

# ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

### COVID-19 VERSION

# Table of Contents

## I.

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### Overview

Impacting Student  
Success Through  
Advising

3

## II.

---

### AAC Operations

Student Contacts  
Technology  
Office Reception & Quick  
Answer Desk  
Assessment  
Highlight: Budget  
Mandatory Advising Program

5

## III.

---

### Team Discovery

Major Exploration Program  
Transfer Program  
Orientation and Outreach  
Peer Advising Program  
Highlight: Utah Global

14

## IV.

---

### Campus-Wide Advising Team

PreProfessional Advising  
Education & Development  
UAAC  
Highlight: UAAC Virtual  
Conference  
Bridge Advising Program  
Academic Standards  
Highlight: General Education  
Exceptions Committee

26

## V.

---

### Epilogue

37

## VI.

---

### Appendices

Activities and Achievements  
of AAC Staff  
Organizational Chart

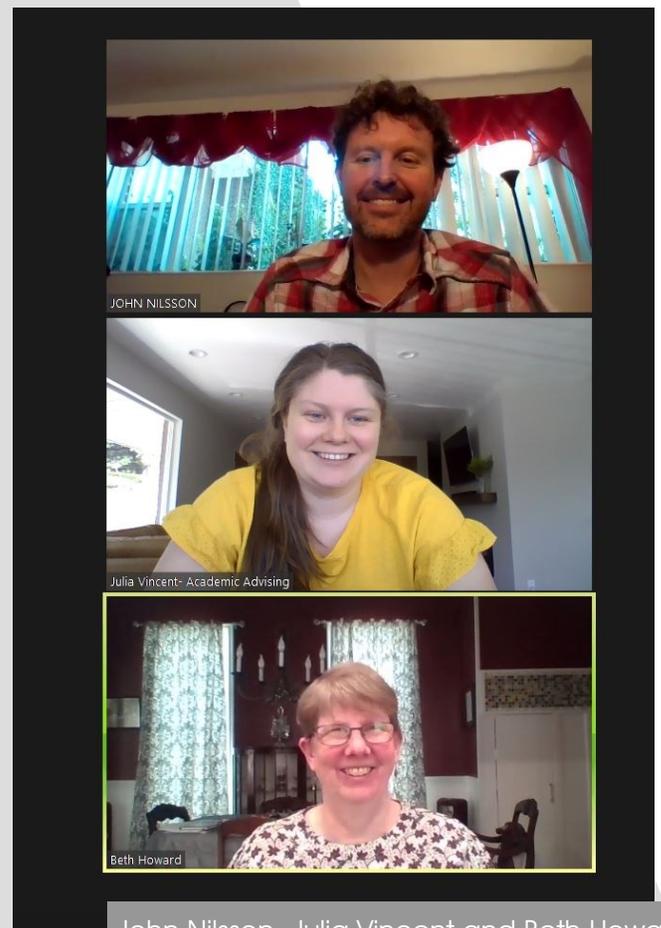
39

# I. Impacting Student Success through Advising

Suffice it to say that this year has challenged us in ways we never would have imagined a year ago. We began the 2019-2020 academic year with every expectation of expanding on our progress from the prior year, always from the perspective of how we can positively impact student success through advising. We were coming off of a noteworthy year, having made great strides in all areas reflecting our core values of inclusivity, excellence in advising, assessment, professional growth, and collaboration. The 2018-2019 Annual Report documented our achievements in each of these areas, and set the foundation for a year of further growth.

As the new academic year was starting, we restructured the Academic Advising Center. Julia Vincent joined Beth Howard and John Nilsson on the Leadership Team. Reporting lines were shifted to facilitate collaboration between functional areas with overlapping objectives or constituencies, as is reflected in the organization of this report. The new structure, in combination with hires made necessary by the domino effect, contributed to an air of excitement and possibilities. Outside of the AAC, there was renewed energy around development of a campus advising ladder.

Then COVID happened. As we increasingly realized that we were not going to experience a short period of temporary inconveniences and adjustments followed by a return to "normal", we had to go back to our core values and re-think, re-envision, and re-create how we support student success through advising.



John Nilsson, Julia Vincent and Beth Howard

The AAC staff rose to the challenge, and surpassed all expectations. A few of the noteworthy achievements include:



**Excellence in Advising:** All services and appointments transitioned to virtual either phone or video **with no interruption in service**. Students and other campus constituencies were able to talk to a live staff member in real-time; students and their supporters frequently expressed their appreciation for our availability and responsiveness to their needs.



**Inclusivity:** Previously, the vast majority of advising appointments required the student to come to campus. For the student who spends minimal time on campus, or has significant personal responsibilities away from campus, mandating on-campus appointments can represent a barrier. Utilizing a broader range of modalities has been of benefit to students and staff members alike.



**Professional Growth:** In a time when state-wide, regional, national, and global conferences and professional development opportunities were being indefinitely postponed or cancelled altogether, the UAAC Conference Planning Committee shifted gears and put on a high-quality, virtual conference with record attendance.



**Collaboration:** Programming and modules for virtual delivery were created for incoming students to replace the in-person Orientation experience. Segments of these tools are being used by colleges across the university. Students can fully engage with Orientation, irrespective of their ability to come to campus.



**Assessment:** In a special version of UROP- the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, two of our peer advisors are examining how various elements of the virtual Orientation contribute to development of a sense of belonging for incoming students.

Advisors make a difference in the lives of students. We are always a resource, but it is in times of great upheaval when our full value becomes visible. Advisors listen to students, and can anticipate many of the struggles they will experience and the questions they will have. Our boots on the ground, in the weeds approach enables us to anticipate need, and make course adjustments on a dime.

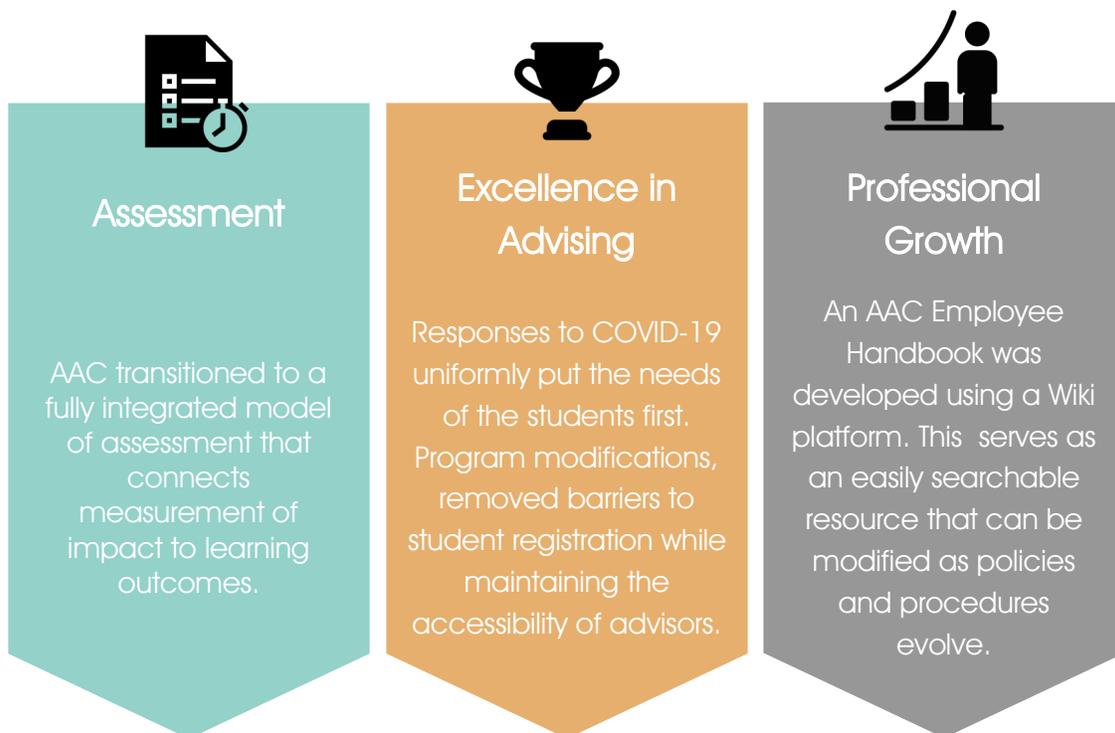
Suffice it to say that we will be forever changed by COVID. That it is happening during a period of national upheaval and racial tension adds to the importance of documenting how we responded, but also as an opportunity to challenge how we approach and execute our work moving forward, and recommit to our values.

# II. Operations

Student Contacts | Technology | Office Reception and Quick Answer Desk | Assessment  
| Highlight: Budget | Mandatory Advising Program

This section includes the initiatives and efforts that most directly impact the student interface with advising. All areas are under the supervision of the associate dean.

## Highlights: Putting Values into Action



## Impact

### Feedback on support provided by Mayumi Kasai:

"I am writing this email as a humble note of appreciation for your outstanding staff Ms. Mayumi Kasai. Mayumi had the patience and kindness to explain to me about my high school kid's class credit transfer questions, many of them. ha ha. :) . Her attitude was very sincere and caring. We really don't have that many employees and customer representatives like her nowadays, most people nowadays are in a hurry to move on to their next work task and rush you off the phone and email. Mayumi's caring attitude really represents your office professionally."

# Student Contacts

## Highlights 2019-20

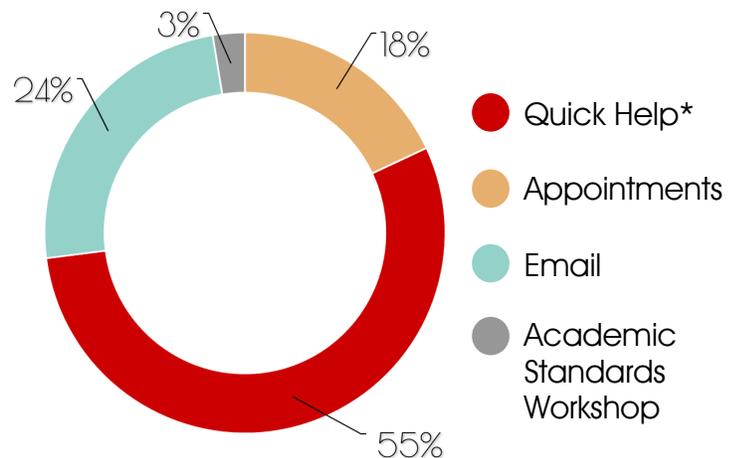
The services of the Academic Advising Center are available to and utilized by all members of the campus community— students (prospective, incoming, continuing, and graduates), their supporters, and university employees.

### Data, Trends, and Analysis

The staff in the AAC had over roughly **111,300** recorded interactions with students, campus partners, and outside constituencies during 2019-20 academic year. This included **7,700** in-person, phone, email and video appointments, **23,600** quick help contacts with students and nearly **80,000** recorded email contacts. By providing a variety of different modalities for interacting with students, we can most efficiently serve their advising needs and maximize the availability of advisors for more time-intensive interactions.

Student Contact Summary 2019-20

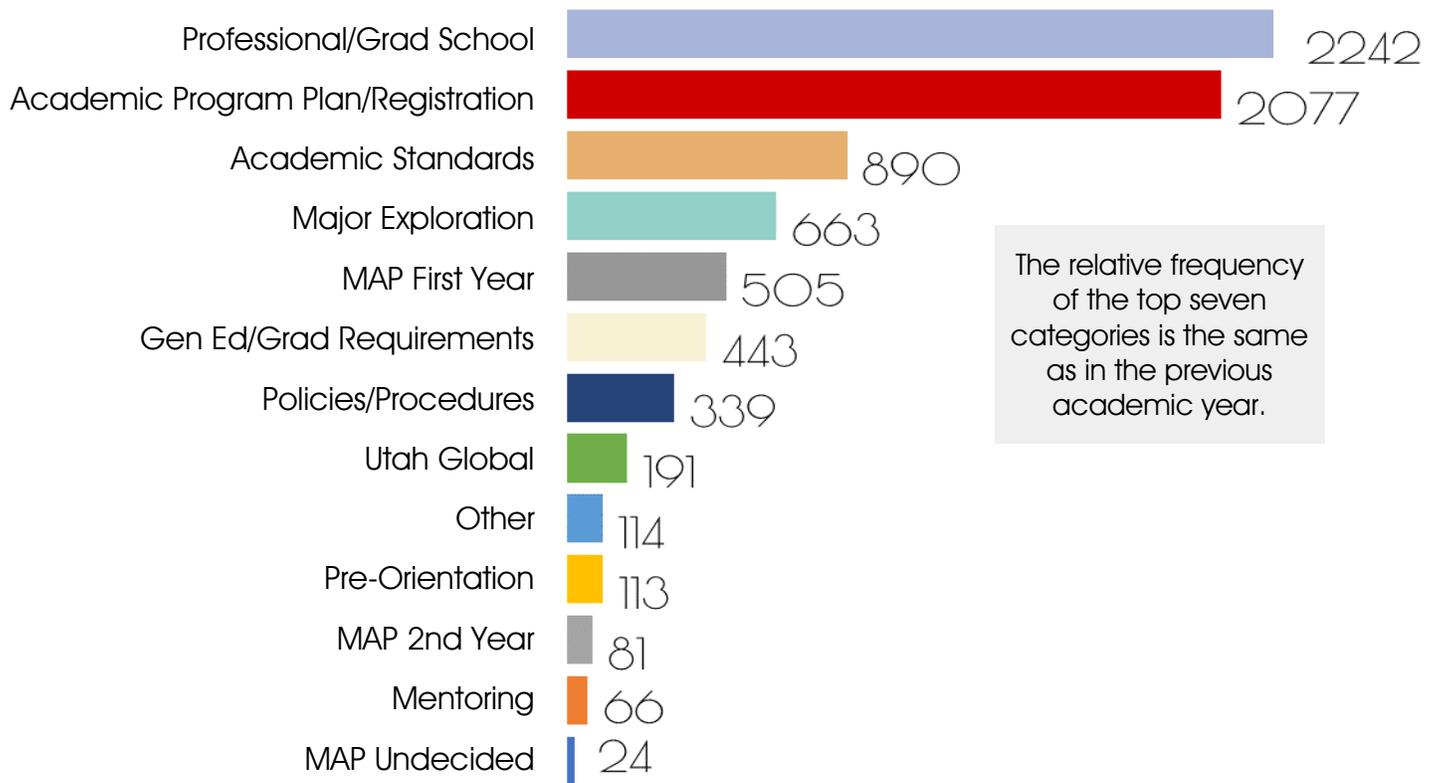
Offering support via group presentations (Orientations, information sessions, programs to campus partners), emails, and at our Reception and Quick Answer desks facilitates student access to in-depth, one-on-one sessions with advisors. This approach enables the AAC to minimize wait time for appointments and maximize impact. The distribution of our contacts is shown to the right.



\*"Quick Help" is any contact not logged on the database system as an appointment except e-mail.

Students are asked to self-identify class year and reason for appointment when they check in with our front desk. Over half of the students we see are freshmen, sophomores, or transfers. The most frequently cited reasons for appointments are academic planning and/or registration, PreProfessional advising, and major exploration. The distribution of appointments by type is shown on the next page. The relative frequency of appointment types has remained stable over the past three years, with one exception: the addition of Utah Global students through a new partnership that will be highlighted later in the report.

## Contacts by Type in 2019-20



The relative frequency of the top seven categories is the same as in the previous academic year.

## Requests for Exceptions to Policy

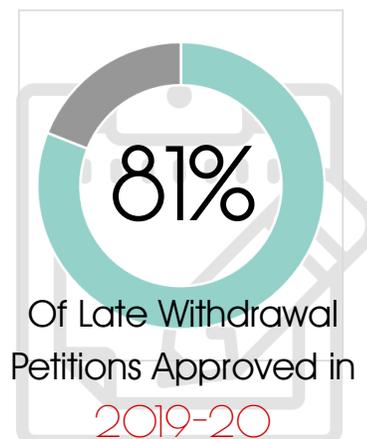
The Academic Advising Center handles requests for modifications to registrations that occur outside of the published registration calendar for non-matriculated students and those without a declared major. Because of the challenges created by the pandemic, the university relaxed the traditional deadlines for course withdrawals and converting the grading option to "Credit/No Credit" until the end of the semester. In addition, students who elected CR/NC were allowed to use courses with grades of CR to satisfy prerequisite, major, minor, general education, and Bachelor's degree requirements.



David Eisen

## Late Withdrawal Requests—2019-20

Term	Submitted	Approved
Summer	5	4
Fall	25	20
Spring	2	2



COVID-19 had a dramatic impact on the number of petitions for exception to policy submitted in the last quarter of the 2019-20 academic year. In 2018-19, 61 petitions were completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar for review, with 18 of the 61 (30%) submitted after March 15, 2019. During the 2019-20 academic year, 49 petitions were initiated, with 45 completed and submitted for review. Only 7 of the petitions, or 14% were submitted after March 15th.

All completed petitions for the 2019-2020 academic year submitted by the Academic Advising Center were approved. The overwhelming majority of petitions were requests for retroactive withdrawal from one or more classes due to health issues. A summary is provided below:

Petitions Initiated Pre-COVID (July 1, 2019—March 15, 2020)

Reason	Approved	Denied	Incomplete
Retroactive Withdrawal	31	0	4
Deletion	3	0	0
Section Change	2	0	0
Reversal of Grading Option	2	0	0

Petitions Initiated Post-COVID (March 16, 2020—June 30, 2020)

Reason	Approved	Denied	Incomplete
Retroactive Withdrawal	5	0	0
Deletion	1	0	0
Section Change	0	0	0
Reversal of Grading Option	1	0	0

Although we were able to meet with students virtually throughout this period, the numbers can be interpreted to suggest that students who have experienced challenges that impacted their education in prior semesters were less likely to initiate petitions while simultaneously dealing with the impact of COVID 19. As we identify these students, we will work with them to make sure that previous challenges are not amplified by COVID 19.

# Technology

## Highlights 2019-20

This year we accomplished several technology related service enhancements within AAC. We were able to move our ticketing system, inventory, time-off request and technology check-out system completely online for virtual access. For the last few years, our technology team has implemented a rotation schedule for purchasing new technology needs as well as retiring older inventory. With this system, we were able to keep our inventory no older than four years including implementation of new laptops for some advisors.

Because of this, when COVID-19 caused our office to move virtually in assist students, we were able to do so quickly. All advisors, front desk staff and support staff were online and assisting students within **one business day**. This included the ability for our front desk staff to answer all phone calls that came into the Academic Advising Center from home. Additionally, our reception staff created an email as another avenue for students to ask questions and receive assistance from our advising team. Our Quick Answer desk also continued to function normally without disruption due to this email account and because advisors had the technology equipment needed to provide assistance. Advisors were also able to provide students with video or phone appointments within one business day as well. Thus, there was little or no disruption to student services within the AAC due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Technology Ticket Allocation 2019-20

49%

### DESKTOP SUPPORT

Hardware and software support and maintenance

35%

### DATA PROCESSES AND ANALYTICS

Running reports and processes, data requests and compilation

10%

### WEBSITE SUPPORT

Updates and maintenance of Academic Advising Center webpages

6%

### CONEX ED

Appointment management system support



# Office Reception and Quick Answer Desk



Our front desk staff is always G.L.A.D. to help!

The Academic Advising Center's front desk reception team assists students and their families as well as faculty and staff that contact AAC in a quick, knowledgeable and friendly manner. We also support the advising staff as they assist students in reaching their academic goals.

## Highlights 2019-20

The front desk staff in the Academic Advising Center were able to quickly switch from working on campus to working remotely from home in our response to COVID-19. On a Friday, we discovered that we would need to work from home. By that same day, after having collected computers and all items needed to answer phones, were able to correctly assist and direct students, parents, and all who called into AAC for help. Additionally, a front desk reception email was created as another avenue for students to reach us and gain assistance. There were very few, if any, gaps in serving students by our front desk staff due to the impact of COVID-19. We were able to continue to facilitate thousands of academic advising appointments, answer thousands of questions, assist with any special projects, gather data, and continue to implement our G.L.A.D. (Greet, Listen, Assist, and Direct) philosophy both in the office and virtually.

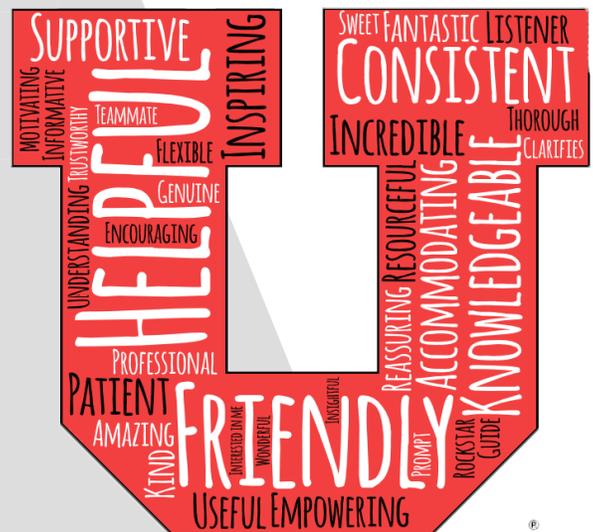
Drawing on our values of assisting and directing students has been our priority so that we may offer students a helping hand during this unprecedented time.

10,000+ Phone Calls &  
2,365 In-person Quick Helps  
facilitated through our front desk  
reception and QA in 2019-20

# Assessment

Over the past three years, the AAC has moved to an integrated model of assessment rather than having it be the sole responsibility of a single staff member. All Program Managers have now attended at NACADA Assessment Institute, and have developed their own assessment plans. The AAC Assessment Committee serves as a resource to help Program Managers develop their assessment plans as well as develop assessment tools for learning outcomes applicable to all of AAC.

The UAAC Assessment Committee led, by Katie Barnard, directs campus-wide assessment of advising. In 2019, the committee developed a graphic of the Block U that integrated words used by students to describe their advisors. This graphic was used on a mouse pad and a sticker distributed to advisors at the monthly UAAC meeting in appreciation for their good work. In the coming months, the Assessment Committee will be conducting a campus-wide survey of advisors.



## Highlight: Budget

Each of the program areas develops an annual budget that includes operational expenses and proposed professional development for staff within the area. Requests for funds are connected to the articulated objectives of the functional areas, and the professional goals of the individual staff members. Budget allocations are made by the members of the leadership team.

Off-campus professional development was halted by the travel ban in March. When the ban is lifted, we will revisit the previously approved plans. In the interim, we have actively sought out virtual options for accomplishing the stated goals on a funds-available basis.

# Mandatory Advising Program

Our core responsibilities are to administer a campus-wide Mandatory Advising Program (MAP) that connects students to academic advisors at key points in their undergraduate experience, and to ensure that campus advisors understand program learning outcomes and how to advise students to meet program goals.

We accomplish this through a campus-wide communication plan to students and advisors, on-going trainings for academic advisors, collaboration with a campus-wide Mandatory Advising Committee, and collection and analysis of program data.

The key points of MAP include:



## Pre-COVID-19

Last year, the MAP Committee established the following Goals for 2019-2020. We were able to fulfill the majority of our goals before COVID-19:

1

Move Kickoff to UAAC so we can focus on targeted training for advisors and incorporate aspects relevant to both new and experienced advisors

**Action taken:** In September 2019, we held a UAAC in-service focused on First Year MAP, and in November 2019, we held a UAAC in-service focused on Second Year MAP.

Our sessions had some basics for newer advisors, but we also used the work on Learning Centered Advising by Maura M. Reynolds to discuss MAP scenarios. This was a new framework for MAP, and was designed to challenge and engage our newer and more experienced advisors.

2

Start investigating MAP for transfer students

**Action taken:** The MAP Committee met with campus wide advising coordinators to discuss MAP for transfer students. We decided to pilot MAP for transfers by focusing on undecided transfer students. In our discussions with the Registrar's Office, it was determined that this would be too much work for a small population. As an alternative, we will be changing our select for our Undeclared MAP process to select undeclared students with 60 or more credits with one prior term of enrollment instead of two terms. This will allow us to pick up more undecided transfer students earlier in their academic career.

3

Assess MAP First Year LO's campus wide in Fall 2019

**Action taken:** 37% of students surveyed completed the assessment. Overall, students who responded to the survey seem to be meeting the first two learning outcomes for MAP First Year Students, and students overwhelmingly had a positive advising experience. The complete report will be sent to the Campus Advising Community in September 2020, along with College specific summary data.

4

Assess MAP Second Year LO's campus wide in Spring 2020

**Action taken:** The MAP Committee created the assessment. Due to a selection error and COVID-19, the assessment was not sent to students in Spring 2020.

## How we responded to COVID-19

In early April, we reached out to College Coordinators, administrators, advisors, and the MAP Committee to get perspectives on MAP for Spring 2020. At that point, we had advised a higher proportion of our MAP students compared to last year. The majority of respondents recommended that we remove MAP holds that were placed in Spring 2020. In the process of gathering this feedback, we got the clear impression that a number of our students were under tremendous stress, and we were concerned that the hold could be a barrier for some students.

Based on this feedback, we collaborated with the Registrar's Office to remove MAP holds that were placed in Spring 2020. We emailed students about this, and strongly encouraged them to make contact with their advisors. In addition, we provided College Coordinators with a list of their students who still had the MAP hold on their record to give advisors the opportunity to reach out directly to their students who had not yet been advised.

This experience taught us the importance of being flexible, responding to changing circumstances, and putting the needs of students first. We are grateful for our campus partners who helped us to make this decision, and then to implement it in a way that supports student success.

As part of our response to the pandemic, next year we are ready to hold virtual trainings on MAP for advisors, and to provide virtual MAP appointments.

# III. Team Discovery

Major Exploration | Transfer Program | Orientation and Outreach |  
Peer Advising Program | Highlight: Utah Global

When the Academic Advising Center underwent a reorganization last year, "Team Discovery" was developed under the leadership of the AAC's most recent Associate Director, Julia Vincent. This newly developed team had a lot to accomplish in just one year. The focus was broken into two primary goals.

**1** Hire new talent into the team to fill vacant positions.

**2** Find current successes within the team and throw fuel on top of the fire.

In March 2020 the team gathered for their first retreat. It was on this day that we gave ourselves a new name, **Team Discovery**. We discussed our shared values and how we want to impact students and the larger University of Utah community.

## Highlights: Putting Values into Action



**Professional Growth:** We hired Lisa Hutton, Ashley Glenn, and Marshal Beach, and promoted Madeline Rencher and Allie McClaskey. This rounded out a team with complimentary skill sets and rewarded excellence in the field of Academic Advising.



**Excellence in Advising:** Major Exploration and Outreach joined forces on a University of Utah "Instagram takeover" highlighting the 2019 Major Expo. This social media blitz was shared on the U's official account which had **78k** followers at the time of the takeover, and the story was viewed **9,000** times.



**Collaboration:** The Orientation and Outreach team spearheaded a huge shift to host New Student Orientation online for the summer. This included creating resources like registration and General Education guides for the entire campus to use.

## Impact

### Incoming Freshman:

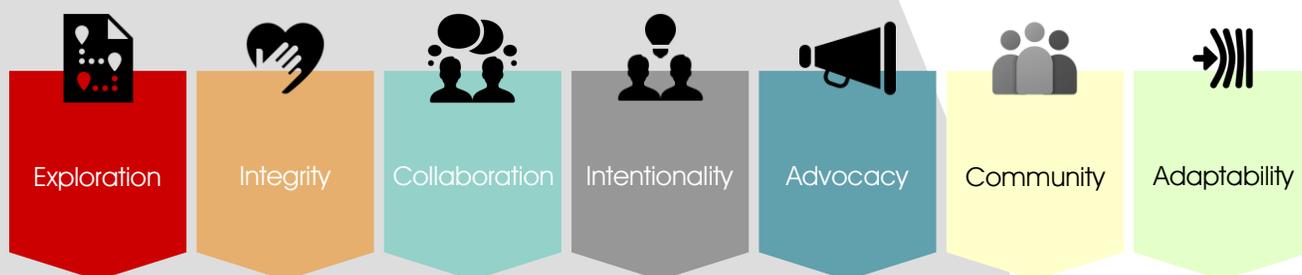
"Thank you for such an easygoing process. I have friends going to different universities where the online orientation is a mess right now, so I'm grateful that Utah's online orientation runs smoothly."

# Major Exploration Program

## MEP Vision

We strive for every student on campus to make individual, intentional decisions of major and minor declaration(s); that faculty, campus partners, and all advisors reinforce the importance of exploration and purposeful decision making; and to be known as the primary resource for exploring students at the University of Utah while creating a community of exploration.

## MEP Values



## Overview

The Academic Year 2019-2020 will always be known as a year of massive change. For the Major Exploration Program (MEP), this began in August and September, as we welcomed Marshal Beach as a new Assistant Director and Lisa Hutton as the new Director of MEP. Stephanie Begaye continues her outstanding service as our experienced Assistant Director. The team held a retreat to refine our mission and create a vision and values, which Lisa honed with the input of faculty at the NACADA Assessment Institute in January 2020.

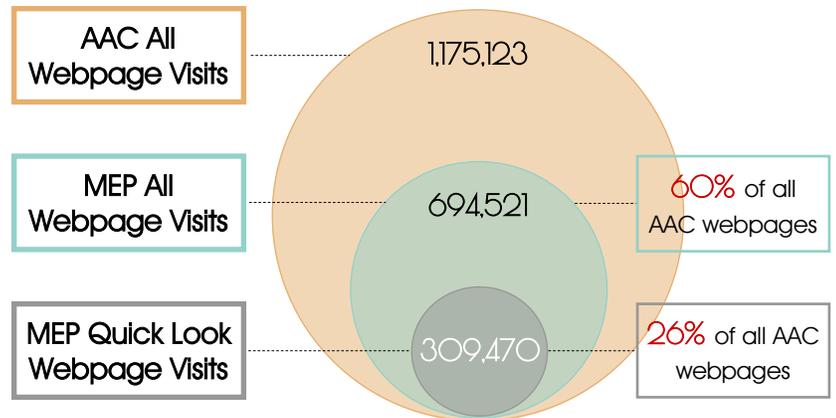
MEP hosted five large events pre-COVID this year (Major Expo and four Major Open Houses) and assisted with the Dean's List Breakfast event. Assessment of each included measuring attendance and soliciting student/campus partner feedback. We also began overhauling the MEP Training Handbook and creating a Major Exploration program of training for new advisors on campus. Throughout this time, we began updating our Quick Looks page. This page received at least half of the total visits to AAC webpages last year (see chart on the next page). We

successfully requested a Parent Fund grant to support a substantial upgrade to this site in the next year.

As we look to the future, the MEP recognizes and is continuously adapting to changes on campus that impact our exploring student population. The development and implementation of direct admissions by colleges and programs will challenge the identification of exploring student populations. In turn, we are ascertaining avenues for data collection and other strategies to increase our relevance and accessibility for students. The goals we have outlined in this report highlight some of the changes where we are already making progress.

193  
Total students in  
UGS 1050 during  
2019-20

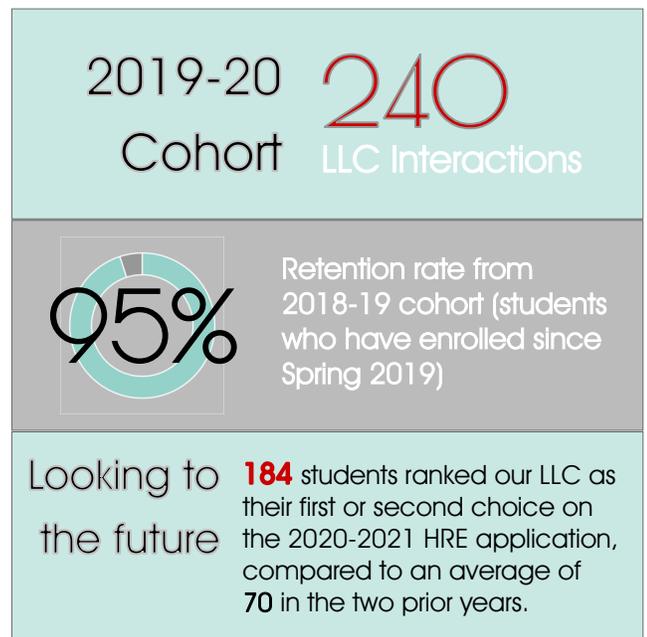
All major exploration advisors pivoted quickly to provide telephone and video appointments to students who are considering major options. As the pandemic hit while we were gearing up for Admissions and NSO season, the MEP has focused on two major areas: updating our website, especially the Quick Looks page, to ensure that students and campus advisors have accurate exploration information; and collaborating with Orientation and Outreach to prepare major exploration sessions for NSO and Admissions.



Updating the Quick Looks page is no small task: this requires communication and **collaboration** with AAC Operations and UIT, as well as all programs across campus, and requires everything from choosing **inclusive** representation in the photos used on the major files to writing short and accurate summaries for new programs. The Quick Looks page will soon be directly linked as a part of a major exploration tool on the main utah.edu homepage, and MEP worked hard to represent exploring students and the program in meetings with UGS, UIT, and UMC.

MEP has continued to **collaborate** and develop our relationship with CPDC. We are working to align exploration curriculum and create passive programming, and Marshal, our LLC advisor, has developed a full 2-credit curriculum with the CPDC's LLC career coach, Megan Randall. Marshal and Megan increased communication with HRE staff, a vital component to improving and expanding the program in the future. Post-COVID-19, all but our international students returned home, and Marshal and Megan stayed in touch with HRE and communicated an open invitation of remote support and services to all remaining residents.

LLC Data



**Major Open Houses**  
 Informal events bringing together academic programs based on a timely theme. Students interact with advisors, faculty and declared students.

**280**  
 Students Attended

**Major Expo**  
 This is the signature event of the Academic Advising Center. It allows all current and prospective students to connect with every academic program offered at the University of Utah.

**1,505**  
 Students Attended

**Dean's Breakfast**  
 This event was to celebrate & congratulate exploratory students for academic success in the 2019 calendar year. Each college was represented and spoke to students about academic possibilities.

**84**  
 Students Attended

The MEP has **collaborated** heavily with Orientation and Outreach to create and engage with virtual resources for incoming students, as AAC’s population of incoming students are nearly all pursuing major exploration. We represented AAC during 11 individual hour-long virtual Admissions Ask Anything events, recorded a presentation for Admissions’ Red White and U virtual event, wrote and recorded a major exploration presentation for First-Year NSO, and assisted in the content development and staffing of live major exploration Zoom sessions for First-Year NSO. The development of and participation in new, innovative advising methods exemplifies how we strive for **excellence in advising**.

Our current **assessment** efforts are combined with Orientation and Outreach as our current major exploration student interactions are majority orientation related. We will also be collecting website data to assess the usage of our site, and are interested in pursuing a larger assessment of UGS 1050.

In terms of **professional growth**, we have all developed new communication techniques and methods for working with students, and have participated in various in-services and professional trainings since moving online. To contribute to our department’s growth, we have hosted monthly MEP Monday Meetups aimed to provide continuous development of major exploration skills. MEP has also provided targeted major exploration training to new departmental advisors on campus.



Marshall Beach, Lisa Hutton, Stephanie Begaye

## What We Learned

Like the majority of academic advisors, we performed our work entirely in-office prior to the pandemic. The largest takeaway from this period of change is that we can absolutely be effective advisors while working remotely. In retrospect, we didn’t miss a beat: major exploration appointment types remained open, and we actively participated in creating online resources for students in both permanent recording and live meeting formats.

The MEP would argue we are now more accessible than ever – students who work full time, who have families, who have other obligations between 8 and 5 are able to make appointments with us via phone or video. Events are another large part of our program, and we are in the process of holding two virtual events in place of our signature Major Expo next fall.

When we met as a team in December and identified our program values, we had no idea how quickly we would learn to exemplify adaptability, advocacy, community, intentionality, and collaboration – along with integrity and exploration – but 2020 provided the perfect scenario to flex our strengths and enact our values as we responded to student needs. We are proud of how we have advocated for the importance of exploration in education and adapted to virtual demands.

## Undecided/Exploring Student Advising in AAC

Major Exploration Advising	Students Advised by Year
	2019-20
Undecided Students Advised	2477
Students designated as “Major Exploration” for the main purpose of their visit	1273
Students designated as “Second Year Advising” for the main purpose of their visit (Students only come to the Academic Advising Center For Second Year Advising if they are undecided.)	147

5,057  
Tabling  
Contacts

3,602  
Presentation  
Contacts

## Goals for 2020-21

- Update our online resources, specifically majors.utah.edu, both visually and organizationally
- Successfully execute virtual major exploration events through Fall 2020
- Increase LLC engagement; advocate to increase numbers for future cohorts

# Transfer Program

At the request of University leadership, the Transfer Program discontinued its weekly advising visits to Salt Lake Community College and instead participated in a variety of recruitment events at that institution.

## Pre-COVID-19

### Outreach Activities

The Transfer Program participated in many outreach events and activities in 2019 and the start of 2020 including 8 Swoop to the U at SLCC events; Hooplaza; Taco Tuesday for Transfers; the Major Exploration EXPO; the College Fair at Snow College; and 8 in-person Transfer Orientation Resource Fairs.

### The Transfer Program Website

Transfer Program advisors continued to post involvement opportunities on our resume-building blog. A total of 233 posts contributed to the **14,366 page views**

### Other Activities in the Transfer Program

- In 2019-2020 Transfer Program advisors advised 2,038 transfer students in our U of U offices and at Snow College!
- Produced a newsletter for SLCC advisors providing them with up-to-date U of U transfer information
- Worked with Jason Taylor, Director of Transfer Pathways, on the Transfer Pathways initiative
- Sent emails to all newly admitted transfer student in Fall and Spring semester welcoming them to the U and pointing out useful resources
- Worked with the Access U team at the U of U and SLCC to develop a process for successfully transitioning students in the program
- Created/updated transfer training materials and provided in-person transfer training to advisors across campus



2,038

Transfer  
Students  
Advised



14,366

Transfer  
Program  
Webpage  
Views

### Outreach Activities

The Transfer Program's outreach activities continued under COVID restrictions, but they moved to the virtual environment. We participated in 9 virtual "Ask Anything" events for newly admitted transfer students.

### Prospective Student Newsletter

COVID restrictions put an end to our in-person outreach effort to prospective transfer students, so we decided to reach out to those students through an online newsletter. Students will sign up for the newsletter from a pop-up on our website. We will begin offering this option to students in August. We also hope to do some tracking and assessment of students who receive the newsletter.

### The Transfer Program Website

With in-person activities and advising appointments curtailed, the Transfer Program turned its attention to developing new online resources for transfer students.

We developed a website called, "Know Before You Go" which has information and links to dozens of resources that transfer students might find useful before, during and after they transfer. Feedback from advisors across campus indicate that this is a helpful resource for both transfer students and their advisors.

#### **We put up the website in April and have had 1,850 page views in April and May alone!**

Content has been created for a site with information specifically for SLCC students. The site will include information on academic planning for students while attending SLCC, major exploration information as well as charts matching SLCC programs and pathways with U of U majors based on career potential, subject matter, skill development and class articulation. We hope to have the site published this Fall Semester if not before. A similar site for Snow College students is being worked on with a goal to have this published in Spring 2021.

### Transfer Training

We moved our transfer advisor training to the virtual realm. Since March we have done transfer training via Zoom for 18 new advisors across campus.

## What We Learned

The COVID epidemic forced the Transfer Program to focus on improving our online resources and developing new ones. Ironically in doing this we believe that we are actually improving our services to transfer students. Transfer students are often located far from the U campus; they also often work or have family commitments. These realities can make it hard for them to take advantage of in-person resources and advising. The new online resources that we've developed during COVID and our increase and improvement of virtual advising provide increased services and resources in a flexible format that meets the needs of many transfer students.

Our goals for the Transfer Program for the next academic year will focus on continuing to develop and improve our website. We also plan to work on establishing best practices and learning outcomes for virtual advising of transfer students.



Terese Pratt and Allie McClaskey

# Orientation and Outreach

## Highlights 2018-19



Ashley Glenn and Madeline Rencher

- New Director, Ashley Glenn
- Online Orientation CANVAS Course
- Virtual Major Exploration Sessions
- Virtual Outreach Programming
- Social Media Initiatives

## AAC Values Into Action



### Collaboration

AAC collaborated with the Office of Admissions and presented at 32 virtual sessions for admitted freshman and transfers students. Our advisors provided the answers students, parents, and supporters needed in order to feel confident in choosing the U.



### Excellence in Advising

The Director of Orientation and Outreach shared **orientation best practices** nationally through a NACADA webinar—“Orientation in a Virtual World”.



### Inclusivity

The creation of robust online orientation resources have allowed students and supports to learn and engage at their own pace and preference. All videos were accessible and offered closed captioning. Our videos have received a total of **3,090 views**.



### Professional Growth

Madeline Rencher hosted AAC’s first @universityofutah Instagram takeover to highlight the Major Expo. Our story was viewed 9,000 times. The U’s social media manager said that this was one of the best stories he has ever seen.

Orientation and Outreach programs focus on guiding and supporting prospective and incoming students in identifying pathways for exploration and in navigating their journey at the university. Through intentional and inclusive advising practices, we create environments and resources wherein students can make informed decisions and begin their journey with both a sense of direction and possibility.

This past year has required Outreach & Orientation to make the seemingly impossible—online outreach and orientation for all incoming students—*possible*. This year, we have needed to work with grace, positivity, and a willingness to embrace new ideas. This began in the fall as Madeline Rencher stepped in to lead orientation and outreach efforts. In January, we welcomed Ashley Glenn as the new director. Not long after, another welcome was necessary. This time, we were altering our plans due to COVID-19.

With summer orientation approaching, we swiftly adapted our orientation plans and began building robust online resources, including websites for transfer and first-year students, helpful video tutorials, and new virtual pathways for major exploration.

## Orientation Videos

Madeline Rencher created a series of video tutorials, introducing students to many of the processes and resources they would need to know to navigate course registration. Not only were these helpful for students within the Academic Advising Center, but also these videos were embedded within all Canvas courses. Additionally, they were shared across campus to both academic and student affairs.

## CANVAS Orientation Modules

To support students through New Student Orientation, we recorded a new Your Degree Pathway presentation and created advising and registration resources for four individual Canvas courses. Across the transfer, first-year, UOnline, and parent Canvas courses, our presentation, registration resources, and video tutorials reached **5,765 students and supporters**.

## Major Exploration during New Student Orientation

Though orientation was no longer in person, we consistently prioritized ways to personalize advising and keep appointments from feeling prescriptive. We developed two new methods of supporting undecided students. We encouraged all undecided students to participate in major exploration; however, neither of these activities were required. Despite no requirement, **52% of undecided/exploring freshman** participated in one of the below major exploration activities.



# 43

Sign-ups (June)

### Virtual Major Exploration Sessions

We trained a team of 6 AAC advisors and 2 peer advisors to facilitate these small-group sessions. Students learned ways to explore, identified a few classes or resources that matched their interests, and learned next steps to take. Sessions were both accessible and personalized with students receiving individual messages following each session.

# 125

Video Views (June)

### Major Exploration Video

We collaborated with the MEP team to create a video presentation that walks students through the process of how to begin exploring as a first-year student. We addressed common myths about majors, discussed general education as built-in exploration, and identified resources and next steps for students.

Through our outreach programming, in 2019-2020, we continued to provide positive pathways for students to begin personal and academic exploration—through social media, virtual events, and online presentations.

## Social Media

While campus moved online, we utilized social media to promote the value and accessibility of academic advising and the importance of major exploration. In the spring, AAC continued to provide excellence in advising especially through our *What's Your Major Wednesday* and *Advisor Takeover* campaigns. With Madeline Rencher at the helm of both @uofuadvising and @uofuppa, our online presence and impact greatly improved, adding **600 new followers** over the past year.

## Admissions Virtual Events

Throughout April, May, and June, we became a key partner in the Office of Admissions virtual programming for admitted students, attending **32 virtual sessions** and speaking with **938 participants**. AAC participated in all virtual sessions offered for admitted students and played a key role in helping prospective students finalize their decision to attend the University of Utah.

This year, the Academic Advising Center set the example for advising during online orientation and created best practices and resources for connecting with students which have been incorporated into programming across campus. Not only making an impact here on campus—both members of Outreach & Orientation were recognized nationally through NACADA. Ashley Glenn's work with orientation was featured in a May NACADA Webinar. Madeline's work with *What's Your Major Wednesday* was mentioned during a NACADA webinar as an excellent example of engaging with students through social media.

## What We Learned

As advisors, we ask students to imagine the U; this year, Outreach and Orientation was asked to re-imagine this university and how we orient students.

The closing of our physical campus made us more open and accessible to students. Students have been able to complete orientation at their own pace. They have been able to better process new information and come to their advising appointments more prepared and more informed on what is possible. Through outreach, we have been able to more easily connect with parents and supporters and with out-of-state students, populations that were often difficult to speak with when relying on physical interactions alone.

Though often confined inside, working remotely at home, our approach to outreach and orientation feels unconstrained. We have a renewed sense of direction and vision of possibility for our programs, no longer bound by the ability to solely engage in person.

"Thanks so much for hosting the excellent session on liberal arts & orientation. I deeply appreciate all the tips and insights shared—these will go a long way toward informing what we'll do here this year at Pomona."

Katrina Sitar, Director of Academic Administration, Pomona College

### Incoming Freshman:

"I knew exactly which classes to take, and I knew I had found an amazing advisor who could answer my questions, and if not, direct me to someone who could."

# Peer Advising Program

The Peer Advising Program serves as a professional development platform for University of Utah students. Being a Peer Advisor is not only a benefit to the Peer, but also to other U of U students and the Academic Advising Center. Through Peer Advising, Peers develop leadership and coordination skills, increase advising accessibility for fellow students, and assist with various AAC program projects.

"I came into the U after a gap year and didn't have the traditional first-year experience. I wasn't involved in the school as much [as] a commuter student, and I wasn't feeling connected. After becoming a Peer Advisor, I became more involved in the school and community in a way that I was interested in. I'm part of a community that makes the college experience easier and exciting for students, and I can see how beneficial [AAC] is to the University of Utah."

**Sage Blackburn, Peer Advisor**

## What We Did Pre-COVID-19

The 2019-2020 year brought many new changes to the Peer Advising Program, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. In August 2020, the Peer Advising Program welcomed a new supervisor, Allie McClaskey. The Peer staff was also reduced from four to three, and a new Peer was hired.

The Peers are invaluable members of AAC team. They advise students via office appointments, staff the QA Desk, table at various campus events (including the Quick Answer Desk initiative launched in 2019), and provide project assistance for AAC program areas. In total, they met with 440 students individually and 203 students through the other activities.

New initiatives launched in 2019-2020 included a Peer-authored newsletter, *The Peer Review*, in which the Peers provide to AAC programs their perspectives on student issues. Topics covered in the newsletter included types of swag students might prefer, and how the Peers experienced the transition to online learning in March. The Peers also trained with the AAC Front Desk and can now provide backup coverage to this station if needed.

## How We Responded to COVID-19

The Peers completed several projects for various AAC program areas as we worked remotely this spring, especially those for Orientation and Outreach. They also continued to author *The Peer Review*. Above all, the Peers assisted AAC and other students by providing advising appointments for orientation. AAC was unable to advise students in a group setting this summer, making it vital that AAC offer as many student appointments as possible. The Peers greatly increased our appointment capacity, helping students finalize orientation requirements and enroll in classes for the fall.

Budget restrictions also inspired creativity in utilizing the Peers for summer: because AAC was unable to provide the Peers with their usual number of hours, we received funding for UROP research for two Peers. This allowed us to retain our staff of three Peers while also conducting meaningful research for the university. The UROP project centers on the student experience of virtual orientation, examining how turning on a webcam in virtual AAC Major Exploration sessions impacts a student's sense of belonging. The Peers have been a valuable presence in these sessions, providing the student perspective to incoming freshmen as they explore majors.

## What We Learned

We recognize this period of remote work as a valuable time to establish best practices for a future with a higher-than-anticipated amount of virtual student interaction. For example, we learned that video appointments may more effectively establish a connection with students than phone appointments. Erica, a Peer Advisor, noted that online advising presented new challenges but ultimately helped her grow professionally: "With going online, I couldn't just walk down the hall and get help with a question from another coworker. I now had to find an answer to a student question in the midst of the appointment. This helped broaden my knowledge of the university and its resources." Another Peer, MacKenzie, was grateful for the flexibility and safety telecommuting provided: "When the pandemic hit us in March, I was staying with my grandparents. They live in a neighborhood with mostly elderly residents, so I took my actions really seriously... I'm thankful that I was still able to work from home, and that I had the financial flexibility to not take another job in order to protect my grandparents." Sage, another Peer, particularly enjoyed telecommuting. "Working from home has made me more confident in my advising. I have many students contacting me for answers to their questions, and it feels good to be an aid in these confusing times."



The Peer Advising Team in a virtual meeting.

Top left: MacKenzie Ridley, Peer since 2019. Top right: Allie McClaskey, Peer Supervisor since August 2019. Bottom left: Beth Howard. Bottom right: Erica Lampers, Peer since 2019. Not present at above meeting, pictured right: Sage Blackburn, Peer since 2018.

# Highlight: Utah Global

## New Collaboration between AAC and Utah Global, July 2019—Present

In July 2019, the AAC was asked to provide advising support for students participating in Utah Global. On an experimental basis, Jake McPartlin and Madeline Rencher dedicated **25%** of their time through the summer and fall supporting Utah Global students and activities. The relationship has proven to be mutually beneficial, and has been extended. This partnership allows for Utah Global staff to work together with U of U academic advisors and the wealth of specialized knowledge they each hold.

Specific achievements include the following:

- Assisted in the onboarding of new Utah Global students through the Math and writing placement, first semester course planning, handling general questions/concerns, liaising with colleges and departments.
- Assisted in the creation of canvas modules for the Utah Global programs; worked with Shorelight HQ on projects including website updates, Year One App content.
- Held events and presented at Utah Global to show students how to register for classes, and assist with class selection.
- Provided an advising perspective at campus partner meetings with colleges/departments and university leadership.
- Created tutorial videos and screencasts to assist students with course planning and registration.
- Developed a formalized Academic Standards path for students for all Utah Global Students.
- Highlighted Utah Global students on @uofuadvising for 'What's Your Major Wednesday', showcasing the different ways that students at the U discover and declare their major.

456  
Utah Global  
Student  
Appointments

&

313  
Utah Global  
Student  
Interactions  
In 2019-20

## Responses to COVID-19

Once the university moved to remote operations, drop-in hours were conducted via Zoom. Breakout room feature allows us to meet one-on-one with students concerning academic standards or other non-academic concerns.

Utah Global students were able to make virtual phone or video appointments with us if they need more time than what is intended for drop-in advising.

We also developed additional video guides to assist new students who are participating in virtual classes before hopefully joining us in person this fall, or via a fully online schedule.



Jake McPartlin and Madeline Rencher

# IV. Campus-wide Advising Team

PreProfessional Advising Program | Education and Development | UAAC |  
Bridge Advising Program | Academic Standards | General Education

## Pre-COVID-19

The Campus Wide Advising Team's common project has been the coordination of advising support for the University of Utah's Asia Campus. In line with the AAC value of collaboration our team leaders rotate chairing a working group of advisors who support Asia Campus students in Korea and while they are in Salt Lake City. Our team coordinated a joint advising visit to the Asia Campus to train Asia Campus staff, provide direct advising and instruction to Asia Campus students, and familiarize themselves with conditions on the Asia Campus in order to better help students succeed in their academic and career goals. This trip was cancelled due to university travel restrictions and we are looking forward to resuming the trip when the virus has been overcome.

## Post-COVID-19

Academic Standards and Preprofessional Advising are looking at ways that students who are on the Dean's List and those applying to medical school can feel celebrated even under the conditions imposed by the pandemic. Alternative ways of connecting students to medical school interviewing opportunities and of recognizing the achievements of students who earn a 3.5 or higher are being considered. The pandemic has shown us that we can deliver high quality advising sessions one on one and also in small groups, so the next challenge will be to see whether we can also have recognition and celebratory events in a virtual manner. This illustrates the AAC value of assessment in our gathering of feedback from students about their experiences and hopes in order to shape our future programming.

## What We Learned

Advisor Education and Development and our Bridge Advisors are assuming an even more central place on our campus as we share our training expertise with our colleagues in the Asia Campus and to campus partners, including the Bennion Center and the Veterans Support Center, as they develop certificate programs. Having a robust set of expectations for advisors has helped us assist partners outside the advising community to both understand the skill sets advisors possess and to share those skill sets with those who may not be advisors per se, but whose one on one work with students necessitates more in-depth training than they can easily find elsewhere. This illustrates the AAC value of inclusivity; we are reaching outside of the advising community to hear the experiences of others who work with students and are adjusting our training accordingly.

# PreProfessional Advising (Health & Law)

## What We Did Pre-COVID-19

The PreProfessional Advising (PPA) team experienced many changes, challenges and successes during the Academic Year of 2019-2020. In spite of the challenges, the PPA team still held 2913 individual appointments and provided group presentations to over 1,600 students during this past year. We welcomed two new members, Joseph Witzke, a new advisor, and Ruby Pfeiffer, a new office assistant. They are great additions to our team.

Building 44, where our office is located, flooded over the Labor Day weekend forcing us to relocate to the Annex building. PPA collaborated with other departments and campus agencies, even under the difficult situation. We thrived and succeeded in meeting the needs of our students continuously. By moving to the Annex, we were able to reestablish our relationships with the Dream Center and the Women's Resource Center as they were located in the same building. Unfortunately, the new location did create challenges for student access as the Annex was difficult to find, far from central campus, and had very limited parking. To enhance our availability to students, we offered more phone appointments and walk-in advising at the Crocker Science Center and the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs. As a result, PPA team responded to 6742 quick questions in the 2019-2020 academic year.

The Annual Law School Fair in October was a success, with representatives from 108 schools from across the country, and approximately 250 students from Utah and Idaho. The Fair was followed by a Law School Admissions Panel where four Law School Admissions Deans answered students' questions about the admissions process.

We hosted the student-run annual PreMed/PrePA conference independently rather than cohosting with Utah Valley University, for the first time in many years. It was a great success due to the student volunteers on the committee with their strong leadership and hard work. Over 150 students from across Utah and Idaho participated in the conference. The theme for this year was Medical Humanities. Some of the topics include foreign medical care in Africa and Central America, Ethics & Medicine, and the admission processes. Students had opportunities to network with medical and physician assistant students as well as school representatives.

**2,913**  
**Appointments**  
By the PPA Team in 2019-20

In addition to the conference, we offered UGS 1020 (Intro to PreMed/PA) three times and UGS 1030 (Intro to PreDentistry) once during the academic year. Students provided positive feedback for both classes, and these classes remain two of the most popular courses for first-year students.

Finally, we returned to Building 44 in early March only to receive the news a week later about campus closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, we successfully transitioned to video and phone advising, and Shelley Nicholson, PPA Assistant Director, successfully transitioned UGS 1021 (Successful Application for Medical School) from in-person to online, teaching through Zoom and providing continuous support to her students online.

## How We Responded to COVID (Putting Values into Action)

While we were in the Annex building, we discussed implementing online video appointments to meet students' needs as the Annex was in a physically inaccessible location. Therefore, our team transitioned from in-person to video appointments more smoothly when COVID-19 happened. However, we faced unique challenges to meet the needs of students as they prepared for the application process for law and health professional schools. All of the standardized tests were canceled due to the closure of test sites, and the university's decision regarding relaxing the Credit/Non-Credit grading policy brought up many questions among students. They were also concerned about not having a competitive application because they had to stop extracurricular activities. In response, we quickly created the COVID-19 FAQ page on our website, which listed comprehensive information related to COVID-19 for health professional and law schools. We worked closely with Health Sciences programs and law schools and shared updated information with students and advisors across campus. Even after the spring semester ended, we have continued to reach out to students via newsletters, and have offered a number of virtual information sessions and workshops, which have drawn a record number of participants.



Top L to R: Amy Urbanek, Mayumi Kasai, Ruby Pfeiffer  
Bottom L to R: Shelley Nicholson, Joe Witzke, Heather Crum

## What We Learned

Throughout the challenges of two relocations and a pandemic, we remained flexible and continued to demonstrate resilience, staying positive and supporting one another in order to provide the highest possible level of services to students. Observing what our students are going through during the pandemic made us reevaluate what our roles are as advisors and how we can best serve our students' needs and promote their success.

Many of our students are facing a variety of unusually difficult challenges due to COVID-19. Therefore, our focus this coming year will be on meeting their unique needs, especially those of underserved students, by identifying and providing services they can utilize to overcome their challenges.

Table 1: PPA Annual Student Contacts

Academic Year	PreProfessional Health & Law				
	Individual Appointments		Group Presentations	Quick Helps	PPA Total Interactions
	HLTH	LAW	Total	Total	
2018-19	2,151	252	1,321	10,532	14,256
2019-20	1,972	247	1,674	8,416	12,309

# Education and Development

## Pre-COVID-19

Prior to his departure in October 2019, Sean Crouch built some introductory training modules for new advisors and developed a manual for his position outlining his core responsibilities. Since Sean's departure, much of the time for this program focussed on maintaining current services such as weekly in-service training and onboarding new advisors. Time was also spent on searching for a new Coordinator for Advisor Education and Professional Development.

The search for a new coordinator began in November 2019, but was slowed by a lack of applicants. Eventually, three offers were made, but all were declined primarily due to salary concerns. A new search began in February. As we were preparing to extend offers for interviews the COVID-19 pandemic created barriers. The University campus was closed, all classes shifted to an online format, and faculty/staff began working in remote locations. Under these circumstances we felt we were unable to conduct thorough and reliable search. As a result, we postponed the search. A short time later the University issued a hiring freeze and the position has remained open.

## COVID-19 Response

The Advisor Education and Professional Development program continued to provide essential training and development services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The onboarding of new advisors has been facilitated online through email and video conferencing. Weekly in-service training sessions for AAC and campus wide advisors have also been provided via video conferencing. Finally, with a reduction in other distractions a significant amount of time has been spent developing PeopleSoft training modules in Storyline. The following will discuss how these activities relate to the AAC core values.



**Inclusivity:** In response to current events related to the Black Lives Matter movement the Advisor Education and Professional Development program organized an in-service to discuss current events and resources that help advisors address bias and provide a more inclusive environment. Additionally, Storyline training modules are developed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind. All modules provide text, audio, and visuals and closed captioning.



**Excellence In Advising:** Continuing weekly in-services has allowed advisors to stay current with changing circumstances, learn new ideas and skills, and provided an opportunity to stay connected. Many of these in-service sessions will contribute to improved advising experiences for students during a time that advising is taking place via telephone, email, and video conferencing. Peoplesoft training modules will also contribute to excellence in advising as effective use of PeopleSoft allows advisors to be more thorough in their advising practice.



**Assessment:** All of the Storyline training modules that are being created incorporate an assessment component to measure the understanding of participants completing the modules.



**Professional Growth:** In-services, training modules, and on-boarding activities are all focused on the professional growth of advisors. Training options are provided for both new and continuing advisors.



**Collaboration:** Collaboration in advising has occurred through monthly campus-wide in-service training opportunities, as well as, new advisor onboarding activities. New advisor training sessions have been provided via Zoom and recorded for those unable to attend the live sessions.

## What We Learned

Despite some initial challenges involved with transitioning to working remotely, we found that working remotely was an effective way to build training modules in Storyline as distractions were more limited. We were able to dedicate large blocks of uninterrupted time to building modules resulting in more modules being completed.

Previous reasons for developing an online training program was to use time more efficiently and for convenience. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the ability to provide online training options is essential. Online training modules allow advisors to participate in training at any time and from any location. For example, a new advisor at the University of Utah Asia campus is able to participate in training despite time and location differences. Advisors that began their position during the pandemic have been able to participate in training rather than waiting until we return to campus.

Many of the administrative tasks of onboarding can be done effectively from a remote location (Submitting Security Access forms). Some face to face interaction can be accomplished through video conferencing technology such as Zoom. However, it has been more challenging to develop connections with advisors and staff in other departments across the University.

Finally, we have been able to continue a robust in-service program online. As with many things, some topics would probably be preferable in-person. However, online in-service sessions have been more accessible to advisors that may not be able to attend in person.

# UAAC

## University Academic Advising Community (UAAC) Mission

As educators and problem solvers, we advocate for students as they navigate their personal journey of higher education and attain their academic goals. Through inclusion and connection, we open doors to new opportunities for self-awareness and growth, empowering students to define their roles as citizens within local and global communities.

## Our Vision

By promoting the UAAC mission to the University of Utah community we will advocate for the profession of academic advising. We will become a stronger advising community through the collaboration of advising units, encouragement of advisor well-being, and inclusive ongoing professional development opportunities.

## Executive Committee

The UAAC Executive Board consists of the UAAC co-chairs, chairs of the UAAC Committees, the recorder (non-voting), and the Director of the Academic Advising Center (ex officio, votes only in the event of a tie). Monthly meetings are held to discuss full meeting agendas, committee structure and priorities, and issues of concern to the campus advising community.

Both co-chairs elected in late fall of 2018 left the university in 2019. Each time, an election was held to fill the unexpired term. The Executive Committee provided strong leadership for UAAC during the transition periods. Adoption of a leadership structure that includes co-chairs and an Executive Committee facilitated smooth transitions and a vibrant, inclusive advisor development and advocacy community.

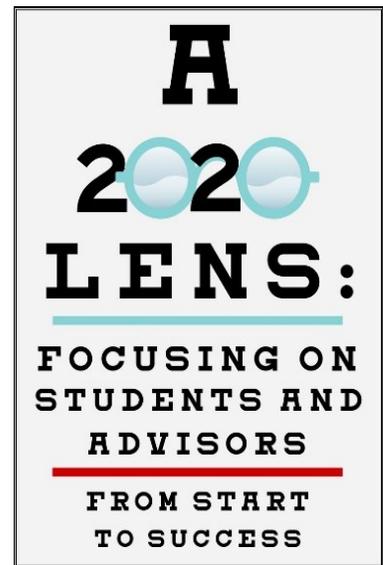
Our current UAAC co-chairs, Madalyn Smith (College of Social and Behavioral Sciences) and Denise Brenes (Division of Biology) have provided exceptional leadership. In adjusting to the virtual world necessitated by COVID, Madalyn and Denise have demonstrated great creativity and commitment to advising excellence. Our monthly meetings, now virtual rather than face-to-face, have had higher rather than lower attendance. Agendas have been modified to include campus partners, sometimes very quickly, to allow for timely dissemination of changes critical for effective advising.

## UAAC Programming

In addition to monthly meetings, UAAC has traditionally sponsored a monthly In-Service on a topic of interest to advisors irrespective of college or program. In-Services are designed to increase advisor knowledge of campus programs, advising theories, and advising practices. The Advisor Education and Professional Development team organizes the monthly UAAC In-Service, in addition to those designed for the AAC and Bridge advisors. The UAAC Annual Conference is highlighted on the next page.



UAAC Conference Committee



When the committee originally met to start planning this conference, we had no idea how accurately our theme and goals would align with the challenges we would face and overcome this year. When we were forced to move to remote operations, the last thing we wanted to do was cancel the conference. We needed each other's support, so the conference was moved to an entirely virtual format. Our advisors have been able to adapt and persevere through these challenges and continue to be resources for one another. Being able to weather this storm together and help build each other up is incredibly important so we can continue to do our jobs, which are such an integral part of students' success.

### Highlights

- AAC staff Tammy Mabey & Madeline Rencher served as Co-Chairs for the 2020 conference
- Conference planning committee was comprised of 9 members from 5 different colleges
- 7 out of the 12 conference presentations were either presented or co-presented by AAC staff
- Virtual conference had 151 attendees from all across campus
- New 'TEDx' style keynote with several speakers instead of just one
- The conference was featured as an @theU article

### Response to COVID-19

We learned a great deal from holding the conference in a virtual format. Participants were able to "attend" multiple sessions since all presentations were recorded and uploaded to Canvas- we will likely adopt this same strategy moving forward. We also discovered that including an interactive trivia game such as Kahoot is a great way to build community and a sense of fun.

"I thought this format was great! it allowed me the freedom and flexibility to attend in a way that I felt comfortable and I also know that the sessions that I wasn't able to attend was recorded'.

"PHENOMENAL job. I am so impressed with how organized this was and how well it worked! Congratulations and thank you so much - your work on this is so very appreciated'."

'Really amazing job, planning committee! It was so professional, well organized, and fun despite not being able to be together physically. Nicely done, and THANK YOU for all the hard work!'

# Bridge Advising

## Pre-COVID-19

This year Academic Advising Center welcomed Medical Laboratory Science (administered in the School of Medicine) to the Bridge Advising Program. Lauren Bustamante has made great strides in integrating Medical Laboratory Science into the undergraduate advising community. In addition, Jacklyn Chiu replaced Jo Jo Beyene as the College of Health's Bridge Advisor, and Tricia Cook replaced Ally Marringa in the College of Social and Behavioral Science. Each one of these advisors has been invaluable to that Academic Advising Center and our operations. In the spirit of collaboration, bridge advisors continue to serve on our internal AAC committees each year.

## Post-COVID-19

The training of Lauren Bustamante and Jacklyn Chiu was interrupted by the need to transition to remote operations. Shortly thereafter, April Vrtis-Curran was promoted to lead the College of Engineering's advising team, leading to the need to train her replacement, Emily Howsley, as Engineering's new bridge advisor. These trainings spurred the AAC to take a fresh look at our training protocols. One outcome of this situation has been the delivery of bridge advisor training online which means these sessions can be easily recorded and used in the future. The AAC value of assessment is illustrated by our practice of informally interviewing former bridge advisors on their experience during and after training.

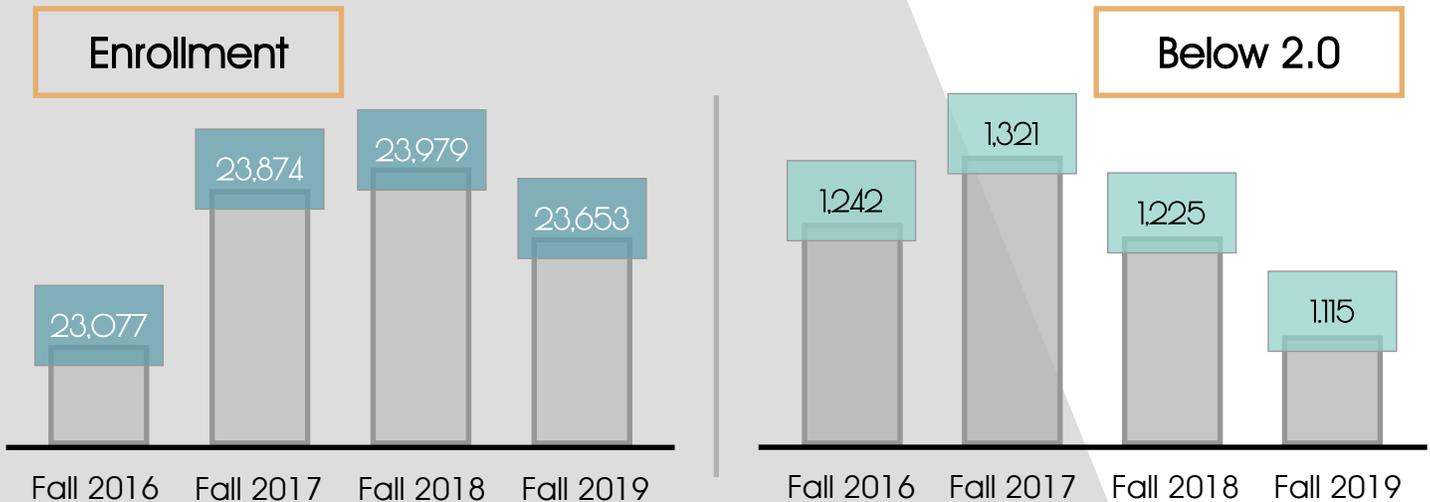
## What We Learned

Delivering training to bridge advisors online has benefits in that we can record the sessions for future use and more easily discern when a particular training component is resonating with new staff and when it ought to be replaced or updated. The social and less-tangible elements of our training and mentoring practice have weathered the COVID storm rather well as in line with the AAC value of inclusivity we were able to maintain vibrant mentoring relationships between newer and more seasoned bridge advisors. The close communication between bridge advisors and AAC Core advisors has been of heightened importance as we all seek to adapt our advising practices to better serve students in a virtual environment.

