



# **Advising Through the Ages: Past, Present, and Future**

**2024 USC-System Advisors'  
Educational Conference**

***Sponsored by the Office of  
the Provost-USC Columbia***

University of South Carolina Columbia  
1970 student registration  
Carolina Coliseum

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# Schedule

9:05–9:15 a.m.

## Welcome

**Ballroom** - Sara McConville, Coordinator for Advisor Training and Outreach, University Advising Center

9:20–10:20 a.m.

## Keynote Address | Dr. Laurie Schreiner

**Ballroom** – Thriving on the Front Lines

10:30–11:25 a.m.

## Concurrent I

**Room 203** – Behind the Scenes of Academic Intervention: Setting the Stage for Student Support

**Room 205** – Culture, Language, Inclusion: Bringing Underrepresented Students into the Conversation

**Room 303** – Mission & Values in Action: Developing Learning Outcomes for 4-Year Academic Advising

**Room 305** – Academic Advising as Student Space-Making: Lessons from Makerspaces

**Room 315** – Supporting Students in the Middle Years: The Sophomore and Junior Experiences at USC

**Theatre** – The Advisor Dream Team: Why Advisor Collaboration is Important and How to Achieve It

11:30–12:25 p.m.

## Concurrent II

**Room 203** – TRIO Programs: Tried-and-True

**Room 205** – In my Accountability Era

**Room 303** – Maximizing Advising Efficiency Using DegreeWorks Plans

**Room 305** – Mental Health and Advising: Building Resilience through Support and Understanding

**Room 315** – Cultivating a Positive Perspective through Academic Advising

**Room 302** – Navigating the Third Space: The Integral Role of Academic Advisors in Higher Education

**Theatre** – Strengths-Based Approaches to Advising

12:30–1:25 p.m.

## Lunch & Networking

1:30–2:25 p.m.

## Plenary Address | Dr. Shelley Dempsey

**Ballroom** – Use your “Imperfections” to Help Others through Prosocial Behavior

2:30–3:00 p.m.

## USC Awards, Raffle & Closing

**Ballroom:** Join us as we celebrate our 2023 USC Institutional Academic Advising Award Winners and conclude with the conference raffle.

# Welcome

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**Ballroom**

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## Welcome

to the eleventh annual USC-System Advisors' Educational Conference! We are excited to welcome over 200 academic advisors and university colleagues from across all of USC's two- and four-year campuses. The theme this year is *"Advising Through the Ages: Past, Present and Future."*

The 2024 USC-System Advisors' Educational Conference seeks to explore the evolution of academic advising at USC and nationally. Over the last decade, Academic Advising has evolved in significant ways. Shifting from faculty advising to professional staff advising, hand-off advising to four-year advising, prescriptive advising to holistic advising, academic recovery to academic intervention, paper check-sheets to online degree audits, in-person advising to virtual/hybrid advising, advisor caseloads of 700:1 to 300:1, implementing advisor career ladders, and much more.

As our profession continues to evolve, we find ourselves asking questions like, "How do we celebrate and share our success stories?", "How can we prioritize what is most needed moving forward?" and, "How can we set advisors up for success so they can set their students up for success?" We hope this conference will provide a space for you to ask and answer these and other questions as you engage with your colleagues today.



**Sara McConville,**  
*Coordinator for Advisor Training and Outreach  
University Advising Center | Columbia*

# Keynote Address

Ballroom

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## Thriving on the Front Lines

Join us for the opportunity,

to hear from Dr. Laurie Schreiner, a professor of Higher Education at Azusa Pacific University. Dr. Schreiner holds a PhD in Community Psychology from The University of Tennessee and is currently a Professor of Higher Education at Azusa Pacific University in southern California. An award-winning teacher and researcher, her most recent work on college student thriving has studied over 150,000 students from 285 universities across the U.S., Canada, and Australia and has led to over 50 publications, as well as the edited book entitled *Thriving in Transitions: A Research-Based Approach to Student Success*. Schreiner is author of the Thriving Quotient, an instrument designed to assess the malleable intellectual, interpersonal, and psychological qualities associated with student success in college.

