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

Chapter 7 - Strengths-based Advising

Reader Learning Outcomes

Readers will:

- Articulate a strengths development philosophy and specify how this approach differs from the way in which advising is typically conducted on your campus.
- Identify the four challenges advisors often encounter when implementing a strengths-based approach to advising.
- Apply the five steps of strengths-based advising with students on your campus and evaluate the outcome.
- Evaluate specific instruments and techniques that can help students identify their talents.
- Implement strategies for helping students envision their future goals in compelling ways.

Aiming for Excellence discussion questions and activities

- How is a strengths-based approach to advising different from how advising is typically conducted on your campus?
- What would it look like to incorporate a strengths-based approach into your current advising system?
- What (if anything) would need to change about the way you currently organize and implement advising on your campus, if you wanted to focus more on your students’ strengths?
- What benefits do you see from shifting to a strengths philosophy? Which types of students do you think would benefit most from this? What would it take to implement this approach with those groups?
- What kinds of additional information would you need about your students in order to implement strengths-based advising?
- What support is necessary for your advisors if you shift to this approach?
- What are the challenges of moving to this approach? What strengths do you have in your academic leadership team to address these challenges?
- What kind of training would your advisors need? How would you provide this training?
- How do you help advisors view advising as more than course selection?
- What is the first step you would need to take if you wanted to make a paradigm shift to strengths-based advising?