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Xiafei Xue

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**ETHICALITY OF ADVISOR MOTIVES IN ACADEMIC ADVISING:  
FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENT PERSPECTIVES**

A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of  
Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science, Psychology

By

Xiafei Xue

December 2016

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ETHICALITY OF ADVISOR MOTIVES IN ACADEMIC ADVISING: FACULTY,  
STAFF, AND STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

PSYCHOLOGY

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY, DECEMBER 2016

MASTER OF SCIENCE

XIAFEI XUE

**ABSTRACT**

Advising is an important aspect in academic settings. While the literature has emphasized better academic advising, including the personal qualities of good advisors, there has been little emphasis on ethical issues and ethical concerns related to advisors' roles or positions. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) provides a set of core values to guide ethical behavior. The current study examined (in an experimental design) faculty, staff, and student perspectives regarding advisors' more ethical, neutral, or less ethical behaviors. Results indicated that there were no significant differences between faculty and staff. All groups could differentiate between ethical and unethical extremes, but students had difficulty differentiating between ethical and neutral behavior. All groups were hesitant to rate advisors as highly ethical or unethical. Even when behavior was seen as less ethical, students and faculty/staff perceived limited opportunity for students to change advisors. Results are discussed within this ethical framework, including the need to recognize these different perspectives.

**KEYWORDS:** advising, ethics, academic, NACADA, core values

This abstract is approved as to form and content

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David Lutz  
Chairperson, Advisory Committee  
Missouri State University

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Approved:

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PhD: David Lutz

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PhD: Rachelle Darabi

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PhD: Wayne Mitchell

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Julie Masterson, PhD: Dean, Graduate College

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## INTRODUCTION

Advising is an important aspect in academic settings. Efficient and helpful advising can help students succeed. Bad advising might increase the chance that students fail in academic life, impacting their future careers. Important stakeholders include administrators, faculty, staff, and students. While administrators manage resources for advising, faculty and staff advisors usually are the ones who provide the advising that directly affects students. Administrators emphasize the importance of advising in retention (Nutt, 2014). Faculty and staff advisors emphasize the importance of prescriptive or developmental perspectives in achieving academic goals (Crookston, 1972). Students rely on advisors as primary, credible sources, believing that the information they are given is valid and appropriate for their situations. For example, in a first year foundations course at our university, the question was asked, “What is the primary purpose for having an academic advisor?” In a sample of over 200 student responses, not one answer mentioned anything that could be construed as students expecting advisors to provide anything less than complete, unbiased information tailored to the interests and success of the students. The common answers were: (1) make sure you graduate on time, (2) help you choose the right classes suited for you, (3) help you make the right decision on a career path, (4) answer any questions you may have, (5) answer questions about classes or different majors, (6) keep you on the right track, and (7) help you succeed and graduate. These different stakeholders have different expectations, but finding the balance among these expectations is difficult. For example, an advisor who is student-centered might focus mainly on the student’s interest and



expectations with an emphasis on benefitting students. In contrast, other advisors may focus more on responding to institutional pressures, which may emphasize institutional or personal priorities rather than student priorities.

To meet these needs and demands, some advisors, especially staff advisors, receive some training, but fewer than 35% of advisors in academic departments receive training with even fewer receiving formal training (King, 2000). Typical or traditional advisor training involves a one-half or one full day workshop offered once a year, often before or at the start of the academic year. In some cases, additional training continues throughout the year, while in other cases advisors receive no further training (Robbins, 2012). Most training of advisors continues to be on factual information with some attention paid to defining advising and the importance of advising. There is a limited focus on advising concepts that are more theoretical and also a limited focus on the development of or relationship skills useful in advising (King, 2000). Advocates for broader training of advisors suggest that three components of advising should be emphasized: conceptual components, such as the student within the institution and the role of advising within the institution; information components, such as internal institutional structures and functions, external environment, student needs, and advisor self-knowledge; and relationship components, such as accessibility and developing personal relationships with student advisees (Higginson, 2000).

