

TennACADA Times

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Rayborn's Ramblings

TennACADA community,

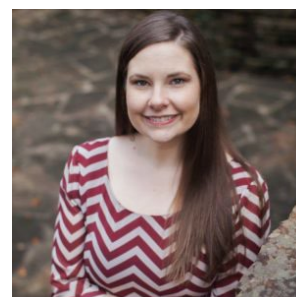
Well, friends, advising season is upon us, registration has begun, and you know what that means... it means you probably need to unclench your jaw, take a sip of water, and do a quick stretch. Doesn't that feel better!?

In all seriousness, we're at that point in the semester where you're being asked all the questions and pulled in all the directions, so it is even more crucial than ever to check in with yourself, prioritize your mental health and well-being, and remind yourself that self-care isn't selfish!

I heard a quote the other day (from the show *Scratch* on Netflix) that I feel is particularly relevant to advising: "The more you show up for yourself the more capacity you have to show up for others." So, with that in mind, please make sure that you're showing up for yourself (however that might look) and reminding yourself of how amazing you are and what a difference you are making in the lives of your students.

I am sending you all the good advising vibes and I hope you have a wonderful rest of the semester!

Amber Rayborn
TennACADA President

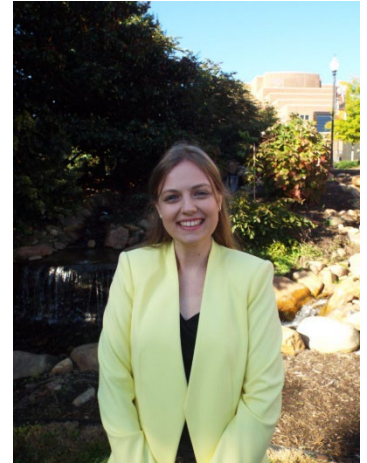


Staff Spotlight: Sarah Thomas

Advisor I – College of Education, Health and Human Sciences

Tell us a bit about your professional career?

I began working in Higher Education during my undergraduate career at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I was a student here from 2016-2020. I was a Peer Mentor in the First Year Programs Office my sophomore-senior year working with first year students in the 101 seminar course. I moved up the leadership ladder and became a Peer Mentor Coordinator who trained upcoming Peer Mentors, and did an internship in the office my senior year working alongside the GA. Once I finished undergrad, I entered into a one-year masters program at the University of Virginia in Higher Education. Because it was height COVID time (2020-2021), I completed my coursework fully online here in Knoxville. Luckily, I was able to attend my graduation in person. A few months after I graduated, I was hired as an Advisor I back at my alma mater and couldn't be happier.



What is most important to you in your work with students?

I want students to know that I am a resource to them. With so many elements of the orientation process online, in some cases, I am the first face students see and the first person they speak to before walking onto campus. I want students to feel comfortable sharing career goals and personal goals so that I can best help them while they are here. In my advising appointments, I want students to know that they are respected, valued, heard, and most importantly, that they matter.

What is something you've learned from working with students?

One thing I have learned so far in my (early) career is that students want someone who will listen. During my time in my masters program, we took a counseling course where we learned to actively listen, ask open ended questions, and allow the person you are speaking to open up. I try my best to implement these practices when working with students. I try to give them the space to speak and make decisions that are best for them. Each student has a unique experience. I cannot give each student in my appointments the same advice. I have learned to go into each appointment with a new set of eyes and ears.

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What books/podcasts/artists are you into right now?

During COVID, I became a big reader. I really enjoy mystery/thriller novels and romance novels. My favorite books I have read are by Emily Henry and Colleen Hoover. I just finished 'Anxious People' from Fredrik Backman and am currently reading 'An Anonymous Girl' by Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen. I also enjoy true crime podcasts. I regularly listen to True Crime Obsessed and Crime Junkie on my way to and from work.

What is your favorite travel spot?

I grew up about two hours from Disney World. This is my family's favorite travel spot. We are the definition of Disney Adults. I still have family that live there, so we will usually go to the parks, visit family, and hit the beach. One of my goals in life is to go to all the Disney parks since I have only been to Disney World. (California, Paris, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Tokyo).

What are some favorite Knoxville spots?

My favorite restaurant in Knoxville is Savelli's. During my undergraduate career I studied abroad in Italy. Savelli's is the closest I can get to that kind of food. It is small and has a wonderful, romantic vibe. My favorite spot on campus is Ayres Hall. Making the climb is sooo worth it. I am also a frequent at McKay's. I am there for hours, looking at cheap books, movies, and board games. I love to take my sister because she loves their vinyl collection.

