

The NAAAA: 10 Years Old and Changing

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The field of athletic advising has a short but noteworthy history. In the summer of 1975, at Michigan State University, Frank Downing and Clarence Underwood convened a meeting of advisors in order to form a national organization (F. Downing, personal communication, January, 1985). Initially known as the National Athletic Counselor's Association (NACA), the organization held its first official convention in St. Louis in 1976 and declared its purpose to be that of helping student athletes maintain their eligibility and achieve an education terminating with graduation (Downing, 1981).

The need for advisors of athletes was obvious following rulings by the NCAA regarding academic eligibility requirements and the eligibility of the most academically vulnerable athlete, the freshman. Most early advising was done by men from the football coaching staff, but times and advisors were changing. As noted by Kurpius and Rose (1982), in the 1970's universities such as Indiana, Nebraska, and Washington began hiring women with academic (not athletic) credentials for advising. And, probably because of scandals in the late '70's, universities began placing administrative control of advising in the academic community. These changes were monitored but not very systematically, the only report being that of a mail survey by Brennan (1983).

It seemed appropriate, therefore, to conduct a second survey in an attempt to identify trends and changes in the field of academic advising as it celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Method

At the conclusion of the opening general session of the 1986 NAAAA convention, survey forms were distributed to those in attendance. The president urged completion of the survey, stating that its purpose was to identify parameters of the association's membership and of their jobs. In the event that an institution had more than one representative at the meeting, the president asked that only the director of the advising program complete the survey. He further requested that divisional status be written at the top of the survey (an item omitted on the survey form). The president gave general instructions and answered questions that arose while the survey was being completed.

Survey Instrument

Based on the work of Brennan (1983), the survey was printed on both sides of a single sheet of 8½ x 11 inch paper and contained items relating to characteristics of the respondents and of their current appointments (see table 1 for items). Most of the items required simply checking appropriate categories. Respondents were required to provide information on only the items of total budget, tutoring budget, and number of full-time advisors at their institutions. Respondents also checked any of 37 descriptive duties for which they were responsible (see table 2 for these duties taken from Brennan). In addition to the items shown in table 1, respondents also checked whether they were employed full time or part time.

All information was provided anonymously; neither name nor institutional affiliation were requested.

Preliminary Analyses and Decisions

From approximately 120 in attendance, 102 returns were collected. One was rejected because the respondent indicated that he was an affiliate member and director of admissions, not an advisor.

Of those who provided the requisite information, most were employed full time (92 percent) and most were at Division I schools (85 percent). We decided, therefore, to analyze just the returns of advisors working full time at Division I schools.

Unfortunately, despite the request to write division affiliation on the return, 21 respondents failed to do so. Rather than excluding all these returns, the first author examined the returns of all who indicated Division I affiliation and noted the pattern of responses to items of budget, number of full-time advisors, and salary. He then assigned Division I affiliation to those returns which clearly showed the same pattern. This procedure rescued 13 returns.

These screening decisions reduced the usable returns to 72 from advisors who indicated both full-time employment and at Division I schools. While this sample surely represents the majority of advisors in the field, the reader should note that the data are from probably the most senior academic advisors who attended the national meetings.

With only 72 usable returns, categories were combined on certain items to reduce the number of zero frequencies. For example, the item regarding academic field originally included Business. Because only two respondents indicated the field, the category was combined with Other. Similar combinations resulted in the categories listed in table 1. The academic field labeled Psychology in table 1 included on the survey the fields of counseling, psychology, and student affairs, and this field should consequently be interpreted loosely as psychological.

Results

All data were coded for computer analyses using programs available with

the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 1.

