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Practitioner Inquiry to Develop Antiracist Advising Practice: Investigating Issues of Equity and Access

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In the field of academic advising, the advising and retention of students of color are of particular concern. Academic advisors can utilize practitioner inquiry to better understand the (in)equities in their interactions with and in service to these students. Our inquiry was conducted over one semester at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) in the mid-Atlantic region. We utilized practitioner inquiry groups and the Equity Scorecard to identify antiracist actions in our advising practice, including supporting students' connectivity to support services on campus and advocating for changes to inequitable campus systems. The implications demonstrate why advisors may conduct a similar inquiry on their advising practice. The findings further emphasize the importance of proactive approaches and modeling advocacy in prior advising studies.

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Introduction

We are concerned with the experiences of historically marginalized students on our campuses, particularly during this time of ongoing crisis for students of color, who, in our practice, are primarily Black and Hispanic students. Among the many racist systems in higher education that contribute to student marginalization, academic advising is a space in which racism can be enacted.

In higher education, we often tout the importance of equity and inclusion without engaging in "critical self-examination and transformation" (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012, p. 2). As White advisors, we assume that we are part of the problem of racism (Applebaum, 2015). Any person, regardless of race and ethnic background, can perpetuate racist systems (Mitchell et al., 2010). In fact, any academic advisor would benefit from utilizing practitioner inquiry to investigate their practice and identify ways to develop antiracist approaches in their advising practice. However, as White individuals, along with an estimated 66 percent of academic and student affairs staff and 71 percent of full-time faculty members (Taylor et al., 2020), we know that White people often demonstrate an inability to recognize the presence of White culture and the presence of systemic racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2017). We bear the greatest responsibility for dismantling systemic White supremacy.

Antiracist Advising Practice

If racism can be enacted in academic advising, so can antiracism. We believe Kendi's (2019) assertion that every policy and system at a college or university, including advising practice, is racist or antiracist; they either perpetuate systemic inequities or disrupt and resolve them. Because, to our knowledge, a clear definition of antiracist academic advising does not exist in the literature, we draw on the literature of antiracist pedagogy to describe our stance:

> When racism is understood only as individual prejudice, racism embedded in institutions is ignored. At the same time, focusing *only* on institutional racism allows individuals benefiting from racism to avoid any responsibility. Awareness and self-reflection of our social positions is important, but it must be understood within the broader context of race and power, and need to be applied beyond the individual in order to make effective institutional change. (Kishimoto, 2018, p. 542)

Academic advising is not politically neutral and can be used to promote social justice through critical reflection (Puroway, 2016). As we demonstrate, practitioner inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999,

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2009) can help us expand equity and access through our advising practice. Antiracist advising must move from conceptualizing the advising relationship as "student-to-advisor" to understanding it as a "more systemic advisor-to-student-to-institution analysis" (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 295). Therefore, drawing on the work of Kishimoto (2018) and Kendi (2019), we define antiracist advising as advising practices that break down racist positions and ideas through interpersonal interactions and upend institutions and policies that allow racial inequity to exist.

Although we, the authors, have been concerned about the systemic institutional and interpersonal racism that our students face, we historically allowed ourselves passivity in addressing and disrupting these systems while concurrently reassuring ourselves that we are good and moral Whites who desire social justice (Teel, 2015). Mark, an academic advisor, and Heather, a then-tenure-track professor and coordinator of Mark's doctoral program, came to collaborate on this work through their shared belief that academic advisors are uniquely positioned as "co-conspirators" who can work alongside students while "us[ing] their privilege to demand justice" (Love, 2019, p. 121). Our professional obligation to our students of color is to intentionally and systematically analyze our advising practice to identify our racist beliefs and actions so that we might disrupt these tendencies in future advising exchanges. Antiracist work is always ongoing; we never fully arrive (Applebaum, 2015; Yancy, 2017).

To critically evaluate practice in a way that can generate new knowledge and insights, we chose to engage in practitioner inquiry. The literature is sparse on "*how* best to perform [academic advising] in college contexts" (Johnson et al., 2019, p. 5), and we lack models of antiracist advising. Museus and Ravello (2010) identified the characteristics of advising that support students of color but not examples of how these characteristics are enacted in practice.

