Using the Appreciative Advising Model to Design an Advising Treatment Plan for Medical Students

MAKAYLA L. MERRITT, PHD, MPH, ATC
ELIZABETH K. MCCLAIN, PHD, MPH, EDS, FNAOME
WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
Learning Objectives

1. Identify **current advising practices** of osteopathic medical schools in the country as reported in presented study.

2. Identify advising **perceptions of faculty advisors** in osteopathic medical schools in the country as reported in presented study.

3. Recognize **advising needs of medical students** as reported from one medical school in the country.

4. Understand the **Appreciative Advising Model** and how expert researchers in Appreciative Advising feel that Appreciative Advising should be used in medical education.
Research Questions

- What are the current advising practices of osteopathic medical schools in the country?
- What are the advising perceptions of faculty advisors in osteopathic medical schools in the country?
- What are advising needs of medical students?
- Will there be a difference in students' survey results based on variables of gender, age, ethnicity, or previous degrees held?
- How do expert researchers in Appreciative Advising research feel that Appreciative Advising should be used in medical education?
Literature Review

- Academic advising is often neglected
- Clear need for quality advising in medical schools
- Stress in medical students is a very common and debilitating problem
- Students often have idealized expectations of medical school
- Appreciative Advising success in a wide variety of settings
"Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals and potentials."
APPRECIATIVE ADVISING

1. DISARM
2. DISCOVER
3. DREAM
4. DESIGN
5. DELIVER
6. DON'T SETTLE

Aim for mastery! Keep raising the bar
Build rapport – safe, welcoming
Draw out strengths, needs, difficulties
Formulate a vision, maximize potential
Implement plan, support learner
Develop a plan!
Methodology: Participants & Protection

- Faculty Advisors at osteopathic medical schools in US
  - Descriptive/Survey (Anonymous)
- Students enrolled in one medical school in an osteopathic medical school
  - Descriptive/Survey & Quasi-Experimental (Anonymous)
- Ten experts in Appreciative Advising
  - Qualitative (Signed letter of informed consent)
Methodology: Instruments & Data Collection

- **Descriptive/Survey & Quasi-experimental** – electronic survey

- **Qualitative** – informed consent of 10 experts in Appreciative Advising
  - Phone interviews lasting 30 – 60 minutes
  - Recorded/transcribed
Results: Quantitative Faculty Advisor Participants

- 469/1284 (36.5% response rate)
- Advising Experience

- Yes: 90% (N=420)
- No: 10% (N=49)
Results: Quantitative Student Participants

- 163/394 (41.4% response rate)
- Mean Age = 28 years

### Year in Medical School
- Year 1: 31%
- Year 2: 22%
- Year 3: 26%
- Year 4: 21%

### Gender
- Male: 47%
- Female: 53%
Results: Quantitative Student Participants

- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - Caucasian: 64%
  - African American: 23%
  - Asian: 5%
  - Other: 8%

- **Highest Degree Held**
  - Undergraduate: 58.02%
    - Liberal Arts: 9.57%
    - Science: 90.43%
  - Graduate: 67.00%
    - Liberal Arts: 1.52%
    - Science: 98.48%
Discussion

Participant Profile

- Demographic and student profile information evenly distributed or representative of the student population at this school:
  - Year in Medical School
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Previous degree held
Results: Quantitative Research Question 1

Advisee Year in Medical School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisee Year</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>92.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>85.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>59.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>51.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year Advisee Assigned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Assigned</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>77.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Formally</td>
<td>19.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results: Quantitative Research Question 1

### Number of Assigned Advisees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisee #</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10</td>
<td>44.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>31.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>11.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Are advisors trained?

- Yes: 52%
- No: 48%
Results: Quantitative Research Question 1

School Advising Parameters

- YES: 36.77%
- NO: 57.35%
- N/A: 8.08%
- OTHER: 7.80%

Student Utilization of Advising Services

- Yes: 41%
- No: 32%
- Somewhat: 27%
## Results: Quantitative Research Question 1

Topics that Students Utilize Advisor For (N = 356)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam Tutoring</td>
<td>38.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>73.31</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress Management</td>
<td>64.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Problems</td>
<td>68.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Opportunities</td>
<td>58.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Skills Assistance</td>
<td>26.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Preparation</td>
<td>40.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Choice</td>
<td>48.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Prep Assistance</td>
<td>50.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Quantitative Research Question 1

- Does your school use a specific advising model?
  - Yes: 92%
  - No: 8%

- Would you be interested in learning about new advising models?
  - Yes: 57.87%
  - No: 24.16%
  - Somewhat: 15.45%
  - Other: 2.53%
Discussion – RQ1

Current Advising Practices

- Most advisees from years 1 and 2
- ¾ advisors have less than 20 advisees
- Most indicated they have no training
- ½ said no parameters were placed for advising
- Responses very distributed about whether student utilized advising resources – consistent with literature
- Majority noted no advising training – Over half interested in learning about new advising models
Results: Quantitative Research Question 2

- Highest Mean = 4.09
  “I feel that the advisors at my school ensure that their advisees feel that their advisor is approachable.”

- Lowest Mean = 3.31
  “I feel that the advising services at my school are satisfactory for our students.”
Results: Quantitative Research Question 2

- Highest Standard Deviation = 0.97
  “I feel that the advising services at my school are satisfactory for our students.”