In addition to her research on thriving college students, Dr. Schreiner has contributed to the NACADA book *Academic Advising Approaches* (Drake et al., 2013) and has co-authored numerous instruments and publications, including *The Student Satisfaction Inventory*, as well as books on sophomore success and articles on strengths-based advising. She has consulted with over 150 colleges and universities on issues of student success and thriving, academic advising, the sophomore-year experience, strengths-based education, retention, student satisfaction, and effective teaching strategies.

Advisors are on the front lines as students experience frustrations, disappointments, and challenges, often bearing the brunt of those negative emotions. Yet being on the front lines also means witnessing first hand when students are meeting their goals and realizing their dreams. In this keynote address, Dr. Schreiner will share research on how advisors can thrive in their role and how educators can create environments for students and advisors to thrive.



**Dr. Laurie Schreiner**  
*Professor of Higher Education*  
*Azusa Pacific University*

# CONCURRENT Session I

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Room 203

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## **Behind the Scenes of Academic Intervention: Setting the Stage for Student Support**

When a student is struggling, how do we connect them to support? This is a central question to effective academic advising, and the options to answer it have grown over the years as colleges expand their services. Early alert and academic intervention programs provide a way for staff to proactively intervene with at-risk students and encourage their success. At USC-Columbia, the University Advising Center and Student Success Center have developed a partnership to facilitate effective intervention. These offices work together (and with others) to create systems for identifying students in need of support, alert relevant staff, and facilitate effective referrals. This session will provide insight into how the process of coordinating academic intervention at USC-Columbia works, including what alerts are used, what they mean, and how multiple offices (and advisors!) collaborate for effective referrals. Participants will gain a better understanding of how offices at USC collaborate on academic intervention and how their essential role fits into the larger support network for students.



**Alyssa Stephens**

*Assistant Director of Undergraduate Advising & Academic Intervention  
University Advising Center - Columbia*



**Rebecca Keilty**

*Early Alert Case Manager  
Student Success Center - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT Session I

Room 205

## **Culture, Language, Inclusion: Bringing Underrepresented Students into the Conversation**

Speaking from a variety of perspectives, we will discuss the particular challenges faced by ESL, first-generation, and neurodivergent students. What these students have in common are difficulties with communication and with understanding social cues and codes. They need ways into academic culture, but they also need ways to live in that culture without erasing their own various cultures and communicative styles.

We will discuss these populations' experiences with advising and present strategies to bring them in to a fuller, more inclusive, more compassionate experience of university life. The panelists will speak from their experiences as students, faculty, and professional advisors. Several panelists also speak from their experience as neurodivergent.



**Shannon Blake-Lynch**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor I*  
*College of Information and Communications - Columbia*



**Hayes Hampton**  
*Professor of English and Coordinator of Advisement*  
*Arts and Letters - Sumter*



**Carolina Hoppmann**  
*Sophomore Art Studio Major - Sumter*



**Savannah Williams**  
*Coordinator of Veteran Affairs and Disability Services*  
*Assistant to Records and Advisement*  
*Records and Registration - Sumter*

# CONCURRENT Session I

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Room 303

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## **Mission and Values in Action: Developing Learning Outcomes for 4-Year Advising**

Through this interactive session we will examine how to breathe life into the mission and values that drive successful and intentional academic advising. The College of Engineering and Computing is in the midst of their third year of advising from orientation-graduation. We will share with attendees how to evaluate mission and values amongst a variety of University missions, develop their motto/creed and get started with developing learning outcomes for advisees. Participants are encouraged to attend with co-workers from the same area.



**Sarah Jusiewicz**  
*Director of Advising  
College of Engineering and Computing - Columbia*



**Allison Brillhart**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor II  
College of Engineering and Computing - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT Session I

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Room 305

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## **Academic Advising as Student Space-Making: Lessons of Makerspaces**

What would you say to a first-year student from a small town who suddenly finds themselves on a large college campus and appears concerned about their choice? The response to this inquiry functions not only as a potential reply to an interview question but also as a thoughtful departure for theorizing how students have an active role in creating the spaces they inhabit while at university.