Goals and qualities of advisors have also been emphasized. Greenleaf (1977) emphasized the importance of aspirational goals, including increased autonomy, a greater willingness to become public servants, and serving the highest needs of those whom are served, in this case, students. Advisors are seen as supporting their students and providing

them with the maximum help to assist them. There is the positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors and advisors' developmental advising with wisdom being the best predictor of advisors' developmental advising (Paul, Smith & Dochney, 2012). McClellan (2007) suggested methods for how to achieve such goals, including the importance of awareness, listening, and empathy. Within this framework, perspective taking is important, meaning that advisors should take the perspective of students and consider students' particular issues. Advisors should be aware of students' situations and engage in reflective listen and provide empathy. Faculty and staff perceive their advising work as important and valuable as they try hard to do what is best for students (Allen & Smith, 2008).

Academic advisors have many different roles. For example, they are educators who are expected to create and foster learning opportunities for students. They are confidants, providing safe places for students. They are facilitators between institutional departments and community services, serving as gatekeepers of knowledge and as enforcers of policy and procedure (Compton, 2014). No matter the situation, advisors are to conduct their professional duties and responsibilities in an ethical manner. While the literature has emphasized better academic advising, including the personal qualities of good advisors, there has been little emphasis on ethical issues. Lowenstein (2008) described the inherently ethical nature of advising, and how advisors may incorporate moral ideals, such as care and respect for students, into their behaviors. Most advisors try hard to do what is best for students, but attitudes and even the best of intentions may not lead to specific behaviors (Chaiklin, 2011; Glasman & Albarracin, 2006; Wicker, 1969). Advisors may believe they are acting in students' best interests. Yet, there are competing

attitudes and intentions, such as those involving the advisor's personal and institutional goals, that may contribute to less than optimal experiences for students (Lutz, Boon, & Xue, 2016). Often there is a significant disconnect between what a student perceives the function of an advisor to be and what may be the advisor's perception. Crookston (1972) emphasized the importance of clarifying this ambiguity to avoid a result that is "often counterproductive, if not total disaster" (p.17).

Ethical concerns related to that role or position do not appear to have been considered sufficiently, leaving some advisors unaware of how such concerns need to be incorporated into advising. Fortunately, the ideas about ethical principles and values have been modified by various professional associations. For example, the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* of the American Psychological Association include five general aspirational principles (APA, 2014). Beneficence and nonmaleficence emphasize the idea of doing no harm. Fidelity and responsibility emphasize establishing trust with those with whom professionals work in an effort to serve the best interests of these persons. Integrity emphasizes the importance of accuracy, honesty, and truthfulness. Justice emphasizes fairness along with the caution that the action of professionals do not lead to unjust practices. Respect for people's rights and dignity emphasizes the right to self-determination. The National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (NASW, 2014) identifies six similar guiding values, including service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. The American Medical Association (AMA, 2014) describes importance of ethical principles within the patient-physician relationship.

Within the advising realm, the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) developed *The Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising*, which is similar in content and spirit to various other ethical guidelines (NACADA, 2005). It describes six core values. First, “Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise.” This value emphasizes the importance of advisors respecting students and helping them establish and achieve their goals and objectives. Advisors are encouraged to help students explore various avenues and methods to achieve optimal academic outcomes. Second, “Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process.” When students have need of other resources and when those needs are appropriate, advisors should help students find and utilize the resources which could benefit students. The third core value states, “Advisors are responsible to their institutions.” Advisors are aware of the policies and procedures of the institutions within which they work, and advocate for the importance of advising. The fourth core value, “Advisors are responsible to higher education” in general, and the fifth core value, “Advisors are responsible to their educational community,” focus on the relationship of the advisor to the broader community. Still, this emphasizes the importance of advisors advocating for students, not for the institutions. Finally, the sixth core value, “Advisors are responsible for their professional practices and for themselves personally,” emphasizes the importance of professional development and self-care to promote a healthy and effective environment.

The present study examined these ethical principles within typical advising situations involving ethical dilemmas. Different stakeholders, including faculty, staff, and students, were questioned about advising situations varied by the advisor’s motives

(personal and institution centered or student-centered). I hypothesized that students would most value and be more likely to retain a student-centered advisor compared with an advisor who was more motivated by personal and institutional concerns. In contrast, I expected faculty and staff advisors to have a broader view of competing demands, resulting in more varied and less student-centered responses.

