

PENNSTATE



Innovative Advising

in  
CHALLENGING  
TIMES

October 29, 2009

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University Park, Pennsylvania

Sponsored by Penn State's

Division of Undergraduate Studies  
Office of Undergraduate Education  
University Faculty Senate

*The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*

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*Eighth Annual Professional Development Conference on Academic Advising*

Division of Undergraduate Studies  
101 Grange Building  
University Park, PA 16802-6700

Division of Undergraduate Studies

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# Innovative Advising 11 CHALLENGING TIMES

## EIGHTH ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ON ACADEMIC ADVISING

*A professional development conference for academic advisers, faculty who advise, and others interested in the field of academic advising.*

Thank you for attending the Eighth Annual Professional Development Conference on Academic Advising, aptly titled “Innovative Advising in Challenging Times.” This year’s focus addresses the economy’s impact on higher education and the creative means by which institutions are adapting through new technologies, administrative structures, teaching situations, management strategies, and recruitment policies.

The state of our nation’s economy calls for our collective consideration, research, and best practices to ensure that current and future students receive the most enriching academic experience at the most affordable cost. Indeed, how can we, as academic advisers, best support our institutions, our students, and our profession in the face of today’s economic challenges?

*Indeed, how can we ... best support our institutions, our students, and our profession in the face of today’s economic challenges?*

We are grateful for your participation today and hope you not only learn from respected experts speaking on a range of timely issues but also have an opportunity to join discussions and share your thoughts with colleagues. Only by exchanging ideas and diverse experiences can we hope to meet the challenges that our country, our institutions, and our students face today.

Thanks also go to the University Faculty Senate, Office of Undergraduate Education, and *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal* for joining Penn State’s Division of Undergraduate Studies in sponsoring this 2009 academic advising conference.

Please enjoy the presentations and offer your feedback so that we may continue to improve this important event.



Eric R. White  
Associate Dean for Advising  
Executive Director, Division of Undergraduate Studies  
The Pennsylvania State University

# Innovative Advising CHALLENGING TIMES

## Plenary Speaker

Donald E. Heller, Ed.D.  
Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education  
Professor of Education  
Senior Scientist, Penn State



Donald E. Heller teaches and conducts research on higher education economics, public policy, and finance, with a primary focus on issues of college access and choice for low income and minority students. He has consulted on higher education policy issues with university systems and policy-making organizations in Washington, California, Colorado, Kansas, Michigan, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C., and he has testified as an expert witness before congressional committees and state legislatures and in federal court cases.

Dr. Heller earned an Ed.D. in higher education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, an Ed.M. in administration, planning, and social policy from Harvard, and a B.A. in economics and political science from Tufts University. Before his academic career, he spent a decade as an information technology manager at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In July 2007, he was named the ninth director of the Center for the Study of Higher Education at Penn State and in 2009, he was a visiting professor at Birkbeck College, University of London.

Dr. Heller came to Penn State from the University of Michigan, where he earned a national reputation for his studies of higher education finance, tuition pricing, financial aid, and student access.

His research has been published in *The Journal of Higher Education*, *The Review of Higher Education*, the *Journal of Student Financial Aid*, and the *Review of African American Education*. He received the 2002 Promising Scholar/Early Career Achievement Award from the Association for the Study of Higher Education, a scholarly society with 1,400 members dedicated to higher education as a field of study. He was also the 2001 recipient of the Robert P. Huff Golden Quill Award from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, for his contributions to the literature on student financial aid.

## Plenary Abstract

### **The Financial Crisis in Higher Education**

*What It Means for Advising and Advisers*

Dr. Heller will provide an overview of the financial crisis facing the higher education industry in the United States and discuss the subsequent impact on institutions and students alike. He also will describe how the crisis is likely to affect the work of academic advisers both now and in the near future.

Colleges and universities are feeling the effects of the recession in a number of ways. Public institutions are operating under state funding constraints, wealthy private universities have experienced drops in their endowments, and school administrators see students and families contending with more problems paying for college. These factors may challenge students' ability to fund their educations, cause them to rethink career choices, and create difficulties in fulfilling academic requirements.

Explaining these and other implications of today's financial crisis, Dr. Heller's address will provide a context for the sessions that follow today.