In the past, advising was once highly prescriptive; in the present, advising has become more descriptive; and in the future, we are hoping for advising to be transformative. In 2024 at USC, we are ready and willing to think anew about the ideas that lend themselves to positive transformations in 4-year advising. This discussion, thus, juxtaposes student development theory (Astin, Schlossberg, Baxter Magolda & King) and the constructivist literacies of makerspaces (Beck, 2020) to provide one way of naming, illustrating, and fostering undergraduate student activity leading to program success.

Eschewing the primacy of an advisor's lens, this work privileges a student's perspective and posits that advising is itself a material, a resource, an entity that is (not) manipulated strategically by the student. Much like the tangible objects of makerspaces, the advising relationship and its concomitant entities (e.g. appointments, communications) may be viewed as yet further items available for undergraduates' tinkering. As the discourse of advising at USC leans toward personal responsibility and ownership of the educational experience, student space-making may fruitfully address efforts for retention, progression, and intervention strategies in advising.



**Kerry Armbruster**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor I  
Arnold School of Public Health - Columbia*



# CONCURRENT Session I

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Room 315

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## **Supporting Students in the Middle Years: The Sophomore and Junior Experiences at USC**

The Student Success Center has been conducting qualitative and quantitative assessments of the sophomore and junior student populations on the USC campus for many years. What are the common experiences of students in the middle years of college? What are the biggest challenges they face and what do they most look forward to? How does this align with the national research on these populations? And most importantly- how can this information be used to support their academic advising experience? Join us for this session to learn more about these assessment findings and how they can be applied to help in an advising setting! We will also go into details on the assessment findings and what specialized resources are already in place at USC to support these populations across several programs. Finally, we will wrap up this session with group discussion on how advisors can incorporate this new knowledge into their work with students as USC phases in a complete 4-year advising model.



**Kimberly Dressler,**  
*Coordinator of Academic Engagement  
Student Success Center - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT Session I

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Theatre

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## **The Advisor Dream Team: Why Advisor Collaboration is Important and How to Achieve It**

Students have long pursued dual degrees, pre-professional pathways, and other certifications of merit such as GLD and the Honors College. However, today's higher education and professional landscapes incentivize students to take on more programs than ever. Now more than ever, effective communication between advisors is central to addressing the diverse needs of students, ensuring continuity in guidance, and optimizing resource allocation. Over the course of the presentation, we will examine the critical importance of advisors transcending departmental boundaries to create a cohesive support network for students. Using our experience collaborating as a major advisor and an Honors advisor, we will briefly review the evolution of advisor roles at USC, share best practices for forming and fostering advisor "dream teams," and provide ample time to brainstorm and discuss ways to improve and expand this initiative. Finally, our presentation will touch on how this endeavor incorporates technology, supports job satisfaction, and advisor wellness.



**Cami Reid**  
*Academic Advisor and Student Engagement Coordinator  
South Carolina Honors College - Columbia*



**Cam Fowler**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor I  
Neuroscience - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT Session II

Room 203

## TRIO Programs: Tried-and-True

TRIO Programs have played a crucial role in empowering individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds by providing them with the necessary resources and support to pursue higher education and achieve their career goals. One of eight federally grant-funded TRIO programs and nationally known as TRIO Student Support Services (SSS), the TRIO Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) at the University of South Carolina (USC) has a rich history of advising and advocating for first-generation and Pell-eligible students throughout their collegiate journey. Services for scholars include:

- T-section course advisement
- Tutoring
- Cultural events
- Peer and alum mentoring
- Education abroad opportunities
- Career and employability preparation
- Integrative and experiential learning opportunities

TRIO programs emerged from the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as a response to the War on Poverty. Since 1968, and through holistic support and advising, TRIO OSP alums have become state representatives, attorneys, therapists, engineers, teachers, accountants, media executives, tenure track professors, deans, and change agents as TRIO professionals. Through our comprehensive approach, TRIO OSP alums have transformed their lives and made significant contributions to society by breaking the cycle of poverty and opening doors of opportunity for future generations. Their success stories testify to the effectiveness of TRIO programs in promoting social mobility and creating a more equitable society. The impact of TRIO programs cannot be overstated. #trioworks



