



May 22, 2015

Dear MAAN,

As I close out my tenure as the co-chair of the Mason Academic Advisor Network, it is with some sadness and much glee. I am sad to leave the co-chair position, but MAAN's direction and impact on campus is something to really be proud of. We had great numbers in participation throughout the year and really saw an enthusiasm that cannot be compared to anything I have witnessed in my almost 15 years on campus.

I want to thank Jon May and Ann Ludwick, my co-chairs during the last year, for setting the bar in that role and being great advocates for advisors and students. A huge thank you also to the steering committee for being as supportive as they were during this last year.

We are in the midst of graduating students and bringing in the next batch of Patriots during the orientation exercises this summer. Please do make certain to take care of yourself. I hear a walk does wonders, and they might happen on Wednesdays. Thank you and enjoy the upcoming long weekend.

-Assad Khan
MAAN Co-Chair

MAAN Updates

Wow, what a year it has been! I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some exciting accomplishments for our organization over this past year. We continue to grow within the Mason community thanks to the commitment of our membership.

I am pleased to announce that MAAN has been approved as an official allied member of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Allied membership with NACADA, encourages cooperation and joint programming with other organizations that support the purposes of NACADA. This partnership raises Mason's profile at the national level, as we are now one of two allied organizations in NACADA's Region 2 (DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA). MAAN also joins the ranks of the other 40 organizations recognized as allied members.

This is just one of our many steps forward this year. While continuing our already successful programs such as the Mason Advisor Certificate (MAC), Registration Awareness Week (RAW), and Learn Over Lunch (LOL), MAAN was able to host the first ever Mason/VCCS Academic Advising Symposium to start conversations around transfer student success and transitions, generously supported by Dr. Janette Muir in the Provost Office and the 4VA Consortium. The symposium focused on sharing the Mason advising culture to highlight our unique advising structures that will allow our colleagues at other institutions to better prepare students transitioning to Mason. We specifically targeted First Year Advisors, Transfer Counselors, and Faculty Advisors from Northern Virginia Community College and had an impressive turn out with 69 attendees. MAAN has already received a commitment from the Provost Office to continue the Mason/VCCS Academic Advising Symposium for next year. We hope to not only expand our outreach within the Virginia Community College System but to also include more opportunities for Mason advisors to connect with our colleagues at other institutions.

Academic Advising Reform, lead by Dr. Jeannie Brown Leonard, continues to make strides in addressing student success within our community. Over the past year, Jeannie has taken the recommendations made by the committee, of which there were several members of MAAN, on a road show to all of the academic Colleges/Schools. One of the major victories was the unanimous approval of a new vision and mission of undergraduate academic advising (see: University Catalog 2015-2016):

Vision

Academic advising at George Mason University is an integral part of the educational process that enhances student learning and development by supporting, teaching, and connecting students to curricular and co-curricular experiences relevant to becoming an exemplary Mason Graduate: an engaged, reflective citizen and well-rounded scholar who is prepared to act.

Mission

The academic advising community at George Mason University commits to creating ongoing, personal and purposeful educational partnerships with students and colleagues. Advisors contribute to student success by providing resources and by teaching students to develop the skills required to become life-long learners capable of effective self-advocacy. Dedicated to putting students first and to being responsive, academic advisors:

- Support students in setting and reaching educational goals.
- Teach students to engage in a process of self-reflection and self-discovery, guiding them to find degree pathways that match their interests, skills, and abilities.
- Connect students to campus resources and co-curricular opportunities to integrate learning and experience.

The new vision and mission for advising provides a much clearer representation and direction of what is expected in the undergraduate advising experience. By strengthening the functions of academic advising, we can continue to improve our graduation and retention rates for our students. We also continue to strengthen our advising culture, providing a greater sense of well-being for our advisors.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer and keep an eye on the listserv for additional MAAN summer events. We look forward to another successful academic year!

Best,

Wayne Adams - Academic Advisor, School of Art

NACADA Region 2 Conference Recap

The 30th Annual Region 2 NACADA Conference: EnRICHing The Advising Experience was held in Richmond, VA from March 18 to 20, 2015. There was a record attendance will well over 400 representatives from all across Region 2, which spans from Virginia north through Pennsylvania and New Jersey, including 4 year public and private universities, HBCUs, community colleges, for-profit schools, and higher education vendors.

Mason also had record attendance for a regional NACADA conference and those participants included:

NCC- Andrea Barabach, Elise Buckley, Marlon Dortch, Misty Krell, Aoi Yamanaka

S-CAR- Nathanael Lash, Monique Peterson, Leah Thompson, Jane Walker

VSE- Krystal Dains, Cheryl Howe, Smriti Kansal, Lisa Nolder, Anya Sailey

CAART- Melitta Igwe (also part of the region 2 conference planning committee, co-chair of conference registration), Jon May (region 2 conference volunteer)



Each year NACADA conferences cover a wide array of topics from the world of academic advising. Here is a list of a few of the topics from this year's regional conference that stood out to our Mason advisors:

- Networking
- The role professional development plays in advisor development
- Retention strategies
- Integrating technology for advising students on warning and probation
- Best practices in advising
- Motivating advisors
- Self-care
- Advising as programing
- Advising is teaching
- Various approaches to advising using multiple advising styles

We all know how difficult it can be to keep professional development a high priority during times of tight budgets, which makes it all the more impressive at how many of you found resourceful ways to carve out the money to continue to improve advising at Mason through the ongoing support of professional development.