## Conference Sponsors

### **Support for the Eighth Annual Professional Development Conference on Academic Advising is provided by Penn State's:**

Division of Undergraduate Studies, a unit within Undergraduate Education that helps students explore the University's academic programs while making progress toward graduation

Office of Undergraduate Education, an academic administrative unit that provides leadership and coordination for University-wide programs and initiatives in support of undergraduate teaching and learning at Penn State

University Faculty Senate, the representative body of Penn State's faculty with legislative authority on all matters pertaining to the educational interests of the University and all educational matters that concern the faculties of more than one college

*The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*, a free electronic publication about academic advising in higher education that is available at [www.psu.edu/dus/mentor](http://www.psu.edu/dus/mentor)

# CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Time	Room	Event / Session
7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	outside Deans Hall	coffee, tea, and water available
7:30 a.m.–noon	outside Deans Hall	<b>Registration</b>
8:30–8:45 a.m.	Deans Hall 1 & 2	<b>Welcome</b> Eric White Associate Dean for Advising and Executive Director, Division of Undergraduate Studies Penn State
8:45–9:15 a.m.	Deans Hall 1 & 2	<b>Plenary Address</b> Donald E. Heller Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education Professor of Education Senior Scientist, Penn State
9:15–9:45 a.m.	second-floor break area	<b>Break</b>
9:45–10:45 a.m.	Room 204 Room 205 Room 206 Room 211 Room 218	<b>Concurrent Presentations</b> Academic Orientation in the Digital Era Career Development Strategies for Tough Economic Times Effectively Using Facebook and Twitter in Academic Advising Money Management and Advising Students Paying for College in a Challenging Economy
11:00 a.m.–noon	Deans Hall 1 & 2	<b>Student Panel</b> Succeeding in Today's College Environment: What Students Have to Say

# CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Time	Room	Event / Session
12:15–1:15 p.m.	Deans Hall 1 & 2	<b>Lunch</b> (provided)
1:30–2:30 p.m.	Room 204 Room 205 Room 206 Room 211 Room 218	<b>Concurrent Presentations</b> Incorporating Clicker Technology into Group Advising Sessions  Assessing Student Readiness for Online Learning: Preparing for the Experience  <b>Administrator Panel</b> Administrators Bite the Bullet: Issues and Strategies Surrounding Institutional Budget Cuts  Sustainability across the Campus  Graceful Exit
2:30–3:00 p.m.	second-floor break area	<b>Break *</b>
3:00–4:00 p.m.	Room 204 Room 205 Room 206 Room 211	<b>Concurrent Presentations</b> Second Life: A Virtual Academic Support Community for Distance Education Students  Problem-Based Learning: Challenging Students to Actively Engage  Minority Student Access to Higher Education  Innovative Advising Practices Utilizing Technology
* Break sponsored by the University Faculty Senate		

# PRESENTATIONS *and* ABSTRACTS

Thursday, October 29

◀ 9:45–10:45 a.m.

## **Academic Orientation in the Digital Era**

**Room 204**

*Janet Schulenberg, Ph.D., Senior Undergraduate Studies Adviser and Operations Coordinator  
First-Year Testing, Consulting, and Advising Program, Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State  
Kelly Bellew, Graduate Assistant, Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State*

Ready access to Web-based resources is challenging traditional modes of communication. Students and families have become impatient with lecture- or video-based delivery of information in campus academic orientation sessions. These critiques suggest that information could be more efficiently delivered online, saving participants time and the expense of traveling to campus. Such critiques also force examination of the unique opportunities associated with a campus visit that are not possible in cyberspace. This presentation explores ways colleges and universities across the country are offering academic orientation content via electronic modes and discusses ways in which campus visits continue to be critical components of the orientation experience.

## **Career Development Strategies for Tough Economic Times**

**Room 205**

*Jack Rayman, Ph.D., Director, Career Services, Penn State*

In spring 2009, thirty-four career center directors from major universities participated in a survey to determine what strategies their offices had developed to assist students confronting some of the most challenging economic conditions in the last twenty-five years. The results of that survey will be shared in this session. Implications of the economic downturn as they apply to current college students and recent graduates will be discussed, and session participants will receive a handout enumerating strategies that career centers at major universities are recommending to help students meet their career development needs. A fifteen- to twenty-minute question-and-answer segment will follow the presentation.