Practitioner Inquiry and Antiracism

Because we are White, we need tools to help us recognize what is racist in our advising work. We are socially conditioned to remain ignorant of our Whiteness and the privileged systems from which we benefit and instead encouraged to "avoid considering [our] complicity, to remain in the space of comfort" (Applebaum, 2015, p. 10). Mere reflection on our practice is insufficient. We can only reflect through our extant lenses, which are inadequate because we have been socialized not to see racism (Kishimoto, 2018); we bump up against the limits of our awareness. Practitioner inquiry draws on the tools of systematic research – literature review, data collection, and data analysis. This work allows us to engage in what Yancy (2017) deemed essential: "*continuous* effort on the part of whites to forge new ways of seeing, knowing, and being" (p. xxxviii). Practitioner inquiry, established by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999; 2009), is a qualitative research method useful for allowing practitioners to be the creators of knowledge about their practice through analysis of their work to more clearly see their contributions to racist systems and to seek equity (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Maxwell, 2015; Rutherford, 2009). Practitioner inquiry helps us better understand our practice as academic advisors. Still, it also contributes knowledge to the field, adding to extant conversations limited by the constraints of other research designs.

During a challenging semester, in terms of inequitable student outcomes, Mark sought to learn more about how his advising communications and interventions played a role in either contributing to or removing systemic barriers and how his future advising practice could be more antiracist. Mark, a White male professional academic advisor, advised students at a mid-Atlantic Predominantly White Institution (PWI) with a caseload more diverse than the overall student population: nearly half of the incoming cohort of students in a degree completion program were students of color. However, these students of color also experienced disproportionate academic struggles and stop-outs. Given that his institution had heavily recruited students of color, Mark and his institutional colleagues frequently discussed their concerns about equity. As their academic advisor, it was essential to help meet students' needs and to engage and mobilize resources when he could not.

We demonstrate how practitioner inquiry can be used as a methodology for exploring the often unmet, overlooked, or systematically denied needs of our racially and ethnically diverse students. We intend for our article not to make a substantial empirical contribution with findings specific to Mark's advising practice but to offer these as an example to help other advisors imagine how they can use practitioner inquiry to illuminate unexamined and potentially racist aspects of their advising practice.

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Table 1. Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) Types of Professional Knowledge

Type of Knowledge	Definition
Knowledge *for* practice	The knowledge created by outside researchers through traditional empirical research or best practices
Knowledge *in* practice	Our professional knowledge of the craft of advising developed through our years of experience and work
Knowledge *of* practice	The knowledge we develop about our practice through reflexive but systematic and rigorous inquiry

Conceptualizations of Learning and Knowledge Framework

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) introduced a conceptual framework of three types of knowledge and learning, presented in Table 1. Although initially conceptualized for teacher learning and research, these also are applicable to academic advising (Chimel & Hurst, 2020). Knowledge *for* practice is what many of us imagine when we think about "research": the knowledge created through traditional empirical research or best practices. However, as advisors, we have also developed our knowledge *in* practice, which is our professional knowledge of the craft of advising we have grown through our years of experience and work with students and colleagues. Traditionally, these two types of knowledge have been disparate. We have tacitly accepted that we should incorporate what others have learned empirically (the knowledge *for* practice) into our advising practice. Although we honor our experience (our knowledge *in* practice), it is not generally valued as highly as knowledge *for* practice.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) suggested that we shift toward knowledge *of* practice, developed through a reflexive inquiry cycle. We advocate for knowledge *of* practice (Chimel & Hurst, 2020) because we see the rich benefits of the insider knowledge advisors have. Although an outside researcher can bring fresh perspectives, our insider knowledge of our students and our institutions' roles, relationships, politics, and systems are great affordances. We use practitioner inquiry of our academic advising practice through an antiracist lens to investigate a local problem of practice and create new knowledge.

Prior Equity-Focused Knowledge for Practice

Although we advocate for knowledge *of* practice through practitioner inquiry, we must incorporate our learnings from knowledge *for* practice. A key focus of academic advising is increasing retention and persistence, and good advising has been shown to impact these areas (Drake, 2011). However, opportunity gaps in retention and persistence are still present at many institutions. Several studies in advising have focused on equity for student populations similar to those Mark served. Studies on advising underrepresented groups in higher education highlighted the importance of relationship-building and a holistic approach (Johnson et al., 2019; Lee, 2018; Lin, 2016; Museus & Ravello, 2010). Museus and Ravello (2010) found that students of color valued a holistic academic advising approach that honored academic and nonacademic concerns. Walker et al. (2017) found that broader student populations also cite a lack of a relationship with their advisors, further highlighting the importance of this practice.

Although this inquiry work focused on Mark's advising interactions with students of color, specifically Black and Hispanic students, his advisees were also all female and nontraditional students over the age of 24, and many were first-generation students. Previous advising studies pertaining to these subpopulations suggest how students experience academic advising and its shortcomings for underrepresented and often marginalized student populations (Auguste et al., 2018; Lin, 2016; Longwell-Grice et al., 2016). These studies also show how intersectional identities may impact experiences (Crenshaw, 1991; Museus & Griffin, 2011), such as a lack of a sense of belonging and difficulty adjusting (Lee, 2018; Lin, 2016; Longwell-Grice et al., 2016). These issues could be caused or exacerbated by microaggressions (Lee, 2018) and the marginalization of students' identities (Auguste et al., 2018). First-generation students might feel like they lack "insider knowledge" (Longwell-Grice et al., 2016, p. 41) or face a "hidden curriculum" (Smith, 2013, p. xiv). Relatedly, Lin (2016) found low self-confidence affects adjustment and success for nontraditional female students.

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These studies in higher education, specifically in advising, can provide further insight into student needs and potentially successful strategies, but these studies are mostly independent of practice. Therefore, the use of practitioner inquiry to expand on and explicate prior advising literature on students of color, first-generation, and nontraditional students is practical and useful.

Practitioner Inquiry Methodology

As a research method, practitioner inquiry draws on existing literature, encourages self-contemplation of praxis, and contributes new knowledge to the field (Chimel & Hurst, 2020; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Using the knowledge framework, Mark conducted practitioner inquiry to analyze his practice, create meaning, and inform his future advising work. An advisor engaging in practitioner inquiry would identify a problem of practice, seek relevant literature that relates to the problem of practice, and consider the applicability of extant literature to their practice (Chimel & Hurst, 2020). The steps of identifying relevant data sources, then collecting and coding data to analyze and locate themes, are similar to other systematic qualitative research cycles. Coding and analysis are done independently and with inquiry groups, which are described later, and the themes found in the data respond to the problem of practice. Advisors who engage in practitioner inquiry might share their findings locally and with the field of advising. Through creating time and space between their work (Chimel & Hurst, 2020), engaging with inquiry groups (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), and connecting their work and findings to prior studies of academic advising, advisors can move beyond mere suppositions to the creation of knowledge.

Frameworks Utilized

We used practitioner inquiry (Chimel & Hurst, 2020; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; 2009) and the Equity Scorecard (Dowd & Bensimon, 2014) to generate this knowledge and improve future practice. The Equity Scorecard framework is designed specifically "to solve the problem of inequitable educational outcomes" (Center for Urban Education, para. 2), which was Mark's identified problem of practice. Designed for postsecondary environments, the Equity Scorecard provides a cycle of inquiry with several stages: laying the groundwork, defining the problem, assessing interventions, implementing solutions, and evaluating results (Dowd & Bensimon, 2014). Dowd and Bensimon (2014) prescribed examining vital signs of access, retention, excellence, and completion and described the analysis phase as searching for "aha moments" (p. 22). The goal of the cycle of inquiry is to develop adaptive expertise that can bring equitable change.

Practitioner inquiry as a research methodology also requires critical self-reflection (Puroway, 2016). Practitioner inquiry is particularly important in antiracist academic advising because the systematic analysis of our practice requires that we "question the piece of the oppressor that lives in all of us" (Love, 2019, p. 122).

Inquiry Groups

Inquiry groups or communities are a key component of practitioner inquiry methodology and in creating knowledge *of* practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; 2009). What sets inquiry group conversations apart from other conversations among practitioners, per Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), is reflective and deliberate deep talk that draws new meaning from knowledge *in* practice or validates this knowledge. Advisors can move beyond knowledge *in* practice and knowledge *for* practice to create valuable knowledge *of* practice to solve their local problems of practice, especially those stemming from inequities, injustice, and racism.

Mark's inquiry groups helped define his problem of practice and his research questions. His inquiry group with advising colleagues engaged in deep talk about the disproportionate number of new students of color who were struggling and the sources of their struggles, which led to defining the problem of practice. As Kendi (2019) stated, educators should be seeking to fix the test (in this case, the academic program) and not the test-takers (Mark's advisees) when achievement gaps are presented. Similarly, Bensimon (2005) described moving from developing programs that fix the student, a cognitive deficit frame, to accountability for equitable outcomes, an equity cognitive frame. Mark also engaged with an inquiry group of fellow practitioners in his doctoral cohort, which is part of a program focused on developing scholarly practitioners (CPED, 2021). Through knowledge of practitioner inquiry methods, his classmates helped clarify his research questions. Additionally, Mark and Heather formed a third inquiry group to

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design and enact his practitioner inquiry, which has now spanned a few years. Over time, we shifted from discussing the symptoms of inequity and access to confronting the problem of our own and our institutions' racism.

Through this inquiry group work, Mark posed these research questions about his advising practice:

1.) What do Mark's interactions with students from underrepresented backgrounds in a distance education program reveal about how he responded to their unmet needs?
2.) How does Mark communicate student needs that he cannot resolve himself to others?
3.) In what ways, if any, does Mark demonstrate the characteristics of academic advising that minoritized students have deemed beneficial to their success, such as by humanizing the advising relationship (Johnson et al., 2019; Museus & Ravello, 2010), building trust with students (Johnson et al., 2019), and signaling to advisees that they matter (Johnson et al., 2019)?

Data Sources Used for Inquiry

Practitioner inquiry presents a conundrum in terms of informed consent. Asking students to consent to participate in human subjects research can affect our relationships with them, which should be solely in service to them. We also often lose contact with graduated or former students once their university-based email is discontinued. However, myriad data sources can help us understand our practice independent of our students' interactions with us: journals, emails, and transcripts of reflective inquiry groups or advising team discussions can all serve as data sources to help us analyze how we establish and enact the advising relationship. It is also important to note that the primary goal of practitioner inquiry work is not to produce findings about the students but about our practice and how it relates to the field of advising.

The data sources chosen were those that could reveal racism and antiracism within Mark's actions: emails and notes from meetings with advisees and his inquiry group. Much of Mark's work in distance education was conducted through email and other electronic messaging (e.g., the institution's learning management system). However, with growing caseloads and an increasing reliance on technology in advising overall (Robbins, 2013)—and, of course, the pandemic—this method for advising does not seem unique to distance advising. Maxwell (2015) similarly used emails as a primary data source in a practitioner inquiry study. Further, meeting notes, written after every student meeting, can serve a purpose similar to reflective journal entries. Like Dinkins (2005), Mark drew on notes and recollections from inquiry group interactions.

Given his problem of practice and related research questions, Mark focused on data demonstrating his interactions with students of color from the full first-semester cohort of students, all of whom were female and considered nontraditional. Knowledge *for* practice exists for advising students from these populations and their intersections. However, a reflective praxis offered Mark the opportunity to compare this existing body of knowledge to his practice and create knowledge *of* his practice and the specific challenges faced.

Small samples are not uncommon in the practitioner research literature and can be more actionable (Dowd & Bensimon, 2014). In this study, the population for the defined problem of practice consisted of 10 students of color in the first-semester cohort.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection consisted of compiling all meeting notes, emails, and other written communications with the selected students beginning with the summer before the students entered the institution through the end of their first semester. Mark analyzed the data using qualitative coding methods, which are explained and illustrated in this article for potential replication.

First Cycle Coding. One of Mark's inquiry groups suggested that he use process coding as a first-cycle coding method, given his action-focused research questions. Process coding uses gerunds (nouns ending in -*ing*) to code actions evident in the data (Saldaña, 2015). Seeking critique, Mark coded both potentially helpful and detrimental actions. Appendix 1 shows examples of first cycle codes created through the data sources and how they were categorized as things Mark was "doing" or "not doing."