## METHOD

### Participants

Participants were selected from three sources at a Midwestern university (see Appendix B). First, approximately 120 faculty advisors were contacted through email and personally to participate, resulting in 86 faculty advisors. Second, 30 staff advisors in university advisement offices were contacted in a similar manner, resulting in 26 staff advisors participating. Third, 133 students were obtained through advisement offices throughout campus. This research approved by Institutional Review Board (IRB) on Sep. 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and the approval number is 16-0086.

### Scenarios

Participants were randomly assigned to three scenarios (Faculty-centered, student-centered, neutral). Each scenario contained a situation in which a college sophomore went to an advisor for assistance (see Appendix A). The student had not yet declared a major, and was considering three choices, one of which was in the advisor's department. The program in the advisor's department was a low enrollment program, and the administration threatened to dissolve the program and reassign faculty if enrollment does not increase. The advisor does not want the department to be dissolved. All information was identical with the exception of two sentences in each scenario. The advisor's motive varied in one of three ways.

**Faculty-Centered.** The advisor in the faculty-centered scenario had a personal agenda in which the advisor tries to recruit the student to declare the major. This scenario

stated, “As the advisor starts to discuss the student’s choices, the advisor lauds the advantages of majoring in this discipline in the hopes that the student will declare a major in this department. The advisor focuses on recruiting the student to declare this major.”

**Student-Centered.** The advisor in the student-centered scenario only focused on the student and helped the student determine which choice was best for the student. This scenario stated, “As the advisor starts to discuss the student’s choices, the advisor discusses the advantages and disadvantages of majoring in the advisor’s discipline and where to get information about the other two choices.”

**Neutral.** The advisor in the neutral scenario discussed the advantages and disadvantages of majoring in the advisor’s discipline with the student. This scenario stated, “As the advisor starts to discuss the student’s choices, the advisor discusses the advantages and disadvantages of majoring in the advisor’s discipline with the student.”

### **Dependent Measures**

The questionnaire was developed using a content validity approach. The Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2002) and the Core Values of the NACADA (NACADA, 2005) were examined and main principles (e.g., integrity, justice) and values (e.g., acting on behalf of students) across these two documents were obtained. Questions then were developed to measure each of these principles and values, resulting in 10 questions. Three questions were developed to predict the student’s actions, such as retaining this advisor for future advising. One question was developed to measure the interpersonal warmth of the advisor. Finally, advisors were asked if they would act in a manner similar to the advisor

in the scenario; students were asked if the advisor described in the scenario was similar to their academic advisor. Five faculty participants had excessive missing data, and were eliminated from analyses. Four participants omitted one or two items. The participant's mean score across items (i.e., core values or student actions) was used to replace those one or two items for the four participants.

### **Procedure**

**Faculty and Staff Advisors.** Participants completed the questionnaire either online or in paper form. Faculty and staff were contacted with the support of the University's Academic Advisement Office. All were initially contacted by email asking for their support for and participation in this project. A link was provided that allowed them to access the questionnaire electronically. Follow-up emails were sent along with individual visits to many faculty to ask them to complete the questionnaire either online or in a paper version.

**Students.** Students who visited the advising offices on campus were asked by their advisors to participate. These students completed a paper questionnaire either before or after their advising appointments.



## RESULTS

### Summation of Scores

To determine whether faculty and staff differed on any items, 2 (Participants' role: Faculty, Staff) X 3 (Scenario type: Faculty-centered, Student-Centered, Neutral) ANOVAs were conducted across all items. There were no significant differences between faculty and staff on any items. Therefore, faculty and staff participants were combined in all subsequent analyses. To determine whether giving the questionnaire before or after advising appointments made a difference, 2 (Order: Before, After) X 3 (Scenario Type) ANOVAs were conducted across all items for students. There were no significant differences due to order on any items.

Given the numerous scores and to make interpretation easier, summation scores were used initially instead of initial items. Ten questions in the questionnaire, developed to measure each of the NACADA principles and core values, were summarized into a composite score called, "Core Values." Three questions, developed to predict the student's action, were summarized into a composite score called, "Student Action." To assess reliability, item-score correlations examined each appropriate item's correlation with the composite score. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated omitting each item from the composite score to determine any items that did not correlate highly with the composite score. Results indicated that the item asking if the advisor was acting in his/her own self-interest should be omitted from the Core Values score as there was a low correlation for student participants ( $r = .471$ ) but not for faculty/staff participants ( $r = -.821$ ). Results indicated that the item asking if the student would choose the advisor's

major should be omitted from the Student Action score due to a low correlation ( $r = -.284$ ). This resulted in nine items in the Core Values composite, two items in the Student Action composite, and five remaining individual items.

