

# TennACADA Newsletter

APRIL 2014

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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Greetings, TennACADA!

I hope that each of you is enjoying the spring weather and that the end of the term is treating you well. As we wrap up the spring semester, TennACADA is excited about upcoming opportunities for the advising community. We have two April programs: 1. **DEAN LEE** presenting on sleep and its impact on student success and 2. **JENNY BLOOM**, past NACADA President, coming to UT to speak to the advising community on appreciative advising. (A big thanks to FYS Director Jason Mastrogiovanni for his help in arranging this event!) What great opportunities for professional development. We hope to see everyone at both events.

Additionally, nominations and voting for TennACADA have wrapped up, and it's a pleasure to introduce the Executive Board for the 14-15 academic year.

**President: Shanna Pendergrast**  
**Vice President/Program Chair: Nayasha Farrior**  
**Secretary: Luke Garton**  
**Communications Chair: Colette Magoon**

We look forward to seeing everyone for Dean Lee's and Jenny Bloom's programs.

Mark E. Willoughby  
President

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

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### SLEEP AND THE IMPACT ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

Dr. Theresa Lee, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
April 16 at 3:30 in Ayres Hall, Room 405

### **NEW!** APPRECIATIVE ADVISING

Dr. Jenny Bloom, past NACADA President and faculty at the University of South Carolina  
April 24 from 3:00-5:00 (location to be announced)

Jenny serves as clinical professor and Director of the Higher Education and Student Affairs Master's Degree Program in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of South Carolina (USC). In addition, she directs the Office of Appreciative Education at USC's College of Education where she oversees the Appreciative Advising online course, the Appreciative Advising Summer Institute, as well as the certification process for Appreciative Advisers. She also serves as an adjunct associate professor for the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign. She previously served as the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Medical Scholars Program at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign (2003-2007). She was elected to the position of President of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) for the 2007-08 term. She has spoken over 150 times on the topic of Appreciative Advising/Education at colleges, universities, and conferences. Her research interests include academic advising, career paths in higher education administration, leadership, and change.

<http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>

# ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

## MIKE TAYLOR

College of Engineering

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### **How did you get involved with academic advising and how long have you been working at UTK?**

Before starting my advising experience, I originally worked here at UT as a GTA for the History Department. I later got a GA position with the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Center as an advisor. I thoroughly enjoyed my time advising and I was able to get a similar position with the College of Engineering in 2010. During the time I was a graduate advisor in Arts and Sciences and Engineering, I also taught history surveys in US History and World Civilization at UT, Lincoln Memorial University, and Tennessee Tech. While I really enjoy teaching history and lecturing and believe I have gotten pretty good at it, I find the one on one connection created through academic advising is much more personally rewarding to me. In fact, I liked my experiences enough with advising that I have changed my career focus to be much more involved in academic advising.

### **What do you like about working with students in the College of Engineering?**

The College of Engineering works with an advising population somewhat different from the others here at UT. Certainly, all of our students at the University of Tennessee have the potential for academic excellence and achievement. But the “average” freshman engineering schedule is, I think with few exceptions, one of the most challenging set of first year courses encountered by freshmen here at UT and is certainly much more packed with math and science than most other majors here at the university.

Because we work with very high ability students in demanding curriculums, the challenges as an advisor are different here than with my experiences in Arts and Sciences. While we have fewer majors to deal with that are all taking variations of a common fixed freshman curriculum, the potential for our students to push forward into upper-level classes sooner than many other majors here at UT often make class choice a much more challenging undertaking with engineering students. Similarly, being able to help a student untangle a seemingly “untangleable” academic situation with their engineering major is a very satisfying experience that further confirms my decision to make the shift towards academic advising as a career.

### **What qualities and characteristics do you think are important for an academic advisor to be successful?**

If I had to pick a skill I’ve found useful to myself for being a good advisor, I’d probably say that flexibility really comes in handy. No two students are alike, and so no two advising experiences are alike. What may cause great distress for one student might be shrugged off as no big deal by another. Every time I think I have this all figured out, some new circumstance with our students appears that must be addressed, making this job never dull and always challenging. So, being able to adapt to changes has really helped me and continues to make me enjoy what we do as academic advisors.