

2014 UPAC Co-Chair Candidate's Nomination Statements

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Lexie Allen
Systems & Industrial
Engineering

I've been the advisor for the three majors in the SIE department for almost two years. Some of my areas of focus for my department have been developing student autonomy, recruitment, and developing a community within the major that will allow students to feel more comfortable interacting in the department and with faculty. This last goal is particularly important for department development, alumni relations, and allowing for intermingling between faculty, upperclassmen, and lower classmen. Previous to moving to Arizona I ran a program for National University in San Diego, CA. I also have a deep love for Starbucks and Wildcat Basketball.

This is the first University that I've worked at that has had such a strong Academic Advisor community, which is what made me want to be involved in UPAC from the beginning. I love the opportunities for professional development both in the university and through NACADA, as well as the opportunity for networking with other advisors. As a UPAC co-chair I would like to broaden these opportunities allowing for more networking opportunities so that we as advisors can continue to learn from each other. Perhaps a UPAC social event at a Wildcat baseball game, or brown bag round table discussions would be good opportunities for us to share our advising secrets with each other. Another goal I would like to address as a UPAC co-chair would be ways that we can bridge the gap between advisors and students, making advisors more of a tool to utilize in planning ahead and less of an errand for students in need. There have been ideas bounced around and I think it's time to put some of those into action.

Really, I am just an advisor that loves my job and good ol' Red and Blue, and can't wait to get more involved.

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Yadira Berigan
Department of Spanish
& Portuguese

Currently, as the director of Undergraduate Studies and Study Abroad programs of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, probably, the my most important responsibility is advising over 400 majors and around 200 students studying abroad in our programs. In addition, I supervise two minor advisers who oversee over 2000 students, and held a membership in the College of Humanities Dean's Advisory Council (DAC) for 2 years. In particular, as an adviser, I really enjoy helping students figure out what careers they want to pursue. I can truly relate to them when they inform me that they have yet to discover the direction of their interests. Furthermore, I have a BA in International Economics, a MA in Linguistics, and a Ph.D. in Spanish with emphasis in Cultural and Performance Studies. This diverse education has given me the instruments required to succeed in my present position.

What makes me suited to co-chair UPAC? I have experienced first-hand the benefits of being part of this organization. Its training sessions and up to date information sent via email help advisers keep up with all the changes constantly transpiring in our field. I believe that UPAC is already doing an excellent job and my primary objective would be to achieve 100% participation from all advisers in the university. In order to achieve this goal, I would strive to develop novel means to get to know all advisers on an individual basis. I have no doubt that we will achieve this goal.

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Stephanie Carlson
Department of
Communication

Greetings, UPAC! I'm one of the two advisors in the Department of Communication, and I started in this position in August 2013. I earned both my B.A. in Psychology and my M.Ed. in School Counseling from the U of A, and worked for a few years as a high school counselor before moving into advising.

Knowing the high school setting gave me insight into student development that has helped me grow as an advisor. Because of my experience, I would like to facilitate increased collaboration between UPAC and community colleges, and dual-enrollment programs, and high school counselors. I believe it's important to understand where our students are coming from to best help them figure out where they are going.

Another goal I would like to implement is technology tips, both as advising tools and as resources to share with students. As we all know, technology moves very quickly, and while some of it helps make our lives more streamlined, not all of it does. By sharing quality resources with each other, we can all be a little more ahead of the curve and up to date with our students.

I appreciate the existing collaborative environment between advisors, and will work to further that sense of a tight-knit advising community through sharing of best practices and open discussion about the concerns and victories we experience every day as advisors. UPAC was one of my greatest resources in developing my advising practices, and I hope to help current and future advisors in the same way as a UPAC co-chair. Thank you for your consideration.

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Amy Dreweatt
Molecular & Cellular
Biology

My name is Amy Dreweatt and I feel extremely honored to be nominated for the UPAC co-chair position and if elected, I would hope to bring my experience in higher education, organization and event planning to the position. I work in the College of Science and advise for Molecular and Cellular Biology and Computer Science. I have been at the University of Arizona for a year and feel I have now been fortunate to see the entire academic year cycle. I am pursuing my M.S in Academic Advising and will be graduating in December.