### **Core Values**

To determine whether students and faculty/staff differed across scenarios on core values, a 2 (Participants' Role: Faculty/staff, Student) X 3 (Scenario Type: Faculty-centered, Student-Centered, Neutral) ANOVA was conducted on the Core Values composite score (see Appendix C). This analysis revealed a significant main effect for Participants' Role ( $F(1, 236) = 3.91, p = .049, \eta^2 = .016$ ) indicating that students ( $M = 4.94$ ) rated the advisor as significantly higher on core values than did faculty/staff ( $M = 4.22$ ). A significant main effect was also found for Scenario Type ( $F(2, 236) = 69.94, p < .001, \eta^2 = .372$ ). Using independent t-tests for this and all subsequent appropriate analyses, the Student-Centered scenario ( $M = 5.36$ ) and Neutral scenario ( $M = 4.61$ ) were rated significantly higher than the Faculty-Centered scenario ( $M = 3.51$ ). These main effects were qualified by a significant interaction, ( $F(2, 236) = 4.82, p = .009, \eta^2 = .039$ ). All participants rated the advisor in the faculty-centered scenario significantly lower than the student-centered and neutral scenarios. However, faculty/staff participants rated the advisor in student-centered scenario significantly higher than in neutral scenario. In contrast, this result did not apply to student participants, as there was no significant difference between student-centered and neutral scenarios for student participants.

To further explain the Core Values composite score, 2 X 3 ANOVAs were conducted on the nine individual items comprising the composite scores (see Appendix

C). Four items indicated significant interactions. The item, “The advisor encourages autonomy,” ( $F(2, 238) = 13.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .014$ ), indicated that faculty/staff rated the advisor in the student-centered condition significantly higher and the advisor in the faculty-centered condition significantly lower than did students. “The advisor is trustworthy,” ( $F(2, 238) = 5.326, p = .005, \eta^2 = .043$ ), “The advisor respects the student,” ( $F(2, 238) = 3.064, p = .049, \eta^2 = .025$ ), and “The advisor is competent,” ( $F(2, 237) = 6.307, p = .002, \eta^2 = .051$ ), indicated that students rated the advisor in the neutral condition equal to the student-centered condition and equal to the faculty/staff rating of the student-centered condition. These three conditions were significantly higher than faculty/staff rating in the neutral condition. One of nine items in the Core Values, “The advisor has integrity,” ( $F(1, 238) = 6.57, p = .011, \eta^2 = .027$ ), indicated a significant main effect for Participants’ Role without a significant interaction. This item indicated that student participants ( $M = 4.70$ ) rated advisors across conditions significantly higher than did faculty/staff participants ( $M = 4.27$ ). Five out of nine items in the Core Values indicated a significant main effect for Scenario Types without an interaction (means are for faculty-centered, student-centered, and neutral scenarios respectively): “The advisor has integrity”, ( $F(1, 238) = 6.57, p = .011, \eta^2 = .027; M = 3.47, M = 5.44, M = 4.58$ ); “the advisor is fair”, ( $F(2, 238) = 6.57, p < .001, \eta^2 = .362; M = 3.08, M = 5.44, M = 4.63$ ); “the advisor is acting on behalf of the institution”, ( $F(2, 237) = 11.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .086; M = 4.28, M = 5.35, M = 4.59$ ); “the advisor is acting on behalf of the student”, ( $F(2, 237) = 55.39, p < .001, \eta^2 = .319; M = 2.86, M = 5.28, M = 4.21$ ); and “the advisor is ethical”, ( $F(2, 238) = 49.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .294; M = 3.13, M = 5.23, M = 4.49$ ).

Consistent with the Core Values composite score, these items, with the exception of the

institution item, indicated that all participants rated the advisor significantly higher in the student-centered scenario than the neutral scenario, which in turn was rated significantly higher than in the faculty-centered scenario. The neutral scenario and the faculty-centered scenario were not significantly different for the institution item.