Percentages Reported by 72 (or N) Full-time Academic Advisors of Athletes in Division I Schools Attending the 1986 NAAAA Meeting

Advisor Variables	
Age	Sex
14% 30 or less	56% Male [68%]
58% 31 through 40	44% Female [32%]
28% over 40	
Highest Degree Earned	Academic Field
26% Doctorate [21%]	39% Education
61% Master's [64%]	14% Phys. Ed.
13% Bachelor's [15%]	19% Psychology [15%]
	28% Other [21%]
Coaching Experience	Years Employed (N = 70)
25% Football/basketball	41% less than 3 [40%]
11% Other sports	21% 3 through 5 [34%]
64% None [42%]	37% more than 5 [26%]
Appointment Variables	
Salary	Total Budget (N = 38)
15% \$15,000 to \$20,000 [22%]	24% less than \$51,000
14% \$21,000 to \$25,000 [30%]	26% \$51,000 to \$100,000
29% \$26,000 to \$30,000 [28%]	24% \$101,000 to \$150,000
19% \$31,000 to \$35,000	26% more than \$150,000
22% more than \$35,000	
Tutoring Budget (N = 42)	No. Full-time Advisors (N = 54)
31% less than \$11,000	33% 1
26% \$11,000 to \$20,000	28% 2
10% \$21,000 to \$30,000	19% 3
33% more than \$30,000	20% 4 or more
Budget Source (N = 69)	Salary Source
71% Athletic dept.	61% Athletic dept. [76%]
19% Other depts.	28% Other depts. [20%]
10% Split	11% Split [4%]
Immediate Supervisor	Office Location Facility
67% Athletic dept. [76%]	74% Athletic [94%]
33% Other [24%]	26% Academic [6%]
Faculty Rank (N = 65)	First Full-time Advisor
23% Yes [16%]	42% Yes [39%]
77% No [84%]	58% No [61%]
No. Responsibilities (see table 2)	
17% less than 14	24% 19 to 23
35% 14 to 18	25% more than 23

Note: Brennan's 1983 percentages in square brackets.

Descriptive Analyses

Table 1 contains the percentage of responses to each category of the items surveyed. On items completed by fewer than 72 respondents, the number is given in parentheses.

To summarize advisor variables, the majority of these advisors were between 31 and 40 years old, had been employed for less than five years, had master's or doctoral degrees, and had no coaching experience. Men constituted a slight majority, and only half were from the historically traditional fields of education or physical education. Today's academic advisors may be characterized, therefore, as well-educated young men and women from various disciplines who have recently been hired for academic advising skills and not for knowledge of athletics.

If we can assume that Brennan sampled similar advisors, some notable trends can be discerned by comparing the present results to those reported three years ago by Brennan (in square brackets). There are now more women advisors, more trained in fields other than education, more with no coaching experience, and slightly more with doctoral degrees.

To summarize appointment variables, the median reported salary was between \$26,000 and \$30,000. Only about half of the respondents were able (or willing) to provide budget information, and these reported total budgets ranging from \$7,000 to \$333,000 (median \$100,000) and tutoring budgets ranging from \$1,000 to \$200,000 (median \$18,000). Salary and budgets were funded primarily by the athletic department. Most advisors reported to the athletic director, and most had offices in the athletic facility. The majority did not have a faculty appointment, and while more were not the first full-time academic advisor hired, only one or two advisors were reported on staff. Most advisors were responsible for 14 to 23 separate duties.

It appears, therefore, that these advisors represented primarily large schools with substantial budgets and with established academic advising programs controlled largely by the athletic department.

The field, however, appears to be changing. In contrast to Brennan's earlier results, we note higher salaries paid from athletic departments to advisors. Advisors were less likely to have offices in the athletic facility and less likely to answer directly to the athletic department but more likely to have faculty status. Athletic advising appears to be becoming more of a shared university responsibility.

Job Analysis

Respondents were asked to check any of 37 activities for which they were responsible. Table 2 contains those activities, ranked according to the percentage of advisors indicating responsibility for each.

The respondents did discriminate among the activities. Hence, we can note some general characteristics of the work of academic advisors. Most advisors serve both men and women athletes directly, apparently offering more personal counseling than either career/vocational advice or tutorial

assistance. At the same time, these advisors have heavy managerial duties, including monitoring, coordinating, supervising, and preparing budgets. Less consistently mentioned is the role of liaison between the athletic department and various university offices. As it probably should be, academic advisors are generally not involved in teaching, faculty committees, non-academic athletic department committees, and coaching.

