

Title:

Exploring Students' Involvement in Curriculum Advising in Higher Education: A Critical Reflection at a Traditional University.

Scholarly area: Academic Development

Oral presentation

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum advising is an important academic enterprise in higher education contributing towards student success, retention and improving overall academic performance. The evolution of an academic advising ecology centered on the involvement of students in curriculum advising is an emerging phenomenon requiring further analysis. This research is aimed at exploring the benefits of involving students in curriculum advising as a reflective practice by academic advisors at a traditional university in South Africa. The study was underpinned by a systematic literature review to outline the evolution of curriculum transformation and its connections to student needs and future career paths. Curriculum advice is mediated by the challenges of articulation between the curriculum advice needed by students, their knowledge and understanding of curriculum, and the actual practice of advising. This however needs to be contextualized within a new social contract with students to maximize their paths in higher education.

Using a grounded theory approach, this qualitative study sought to explore the benefits of including students in curriculum advising. A grounded theory approach assisted with the formulation of an

advising model/middle range theoretical propositions for the enablement of students to participate in curricula advising. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews from convenient sample consisting of 6 Programme Directors, 8 currently registered students and 8 Alumni as participants. A thematic analysis strategy was used to analyze the data on the benefits of involving students in curriculum advising. It is anticipated that student involvement will benefit the academic relationships between the lecturers and students, improve students learning interest, learning assessment skills and reduce students dropout. Finally, this research study is also anticipated to add on to the existing body of knowledge on academic advising in higher education.

Keywords: Curriculum advising, Student involvement, Assessment, Lecture-Student relationship, Learning interest