### **Student Action**

To determine whether students and faculty/staff differed across scenarios on student actions, a 2 (Participants' Role) X 3 (Scenario Type) ANOVA was conducted on the Student Action composite score (see Appendix C). This analysis revealed a significant main effect for Participants' Role ( $F(1, 238) = 6.391, p = .012, \eta^2 = .026$ ) indicating that students ( $M = 4.84$ ) rated the advisor as significantly higher on student action than did faculty/staff ( $M = 4.49$ ). A significant main effect was also found for Scenario Types ( $F(2, 238) = 19.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14$ ). The Student-Centered scenario ( $M = 5.13$ ) and the Neutral scenario ( $M = 4.80$ ) did not differ significantly from each other but were significantly higher than the Faculty-centered scenario ( $M = 4.12$ ). No significant interaction was found.

To further explain the Student Action composite score, 2 X 3 ANOVAs were conducted on the two individual items comprising the Student Action score (see Appendix C). "The student will likely retain this advisor for future advising" revealed a main effect for Participants' Role, ( $F(1, 238) = 12.32, p = .001, \eta^2 = .049$ ), indicating that students ( $M = 5.31$ ) believed that the student would be more likely to retain the advisor than did faculty/staff ( $M = 4.81$ ). "I prefer an advisor like this" revealed a significant main effect for Scenario Type, ( $F(2, 238) = 33.23, p < .001, \eta^2 = .218$ ),

indicating that all participants preferred the advisor in the student-centered scenario ( $M = 5.16$ ) significantly more than the advisor in the neutral scenario ( $M = 4.41$ ), which was significantly higher than the advisor in faculty-centered scenario ( $M = 3.25$ ).

### **Individual items**

“The student will choose the advisor’s major” revealed a significant main effect for participant role, ( $F(1, 238) = 6.62, p = .011, \eta^2 = .027$ ), indicating that student participants ( $M = 4.88$ ) believed that the student in the scenario would be more likely to choose the advisor’s major than did faculty/staff participants ( $M = 4.56$ ). It also revealed a significant main effect for scenario type, ( $F(2, 238) = 5.20, p = .006, \eta^2 = .042$ ), as participants expected the student in the faculty-centered scenario ( $M = 4.99$ ) to choose the advisor’s major significantly more than in the neutral ( $M = 4.68$ ) or student-centered ( $M = 4.50$ ) conditions. “The advisor is acting in his or her own self-interest” revealed a significant main effect for scenario type, ( $F(2, 238) = 29.95, p < .001, \eta^2 = .201$ ), that was qualified by a significant interaction, ( $F(2, 238) = 4.635, p = .001, \eta^2 = .037$ ). Similar to the pattern noted previously, students believed that the advisor in the faculty-centered condition was acting more in self-interest than in the other two conditions, but did not discriminate between the other two conditions.

In contrast, faculty/staff believed that the advisor was acting significantly more in self-interest in the faculty-centered condition than in the neutral condition which was significantly more than in the student-centered condition. Faculty/staff believed that the advisor was acting less in self-interest in the student-centered condition than in any of the other conditions for students or faculty/staff. “The advisor is warm” revealed a significant

main effect for scenario type, ( $F(2, 236) = 3.92, p = .021, \eta^2 = .032$ ), as participants rated the advisor in the faculty-centered scenario ( $M = 4.37$ ) significantly lower than the other two scenarios with no significant difference between the student-centered scenario ( $M = 4.65$ ) and neutral scenario ( $M = 4.77$ ). There was also a significant main effect for participant role ( $F(1, 236) = 10.10, p = .002, \eta^2 = .041$ ), indicating that students ( $M = 4.78$ ) rated advisors as significantly warmer than did faculty/staff ( $M = 4.41$ ).

