AAN Meeting 9/13/17

What are your secrets?

* Be available
* Getting to know your students
* Your team is very important, they can make the difference when you do not know something
* Make your student know their worth
* Congratulate your students on their successes
* Find out where you want to be the day after you retire and work backwards
  + Internships, classes, grades, etc
* The best advisement is sometimes from the student themselves
* Getting the students answers, one way or another
* This is the FIRST time THAT student has asked THIS question. We get asked a lot of the same questions but its important to treat each student as the individual that they are
* Talk about what is important
  + Career goals
  + Advising “aint” scheduling
  + Get to know our students
  + Don’t treat them as numbers

How do you manage treating them like individuals with busy days full of class and appointments?

* First question should always be “How are you doing?”
* Especially important in First-Year Experience to greet the student and let them know you care about them. This is their first time being in a new environment
* Take a pencil and sheet of paper and at the end of each day review your process. Did you spend too much time on the phone or answering emails? Or was a majority of your time spent embracing students? Make them the priority
* Create a Blackboard group for each of your majors to help organize all information in one place
* End of semester not only do you need to chase after students in trouble but also ones that do great! Don’t forget to give credit when credit is due.
* Be organized for the students

Success Stories

* Go beyond the grades! I had a student who struggled for three semesters with a 3.2 GPA. Advisor told the student hey you can do better; lets look at your study habits. Oh! You’re working harder not smarter, lets fix that. Here is how I studied when I was in college. All of a sudden the student’s GPA increased to a 3.4 then to a 4.0. Working closely with the student the advisor realized she had aspirations to go to Germany and he happened to know a guy looking for an American student and the advisor set up the student to pursue a dream.
  + Tell them about the skill set and assign them a project then get out of the way
* You don’t always know the full story. An advisor made an initial judgment of student because he was on the phone and not paying attention during their appointment. Frustrated the advisor asked do you need to step out and take that? The student broke into tears because he had been struggling with personal matters. After hearing this the advisor went above and beyond to make sure the student was being checked on often for the next six months. This showed the student that we care more than what classes you’re taking.
* When an advisor was calling students about absences she sometimes gets individuals that cry. Its important to recognize they might be far away from home, not know anyone and having a shoulder to cry on can make all the difference.
* Make sure students are pursuing passions. A student had okay grades in Chemistry. All of a sudden grades started to decline. Advisor intervened and asked “What’s happening? How do you like chem?” Student stated that they actually hated chemistry, but I love my minor. The Advisor asked why the student then chose to major in chemistry. The student replied because I think I’ll be able to have a good job in chemistry. The advisor recommended for the student to talk to the department of their minor and see what type of jobs that major typically leads to. The student was pleasantly surprised and ended up switching their minor to the major and having a minor in chemistry.

Advising retention/suspension students?

* Find something to praise them on, always stay positive
* Help them work through problems. Recommend tutoring, time management workshops, etc.
* Network with other majors
  + Build passion as well as have them pursue academics
  + Share tips and tricks

How do you find you motivation?

* Run the game film on a regular basis
* Not everyone cares about the students and we NEED to. A little extra effort goes a long way
* Do not lie and be honest no matter how tempting it is to sound like you are knowledgeable
* Build and consult your network
* Vent and celebrate with your network
* Take care of the gurus in your network
* Put a sticker on students folder if you had a great experience with them so every time you pull their folder you’ll remember the great time and try to make that a repeat moment.
* Print out student emails that give you praise to remember it’s a shared success

How do you have those hard conversations?

* Ongoing process through multiple conversations and terms
* With unrealistic expectations, be in it for the long haul
* Comparison to making frog soup. You don’t throw the frog into the boiling water, you gotta simmer it first
* Talk out of genuine concern and they will eventually listen
* Sometimes someone else will be the one to break through to the student and that is okay
* Transcripts tell a story that the student might not be sharing. With this you can find the reasoning behind why they chose the path that they did.
* Students sometimes pursue other peoples passions, need to recognize this
* Numbers help to set realistic goals, use GPAs, stats, the GPA calculator
* Take it a semester at a time, if the student really wants it then map out a game plan

Final Tips/Thoughts

* Treat students the way you want to be treated
* Explain everything because a lot of times they don’t know what every little acronym or phrase we use means
* Believe in your students, give them that confidence that they can do great things
* Make contacts, find your gurus, expand network
* Coworkers are key
* Know your catalog and resources
* Demonstrate that you will give that extra bit of effort for students
* Ask a lot of questions
* Run the game film on a regular basis
  + Write down what you do
  + Write down what you want to improve
* Never forget, it’s ultimately about the student. Give them all your focus when they are in front of you