

# **Academic Advisor Wellness Program**

## **University of California, Riverside (UCR)**

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**Faculty Support:** Dr. Robert Ream, Associate Dean of Student Success, Undergraduate Education

### **Vision:**

Academic advising professionals are essential to undergraduate student success. At UCR we pride ourselves in hosting the most diverse student body in the UC system – 52% of undergraduate students identify as first generation, 62% receive financial aid, and most hail from traditionally marginalized populations. UCR also holds Hispanic-Serving Institution and Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institution designations. Our students require specialized support as they navigate their educational paths. Advisors at UCR are in tune with the needs of their students, however, limits on resources present a large challenge to academic advisors' overall wellness. A recent survey highlighted that UCR advising professionals have a desire to invest their time in professional development, wellness, and community building but struggle to access these opportunities. An influx of grant money would make a tremendous impact on newly reestablished efforts to encourage wellness for advisors, including reinitiating the UCR Advising Council, a grassroots committee that has been unable to provide consistent programming due to funding limitations. We hope to establish a wellness program that provides advisors with resources, support, community building, and professional development.

### **Goals for Academic Advisors:**

1. Improve mental, physical, and emotional well-being.
2. Increase job satisfaction.
3. Enhance quality of advising.
4. Ease advisor workloads to increase available time for wellness program participation.
5. Foster a culture of wellness and collaborative community within advising.

### **Program Components:**

1. Wellness workshops and quarterly challenges: led by experts in the field covering topics such as stress management, mindfulness, community mindedness, and healthy sleep habits.
2. Support UCR Advising Council programming:
  - a. Advisor professional development and growth.
  - b. Community building via events like wellness fairs, cooking classes, yoga classes, etc.
  - c. Develop awards to acknowledge advisor excellence.
  - d. Provide space for community and collaboration via UCR Advising Conference.

3. Support UCR Peer Academic Advisors to help ease advisors' workload.
4. Fund NACADA memberships to increase professional development opportunities.
5. Create communication channels to showcase efforts and foster engagement.
6. Peer groups to support wellness goals.

**Budget:**

\$8,000 wellness activities, \$8,000 professional development, \$4,000 community building, \$3,000 advising awards, \$2500 NACADA Annual Conference Travel cost, \$3000 NACADA membership funds, \$1500 Peer Academic Advising support.

**Evaluation:**

The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated through a longitudinal study of academic advisors at UCR. The study will collect data on academic advisor job satisfaction, mental, physical, and emotional well-being primarily via surveys and focus groups. Similarly, we will gather data on student academic advising experience to measure program effectiveness on advising services and student success.

**Grant Term:**

We would accept the award as a two year program grant: Summer 2023 - Spring 2025.

**Conclusion:**

Receiving this grant will provide advisors with the resources and support they need to increase their well-being while building community and benefiting students. We anticipate program sustainability after solidifying buy-in by showcasing success to campus leadership.