In a question asked only of students, “The advisor described here is similar to my academic advisor” revealed a significant main effect for scenario types, ( $F(2, 131) = 19.26, p < .001, \eta^2 = .230$ ), indicating that students saw the advisor in the student-centered ( $M = 4.35$ ) and neutral ( $M = 3.98$ ) scenarios significantly more similar than the faculty-centered advisor ( $M = 2.30$ ). In a question asked only of advisors, “I would act in a way similar to the advisor” also revealed a significant main effect for scenario, ( $F(2, 109) = 25.65, p < .001, \eta^2 = .324$ ). Faculty/staff believed that they were more similar to the advisor in the student-centered scenario ( $M = 5.34$ ) than in the neutral scenario ( $M = 4.00$ ) with both of these conditions significantly higher than the faculty-centered scenario ( $M = 2.77$ ).

## DISCUSSION

This study examined to what extent students, faculty, and staff differed in their perceptions of advisors' behavior that varied in ethicality and subsequent action based on those perceptions. First, it looked at whether students, faculty, and staff could discriminate among faculty-centered, neutral, and student-centered scenarios. These results suggest that students and faculty/staff could recognize the difference between advisors acting in unethical (faculty-centered) and ethical (student-centered) ways. However, students found it difficult to differentiate between student-centered advisors and neutral advisors in terms of ethical behavior. Students could not recognize any difference when the advisors behaved in an ethical manner, such as the advisor encouraging autonomy, being trustworthy, showing respect, and being competent, compared with the advisor acting in a neutral manner. For most items, even when a significant interaction was not found, the same pattern held true between the student-centered and neutral items. In contrast, faculty/staff could tell the difference. Students generally are not as familiar with ethical rules and concepts compared with faculty and staff. Therefore, while students can discriminate between more extreme forms of ethical and unethical behavior, they are not able to differentiate between subtler forms, in this study between more ethical behavior and neutral behavior. Future research might want to focus on how to educate students to better understand ethical behavior not just with advisors but with academia in general.

Second, this study looked at the level to which behavior was considered ethical or unethical by using a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale. The student-

centered scenario was a limited model of ethical behavior for an advisor, as it contained certain Core Values, including encouraging autonomy, trustworthiness, and competence. Therefore, I would expect the ratings for student-centered scenario might even have been higher, such as a 6 (agree) or 7 (strongly agree), than the values obtained here that ranged from 4.52 to 5.87 for the student-centered scenario. In contrast, the faculty-centered scenario was a limited model of unethical behavior, which could have resulted in even lower scores than the values obtained here that ranged from 2.54 to 4.48. Although positive values expressed in the student-centered are not as clearly ethical or unethical, the negative values, expressed in faculty-centered, at the least clearly suggested ethical concerns. Students in the faculty-centered condition generally rated the advisor as neutral to slightly unethical. Again, it is likely that students are not sure how to judge unethical behavior because they have limited knowledge of how to judge such behavior. Even if they are sure, they may be hesitant to make such negative judgments about faculty. In contrast, faculty/staff ratings were lower but still not extremely low, indicating that they may not have perceived this behavior as highly unethical. This may be because they have experienced similar behaviors on campus, which would normalize such behaviors, or because they recognize the various pressures that might be on such a faculty member.

Third, students and faculty/staff both perceived that students were slightly to moderately likely to retain the advisor, regardless of the condition. This was in spite of the fact that both students and faculty/staff did not prefer the faculty-centered advisor. Even when students and faculty/staff perceive that something is not appropriate in an advising situation, there may be constraints for the student to change advisors. For example, students may not think they have a choice to change the advisor, which might



be true especially in a small academic program or if students are not informed about the possibility for change. It may also be that the advisor's content area is appropriate for the student, meaning that there are advantages for the student despite inappropriate behavior.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the effects noted here were not because of some general interpersonal "halo" effect. It is not that the participants did not like the advisors, as they rated all of them slightly higher than the middle on the warm item. Instead, they actually rated the advisors based on the behaviors and motives of the advisors. Thus, participants rated the advisors positively on interpersonal characteristics even while perceiving them as less than ethical.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations need to be addressed in this study. First, the sample size for staff participants was limited compared to the sample sizes for students and faculty. Although I did not find any differences between faculty and staff responses, it might be that a larger and broader representation of staff could identify some differences. Second, although positive values are expressed in the student-centered scenarios, they are not as clear as the negative values expressed in the faculty-centered scenarios as these scenarios focused not only on behaviors but also on motivations. It might be helpful to provide more complete, nuanced examples of ethical and unethical behavior, possibly through other media, such as video. Finally, students read about another student and advisor. It would be useful to make the scenarios more salient so that students perceive more personal direct impact of the advisor behavior.