- Lowest Standard Deviation = 0.65
  “I feel that the advisors at my school encourage student confidence in reaching their academic goals.”
Faculty Perceptions (nationwide)

- Overall means pretty high and standard deviations pretty low
- “I feel that the advising services at my school are satisfactory for students.” (lowest mean/highest standard deviation)
Results: Quantitative Research Question 3

- Knows Assigned Advisor
  - 34% Yes
  - 66% No

- Feels that they utilize school advising services
  - 27% Yes
  - 8% No
  - 65% Somewhat
### Results: Quantitative Research Question 3

**Topics Students Use and Want to Use Advisor For**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Current %</th>
<th>Want %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam Tutoring</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>11.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Skills*</td>
<td>12.63</td>
<td>30.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress Management*</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>25.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Problems*</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>17.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Opportunities</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Skills Assistance</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>37.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Match Preparation</strong></td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td><strong>80.74</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Choice</td>
<td>9.47</td>
<td>63.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Prep Assistance</td>
<td>16.84</td>
<td>51.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.42</strong></td>
<td>11.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N = 95

* N = 135
Results: Quantitative Research Question 3

- Meetings with Advisor during 2015-2016 School Year
  - Range = 0 - 20
  - Mean = 0.74
  - Median = 0
  - Mode = 0
Results: Quantitative Research Question 3

- Highest Mean = 4.48
  “I want my advisor to be approachable.”
- Lowest Mean = 2.54
  “I feel that the advising services at my school are satisfactory.”
Results: Quantitative Research Question 3

- Highest Standard Deviation = 1.16
  “I feel that the advising services at my school are satisfactory.”

- Lowest Standard Deviation = 0.62
  “I want my advisor to be approachable.”
Discussion – RQ3

Student Perceptions (one school)

- List of topics current vs. want to have indicate students want to use their advisor more and for more reasons.
- Overall means low and overall standard deviations are high for “current” questions – high degree of variability.
- Overall means much higher and overall standard deviations much lower for “want” questions – better consensus.
- Students would like to see improvement in advisor characteristics and advising experiences.
Student Responses Separated into 2 Groups:
- Current Advising Practices
- Advising Students Would Like to Have
Results: Quantitative Research Question 4 - $H_0$ 1

- Independent samples t-test, alpha = 0.05
  - Males vs Females

- **Current advising:** No statistically significant differences based on gender, $t(146) = .798$, $p = .426$.

- **Advising students would like to have:** No statistically significant differences based on gender, $t(146) = .333$, $p = .740$. 
Results: Quantitative Research Question 4 - $H_0 \ 2$

- Pearson’s Correlation, alpha = 0.05
- **Current advising:** No statistically significant differences based on age, $r(144) = .119, p = .153$
- **Advising students would like to have:** No statistically significant differences based on age, $r(144) = -0.99, p = .232$
Results: Quantitative Research Question 4 - $H_0$ 3

- Ethnicity was recoded into 2 groups: Caucasian and Non-Caucasian
- Independent samples $t$ test, alpha = 0.05
- **Current advising**: No statistically significant differences based on ethnicity, $t(148) = -1.301, p = .195$
- **Advising students would like to have**: No statistically significant differences based on ethnicity, $t(148) = .742, p = .459$
Results: Quantitative
Research Question 4 - $H_0$ 4

- Independent samples $t$ test, alpha = 0.05
  - Graduate degrees vs. Undergraduate Degrees

- Current advising: No statistically significant differences based on collegiate degrees obtained prior to entering medical school, $t(147) = -0.157$, $p = .875$.

- Advising students would like to have: There was a statistically significant difference based on collegiate degrees obtained prior to entering medical school, $t(147) = 2.08$, $p = 0.039$. 

Statistically Significant Difference
The only statistically significant difference found was based on previous degree held for what students would like to have in an advisor.

Students who have previously been through another graduate degree program expect/want more out of their advisement experience than those students who have not been through a graduate degree program.
Results: Qualitative Research Question 5

- Purposive sample – 10 Appreciative Advising Experts
- Interviews ranged from 32 – 58 minutes in length
- Interviews were transcribed and analyzed for common themes across all interviews
- Expert Experience: Ranging from 3 – 10 years
- All experts wished to be identified by name
Results: Qualitative Research Question 5

Four Identified Categories of Topics:

- Strengths of the Appreciative Advising model
- Weaknesses of the Appreciative Advising model
- Implementation of Appreciative Advising
- Considerations in the six phases of Appreciative Advising for medical students
Strengths of the Appreciative Advising model

- Two themes:

  “positive, simple, and has good theoretical foundation”

  and

  “develops institutional culture and a shared language”
Weakeness of the Appreciative Advising model

- Theme:
  “too much time, not realistic, and faculty resistance” [perceived]

Implementation of Appreciative Advising

- Theme:
  “adequate training, faculty buy-in, participation in AA online course and Institute, and hosting an AA speaker”
Considerations in the six phases of Appreciative Advising for medical students

- Theme:
  “importance of the disarm phase and phases are not linear”

- Do you think the AA model will work for medical students? All Experts - YES
Discussion – RQ5
Appreciative Advising Experts

- Tips provided gave a comprehensive view of the Appreciative Advising model and also a variety of things to consider for implementation.
- Strengths and weaknesses emerged throughout entire interview.
- Most weaknesses were “perceived” – experts offered strategies to overcome.
- More success when implemented institutionally.
Discussion Summary

- Problems Encountered
  - Faculty Emails

- Implications
  - Formulate a plan for advising implementation

- Future Research
  - Compare faculty and student perceptions
  - Analyze impact of implementation of AA model
  - Look at special student populations
  - Involve other colleges of osteopathic medicine
What are we doing?

- Faculty development for 2016-2017 school year to introduce Appreciative Advising framework
- Faculty learning materials distributed
- Adapting current materials to be specific to Medical Education
- Grant submission for additional resources:
  - Expert speakers for training
  - Monthly Appreciative Advising Luncheons for Faculty Advisors
  - Additional training material
- More research to compare – include other medical schools
Questions?

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST