

*Editorial: Innovation for Transformation*

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**Editorial Team**

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Advising interactions are among the most important experiences that support students in higher education settings. In a recent What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) practice guide for educators, effective advising practices were synthesized based on input from a panel of experts (Karp et al., 2021). The practice guide included 21 studies meeting the WWC standards and highlighted four recommendations including:

1. Intentionally design and deliver comprehensive, integrated advising that incorporates academic and non-academic supports to empower students to reach their educational goals.
2. Transform advising to focus on the development of sustained, personalized relationships with individual students throughout their college career.
3. Use mentoring and coaching to enhance comprehensive, integrated advising in ways that support students' achievement and progression.
4. Embed positive incentives in intentionally designed advising structures to encourage student participation and continued engagement. (p.4)

When elaborating on the advising model that may transform advising relationships with students (recommendation 2), the authors specified Appreciative Advising (Bloom et al., 2008) as one common framework used by academic advisors. Indeed, since its initiation in advising practices, Appreciative Advising has grown from an emerging approach to a well-established strengths-based framework that has been applied broadly in educational settings (e.g., Bloom et al., 2013; Bloom et al., 2016; Bloom et al., 2021; He et al., 2016).

Instead of focusing on the fidelity of the application of the framework in a fixed and predetermined manner, the Appreciative Advising framework embraces innovations and adaptations. In this special issue, we highlight a few of such innovations in a variety of higher education contexts.

Several authors in this issue shared how they applied the framework in their advising and instructional practices when facing challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Welleford et al. (2021), for example, described the development of an online course that bridges the classroom and community to meet the needs of learners. Forche et al. (2021) shared their perspectives and experiences as advisors and how they leveraged digital tools to extend caring for students and colleagues in the online environment. Ford et al. (2021) reflected on their experiences as faculty advisors and explored strategies to not only support students, but also prioritize advisor self-care and advocate for student learning and development. In addition, Beorchia (2021) emphasized the engagement of people rather than the focus on process through the application of the framework when facing challenges during the pandemic.

Authors featured in this special issue also shared how the framework can be applied at the organizational level to inform strengths-based decision making and transform institutional practices. Dial and his colleagues (2021) moved beyond introducing advisors to the

framework to integrate the framework in the advisor onboarding process and through ongoing advisor professional development. Buyarski (2021) detailed the application of appreciative inquiry, appreciative advising, and design thinking to enhance communications with students at the institutional level. Nelson et al. (2021) shared steps the team at the Office of Appreciative Education took to leverage resources and negotiate challenges as they shifted the in-person appreciative advising institute to an online platform. Building upon the principles of appreciative administration, Proctor (2021) explored how higher education administrators can apply the framework in their decision making.

Although these recent innovations may not have accompanied empirical evidence that reflect the WWC standards yet, they exemplify the potential impact of the framework beyond the development of relationships with students. The authors' collective narratives also expand the connections between the framework and other models such as design thinking (Buyarski, 2021) and a variety of digital tools in the online space (e.g., Forche et al., 2021; Nelson et al., 2021; Welleford et al., 2021). Following the core activities in design thinking (Brown, 2008), we also hope that articles in this special issue may trigger further inspiration, ideation, and implementation that can in turn contribute to the expanding scholarship on strengths-based innovations that may lead to transformative actions in higher education.

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