## **Conclusion**

The present study confirmed that there is a difference between student and faculty/staff knowledge about ethical behaviors and the implications for action. This knowledge difference creates the likelihood of a power differential that advisors need to consider. While students are not expected or supposed to know all the rules for the ethical or unethical behaviors of their advisors, advisors are expected to be responsible for their behaviors. Faculty and staff may need more extensive training to recognize ethical dilemmas and respond to them more appropriately. Similarly, it may also be helpful to educate students about these ethical issues along with their choices of retaining or changing advisors. Good advising involves, among other things, knowledge of academic regulations and career information, but all must be done within an appropriately ethical environment.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

The following is a scenario which happens between a student and an advisor. Please read this scenario carefully and provide your responses to the statements after you have finished reading.

#### **Scenario one: Faculty (or staff) advisor who is faculty centered**

There is a sophomore who is going to meet a faculty (or staff) advisor this morning. This student has not yet declared a major and is considering three possible choices. The student has an equal desire for all three choices, one of which is in this advisor's department. However, the choice within the advisor's department is a low enrollment program. The number of majors has been declining over the past 15 years to the point that the university is threatening that if the trend is not reversed, the department will be dissolved and current faculty will be incorporated into other disciplines. This advisor does not want this to happen and is trying to get more students into the program. In meeting with the student, the advisor finds out that this student is smart, articulate and motivated—exactly the kind of the student that every professor wants in the classroom. As the advisor starts to discuss the student's choices, the advisor lauds the advantages of majoring in this discipline in the hopes that the student will declare a major in this department. The advisor focuses on recruiting the student to declare this major. Although hesitant at first, the student becomes increasingly enthusiastic about the possibilities of this major and will decide on the major soon.

#### **Scenario two: Faculty (or staff) advisor who is student-centered**

There is a sophomore who is going to meet a faculty (or staff) advisor this morning. This student has not yet declared a major and is considering three possible choices. The student has an equal desire for all three choices, one of which is in this advisor's department. However, the choice within the advisor's department is a low enrollment program. The number of majors has been declining over the past 15 years to the point that the university is threatening that if the trend is not reversed, the department will be dissolved and current faculty will be incorporated into other disciplines. This advisor does not want this happen and is trying to find students who show interest in this program. In meeting with the student, the advisor finds out that this student is smart, articulate and motivated—exactly the kind of the student that every professor wants in the classroom. As the advisor starts to discuss the student's choices, the advisor discusses the advantages and disadvantages of majoring in the advisor's discipline and where to get information about the other two choices. The advisor focuses on the student and helps the student to figure out which choice is best for the student. Although hesitant at first, the student becomes increasingly enthusiastic about the possibilities of this major, but will check on the other majors and decide on the major soon.

#### **Scenario three: Faculty (or staff) advisor who is neutral**

There is a sophomore who is going to meet a faculty (or staff) advisor this morning. This student has not yet declared her major and is considering three possible choices. The

student has an equal desire for all three choices, one of which is this advisor's department. However, the choice within the advisor's department is a low enrollment program. The number of majors has been declining over the past 15 years to the point that the university is threatening that if the trend is not reversed, the department will be dissolved and current faculty will be incorporated into other disciplines. This advisor does not want this to happen, and talks with students who show interest in the program. In meeting with the student, the advisor finds out that this student is smart, articulate and motivated—exactly the kind of the student that every professor wants in the classroom. As the advisor starts to discuss the student's choices, the advisor discusses the advantages and disadvantages of majoring in the advisor's discipline with the student. Although hesitant at first, the student becomes increasingly enthusiastic about the possibilities of this major, considers the choices, and will decide on the major soon.