After First Cycle and Second Cycle Coding. Mark next organized his codes using a charting

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method. The second coding cycle organized the process codes and student descriptions by various cycles in the student journey. Mark applied the Equity Scorecard framework at this stage to focus on its vital signs of recruitment, excellence, and retention to display the different time periods in the data (Dowd & Bensimon, 2014). Appendix 2 illustrates how codes were further organized in the second cycle analysis.

A Priori Coding. Mark completed the third round of data analysis using a priori codes related to the characteristics of academic advising that students of color believed to help them succeed as identified in extant literature (Johnson et al., 2019; Museus & Ravello, 2010). These codes included the amount and quality of time Mark spent with the students (Johnson et al., 2019); how he built meaningful, humanizing relationships with his advisees (Johnson et al., 2019; Museus & Ravello, 2010); how he signaled to his advisees that they matter (Johnson et al., 2019); how he identified similarities (in culture, background, experiences, and knowledge) with students (Museus & Neville, 2012); and how he built trust with his advisees (Johnson et al., 2019). Mark then identified themes from the data to understand how his interactions could break down systems of inequity rather than contribute to them. Each stage of the practitioner research process, from defining the problem of practice to determining research questions to analyzing data and determining findings, was verified and validated through collaboration with his inquiry groups. Appendix 3 provides illustrative examples for each of the a priori codes used.

Understanding Findings and Applying to Practice

Unmet Needs and Actions to Address

Common themes indicated what students needed, and outliers, somewhat uncommon examples, further explicated these needs. These findings identify the students' needs and the actions Mark took at each stage of the Equity Scorecard. Mark also reflected on his actions to imagine actions he could take in the future that are more antiracist.

Recognizing Systemic Barriers to Admissions. Mark's first "Aha" moment was when students expressed the same common barriers during recruitment. Although advisors may not commonly be involved in this stage, Mark found himself meeting with prospective students, engaging in preadvising, and tracking applications. Students commonly expressed financial difficulties and explained that the deposit the institution required to accept admission prohibited them from confirming their intent to enroll. This expressed student need represented a systemic barrier and led to ongoing opportunity gaps.

The delay in paying an admissions deposit also prevented students from enrolling in classes, becoming eligible for student services, and preparing to start at a new institution. These delayed actions may help explain issues that arose in later stages. Further, the students' financial issues persisted as a potential hurdle even after waiving the deposit. Mark could have been more antiracist by helping students become aware of potential financial resources and policies. Additionally, he could work institutionally to develop barrier-removing policies like deposit waivers as part of the standardized admissions process.

Moving Beyond a Transactional Advising Relationship. Advising practices can often be very transactional, especially in common advising functions like planning for course registration. Mark found himself sometimes engaging in humanizing antiracist actions and other times perpetuating a prescriptive and transactional model where opportunity gaps persisted. A key benchmark for students was admittance into the professional program, the excellence stage of Dowd and Bensimon's (2014) framework. Mark discovered that students were missing common prerequisite courses required for admission and faced difficulties in completing these. These courses were typically not required at the students' transfer institutions. Without them, students were either not able to apply to the professional program or had to attempt to take the class at another institution concurrently. Mark found evidence that he was helping students navigate the institution by connecting with the appropriate offices to request application extensions and clarify missing prerequisites. Mark was further helping students connect with other institutions where they could take prerequisite courses not offered in their current program. He advocated institutionally for the commonly needed courses to be offered online for students at satellite locations at a systemic level.

However, Mark also noticed that he was not providing beneficial follow-up beyond a single interaction or meeting. For example, after providing students with information, he did not always ensure that the student had registered for

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the suggested course. He could have further humanized the advising relationship by connecting with students to discover why they hadn't registered to move beyond a transactional mindset of registered or not registered.