**Patrick Wilson**

*Opportunity Scholars Program Advisor and Retention Specialist  
TRIO Programs - Columbia*



**Paulia Williams**

*Gamecock Guarantee Coordinator  
TRIO Programs - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT

## Session II

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**Room 205**

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### **In my Accountability Era**

What can we learn about student accountability in four-year academic advising through the lens of Taylor Swift's music career? As advisors, we have the ability to cultivate a culture of student accountability in our advising practices to empower students to engage in responsible decision-making surrounding their academic and professional goals. This facilitated discussion aims to cover the importance of student accountability in advising, guidance on how to incorporate accountability messaging, and identify the variety of ways we can encourage students to utilize advising and university support resources by breaking down the four-year student experience into ten different "eras" of their academic careers.



**Kate Snelson**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor I*  
*College of Engineering and Computing - Columbia*



**Sam McMillion**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor III*  
*College of Engineering and Computing - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT Session II

Room 303

## Maximizing Advising Efficiency Using DegreeWorks Plans

This session aims to shed light on the pivotal role of using DegreeWorks Plans in guiding college students toward academic success and holistic personal development. As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve, the need for a strategic and individualized approach to advising has become increasingly evident. This presentation will delve into the multifaceted benefits of utilizing DegreeWorks Plans, emphasizing the positive impact on student retention, timely degree completion, and overall satisfaction with the collegiate experience.

The session will explore practical strategies for advisors to collaboratively construct tailored plans with students, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement in their educational journey. By examining case studies and success stories from the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management, attendees will gain insights into the effective integration of DegreeWorks Plan within existing advising technology frameworks. The presentation will also showcase innovative tools that enhance communication and streamline planning for both advisors and students. Ultimately, this proposal contends that the adoption of DegreeWorks Plan represents a proactive shift in academic advising paradigms, positioning advisors as mentors who empower students to navigate their educational pathways with intentionality and purpose.

Through this session, participants will be equipped with practical tools and strategies to implement DegreeWorks Plans into advisement processes, fostering a more personalized and supportive advising environment at the University of South Carolina.



**Kate Blanton**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management - Columbia*



**Kyle Elekwa**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management - Columbia*



**Kimberly Chamberlain**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management - Columbia*



**Martiez Moore**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management - Columbia*



**Angelica Rojas**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management - Columbia*



**Cierra Pinckney**  
*Undergraduate Academic Advisor*  
*Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management - Columbia*



**Stephanie Richards**  
*Administrative Coordinator of Student Services*  
*Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management - Columbia*



**Kathy Smiling**  
*Assistant Dean of Student Services*  
*Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management - Columbia*



**BJ Beckham**  
*Senior Associate Registrar for Educational Planning*  
*Office of the University Registrar | Columbia*

# CONCURRENT

## Session II

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Room 305

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### **Mental Health and Advising: Building Resilience through Support and Understanding**

Mental health is becoming a growing concern for students and can affect each student differently, along with how they interact with the school environment, culture, and classroom achievement. In today's age, it is vital that we address the whole student and all their needs, rather than just what classes they need and their grades. While Academic Advisors are not mental health professionals, we can support students by helping them with basic mental health skills along with appropriately referring them when necessary. According to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, people must have their basic needs met before they can focus and excel at the self-actualization part of the pyramid, which is where education falls; in other words, students must Maslow before they can Bloom. Good mental health skills are important for everyone and if we can help students develop wellness habits now, then we can help them excel in and out of the classroom while they are with us and into their futures. Together, we will focus on helping students establish a work/life balance, self-care, coping skills, and stress management, along with recognizing warning signs of students struggling with their mental health and overall well-being.



