking admission to a selective major and needing a parallel plan, d) student having challenges passing mathematics, etc.

In class, ask each class member to exchange dialogs so that the person who wrote the dialog does not have his or her own. Ask class members to apply the rubric for assessing student thinking to the dialog and then share the results of the rubric with the class.

OR

Ask for 2 volunteers to role play a dialog between a student and an advisor (based on a specific scenario) for the class and ask the class members to independently complete the rubric for assessing student thinking. Ask for volunteers to share their scores on the rubric and discuss why they scored the student’s thinking the way they did.

Assessment: Class members will use the rubric to accurately depict the student’s thinking characteristics.

RLO4: Use the Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Approach (Elements of Thought and Intellectual Standards) to write additional questions for the Socratic Questioning toolbox for advisors (pages 208 and 209). (Additional questions in the Socratic Questioning toolbox will be helpful to advisors as they assist students improve upon their critical thinking skills.)

Activity: There are eight Elements of Thought and eight Intellectual Standards in the Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Framework. Assign each person one of them and ask them to write a question to add to the questions listed in specific Elements of Thought or Intellectual Standards (pages 208 and 209). Have class members take turns reading the question they wrote and explaining why/how the question they wrote would be helpful in addressing the specific Element of Thought or Intellectual Standard with the student. Ask, “how would the question help the student think more critically about their situation or challenge?”

Assessment: Class members are able to create appropriate questions in their dialog with students to help the student think more critically about his/her situation/challenge.

RLO5: Dissect the anatomy of the Socratic advising approach and explain how or why each part contributes to the overall success of the approach, resulting in students using their critical thinking skills to solve problems or challenges.

Activity: Break into five groups. Assign each group one part of the Socratic advising approach. Each group will brainstorm how their specific part contributes to assisting
students in improving their critical thinking skills to solve problems or challenges and report out to the large group.

**Assessment:** Class members will demonstrate their understanding of how each part of the Socratic advising approach contributes to assisting students in improving their critical thinking skills to solve problems or challenges by accurately describing how each part contributes to the Socratic advising approach.

**RLO6:** Determine the purpose of asking different types of questions (one-system, no-system, conflicting systems). Explain the benefits and challenges of each system.

**Activity:** Break off into pairs or small groups. Each group gets a different case study. Practice creating different types of questions using each system. *This activity can also be done as an individual assignment.*

**Assessment:** Groups and/or individuals demonstrate understanding of the different systems of questions by creating questions and discussing the challenges and benefits of each system.

**RLO7:** Engage in self-reflection as an advisor. Recognize how one’s own belief systems and biases impact the advising relationship.

**Activity:** Read the first part of a case study that merely gives an overview of a student issue. Next, review the Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Intellectual Traits and rate what type of thinker you believe you as an advisor for the traits of Humility, Fairmindedness, Empathy, and Integrity. Return to the second half of the case study that details the narrative and the outcome. Revisit the Intellectual Traits. Discuss whether or not your ratings changed and why.

**Assessment:** Individuals will gain a better understanding of one’s own thinking as an advisor through self-assessment of the Intellectual Traits. Discuss of belief systems, biases, and how these innate traits may impact the advising relationship.

**RLO8:** Demonstrate understanding of how to incorporate the Socratic Advising Approach into daily practice.

**Activity:** Create a detailed case study that must include the following:

- detailed description of the student that is the focus of the study;
- detailed description of the problem or issue that the student is experiencing;
- narrative of the advising conversation;
- discussion the types of questions that were asked;
- summary of the outcomes for the student;
- summary of challenges and rewards of using this approach/
Assessment: Case study descriptions, narrative, and types of questions will be reviewed using the following Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Standards of Clarity, Depth, Relevance, Significance. Summaries will be reviewed using the Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Standards of Depth and Fairness. Readers will gain experience in utilization of the Socratic Advising Approach and develop an understanding of how approaches are used in daily practice.