## **Effectively Using Facebook and Twitter in Academic Advising**

**Room 206**

*Rey Junco, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Academic Development and Counseling,  
Lock Haven University*

Because of challenging economic times, there is increased interest in social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, to help advisers and other higher education professionals efficiently engage more of their students. New research shows that, indeed, advisers can use social media to increase student engagement in both advising and course work. This presentation will review research on Twitter and Facebook and their impact on student engagement and success. This lively and engaging session will also review research-supported strategies that advisers can use to incorporate social media into existing repertoires of student-support strategies.

# PRESENTATIONS *and* ABSTRACTS

## Money Management and Advising Students

Room 211

*Emily Artello, Undergraduate Studies Adviser, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College*

More and more students come to college with financial concerns. Very few of these students learn much about money management while in high school. Consequently, it has become increasingly important for academic advisers to be comfortable talking with students about money issues. While we are not required to be experts on student loans, credit cards, and other financial issues, it is important that we have a basic understanding of these concepts and that we speak with our students about them. This session covers the fundamentals of money management as well as how to talk to advisees, particularly first-year students, and their parents, if necessary, about money management issues that include budgets, student loans, and credit cards.

## Paying for College in a Challenging Economy

Room 218

*Anna Griswold, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Education  
and Executive Director of Student Aid, Penn State*

Many people ask how the current state of the economy is affecting students' enrollment in college. This session will explore several dimensions of this question. What are the trends that reflect the cost of education and student aid at Penn State during the past decade? What's new in Federal Student Aid policy and how will that impact how families will pay for college in the future? Are students and their families increasingly relying on loans to pay for college? How are families coping, and what can we do to ensure they receive a return on the investment that the cost of a college education represents?

### ◀ 11:00 a.m.–noon

## Succeeding in Today's College Environment: What Students Have to Say

Deans Hall 1 & 2

*Student panelists: Paulina Castaneda, Joseph Vehec, Chris Oros, Centrice Martin*

*Moderator: Terry Musser, Ph.D., Division of Undergraduate Studies Programs Coordinator, Penn State*

Students have traditionally faced a wide range of challenges on the road to earning college degrees. Difficulties can run the gamut from financial and medical to social, emotional, and family-related issues. Is today's economy exacerbating these conditions and perhaps introducing new difficulties at the same time? What resources do students use to cope? What strategies do they employ? Can the academic advising community do more to help? Today's panel features several college students who will discuss their experiences, the challenges they have faced or are facing, and the various strategies and resources they believe can make a difference.

# PRESENTATIONS *and* ABSTRACTS

◀ 1:30–2:30 p.m.

## **Incorporating Clicker Technology into Group Advising Sessions** Room 204

*Hilleary Himes, Senior Undergraduate Studies Adviser, Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State*  
*Jeffrey Gugino, Senior Undergraduate Studies Adviser, Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State*

Individual response systems, also known as “clickers,” are engaging students in a variety of college classes. These hand-held devices allow students to provide instant feedback about their backgrounds, goals, and levels of comprehension. This presentation will address the uses of clickers in classrooms and ways in which these strategies carry over to academic advising. Presenters will review the literature and the results of pilot studies plus invite discussion regarding the impact of clickers on academic advising.

## **Assessing Student Readiness for Online Learning: Preparing for the Experience** Room 205

*Robin Gill, Instructional Designer, Penn State DuBois*  
*Linda Enseki, Advising Programs Coordinator, Penn State DuBois*  
*Stefanie Rocco, Communications Support Coordinator, Penn State Online and Penn State Outreach*

The number of students enrolling in online and blended learning courses is continually increasing throughout the world. This session will explore a newly developed assessment survey that considers various factors in determining students’ readiness for online learning and will address the instrument’s potential integration into the advising process. This session also introduces a faculty readiness self-assessment tool to assist faculty members determine their levels of preparation for online teaching.