Interested in being featured in a Staff Spotlight? [Fill out this form.](#)

eBoard Recs

Our recommendations for binge-worthy albums/artists/songs:

Amber Rayborn: Taylor Swift - *Midnights*

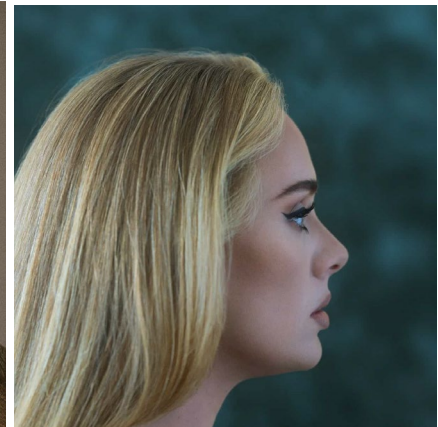
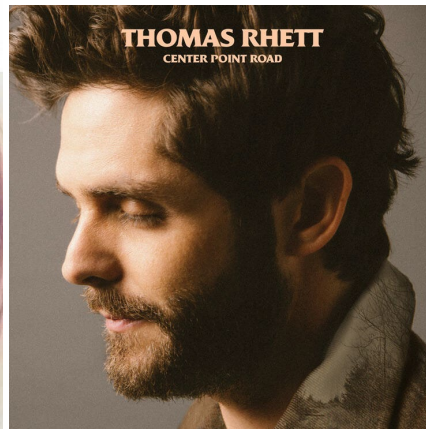
Christopher Kelley: Thomas Rhett - *Center Point Road*

Jeremy Mobley: Tove Lo - *Dirt Femme*, Taylor Swift - *Midnights*

Keima Talley: Adele, Teddy Swims

Jake Working: Koe Wetzell - *Hell Paso*

Midnights

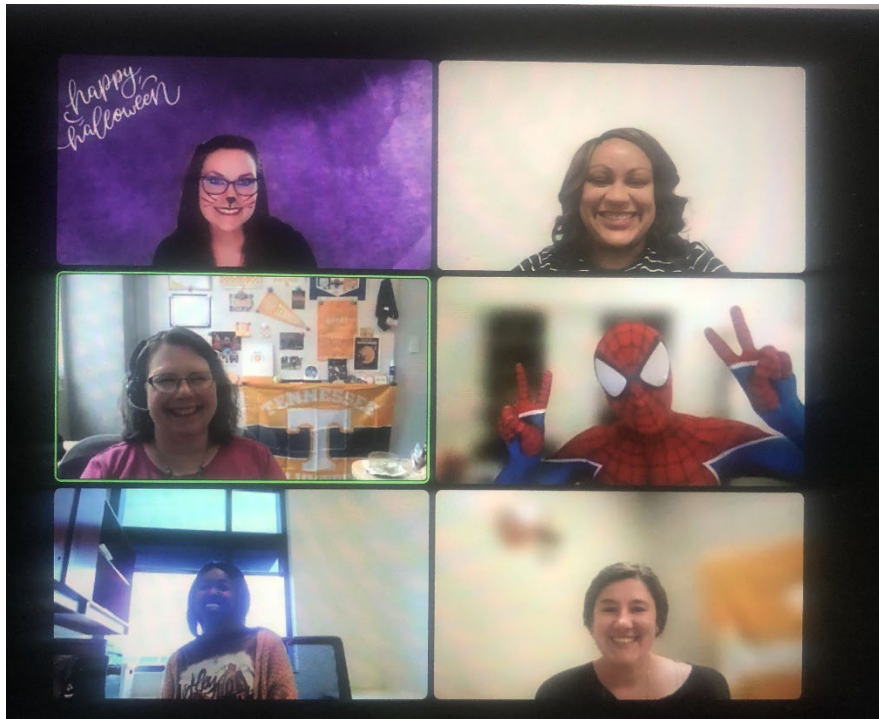


TennACADA Tips

1. On registration days, block off times to allow space to respond to the flood of emails! Nobody needs 11 student appointments and 200 emails in one day.
2. Have an automated response during peak advising season, insert some helpful links for students that might be able to answer their questions. [Sample Response](#)
3. For self-care, consider turning off email notifications on your phone and only open email during work hours.
4. Have some sort of stress relieving/tactile toy available for students in your office.
5. Have a 'smile file' or 'brag folder' to save those thankful emails/notes from students for the future!

TennACADA Halloween Social!

Thank you to all those who attended the TennACADA Halloween Social, shout out to Lisa Byrd for sweeping the competition!



NACADA Conference Showcase

We hope those of you who were able to attend this year's annual NACADA conference had a wonderful time engaging with colleagues from around the world in Portland, OR. A special shoutout to many of our own who represented the UTK advising and student success community by contributing to the conference, including Associate Vice Provost Dr. Leonard Clemons, Amber Rayborn, Ashley Williams, Christopher Shuping, Emilie Wise, Erica Ury, Kirsten Pitcock, and Madeline Anderson.

Are you interested in presenting at next year's NACADA Region 3 Conference? The deadline to submit proposals is swiftly approaching and will close on November 11th. More information can be found on the [Region 3 website](#).



A totally not rainy photo from the NACADA Conference!

Hey Vols! Video – Registration Errors



Upcoming Events

Best Practices for Successfully Engaging Deaf Individuals Lunch & Learn

November 16th Noon - 1:30pm | SU 262AB | [Link to RSVP](#)

Using Appreciative Strategies to Connect with Students Quickly Webinar Lunch & Learn

Nov 3rd 12-1:30pm | I-House Great Room/Zoom | [RSVP](#)

TennACADA Holiday Social

December 8th 8:30-10am | Toyota Auditorium - Baker Center | Flyer to Come!

Want to share a special note with a colleague in the advising and student success community? Send them a candy-gram by filling out the form linked below. We'll prepare it and make sure it gets to them during the TennACADA Holiday Social in December.

[**Form to send Candy-Gram!**](#)