# Academic Standards

The Academic Standards program monitors and advises over 1,200 undergraduate students through collaborative academic interventions that focus on addressing the needs of our students and campus community.

Data Chart 1: Trends in Student Success Over 4 Years



In Data Chart 1, the frequency of students earning a GPA below 2.0 has decreased over the last the four years. During that time, the university has placed an emphasis in the importance in academic advising and has improved on hiring and training practices for advisors.

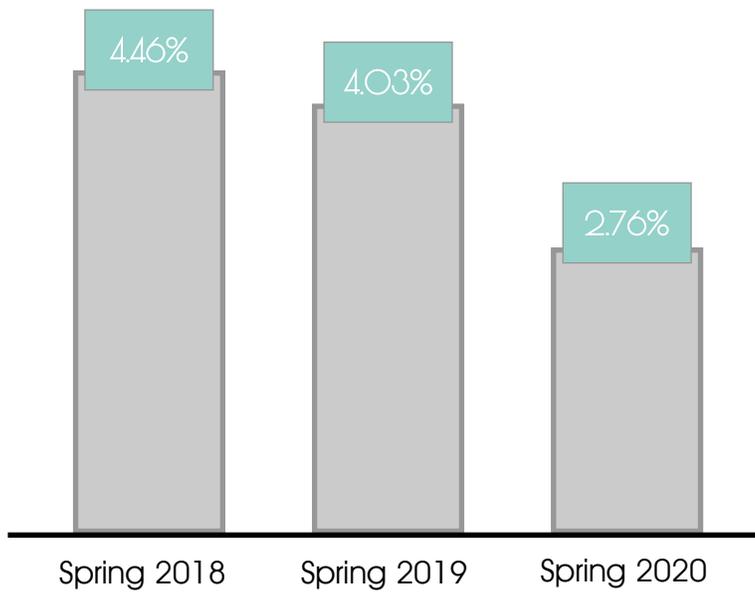
## Post-COVID-19



### Excellence in Advising: Student Advocacy and Outreach

Once the changes to academic policy were made in regards to credit/no credit (CR/NC) option and withdraw deadlines, the Academic Standards team reached out to over 250 undergraduates to remind them of the changes, how it impacts their current standing, how to connect with advising, and relevant campus resources that could be utilized remotely or online.

In addition, the Academic Advising Center benchmarked current policies regarding academic probation with institutions across the country through outreach to NACADA Probation, Dismissal, and Reinstatement (PDR) community. Through information about policy changes and practices used from other institutions and conversations with our university colleagues, we made temporary changes to the suspension and dismissal policies to prevent students to unfairly be suspended from the university during the beginning stages of the national pandemic. This involved intrusive advising by calling over 40 undergraduates and updating each record manually to allow the students to continue at the university.



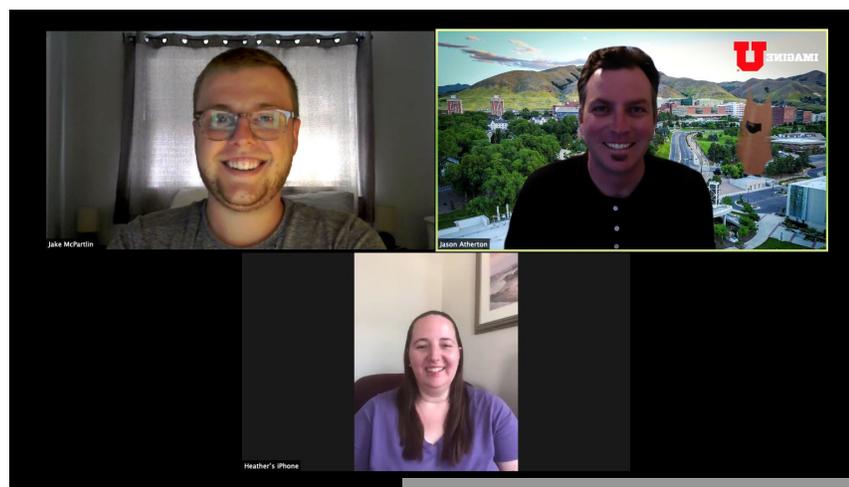
### Percentage Below 2.0

In Data Chart 2, the data represents how changes to our withdraw deadline and credit/no credit (CR/NC) policies dramatically impacted how many students fell below a 2.0 cumulative GPA during the Spring 2020 semester.



**Collaboration:** The Academic Standards team has been spending the past five years getting processes and procedures in student record management and communicating to undergraduates about their academic standards advising streamlined by using technology. This allowed us to pivot very effectively when COVID-19 impacted our work. For example, communicating to over 75 readmitted students on warning, probation, and suspension would not have been possible without our changes we made last year with OnBase and working with admissions in processing readmit applications and connecting students to academic advisors. This has really proven that we are utilizing best practices for the future of advising.

Our entire program involves documents that facilitate information and advising steps to navigate complex university policies which we transferred completely online and digitized. We distributed them across campus and published them on our updated website to make it easier to navigate our program remotely.



Jake McPartlin, Jason Atherton, and Heather Crum

# Highlight: General Education Exceptions Committee

## Highlights 2019-2020

AAC advisors (including bridge) explain the purpose and components of GE to new and continuing students in their advising appointments. The General Education Exceptions Committee considers requests by students to count transfer and U of U coursework towards their GE and Bachelor's degree requirements, and in addition to satisfying content criteria, mandates documentation of unique personal circumstances in the case of U of U courses being petitioned for credit. 411 courses were petitioned to the General Education Exceptions Committee from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Of the 411 that were submitted, 308 were approved. Both students and advisors benefit from the work of this committee—we help students graduate who have met the spirit of the General Education requirements but who have had exceptional educational circumstances.

411  
Gen Ed Courses  
petitioned in  
2019-20

308  
Gen Ed Exceptions  
approved in  
2019-20

## Post-COVID-19

The work of the committee proceeded electronically prior to COVID restrictions and so was relatively unaffected by the consequences of telecommuting.

# V. Epilogue

Change can be hard, and institutions of higher education are typically loath to making significant and rapid change. If COVID has taught us anything, it is that we must be ready to pivot and continually question our policies, procedures, and modes of operation. The second half of the academic year has given us the opportunity to question many of our working assumptions only to discover that some of them were faulty. It is essential (see [opinion piece](#) by David P. Haney, Inside Higher Ed, June 23, 2020) that we use what we have learned as we move forward.

## MYTH

Phone and video advising appointments are not as effective as in-person advising, and should only be used in situations where in-person is not possible.

## REALITY

We've found many scenarios in which remote advising is just as, if not more effective, than in-person advising. **Specifically:** Video appointments permit screen sharing. Students can navigate exploration tools, scheduling, and campus resources on their own equipment, with the guidance of an advisor. Eliminating the need to make a trip to campus makes advising more accessible for students with significant responsibilities outside of their studies. Students can engage family members or other supportive individuals can be included in the advising conversation, expanding the circle of support available to the student.

Staff working from home aren't as productive as when they are working from an office.

We've actually been more rather than less productive. Sick days utilized since moving to remote operations have declined sharply. Specifically, in the period from **April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019, 19 staff members took 463.75 Sick Hours.** In the same period this year, **8 people took 75.5 Sick Hours.** Staff can work remotely with symptoms that would have prevented them from safely coming to work. Project work often requires sustained attention, which can be a challenge in an office environment where there are frequent interruptions. Several advisors have reported completing projects in significantly less time than in the office. Several staff members have been given flexibility with standard hours in order to accommodate unexpected family responsibilities. This increases our accessibility, in that the advisors are able to meet with students outside of the typical 8-5 workday. This is especially welcomed by our working students, and those in different time zones.

# V. Epilogue (Con't.)

The final myth is that there is no real substitute for being face-to-face.

The reality is that yes, remote is different from in-person, but different is not a value judgement. There are the personal, relational elements of our jobs that all of us miss. We all look forward to being together again, without masks, and without concern for social distancing. Until that is possible, we will continue to look for ways to use what we've learned from necessity to improve, enhance, and expand our positive impact on student success.

## Reference:

In times of crisis, colleges should ask different questions than they do in a traditional strategic planning process (opinion), Submitted by David P. Haney on June 23, 2020; <https://www.insidehighered.com/print/views/2020/06/23/times-crisis-colleges-should-ask-different-questions-they-do-traditional-strategic>

## Impact

"I just wanted to thank you for all of your help with getting me back into school and the trust you showed in me. You very obviously believed that I could succeed at the U and that confidence helped me through this first semester. I was thrilled to see that you were right. I did get Dean's List for Spring. I actually had to laugh when I read that my current academic standing is "Dean's List after Suspension." If those aren't two opposite ends of the spectrum!"

Excerpt from a student email to an Academic Standards advisor

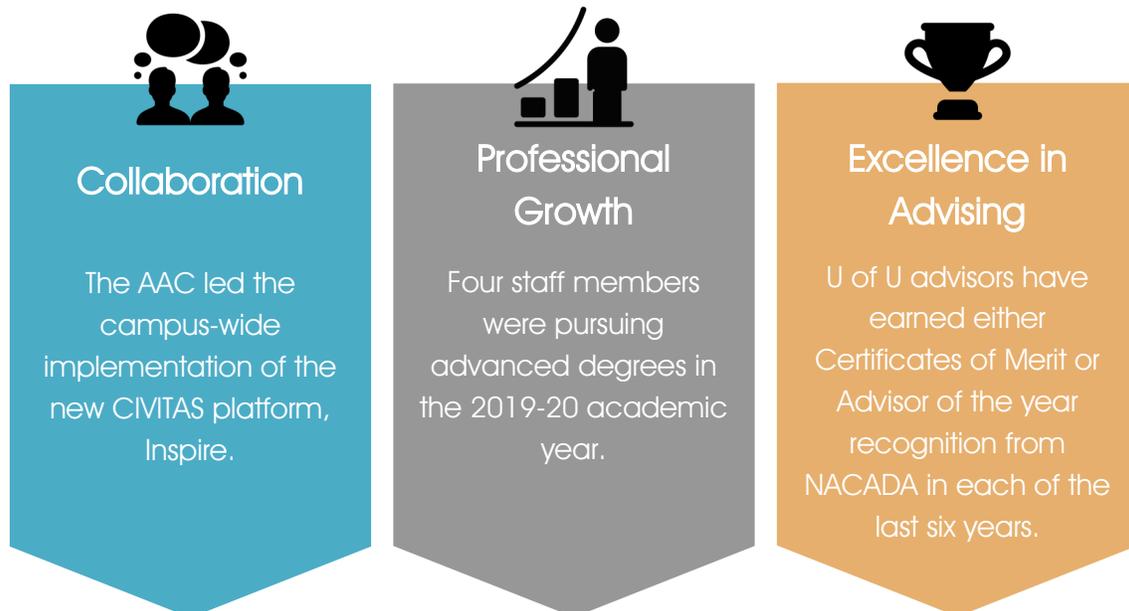
# VI. Appendices

## Activities and Achievements of AAC Staff | MAP Program Data | Organizational Chart

The staff of the Academic Advising Center are leaders in their respective fields. Their collective contributions to the university and surrounding community demonstrate their commitment to excellence in and outside of the work environment. A comprehensive list follows, but a few achievements are deserving of special recognition:

- Jason Atherton was awarded a Certificate of Merit by NACADA for Excellence in advising.
- Ashley Glenn is the chair of the NACADA Commission on Liberal Arts Advising Community
- Of the 40 advisors nominated for "Advisor of the Year", six were AAC Core advisors, ten were Bridge Advisors, and 3 were previously affiliated with the AAC .
- Of the 25 advisors nominated for "New Advisor of the Year", four were AAC core advisors, three were Bridge Advisors, and two were previously affiliated with the AAC. Madeline Rencher received the award.
- AAC and Bridge advisors serve the campus community on committees in all administrative divisions.