**Amber Puckette**  
*Academic Advisor/Career Coach  
Student Success Center - Upstate*



**Franny Robinson**  
*Academic Advisor for Natural Sciences & Engineering  
Student Success Center - Upstate*

# CONCURRENT

## Session II

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Room 315

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### **Cultivating a Positive Perspective through Academic Advising**

A positive perspective is one of the five constructs of Laurie Schreiner's Thriving model of student success (2010). According to the author, students with a "positive perspective...tend to be more satisfied with their lives and enjoy the college experience more... [they] experience more positive emotions on a regular basis, which leads to higher levels of satisfaction with the college experience" (Schreiner, 2010). A positive perspective is one tool students can use to help navigate the difficulties of the college experience. As we know, college students experience high rates of stress, which can stem from a wide variety of socio-cultural, environmental, and psychological attributes. (Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015). Academic factors, such as workload, test difficulty, academic expectations, pressures to perform, and academic self-perceptions, compound this stress, and can negatively affect mental health, academic success, career decision making, self-esteem, and health attitudes (Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015; Paralkar & Knutson, 2021). Academic advisors, charged with providing holistic advising, can teach students healthy behaviors like cultivating a positive perspective, to help them cope with stressors, build resilience, and ultimately foster students' goal achievement and success. In this session, advisors will explore the concept of positivity and learn strategies for cultivating a healthy positive mindset in their students through academic advising.



**Caleb Morris**  
*Instructor and Advisor*  
*Arnold School of Public Health - Columbia*



# CONCURRENT

## Session II

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Room 302

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### **Navigating the Third Space: The Integral Role of Academic Advisors in Higher Education**

In her research on the attributes of personnel in higher education, both in the UK and internationally, Whitchurch (2009) introduced the concept of "third spaces." She explored how these spaces form at the intersection of academic and professional activities, highlighting the importance of individuals who seamlessly blend and transcend the boundaries of both domains. In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, academic advisors have emerged as key figures operating within this 'third space,' which serves as a dynamic bridge between administration and academics.

This presentation aims to explore the multifaceted roles of academic advisors, shedding light on their pivotal contributions and the challenges they encounter in this unique position. While working within this 'third space' presents unique difficulties, such as role ambiguity and issues related to recognition, it also offers opportunities for innovative practices. Academic advisors, although not the sole administrators in higher education occupying third space roles, are arguably uniquely positioned to maximize their effectiveness in this domain. Their experience and expertise are intrinsically linked to the teaching and learning mission of the institution and highly pedagogic in nature. Advisors are integrated practitioners whose roles have a significant and legitimate impact on students and the academic community in various ways.



**Mike Dial**  
*Associate Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising  
University Advising Center - Columbia*

# CONCURRENT

## Session II

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Theatre

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### **Strengths-Based Approaches to Advising**

In this interactive session, participants will have an opportunity to explore together how to leverage their own strengths as an advisor for greater fulfillment in the role. Strategies for strengths-based approaches to advising students will be shared, as well.



**Dr. Laurie Schreiner**  
*Professor of Higher Education*  
*Azusa Pacific University*

# Plenary Address

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**Ballroom**

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## **Use your “Imperfections” to Help Others through Prosocial Behavior**

Join us for the opportunity,

to hear from Dr. Shelley Dempsey, Assistant Provost for Graduation and Retention (GARNET) in the Office of the Provost as she presents the Plenary Address on prosocial behavior. Prosocial behaviors are “voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals” (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). Prosocial individuals are often associated with being compassionate, supportive, and caring.

Research shows that women are more likely to be prosocial in most industries and environments. They exhibit more empathy, concern for others, and concern for the well-being of the community beyond themselves. While we know these aren’t “imperfections”, they can be viewed as weaknesses in some settings. AND, these characteristics begin to surface in females from a young age – causing them to move away from competitive sports and into more collaborative activities.

Come learn how your perceived weaknesses might actually be strengths that can build a more engaged workplace with higher production, happier employees, and more workplace civility.



**Dr. Shelley Dempsey**

*Assistant Provost for Graduation and Retention  
Office of the Provost - Columbia*

# Thank you!

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*We would like to thank you for attending our 2024 conference.*

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## We want your feedback!

Please remember to complete the online survey to give us your feedback on the conference.



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