## **Administrators Bite the Bullet: Issues and Strategies Surrounding Institutional Budget Cuts** Room 206

*Marcos Fernandez, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education,  
College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State*  
*Mary Beth McCarthy, Director, Academic and Career Planning Center,  
Penn State Erie, The Behrend College*  
*William Torgler, Assistant Director, Academic Advisement Center for Campus Outreach  
and Development, University of Akron, Ohio*  
*Moderator: Linda Higginson, Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Advising,  
Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State*

In what ways are institutions of higher education responding to the nation’s shrinking budget, and how are these responses impacting academic advising programs? Are advising programs across the country facing closure, restructure, or realignment? How should administrators make difficult decisions about funding for resources and programs and with what priorities in mind? Guest panelists representing their institutions’ academic advising programs will discuss how the economic downturn is changing the way colleges and universities conduct business, manage facilities, implement student programming, and employ/train/utilize academic advisers.

# PRESENTATIONS *and* ABSTRACTS

## **Sustainability across the Campus**

**Room 211**

*Donald Brown, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Environmental Ethics, Science, and Law,  
College of the Liberal Arts, Penn State*

This presentation will address sustainability as it challenges higher education's institutional mission of education, research, and outreach. For example, what would a curriculum look like that made sustainability a high priority? Should, for instance, economics and engineering majors understand something about ecological systems, should ecology and environmental science majors understand social systems and economics, and should all students know something about ethical principles that might be considered in resolving conflicts between environmental, economic, and social goals? Today's discussion will cover multidisciplinary challenges to higher education and some approaches that schools throughout the United States are implementing to meet these challenges.

## **Graceful Exit**

**Room 218**

*Ro Nuranski, Academic Adviser, College of Health and Human Development, Penn State*

As college seniors plan for life after graduation, they may prepare for graduate school enrollment, employment, or taking time off to explore other options. How can we help them adapt to the many changes they will face? The Graceful Exit workshop prepares students to manage the fundamentals of real life: moving, finding friends and physicians, renting or purchasing housing, budgeting, repaying student loans, monitoring credit scores, preparing for retirement, and more. Join the session and learn how to help students gracefully exit college and thoughtfully transition from gown to town.

## ◀ **3:00–4:00 p.m.**

## **Second Life: A Virtual Academic Support Community for Distance Education Students**

**Room 204**

*Richard Brungard, Advising Programs Coordinator, Penn State World Campus*

What is Second Life and how can it be used to build community and provide advising and student support for distance education students? Penn State World Campus has developed a virtual "island," where distance education students can access resources and create a community with other students. Higher education relies on students making connections with their universities, and Second Life has the potential to foster such connections for distance education students. The purpose of this presentation is to introduce Second Life, discuss its use, and invite discussion about the opportunities for higher education to use virtual realities in meeting the academic and social needs of distance education students.

# PRESENTATIONS *and* ABSTRACTS

## **Problem-Based Learning: Challenging Students to Actively Engage**

Room 205

*Lisa Lattuca, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Center for the Study of Higher Education,  
and Associate Professor, Education Policy Studies, Penn State*

Instructional approaches to problem- and project-based learning (PBL) have many advocates. They are also likely to be the source of anxiety, even antagonism, because PBL approaches expect students to learn actively, collaboratively, and independently, thus challenging those who are accustomed to passivity in the classroom. What can students expect from a typical problem- or project-based learning activity? What will they gain from the experience? How can advisers prepare them for the work ahead?

## **Minority Student Access to Higher Education**

Room 206

*Tara Scales Williams, Ph.D., Director, Multicultural Resource Center  
and Affiliate Assistant Professor of Education, Penn State*

This presentation will focus on how the current economic climate affects the retention of diverse students. Some of the research and strategies for optimizing retention rates for diverse students during challenging economic times will be reviewed followed by a roundtable discussion based on the advising experiences of participants and, in particular, counseling for undergraduate multicultural students at the Multicultural Resource Center.

## **Innovative Advising Practices Utilizing Technology**

Room 211

*Lauri Enterline, Undergraduate Studies Adviser, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College*

Use of technology to facilitate accurate and efficient advising is critical in these challenging times. This session focuses on the use of electronic tools and strategies to provide outreach, review student records, write student notes, monitor progress, and communicate with advisees on a regular basis. The ability to proactively advise students promotes positive relationships, student advocacy, and retention. While many academic and faculty advisers have multiple professional responsibilities, advising is fundamental to empowering students to take advantage of all academic opportunities and avoid costly mistakes.

Penn State encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have any questions about physical access provided, please contact Ruth Hussey at 814-865-7576 in advance of your participation or visit.

### **This publication is available in alternative media on request.**

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