Assisting with Navigating an Inadequate System. Systemic issues, such as inadequate prior preparation in subject areas like writing and math and inaccessibility of resources like tutoring, were common hurdles to student success. Advisors aim for retention, and Mark was particularly discouraged that many of the students in the data cohort withdrew or talked about potentially withdrawing in these communications. Mark and his inquiry groups consistently discussed how to retain students of color. Mark found himself encouraging students to stay, but he did not always resist or seek to learn more when students said that the program was not a fit. He now wonders whether his racial bias led him to conclude that the program was not a fit. Perhaps students needed additional help navigating the complex systems, or the program itself was racist and exclusionary.

The students found distance education itself to be problematic because, although it allowed easier access to higher education, it did not provide ready access to on-campus student support services, aligning with Carnevale and Strohl's (2013) broad findings that students of color are much more likely to attend less-selective and under-resourced institutions. Carnevale and Strohl (2013) specifically referred to open-access institutions, similar to those from which most students had transferred, and even these institutions likely had more resources on-site than their transfer distance site. The relative dearth of available resources led Mark to advocate with students for equitable access, such as establishing online and evening/weekend services and bringing certain services to the distance education sites for at least occasional in-person access.

Advocating for System Change and Promoting Self-Advocacy

The second research question related to advocating for student needs outside Mark's immediate influence (Auguste et al., 2018; Museus & Ravello, 2010). Many student needs required further advocacy and communication with others. Beyond connecting students to resources, Mark also found himself navigating and connecting across different levels of the institution, the most evident form of his advocacy. Email interactions indicated both positive and negative experiences with student services.

Mark's advocacy approaches evolved over the semester, resulting from discussions with his inquiry groups. Multiple advising colleagues collaboratively addressed student needs and issues with the appropriate institutional stakeholders. Mark's doctoral program peers provided additional perspectives and suggested additional advocacy conversations with specific student services. In future interactions, Mark engaged this new knowledge. For instance, Mark began to ask for clarification or justification in interactions with student services when they did not provide adequate assistance; previously, he had accepted their initial response. From this practitioner inquiry, Mark established future goals for his advising practice, including persistence in advocacy work to remove inequitable roadblocks for students and advocate for antiracist systems and policies, particularly at the distance education sites where he was conducting his advising practice. Further, Mark's analysis indicated that his advocacy could further evolve by promoting and assisting students with being their own advocates rather than assuming a savior mentality that upholds majority-dominated systems (Kishimoto, 2018). Therefore, Mark sought to ensure that future advocacy gave space and encouragement for advisees to self-advocate and develop their strengths.

Characteristics of Academic Advising Leading to Success for Students of Color

Mark reviewed his correspondence and notes to identify instances where he demonstrated the characteristics of academic advising that students of color suggest have helped them be successful in higher education (Johnson et al., 2019; Museus & Ravello, 2010); he also investigated these data sources for missed opportunities. Examples of humanizing the advising relationship included getting to know advisees personally by asking about their interests and goals and empathizing with the situations they faced in and out of the classroom. He also built trust with students through advocating alongside them and challenging systemic issues. These advocacy efforts, along with expressing empathy, also signaled to advisees that they mattered. Appendix 3 contains specific examples for each a priori code used and analyzed.

Mark also missed opportunities for displaying these characteristics; several examples have been

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stated previously. Viewing students in transactional terms such as "registered" or "not registered" rather than further exploring the reasons for these outcomes represents an example where Mark should further humanize his advising practice. Mark did not exemplify the behavior of showing students that they mattered when he did not vigorously resist their discouraged beliefs that they did not fit in the program. Similarly, Mark could have done more to establish trust with his advisees by providing more persistent advocacy and deeper follow-up when systemic issues were identified. Although the data showed that Mark displayed beneficial characteristics in his practice, more consistency and less transactional interactions, particularly during busier advising periods, could help Mark further develop his antiracist advising practice.

Discussion and Implications

Using our operational definition of antiracist advising, Mark's findings provide clear and valuable insights into some of the systemic barriers that his advisees faced and how he could better employ antiracist advising behaviors and advocate for antiracist systems. Mark then considered how the knowledge *of* practice could be used *in* practice. Through this process, knowledge could also be created *for* practice.