Table 2.

Percentage of 72 advisors indicating responsibility for each rank-ordered activity.

%	Responsibility
97	1. academic monitoring
96	2. serve men's athletic program [96%]
96	3. liaison: athletic department and faculty [92%]
92	4. personal counseling
92	5. serve non-scholarship student-athletes [60%]
90	6. serve women's athletic program [78%]
88	7. coordinate tutorial program [88%]
79	8. athletic department academic performance research
75	9. provide career and vocational counseling [72%]
74	10. supervise assistants, graduate assistants, interns
72	11. tutoring
71	12. liaison: athletic department and admissions [88%]
69	13. coordinate summer orientation
69	14. recruiting
60	15. interpreter of NCAA and conference rules [62%]
60	16. academic awards
60	17. develop budget
58	18. university committees
54	19. summer programs [46%]
50	20. preparation of certification of eligibility [48%]
46	21. get high school transcripts and 2.0 letters [38%]
44	22. supervise textbook distribution program [44%]
42	23. liaison: athletic dept. and financial aid office [46%]
42	24. department academic meetings
32	25. liaison: athletic dept. and housing office [36%]
32	26. prepare petitions
29	27. faculty advisory committee
28	28. athletic committee
26	29. publications
19	30. teaching
19	31. athletic alumni activities
19	32. special admission committees
7	33. faculty senate
7	34. coordinate financial aids agents law
7	35. senior jobs committee
3	36. athletic residence halls
1	37. coach

Note: Brennan's 1983 percentages in square brackets.

Interestingly, 69 percent of these advisors reported responsibility in the area of recruiting. Apparently the existence of an academic advising program is regarded by athletic departments as an inducement to the recruiting of athletes.

A comparison of the present percentages to those of Brennan is again interesting. The validity of both surveys is supported by the similarity of the percentages in so many categories. Where there are differences, they are understandable. More advisors are serving non-scholarship athletes and women athletes, as one would predict with increasing size of academic advising programs and with the emergence of women's athletic programs.

Correlational Analyses

To characterize further the field of athletic academic advising, correlations were computed among the advisor variables in table 1 and between the advisor and appointment variables. All variables were reduced to the categories indicated in table 1, and for these categorical relations Chi Square (CS) analyses are reported along with either the Phi measure of correlation between variables with two categories each or Cramer's V, a more appropriate measure of relationship between variables with more than two categories. Like the common Pearson correlation coefficient, r , the Phi and V coefficients indicate the strength of the relationship between the two variables. Also reported is P, the probability of obtaining that one correlation by chance (i.e., when in fact there is no relationship). Complete data tables are given only for those relationships with P values equal to or less than .05, not to suggest formal statistical tests of hypotheses, but merely to indicate reasonably reliable relationships which can and should be tested more formally with future surveys. With 96 correlations computed, one would expect five to have $P < .05$ by chance alone. Where less reliable but interesting trends were noted, these trends are described verbally to suggest targets for future and larger surveys. The correlational analyses are presented in order of the advisor variables listed in table 1.

Age. Salary and coaching experience were reliably related to age. The specific data shown in table 3 indicate that older advisors earn higher salaries and have more experience coaching football or basketball.

While no other variables were reliably related to age, the following trends were noted. Older advisors are mostly men but younger advisors are mostly women (60 percent of those older than 31 were men while only 30 percent of those less than 31 were men). Older advisors are more likely to have doctoral degrees (40 percent of oldest versus 20 percent of youngest), to have been trained in the traditional areas of education and physical education (65 percent of oldest versus 20 percent of youngest), and to have been the first full-time advisor (60 percent of oldest versus 30 percent of youngest). These senior advisors have been employed longer and now are more likely to have faculty rank (41 percent of oldest versus 22 percent of youngest), to be working with more academic advisors (86 percent of oldest versus 44

percent of youngest reporting two or more), and to be at the schools with total budgets over \$100,000 (67 percent of oldest versus zero percent of youngest).

