TennACADA Times

The Official Academic Advising & Success Newsletter of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Upcoming Events


Thursday, March 28th, 3-4:30 PM Communication Building Scripps Convergence Lab: Delivering Bad News Panel – Discuss strategies regarding promoting self-awareness in students whose desired major is not realistic or attainable, working with students who are foreclosed, and having the tough conversations surrounding probation, dismissal, and readmission. Panelists include:

- Doug Renalds, Director – Student Success Center
- Stephanie Langley, Interim Assistant Director – First-Year Studies (Volunteer Bridge)
- Nayasha Farrior, Master Advisor – Haslam College of Business Undergraduate Programs
- Ali Brewer, Coordinator of Political Sciences – Arts & Sciences Advising
- Mary Virginia Ireland, Academic Advisor I – Tickle College of Engineering

Questions about our events? Email TennACADA at tennacada@utk.edu
It is the time of year when TennACADA recognizes outstanding faculty and staff at the University of Tennessee–Knoxville. A variety of awards are available for nominations. All nominations must be submitted via the TennACADA website starting Monday, March 25th, through Friday, April 12th. While considering potential nominations, please remember that award winners will be nominated by the TennACADA Executive Board for correlating Region 3 and national NACADA awards for the following year’s cycle. This is an excellent opportunity to recognize individuals who provide exceptional service to our students and the advising community at large! The six awards available are:

• Outstanding New Advisor Award
• Excellence in Advising Award
• Empowering Leadership in Administration Award
• Exceptional Faculty Mentor and Advisor Award
• Innovative Advising Award
• Advocate in Advising: Friend to the Community Award

Full award descriptions can be viewed and nominations can be made via the TennACADA website, found here: https://tennacada.utk.edu/annual-advising-awards/

The time has come to nominate and elect the TennACADA Executive Board for the Fall 2019–Spring 2020 year! Please consider nominating those individuals on campus who demonstrate the desire to collaborate with peers, empower others, and support professional development for all! The positions available are as follows:

• President
• Vice President (Two-Years: 2019–2020, President 2020–2021)
• Communications Chair
• Secretary

Nominations will be open February 14th–27th. Voting begins on March 11th and closes March 29th. If you are interested in a position and have questions regarding what a specific position would involve, please feel free to contact current Executive Board members!

If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else, please do so. Information regarding nominations and voting will be sent out through the TennACADA email.
Wondering how you might challenge a stellar advisee or student in one of your classes? Curious about the Fulbright and other nationally competitive awards? We’d like to share with the TennACADA community a bit about UT’s Office of National Scholarships & Fellowships (ONSF), specifically:

1) **What does ONSF do?** We work with students interested in applying for nationally competitive awards, which means: providing initial support in identifying relevant opportunities, guiding students through applications, and facilitating campus review/nomination procedures when relevant. Some of these awards have been around for many years and have instant name-brand recognition (e.g., Fulbright, Rhodes); others may be relatively new or less well-known. Awards vary significantly, from funded summer/semester/year-long programs abroad, to STEM research awards, graduate study scholarships, and year-long international post-graduate fellowships, such as the Fulbright. This past year, UT established itself as one of the nation’s “Top Producers” in the Fulbright Student Program.

2) **What is a student’s experience with ONSF?** In all its efforts, ONSF emphasizes first and foremost the value of the application PROCESS as one that compels significant critical reflection, clarification of ambitions, strategic planning of time at UT, and the building of relationships with faculty, staff, mentors, and peers. Naturally we celebrate when students receive prestigious awards, but that is not our primary focus. Students who go through the ONSF process learn to take greater ownership of their education as they give it personal meaning and relevance by defining who they want to be and by creating their own expectations of personal fulfilment as socially responsible citizens—application processes demand such reflection. In addition, without exception, students mentored by ONSF successfully use their application materials (e.g., personal statements and proposals) to compete for admission to graduate and professional school, internships and jobs, international teaching positions, and numerous other opportunities.
3) **What are the characteristics of promising candidates?** As a unit in the Division of Academic Success & Transitions (alongside TRIO Student Support Services, Student Success Center, and First-Year Studies), ONSF is a central unit available to all UT undergraduates, not only honors students. Grades are important, yes, but most awards do not stipulate minimum GPAs—they seek focused, yet well-rounded students who are deeply engaged in passions beyond their classrooms, such as leadership experiences, significant community engagement and service, undergraduate research, and international opportunities. Furthermore, award foundations—and, certainly, ONSF—seek to diversify their candidate pools (e.g., first-generation college students). Broadly speaking, students we engage possess intellectual curiosity, a willingness to test their limits as learners beyond the classroom or laboratory, and a commitment to understanding the complexities of the world.

4) **When and how do I refer a student to ONSF?** We encourage students to meet with us as early as their first or second year so as to begin crafting a plan to maximize their undergraduate experience and, thus, their competitiveness for awards. Early communication with ONSF means students will be introduced to more opportunities, some of which are designed for freshmen and sophomores. That said, it is rarely too late to work with ONSF. Even our alumni who choose to apply for such awards as the Fulbright receive our full support as long as they are not enrolled in another institution.

Finally, on a campus with nearly 23,000 undergraduates, faculty and staff assistance is essential in identifying candidates. We solicit referrals year-round here: [https://onsf.utk.edu/refer-a-student-to-onsf/](https://onsf.utk.edu/refer-a-student-to-onsf/) After we receive a referral, we follow up with the student to suggest an initial get-to-know-you-and-ONSF meeting. Our expectation is not for the TennACADA community to advise on yet another thing (e.g., Fulbright) or worry too much about whether a student is “just right” for these awards. Trust your instincts about the student(s) before you. When in doubt, please refer—we love meeting interesting students!

In addition, students are free to request appointments directly with us here: [https://onsf.utk.edu/first-steps/](https://onsf.utk.edu/first-steps/)