### Highlights: Putting Values into Action



# Appendix A:

## Activities/Achievements of AAC Staff

Our staff demonstrate their commitment to excellence in advising and associated activities on and beyond campus. The staff is encouraged to participate and present at national and regional conferences and to seek opportunities that demonstrate the merit of their work. All academic advisors are members of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and Utah Advising Association (UAA). Listed below are some of the activities pursued by AAC staff members outside of their traditional advising and office responsibilities.

### Membership in Professional Organizations

- National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)
- National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)
- National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP)
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- Western Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (WAAHP)
- Western Association of Prelaw Advisors (WAPLA)

### Collaborations

- Facilitating the Transfer Process: A collaborative learning events for advisors at the University of Utah and Salt Lake Community College. November 22, 2019.
- Sage: Graduate Faster. The American Dream Ideas Challenge. Mike Martineau, Jim Agutter, Amy Bergerson, Martha Bradley-Evans, Elizabeth Conder, Brandon Gresham, Beth Howard, Amanda May, Rachael Sheedy. 2019-20.

### Committees/Activities - Off Campus

- Admissions' Freshman Admitted Dinner—statewide
- AMES High School Orientation and Advising Partnership
- Autism Council of Utah
- NACADA Liberal Arts Advising Community — Chair, Ashley Glenn
- NACADA Region 10 Awards and Scholarships Committee — Steering Committee Member, Ashley Glenn
- Olene Walker Scholars Mentor
- Olene Walker Transition to Adult Living Scholarship Liaison
- Utah Advising Association Governing Board Member—Stephanie Begaye
- Utah Transfer Articulation Committee (UTAC)

### Committees/Activities - On Campus (excludes committees within AAC)

- Academic Senate—Ex-Officio
- Admissions – Application Appeals Committee
- Admissions' Ask Anything: Advising Representatives
- Beacon Award Selection Committee
- Behavioral Intervention Team
- Block U Academic Advisor
- Civitas Inspire Implementation Committee
- Dean of Student Conduct Appeals Committee
- Enrollment Council
- Global Leap Curriculum Planning Committee

- Integrated Student Team
- Learning Abroad Student Fee Committee
- Major Maps Project Management Board
- Mandatory Advising Program Committee
- Registrar - Exception to Policy Committee
- Student Affairs Appellate Committee
- Student Affairs Residency Appeals Committee
- UAAC Advisor Advocacy and Promotion Committee
- UAAC Assessment Committee: Marshal Beach & Jason Lyons
- UAAC Awards Committee
- UAAC Conference Co-Chairs: Tammy Mabey & Madeline Rencher
- UAAC Executive Committee
- UAC Salt Lake City Advisor Committee
- UGS Diversity Portfolio Team
- Undergraduate Council
- UStart/Gender Justice Scholars Program Advising
- USTART Program: Women's Resource Center

### Presentations—Invited/Selected

- 2020 NACADA Region 8 Conference: The Major Declaration Mindset: Using Planned Happenstance Theory to Reframe Conversations—Lisa Hutton
- 2020 NACADA Region 10 + 2020 Utah Advising Association Conferences: Seeing Majors Clearly: The Value of Exploration for the First-Year, Decided Student—Marshal Beach
- 2020 NACADA Region 10 Conference: The Major Declaration Mindset: Using Planned Happenstance Theory to Reframe Conversations—Lisa Hutton
- 2020 Utah Advising Association Conference: I Just Can't Decide! Examining the Relationship Between Academic Indecision and Dysfunctional Thinking—Marshal Beach
- A University for Utah: The Great Issues Forum 1952-1974, Utah Historical Quarterly Symposium
- Academically Advanced, Developmentally Ill-Equipped: Advising Exceptional Student in Decision Making Skills, 2019 NACADA Annual Conference
- Leading Advising Teams in the Next Normal. Leticia Wilson and Beth Howard (moderated by Nova Davidson and Halley Bralley). Civitas Virtual Leadership Summit Series, June 19, 2020.
- Liberal Arts Orientation in a Virtual World, NACADA Webinar
- Taking a lesson from our friends in medicine: Using the SPIKE Protocol to deliver bad news in Academic Advising, 2019 NACADA Annual Conference
- Turning the Utah Pledge into Action: A Holistic Approach to Improving Retention and Completion. Florida conference Amy Bergerson, Rachel Hayes-Harb, Marissa Deiner, and Beth Howard. National Student Success Conference, Tampa, FL, March 1-3, 2020.

### Presentations – On Campus

- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: Civitas: Best Practices. Presenter: Beth Howard
- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: Cleaning Up the Petitions Process. Presenters: Jake McPartlin and Registrar Staff.
- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: I Just Can't Decide! Examining the Relationship Between Academic Indecision and Dysfunctional Thinking. Presenter: Marshal Beach
- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: Seeing Majors Clearly: The Value of Exploration for the First-Year, Decided Student. Presenter: Marshal Beach

- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: The Dream Team: Focusing on Student Success While Reshaping Dreams. Presenters: Jason Atherton, Denise Brenes, Shelley Nicholson, Katie Bernard, Lisa Hutton, and Savannah Manwill.
- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: The Major Declaration Mindset: Using Planned Happenstance Theory to Reframe Conversations. Presenter: Lisa Hutton
- 2020 UAAC Virtual Conference: 'There's an App for That: Tech-Savvy Tips for Utilizing Social Media within Advising'. Presenter: Madeline Rencher
- Academic Standards Advising Training Basics and Advanced
- Admissions' Red, White, & U: Major Exploration at the U
- Advising Colloquium Facilitator: Equity and Inclusion. Reinvention Collaborative. University of California, Davis, October 14-16, 2019.
- Asian-American Student Association: Major Exploration at the U
- Bennion Center + new campus advisors: Major Exploration Program Training
- Customer Service and Student Success. Retreat for College of Nursing staff. October 29, 2019.
- Future Freshman Fridays — Major Exploration at the U
- Orientation: Major Exploration Group Zoom Sessions
- Orientation: Major Exploration Pre-Recorded Presentation
- TRIO/Upward Bound Saturday Workshop: Major Exploration at the U

### Conferences Attendance/Professional Development/Off-campus

- 2019 National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) Annual National Conference in Salt Lake City, UT
- Adobe Illustrator Online Tutorials
- APLU Annual Conference, San Diego, CA, November 9-11, 2019.
- NACADA Assessment Institute—New Orleans, LA
- NACADA Region 10 Mentoring Program participant
- National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Annual Conference - Louisville, KY
- National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) - Salt Lake City, UT
- National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP) National Conference - Virtual
- Pre-Law Advisors National Council (PLANEC) National Conference - Virtual
- Reinvention Collaborative. University of California, Davis, October 14-16, 2019. (session facilitator)

### Courses Facilitated by Academic Advising Center Staff at U of U

- UGS 1020: Intro to PreMed
- UGS 1021: Applying to Medical School (*new, Spring 2019*)
- UGS 1030: Intro to PreDental
- UGS 1050: Major Exploration

### Publications

- NACADA Book Chapter "LGBTQA Career Advising Vignette", co-authored by Ashley Glenn.

### Conferences Attendance/Professional Development/On-campus

- Annual Teaching Symposium
- CTLE Workshop: Death to the PowerPoint
- Facilitating the Transfer Process
- Management Essentials Certificate
- Registrar's Summit
- Strong Interest Inventory Certification—Allie McClaskey
- TESOL Non-Credit Certificate—In progress
- The College Completion Summit, University of Utah, September 30-October 1, 2019.
- UAAC Annual Conference

### Other Activities of Note

- New curriculum approved for Fall 2020: UGS 1550, Major and Career Exploration

### Staff Completing Degrees

- Tammy Mabey (Master of Gerontology)

### Staff Pursuing Degrees

- Erica Lampers (B.S. in Biology)
- Jake McPartlin (Instructional Design and Educational Technology M.Ed)
- Jason Lyons (Master of Public Policy)
- MacKenzie Ridley (Honors B.S. in Health, Society, & Policy; Minor in Spanish; Pre-Physician Assistant)
- Mayumi Kasai (Ed.D. in Education, Leadership & Policy)
- Sage Blackburn (B.S. in Political Science and B.S. in Criminology)

### 2019-20 UAAC Advisor of the Month

- Stephanie Begaye (January)
- April Vrtis-Curran (February)
- Justin Nistler (April)

### Awards Received in 2019-20

- The CPDC Career Champion Award—Madeline Rencher, Recipient
- 2019-2020 UAAC Outstanding New Academic Advisor of the Year
  - Madeline Rencher—Recipient
  - Allie McClaskey—Nominee
  - Cyri Dixon—Nominee
  - Jake McPartlin—Nominee
  - Joe Witzke—Nominee
- 2019-2020 UAAC Outstanding Experienced Academic Advisor of the Year
  - Amy Urbanek—Nominee
  - Andrew Grace—Nominee
  - Angie Gardiner—Nominee
  - Ashley Glenn—Nominee
  - Heather Crum—Nominee
  - Justin Nistler—Nominee
  - Karla Motta—Nominee
  - Lisa Hutton—Nominee
  - Michelle Tuitupou—Nominee
  - Shelley Nicholson—Nominee
  - Stephanie Begaye—Nominee
  - Tricia Cook—Nominee
- NACADA Outstanding Advising Awards, 2019
  - Jason Atherton—Experienced Advisor / Certificate of Merit Recipient
  - Katie Barnard—New Advisor / Award Winner

# Appendix B:

## Mandatory Advising Program Data

Table 1: MAP First Year Flow of Students

Year	Selected for Freshman Advising Fall Semester*	Received Early Advising and Priority Registration	Met with Advisor by 12/7	Registered for Spring by Friday of Finals Week	% Advised and Holds Removed by 1/9	Met with Advisor in AAC during Fall semester
2017	4,297	83%	92%	86%	94%	791
2018	4,427	82%	93%	90%	95%	722
2019	4,218	86%	93%	91%	95%	479

\*includes students who started summer and fall.

Table 2: MAP Second Year Flow of Students

Year	Selected for Second Year Advising	Number/% of students advised before hold placed in March	Number/% of students who received a registration hold	Number/% of students advised as of July	Met with AAC Advisor*
2017	3,723	1,508 (41%)	2,215 (59%)	3,297 (89%)	98
2018	3,880	1,498 (39%)	2,382 (61%)	3,412 (88%)	129
2019	3,970	1,505 (38%)	2,464 (62%)	**	61

\* This number is appropriate given we want students to make a connection with their DEPARTMENTAL advisor. AAC saw those who were Undecided.

\*\* Due to COVID-19, all holds were removed on April 9, 2020, so we do not have this number.

Table 3: 60 Credit Undeclared Student Advising Program Statistics

Year	Received Notification Email (November)	Received Registration Hold (February)	% Notified That Actually Received Hold	Holds Removed (July)	% Holds Removed (July)
2017/2018	223	164	74%	127	77%
2018/2019	280	163	58%	124	76%
2019/2020	240	168	62%	*	*

\* Due to COVID-19, all holds were removed on April 9, 2020, so we do not have this number.

# Appendix C:

# AAC Organizational Chart—June 30, 2020

