Presentation Proposal Tutorial

Abstract vs. Proposal - What is the Difference?

- The Abstract will appear in the conference program and is meant to attract attendees to your session.
- The Proposal is your outline, or description, of your session that the proposal readers use to evaluate your session for inclusion in the conference schedule. Your proposal is never seen by conference attendees.

Evaluation Criteria Used by Reviewers

Your proposal will be evaluated by fellow ILACADA members, readers with expertise in academic advising, and members of the conference planning committee using these four standards:

1. Clearly stated purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes.
2. Timeliness of the subject matter.
3. Topic's contribution to the advancement of the field of advising.
4. Creativity in an approach to a situation or in ways to manage it.

Three Characteristics of Effective Proposals

1. A solid foundation for proposal content (a framework of the program should be evident based on data indicating success of a program or strategy discussed). Proposals should reflect the diversity of students and advising programs when possible.
2. Adherence to proposal submission guidelines. It is important to include all information requested in the program proposal guidelines and adhere to length restrictions where indicated.
3. Reflective of good writing practices. Well-written proposals are rated more favorably than those lacking clarity, specificity, and conciseness. A logical program organization should be evident. Proofreading your proposal before submitting is essential.

Guidelines for Writing the Proposal

Reviewers rely on an in-depth, well-written description to enhance their understanding of the content and goals of the presentation. A complete description includes background information, an overview of the presentation, and a description of the format. If the program is reporting research, a description of methods, findings, and recommendations may be appropriate - an emphasis on research results and collected data is highly desirable. The program description should also include learning outcomes, the relationship of the program to the conference theme, methods of audience involvement (i.e., engaging in

discussion, sharing effective practices, analyzing a case study), and the familiarity and background of the presenters with the subject matter of the program.

If appropriate, an effective proposal description:

- Mentions relevant theories and research.
- Includes an outline of the presentation.
- Describes intended learning outcomes for participants.

Examples of Well-Written Proposals

Why Do I Have to Take This Class??!

Historically, students often attended liberal arts colleges for the love of learning, the hope of self-discernment, and the broadening of intellectual thought. Schools established their mission and goals around these concepts promising to expose students to a breadth and depth of knowledge within disciplines and the processes of higher order thinking. Today the majority of students attend our schools with the primary purpose of completing a degree in order to obtain a better job. The shifting viewpoint of students seeing higher education as a means to an end versus the traditional journey of life-long learning has resulted in a loss of connection between students and institutions mission and goals. Often the larger context of the institution's purpose and reason for existence is not present in the students understanding or if so, not rated as important in their educational choices.

When the student embarks on the educational experience itself, it can be seen as disjointed and fragmented. The general education programs that are seen as central to the curriculum in delivering the "breadth of education" so important to liberal arts institutions, are often viewed by students as strange requirements to get out of the way before they begin their "real learning" within their chosen major. The co-curricular program is another aspect that can appear to have little overall coherence or more importantly, relevance to their chosen degree.

Therefore, what often results are fragments of knowledge that orbit around the student experience with little relationship to one another, their major, or their overall education plan.

In an effort to better integrate the institution's mission, Institutional Goals for Graduates (IGG), degree plans, and cocurricular involvement; the division of Student Life and Learning began to research educational planning documents and tools used at other institutions. During the review we found many fine examples connecting the curricular and cocurricular, but they did not address institutional mission and goals which was one of our priorities. Building upon what was learned during the research process, the institution began designing an academic advising tool called the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) that would help students think about and understand how our mission and goals provide a basis for and interact with their overall educational experience as a student.

The CEP helps map ways in which the institutional goals for graduates can be attained by providing a framework for identifying places and circumstances in which those learning opportunities are present in academic, social, and institutional activities. The CEP provides a concrete way to explain how the school's mission and goals are connected to a student's individual degree plan as well as co-curricular activities, and offers clarification as to the purpose of general education classes.

This presentation will explain the developmental process of the CEP, the pilot project with the freshmen class, its integration into the First Year Experience program, and the ongoing assessment as the project evolves and matures. Current challenges and next steps will also be addressed as well as how the CEP was used in the Institutional Quality Enhancement Plan for our accreditation process under SACS.

Advising as Teaching and Learning: Best Practices, Tools, and Tips

Effective advising practices are interactive, lead to student learning, and result in better advising relationships. Creating and maintaining these effective relationships requires certain actions on the advisor's part: preparation for onset of an advising relationship, building rapport, communicating clearly, identifying realistic goals, and demonstrating a connection between academic coursework, academic experiences and real life.

Improve your advising relationships by utilizing tools, tips, and best practices adapted from various institutions around the world. Participants will learn about advising as teaching and learning and take home tools to adapt for their own diverse needs. Examples include:

- thank you and welcome letters
- academic difficulty analysis form
- advising syllabus
- cultural profile
- learning style inventory
- early academic alert
- self-evaluation tool for students

Attendees will leave the session with a CD of tips, tools, and best practices to be adapted for use at their own institution. This presentation is appropriate for advisors and administrators from both 2 and 4 year colleges.

The Role of Trust in Advising Administration and Leadership

The purpose of this presentation is to explore, through discussion, reflection, and activities, the importance of and means of acquiring and maintaining trust in the process of leading and administration of advising.