To summarize, senior academic advisors have coaching experience in the revenue-producing sports and they have higher salaries. They tend to be men, trained in education or physical education, with advanced degrees, with faculty rank, who appear to be working in the larger academic advising programs.

Table 3.

Variables related to age (cell % = row %)

	Salary x \$1,000					
	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	>35	
<31	6 60.0	2 20.0	1 10.0	1 10.0	0 0	10 13.9
31-40	5 11.9	5 11.9	19 45.2	6 14.3	7 16.7	42 58.3
>40	0 0	3 15.0	1 5.0	7 35.0	9 45.0	20 27.8
	11 15.3	10 13.9	21 29.2	14 19.4	16 22.2	72 100.0

CS = 36.85

DF = 8

$P < .001$

V = .51

	Coaching Experience (F/B = Football or Basketball)			
	None	F/B	Other	
<31	7 70.0	0 0	3 30.0	10 13.9
31-40	27 64.3	10 23.8	5 11.9	42 58.3
>40	12 60.0	8 40.0	0 0	20 27.8
	46 63.9	18 25.0	8 11.1	72 100.00

CS = 9.89

DF = 4

$P < .042$

V = .26

Importantly, however, contrasts between the senior and junior advisers suggest some interesting trends in the field of athletic academic advising. In

contrast to senior advisers, the most junior members are likely to be women who do not have coaching experience in the revenue-producing sports, who are not trained in the traditional fields of education or physical education, and who are being hired without the doctoral degree, apparently by schools with smaller academic advisement programs and limited budgets.

Sex. The data for three variables reliably related to sex of advisers are shown in table 4, an inspection of which reveals that men advisers enjoyed higher salaries, reported more responsibilities, had more experience coaching football or basketball, and were less likely to be the first full-time adviser hired.

Table 4.
Variables related to sex (cell % = row %)

	Salary x \$1,000					
	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	>35	
Men	3 7.5	3 7.5	13 32.5	8 20.0	13 32.5	40 55.6
Women	8 25.0	7 21.9	8 25.0	6 18.8	3 9.4	32 44.4
Total	11 15.3	10 13.9	21 29.2	14 19.4	16 22.2	72 100.0

CS = 10.84
DF = 4
P < .028
V = .39

	Coaching Experience (F/B = Football or Basketball)			
	None	F/B	Other	
Men	18 45.0	17 42.5	5 12.5	40 55.6
Women	28 87.5	1 3.1	3 9.4	32 44.4
Total	46 63.9	18 25.0	8 11.1	72 100.0

CS = 16.21
DF = 2
P < .001
V = .47

	First Full-Time Academic Advisor		
	Yes	No	
Men	12 30.0	28 70.0	40 55.6
Women	18 56.3	14 43.8	32 44.4
	30 41.7	42 58.3	72 100.0

CS = 4.02
DF = 1
P < .045
PHI = .26

	Number of Responsibilities				
	<14	14-18	19-23	>23	
Men	3 7.5	15 37.5	13 32.5	9 22.5	40 55.6
Women	9 28.1	10 31.3	4 12.5	9 28.1	32 44.4
	12 16.7	25 34.7	17 23.6	18 25.0	72 100.0

CS = 7.97
DF = 3
P < .046
V = .33

While not reliably related to sex, several other variables suggested a basis for the salary relationship. Men, for example, tended to be older (only eight percent were less than 30 years old) than were women (22 percent). Men were generally employed longer (45 percent over five years) than were women (28 percent). Women advisers tended to be less educated (19 percent with only bachelors' degrees) than were men advisers (eight percent). And more men (34 percent) were at schools with the largest total budget (\$150,000) than were women (14 percent).

In contrast to women advisers, therefore, men advisers have higher salaries, more responsibilities, more coaching experience in the revenue-producing sports, and are less likely to be the first full-time academic adviser in their schools. Men advisers tend to be more formally educated and older, and they appear to be advising at the larger schools with successful athletic programs and more established advising programs.