## Appendix B

### Demographic Information of Participants in the Study

	Faculty Advisors	Staff Advisors	Students
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	46	3	45
Female	40	17	88
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
White	80	19	119
Others	5	1	14
<b>Years of Experience as an Advisor</b>			
1-5	22	7	
6-10	9	5	
11-15	14	2	
16-20	18	3	
21 and above	22	1	
<b>Student classification</b>			
Freshman			42
Sophomore			36
Junior			29
Senior			14
Graduate Student			10
Other			1
<b>College</b>			
College of Arts and Letters	18	0	2
College of Business	0	3	42
College of Education	4	0	2
College of Health & Human Services	25	2	38
College of Humanities & Public Affairs	5	0	6
College of Natural & Applied Sciences	5	1	12
Undecided/Not mentioned/other	17	13	42
Academic Advisement center		7	

Note. Numbers in some categories are not complete due to missing data.

## Appendix C

### Statistics of the Questionnaire

Composite Score or Individual Item	Students			Faculty/Staff		
	Faculty Centered	Student Centered	Neutral	Faculty Centered	Student Centered	Neutral
Core Value Composite Score <sup>1,2,3</sup>	3.66 <sup>d</sup>	5.24 <sup>ab</sup>	4.94 <sup>ab</sup>	3.33 <sup>d</sup>	5.52 <sup>a</sup>	4.22 <sup>c</sup>
The advisor encourages autonomy. <sup>2,3</sup>	3.73 <sup>c</sup>	4.52 <sup>b</sup>	4.07 <sup>bc</sup>	2.54 <sup>d</sup>	5.34 <sup>a</sup>	3.54 <sup>c</sup>
The advisor is trustworthy. <sup>1,2,3</sup>	3.61 <sup>bc</sup>	5.28 <sup>a</sup>	5.23 <sup>a</sup>	3.20 <sup>c</sup>	5.37 <sup>a</sup>	4.00 <sup>b</sup>
The advisor has integrity. <sup>1,2</sup>	3.59	5.48	5.02	3.28	5.40	4.14
The advisor is fair. <sup>2</sup>	3.09	5.28	4.95	3.08	5.60	4.30
The advisor respects the student. <sup>1,2,3</sup>	4.02 <sup>bc</sup>	5.87 <sup>a</sup>	5.65 <sup>a</sup>	3.59 <sup>c</sup>	5.74 <sup>a</sup>	4.57 <sup>b</sup>
The advisor is acting on behalf of the institution. <sup>2</sup>	4.41	5.33	4.91	4.15	5.38	4.27
The advisor is acting on behalf of the student. <sup>2</sup>	2.86	5.07	4.47	2.85	5.50	3.95
The advisor is competent. <sup>2,3</sup>	4.48 <sup>b</sup>	5.24 <sup>a</sup>	5.40 <sup>a</sup>	4.18 <sup>b</sup>	5.66 <sup>a</sup>	4.67 <sup>b</sup>
The advisor is ethical. <sup>2</sup>	3.18	5.11	4.79	3.08	5.34	4.19
Student Action Composite Score <sup>1,2</sup>	4.38	5.17	4.99	3.81	5.09	4.58
The student will likely retain this advisor for future advising. <sup>1</sup>	5.20	5.32	5.40	4.67	4.86	4.92
I prefer an advisor like this. <sup>2</sup>	3.55	5.00	4.58	2.95	5.31	4.24
Individual Items						
The student will choose the advisor's major. <sup>1,2</sup>	5.18	4.63	4.84	4.79	4.37	4.51
The advisor is acting in his or her own self-interest. <sup>2,3</sup>	5.66 <sup>a</sup>	4.46 <sup>b</sup>	4.60 <sup>b</sup>	5.85 <sup>a</sup>	3.49 <sup>c</sup>	4.92 <sup>b</sup>
The advisor is warm. <sup>1,2</sup>	4.45	4.80	5.09	4.29	4.49	4.44
The advisor described here is similar to my academic advisor. <sup>2</sup>	2.30	4.35	3.98	n/a	n/a	n/a
I would act in a way similar to the advisor. <sup>2</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.77	5.34	4.00

Note: Scores for each item range from 1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree.



## Appendix C Continued

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For each item, 1 = a significant main effect ( $p < .05$ ) for Participants' Role, 2 = a significant main effect ( $p < .05$ ) for Scenario, and 3 = a significant interaction ( $p < .05$ ) for the interaction. When a significant interaction was found, independent t-tests were conducted across conditions. Cells with the same superscript for any item do not differ ( $p < .05$ ). Cell sizes range from 34 to 46.

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