That being said, please keep two upcoming budget friendly conferences noted on your calendars:

- This year's annual Virginia State Drive-In Conference will be held during the fall semester. Each year the conference rotates to one of four zones within Virginia. This coming fall the conference will be hosted by a school located in the Tidewater District. More announcements will be made through NACADA and MAAN as those details come to light.
- The 31st Annual Region 2 NACADA Conference will be held March 2016, College Park, MD (you can't get much closer to home than that).

Additionally, if anyone is hoping to attend the National NACADA Conference, this fall that conference will be held October 2015, Las Vegas, NV. Please check the NACADA website for more details.

Get more involved with NACADA:

For any of you who may be interested in finding out how to become more involved with NACADA, there is always a need in helping to plan and volunteer at the state and regional conferences.

NACADA also has an advisor mentorship program which begins each year at the regional conference. Mentors and mentees must apply to this competitive program. Each year mentees with under five years of advising experience are paired with a mentor with more than five years of advising experience. As a former NACADA mentor, I can tell you this is a very worthwhile program.

When you see vacancies in NACADA positions, such as state liaison or regional officer positions, apply.

I would also encourage everyone to submit presentation proposals for any NACADA conference. As someone who has presented at state, regional, and national NACADA conferences, I can tell you, Mason is viewed by others as doing a lot of great things in the profession of academic advising. We need to share our wealth of knowledge with other institutions across the country.

Wishing you much success,
Jon May
Assistant Director, CAART

Upcoming Events

June 9/12:00PM-1:00PM/SUB I, 3A - LOL Extra: Hunger for Education

MAC Updates

Completed the program?

If you have completed your modules and electives, please send your passbook to Erin McSherry (emcsherr@gmu.edu; MSN 6B4).

Summer and Fall 2015 Dates

The MAC committee is working on dates to offer the modules this summer and fall. We appreciate your patience as those times are finalized, and we will announce them as soon as they are confirmed.



Advisor Spotlight

This month, we're highlighting Dr. Cathy Wright, Associate Professor, Undergraduate Academic Advising Director for the Department of Communication, and Director of the Florence and Milan Study Abroad Programs.

What is your background/education?

I have a PhD in Communication (emphasis on New Technology), an MA in Mass Communication from Texas Tech with a focus in Public Relations and Advertising, and my undergraduate was a BS in Business Communication from Phillips University.

How did you get involved in advising?

I got involved with advising as a favor to someone in the department about 8 or 9 years ago. She needed help with orientations and taught me the rudimentary skills to do so. I enjoyed working with the students and when I was asked if I would take on a few hours of advising every week, I agreed to do so. Over time, personnel changed and my then-chair asked me if I'd take on the part-time advising position in the department as the main advisor for almost 1000 students (majors and minors). Each semester, my advising position is contracted for 20 hours a week (but with that many students, it's a lot more!) and I also teach 2 classes. I love what I'm doing, it's a great job!



What are your advising interests?

Helping students avoid the Mason Shuffle and helping students realize their goals. I have found that advising is so much more than just sitting with the students and recommending classes. When I see people I've had in class or whom I've advised walk across the stage, that is the best thing for me! They did it and in some small way, I helped.

What are your career goals/aspirations?

Well.....I've wanted to teach for as long as I can remember, so I have achieved that goal. I work at an amazing university where I have a significant amount of support from my co-workers, advising peers, the greater GMU community and from my chair. I get to teach some amazing students and watch as they grow. In my advising position, I get to work with students to show them options they didn't know they had and help them reach their goals. So in this sense, I have reached those goals.

My future goals and aspirations is to continue to do what I am currently doing and to embrace future opportunities. If you'd have asked me 5 years ago if I'd be the Advising Director, I would have told you no....yet, here I am and I really enjoy doing it!

What is something surprising about you?

Hmmmm.....what's surprising about me is that I scuba dive. When our daughter moved out almost 3 years ago (she was 18) and our son was at college, I announced to my husband that I wanted to learn how to scuba dive. He was absolutely surprised, because I don't like the beach much because I burn easily. One of my greatest fears is drowning, so I decided to meet that fear head-on and learn how to dive. I have 71 dives in and have dived in the Grand Cayman, Honduras, Bonaire, in the Adriatic Sea and the Ligurian Sea (both off the coast of Italy), and the Florida Keys. We are planning a trip this fall, but haven't decided where.

I love diving because it's the closest thing you can get to flying! I have seen all sorts of amazing creatures and the geography under the water is amazing! One of the more interesting things I've done is a swim with sharks. My favorite dive was in Bonaire where I interacted with two squid for about 10 minutes at the end of a dive. It was amazing because the one squid purposely interacted with me...he initiated the interaction and the only reason I left was because it was the end of the dive and I needed to do my safety stop.

Current Issues in Advising



Don't Call Us Only in a Crisis

[Read more](#)



Academic Advising Is Not a Profession: Who Knew?

[Read more](#)



A Student's Open Letter to Academic Advisors

[Read more](#)

[Forward this email](#)

 **SafeUnsubscribe™**

This email was sent to bbanning@gmu.edu by bbanning@gmu.edu | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



Try it FREE today.

Pathway to the Baccalaureate | 4400 University Drive | Fairfax | VA | 22030