Highest degree earned. Only salary was reliably related to highest degree earned, and the data, given in table 5, indicate that advisers with higher

degrees generally earned higher salaries.

Weaker relationships include the previously mentioned tendency for the men to have higher degrees (63 percent of the doctorates, 57 percent of the masters', and 33 percent of the bachelors'). Advisors were also more likely to have faculty status with the higher degree (35 percent with doctorate, 23 percent with master's, and zero percent with bachelor's). Finally, those with doctorates were generally working in situations with more full-time advisors.

Table 5.

Variables related to highest degree earned (cell % = row %)

	Salary x \$1,000					
	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	> 35	
Doctorate	1 5.3	2 10.5	2 10.5	4 21.1	10 52.6	19 26.4
Master's	7 15.9	8 18.2	17 38.6	7 15.9	5 11.4	44 61.1
Bachelor's	3 33.3	0 0	2 22.2	3 33.3	1 11.1	9 12.5
	11 15.3	10 13.9	21 29.2	14 19.4	16 22.2	72 100.0

CS = 20.87

DF = 8

P < .0075

V = .38074

In summary, it appears as though the doctoral degree leads to higher salary, faculty status, more responsibilities, and probably positions in schools with larger academic advising programs.

Academic field. Faculty rank and coaching experience were reliably related to academic field. The data, shown in table 6, indicate that advisors with academic training in psychological fields were more likely to have faculty rank than were those from the remaining fields, especially education, and that advisors who reported any coaching experience were mostly from the academic fields of physical education and, to a lesser degree, education.

Less reliably related to academic fields were the variables of years employed, age, number of responsibilities, and salary source. More advisors from the fields of education and physical education (50 percent each) were employed more than five years while only 23 percent from psychology and 21 percent from other fields were employed that long. The athletic department was the primary salary source for those from education (75 percent) and physical education (60 percent) while only 50 percent of those from psychology and other fields were paid by that department exclusively. Finally, above-average number of responsibilities were reported by 71 percent of those from psychology fields, 70 percent from physical education,

46 percent from education, and only 25 percent from other fields.

In summary, advisors from the traditional fields of education and physical education are less likely to have faculty rank, are more likely to have coaching experience, are more likely to be paid by the athletic department, and are more likely to have been employed longer.

Table 6.

Variables related to academic field (cell % = row %)

	Faculty Rank		
	Yes	No	
Education	2 7.7	24 92.3	26 40.0
Physical Ed	3 30.0	7 70.0	10 15.4
Psychology	6 50.0	6 50.0	12 18.5
Other	4 23.5	13 76.5	17 26.2
	15 23.1	50 76.9	65 100.0

CS = 8.64

DF = 3

P < .034

V = .36

	Coaching Experience (F/B = Football or Basketball)			
	None	F/B	Other	
Education	16 57.1	8 28.6	4 14.3	28 38.9
Physical Ed	2 20.0	5 50.0	3 30.0	10 13.9
Psychology	12 85.7	2 14.3	0 0	14 19.4
Other	16 80.0	3 15.0	1 5.0	20 27.8
	46 63.9	18 25.0	8 11.1	72 100.0

CS = 14.85

DF = 6

P < .022

V = .32

Coaching experience. The only variable not previously mentioned that was reliably related to coaching experience is office location (CS = 7.68, DF

= 2, $P < .022$, $V = .33$), and the data indicate simply that advisors were more likely to have offices located in the athletic facility if they had coaching experience in football or basketball (89 percent) or in other sports (100 percent) than were those who reported no coaching experience (63 percent).

To summarize, advisors with coaching experience are likely to be older men from education and physical education and to have offices in the athletic buildings.

Years employed. Table 7 contains the data for three variables which were reliably related to the number of years employed. These data indicate that longer-employed advisors reported larger total budgets, were more likely not to have faculty rank, and worked with more advisors.