Before moving to Arizona, I worked five years in higher education in Student Life and Leadership Development. In this role, I wore many hats including working with all of the clubs and organizations on campus and coach of the academic team. In this position I was also asked to serve on the Board of Directors for the state of Kansas. I have worked as Community Manager at the American Cancer Society with patient programming and as Outreach and Program Director for a non-profit helping older adults in Kansas City.

Within the past year I am very grateful for the support I have received from the College of Science and UPAC staff and I would like to give back. If I were to be elected, I would survey all advisors asking for their opinion on best times to meet and areas/topics they would like to see covered in future meetings and seminars. From this data I would work with the other co-chair in developing a plan. Another goal would be to incorporate a segment in the meeting for covering a particular advising scenario. Having this “best practices” segment can be a great point for discussion and learning tool while also including all in attendance at meetings.

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Nicole Gonzalez
University of Arizona
South

My name is Nicole Gonzalez and I am a current academic advisor for the University of Arizona South in Nogales, AZ. I have been advising for almost 6 years and I have enjoyed every single moment of my advising career because every day and every student is a wonderful new learning experience. Currently at the University of Arizona South, I advise undergraduate students in all of Santa Cruz County as well as all students majoring in UA South online programs. I also assist local high school seniors that are interested in applying to our main campus by providing them with program and admission information. Advising entails and requires so much more than just assisting students with their academic goals. I believe advisors transform into student supporters and motivators when they seem to be slipping with their academics as well as becoming navigators that guide students to discover career opportunities and internships.

During the last three years, I have learned so much from UPAC trainings and its members. These trainings have expanded my knowledge in various degrees, admissions requirements and financial aid updates. This opportunity has allowed me to become a valuable resource to many students seeking information regarding all university programs. I would like to offer my knowledge and services to UPAC and its members by bridging the communication between University of Arizona South and our main campus. Including UA South information in UPAC meetings will provide a stronger, consistent and inclusive advising unit throughout our campuses. I would also like to assist advisors with distance learning advising. This modality of learning is quickly rising and whether advisors and professors are accepting of it or not, advisors must be prepared to greet and communicate with those prospective students.

I look forward to continuous learning and instruction through UPAC. Thank you.

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Hi. My name is Ann Samuelson and I have been the Advisor in the School of Anthropology (SOA) for seven years. I think UPAC does a fabulous job keeping us informed about new ideas and policies, and I'd like to give back to UPAC for the help they have given me.



Ann Samuelson
School of
Anthropology

With the Academic Advisement Report and the Smart Planner helping our students choose requisite classes, and with the automated transference of credits, I think there is a shifting environment on how advisors and students will spend their time together. My main goal for UPAC would be to have a deep discussion about the focus of advising work and activities in the future.

Personally, I think the most valuable time we spend with our students is helping them figure out what type of career they want and developing a path to that career. Besides bringing them to a career decision, I like to give them information on how to enhance their school efforts. The University uses the term "engagement" for many of these activities, but I think of them as transcript/CV enhancements. This includes encouraging students to find faculty mentors, to write senior theses, and to engage in internships, fieldwork, and study abroad. These all significantly enhance student viability for acceptance into their dream jobs and graduate programs.

I would like to have more information shared among UPAC members on how to best assist our students in these directions. I have been teaching two success classes a year that help my students choose their careers and enhance their chances of getting those careers: I would love to hear other peoples' ideas of ways to help our students succeed.

I look forward to having a discussion with you about our changing roles, and how we can better support our students' futures.

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About me:

- I've been at the university for 3 years and in my current capacity as an Academic Advisor in the Colleges of Letters, Arts and Science for a year.
- I'm a people person and enjoying working with others.
- While I haven't worked directly with Michael or Jessica I think I would be a great addition to the team and am looking forward to working with them if elected to serve as a Co-Chair.



Ryan Sermon
College of Letters, Arts
& Sciences

I am running for one of the Co-Chair positions, because:

- I believe it is a great way to give back service to the university, if you have the time and energy to do so, which I feel I do!
- I work well with others and plan to maintain existing relationships with other university constituents who work both in and with the university academic advising community.

Goals:

- Professional development and the importance of networking: for a new professional entering academic advising, developing a network of peers to bounce ideas off of.
- Examine academic advising within the larger higher education landscape: Can we do anything else to align our current and best practices with the 100% Engagement goal?
- Tailor monthly meetings to meet the needs and interests of the general advising community based on feedback from participants.

Thank you for your consideration and I would appreciate your support and vote!

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