As a result of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Define trust and identify the necessary components of both individual and organizational trust

2. Understand the reciprocal nature of trusting relationship
3. Identify and respond to the barriers they experience in relation to trusting others within the realm of administrative leadership
4. Discuss the benefits of trust and consequences of lack of trust within organizations
5. Be better able to develop a strategy for improving trust within their workplace

The presentation outline is as follows:

1. Initial discussion wherein participants are invited to explore and discuss who they trust most from a list of options.
2. Participants will then be asked to reflect individually and in groups on what it is about themselves and other that causes them to trust or not trust another person and will attempt to define trust.
3. The presenter will provide a definition of trust and an overview of research based and theoretical models of individual trust and organizational trust. Participants will be invited to reflect on the distinctions between their own reflections and discussions and these models.
4. Discussion will then shift to the application of this research to the process of advising leadership. The presenter will provide research based suggestions from the trust literature on how to build and maintain trust, as well as what to do when trust is lost.
5. Participants and the presenter will discuss specific techniques and strategies for building trust based on the literature.

Helping High-Achieving Students Develop Parallel Plans

Talented students often set high professional goals for themselves, but what happens when competition or a change in their interests pushes them away from those goals? Stress and confusion can make the adjustment to a new direction very painful. Academic advisors help diffuse such stress by encouraging students to make parallel plans, alternatives with emotional and career satisfaction equal to students' original goals. This panel of advisors from diverse institutional settings will address parallel planning strategies for use with pre-health students, minority students, those dealing with student development issues, and others. We will invite audience members to share their own success stories of assisting these competitive, high-achieving students.

Guidelines for Writing the Title and Abstract

The abstract and title are the portions of your submission that are printed in the conference program. Attendees will read these to decide which session to attend; therefore please accurately describe what attendees can expect at your session. Both should be considered thoughtfully, written concisely, and thoroughly proofread before submitting.

Writing an Effective Title

The program title is your first opportunity to invite the reader to your program. An effective title encourages the reader to review the abstract; a poorly written title can cause the reader to dismiss the proposal.

At a minimum, an effective title:

- Introduces the subject matter.
- Captures the interest of the reader.
- Does not become a run-on sentence (keep it brief).

If appropriate, an effective title:

- Identifies the scope, sequence and/or level of the program content.
- Identifies specific group presenting.
- Identifies potential target audience.

Examples of Well-Written Program Titles

Why Do I Have to Take This Class??!

Advising as Teaching and Learning: Best Practices, Tools, and Tips

Applying the Glue that Holds Us Together: Building Trust Through Effective Advising Administration and Leadership

Helping High-Achieving Students Develop Parallel Plans

Writing an Effective Abstract

The abstract is a brief description of your presentation that provides the reader with an accurate picture of what the presentation will cover. The abstract helps conference attendees choose between different concurrent sessions. Well-written abstracts identify the purpose and intent of the program, are concise, organized, and specific. Additionally, effective abstracts begin with the most important information or thought. Defining unfamiliar abbreviations and acronyms is helpful to the reader.

At a minimum, an effective abstract:

- Captures the attention of the reader.
- Adheres to the abstract submission guidelines.
- Previews the content and what the attendee can learn.
- Identifies the manner of audience involvement.
- Clarifies the contribution of the topic to the field.
- Alludes to the benefits of the program content.

If appropriate, an effective abstract:

- Summarizes the content and activities of the presentation.
- Distinguishes the program format (e.g., group discussion).
- Clarifies special programs that may not be familiar to ILACADA members.
- Designates the scope, sequence and/or level of the program content.
- Names the potential target audiences.

Examples of Well-Written Abstracts

Why Do I Have to Take This Class??!

Do students ask you why they have to take general education classes? Do they wonder why they have to take art when they are a business major? Do they understand the mission of your school or why it is important? In our quest for a better way to answer these questions, we developed the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). This academic advising tool provides a concrete way to explain how the school's mission and goals are connected to individual degree plans and co-curricular activities. This presentation will explain the development of the CEP, its integration into the First Year Experience, and assessment measures. Current challenges will be addressed as well as how the CEP was used in TLU's Institutional Quality Enhancement Plan for the accreditation process under SACS.

Advising as Teaching and Learning: Best Practices, Tools, and Tips

Effective advising practices are interactive, lead to student learning, and result in better advising relationships. Creating and maintaining these effective relationships requires certain actions on the advisor's part: preparation for onset of an advising relationship, building rapport, communicating clearly, identifying realistic goals, and demonstrating a connection between academic coursework, academic experiences and real life.

Improve your advising relationships by utilizing tools, tips, and best practices adapted from various institutions. You will learn about advising as teaching and learning and gain tools to adapt for your own diverse needs. Examples include: 1) academic difficulty analysis form; 2) advising syllabus; 3) cultural profile; 4) learning style inventory; 5) early academic alert; and 6) self-evaluation tool for students.

This presentation is appropriate for advisors and administrators from both two- and four-year colleges but particularly those new to advising.

Applying the Glue that Holds Us Together: Building Trust through Effective Advising Administration and Leadership

Trust is the glue that holds an organization together and the most important means whereby organizational efficiency and effectiveness are obtained. Regardless of strategic planning, assessment, and other administrative skills, if a leader and a department do not experience trusting relationships both internally and externally, effectiveness is lost. To that end, this presentation will invite you to explore your own understanding of trust, its outcomes and importance, and its development and maintenance within the advising

administration process. This will be accomplished through personal reflection, group discussion, the presentation of research and theory related to trust and leadership, and active participation. Come and explore with us the glue that holds us together.

Helping High-Achieving Students Develop Parallel Plans

Even academic rock stars get the blues! Talented students often set highly competitive goals for themselves. What happens when competition or a change in interests pushes them away from those goals?

They may become confused because the one focus of their future lives has been snatched away. Advisors can assist such students by encouraging them to make parallel plans, alternatives with emotional satisfaction equal to their original goals. In this discussion, advisors from diverse institutional settings will address parallel planning with high-achievers and offer strategies for showing them that an alternative does not have to be a compromise. We hope audience members will share their experiences with students who took a bend in the road and were happier for it. Join us for a lively exchange!