Table 7.
Variables related to years employed (cell % = row %)

	Overall Budget x \$1,000				
	<51	51-100	101-150	>150	
<3 yrs	7 50.0	1 7.1	4 28.6	2 14.3	14 38.9
3-5 yrs	1 14.3	1 14.3	3 42.9	2 28.6	7 19.4
>5 yrs	0 0	8 53.3	2 13.3	5 33.3	15 41.7
	8 22.2	10 27.8	9 25.0	9 25.0	36 100.0

CS = 17.40
DF = 6
 $P < .008$
 $V = .49$

	Faculty Rank		
	Yes	No	
<3 yrs	10 41.7	14 58.3	24 38.1
3-5 yrs	1 6.7	14 93.3	15 23.8
>5 yrs	2 8.3	22 91.7	24 38.1
	13 20.6	50 79.4	63 100.00

CS = 10.49
DF = 2
 $P < .005$
 $V = .41$

	Number of Full-Time Academic Advisors				
	1	2	3	4	
<3 yrs	11 55.0	4 20.0	2 10.0	3 15.0	20 38.5
3-5 yrs	4 40.0	1 10.0	1 10.0	4 40.0	10 19.2
>5 yrs	2 9.1	10 45.5	7 31.8	3 13.6	22 42.3
	17 32.7	15 28.8	10 19.2	10 19.2	52 100.0

CS = 16.76
DF = 6
 $P < .010$
 $V = .40$

A number of less reliable but interesting relationships were also noted. As with total budget, reported tutoring budget was generally lower for the recently employed advisors who also indicated trends away from the athletic department as budget funder and salary source and away from the athletic director as the immediate supervisor. Not surprisingly, there was a tendency for the longer-employed advisors to have more responsibilities and larger salaries. More surprisingly, there was a tendency to move away from the traditional fields of training, Education and Physical Education, by the most recently employed (73 percent of those employed more than five years indicated these traditional fields, but only 38 percent of those employed less than three years indicated those fields). Finally, the proportion of women advisors has increased, from 35 percent of those employed for more than five years, to 47 percent of those employed for three to five years, to a majority of 55 percent of those employed less than three years. Like age, this variable of length of employment provides evidence of trends in the field of athletic academic advisement—and trends are evident in the results of this survey. Women are entering the field and are being hired, apparently, by schools with emerging programs, i.e., those with smaller budgets and fewer full-time advisors. These schools seem more likely to offer faculty rank to advisors with non-traditional training. Moreover, the athletic departments of these schools apparently share the financial responsibility for, and control over, these programs.

Discussion

The results of this survey, combined with those of Brennan, indicate clearly that this young field is changing. Academic advising of athletes is no longer the sole prerogative of huge athletic departments and their male coaching staff. Apparently smaller schools are hiring advisors for their

athletes, and they are hiring young people with ability to advise and/or manage advising programs and not necessarily with formal training in athletics or even in the traditional areas of education. In a very positive sense, athletic advising is achieving autonomy and recognition by the entire university community.

These trends are encouraging for the athlete, for the advisor, and for the field. By sharing responsibility for advising with academic departments, athletes are more likely to encounter advisors professionally trained to handle their specific problems, and these cooperative programs should foster a more accurate and positive image of student athletes. With more schools recognizing the need for athletic advising, and with more cooperative programs in schools, job prospects look good. Schools are apparently paying well and are offering faculty status to appropriately trained young people. Finally, if the field is indeed in a state of transition, it seems appropriate to define the field by developing training programs which will lead to graduate degrees in the field of academic advising of athletes. Such programs will necessarily be interdisciplinary, requiring training in teaching basic skills (reading, writing, and mathematics) and general self-learning skills. Clinical counseling, vocational counseling, and management skills also seem appropriate. And certainly knowledge of rules governing intercollegiate athletics is necessary. It is not too soon to think of doctoral training in this changing field.

But while the field is changing, it is imperative to know how it is changing. To that end, we recommend that a standardized survey be conducted every two years, that it be mailed to all advisors, and that all advisors be encouraged to complete and return the survey.

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