Knowledge of Practice Created and Connections to Existing Knowledge for Practice

In terms of knowledge *of* practice, Mark learned that students would benefit from further interactions before they start their first classes because Mark was already engaging in preadvising and helping prospective students through the application process. Still, findings suggested that further follow-up at key points could be provided between matriculation and the start of classes. Early identification of potential financial difficulties can create opportunities for referrals to various resources. Nontraditional female students describe this positive advising practice as "navigating potential roadblocks" (Auguste et al., 2018, p. 52). One strategy Mark has since employed to assist in this area was including basic needs security statements in advising materials, similar to those suggested by Goldrick-Rab (2017) for syllabi.

The study also showed where deeper communication could be beneficial. Museus and Ravello's (2010) work specifically highlighted the importance of "humanizing the academic advising experience" (p. 53) and providing a holistic approach to advising interactions with students of color. Lee (2018) also encouraged advisors not to generalize the experiences of students of color and instead view each interaction individually. Using this knowledge *for* practice as a lens for his interactions, Mark identified where and how he could explore individual student issues more deeply in advising interactions and empower students to be their best advocates by showing them that they matter. More holistic interactions could help convey deeper meaning to our institutional colleagues so we can collaborate to produce more equitable outcomes for students of color. Synthesizing the knowledge *for* practice and his knowledge *in* practice allowed Mark to create antiracist knowledge *of* practice.

However, the inquiry cycle has also revealed the upholding of racist systems and prejudices within Mark's initial research questions. By inquiring into the students' unmet needs, he situates the problem of practice within the students themselves when the problems are rooted in inequitable and racist systems. The question of students' unmet needs takes a deficit perspective toward the students (Bensimon, 2005). In future inquiry, Mark might pose an antiracist question: "What systemic barriers or issues do my students encounter?"

Knowledge for Practice in Study Findings

This example of practitioner inquiry demonstrates the creation of knowledge beyond an advisor's specific context or knowledge *for* practice. For instance, Mark's findings indicated the benefits of working with students as early and often as possible because students from underrepresented backgrounds may not have access to or are aware of resources that can assist them prior to enrollment. For many students, the curriculum remains hidden because of a lack of institutional cultural and social capital (Smith, 2013) resulting from inequitable systems rather than the individual's fault. The hidden curriculum issues are exacerbated for transfer students, who may have already learned to navigate the unwritten norms of one institution and now must adapt to another.

Identifying specific courses that may act as barriers also highlights the importance of establishing points for proactive advising, as Museus and Ravello (2010) suggested. Some advising software platforms highlight success marker

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courses, but advisors who do not have access to this software can independently identify vital courses and completion timeframes. Advisors must view these data points holistically and humanistically because a student may often need several prerequisites or developmental courses before one identified vital course, as was the case for some of Mark's students. However, advisors must also ensure that this practice does not lead to gatekeeping, a negative academic advising practice identified by Auguste et al. (2018), by discouraging students from pursuing a particular program or course of study based on stereotypes or systemic barriers. Rather, by centering affirmation, support, and advocacy (Lee, 2018), advisors can encourage and aid students on the path to success.

Finally, regarding retention, the findings align with prior knowledge *for* practice focused on the underrepresented subgroups represented by the students in Mark's study. Advocacy, modeling advocacy, and going beyond "normal" advising duties are important keys to creating some sense of belonging. For example, Museus and Ravello (2010) discussed the proactive approach of walking a student over to a specific support office or, in distance education, sending an email to the appropriate support office and copying the student. Advocacy is thereby a collaborative action between advisor and advisee. Ensuring that the modeling of advocacy also allows students to self-advocate is another important aspect of breaking down both racist systems and racial prejudices in interactions.

Some findings and implications from this practitioner inquiry example may appear intuitive, and Museus and Ravello (2010) recognized this characteristic in their work. However, our nature of internalized racial superiority can allow us to ignore our racist actions and instead reassure ourselves of our best intentions. The systematic analysis of practitioner inquiry instead insists upon accountability and transparency. The process of inquiry and reflection can benefit the advisor performing the research and others in the field through the creation of knowledge *of* practice.

Conclusion

Practitioner inquiry offers practical methods for advisors to engage in research and create meaning. The Equity Scorecard is one framework that can aid the work of practitioner inquiry to create knowledge *of* practice. Through this article, we have expanded on a framework for conducting practitioner inquiry with antiracist intent. The newly created knowledge *of* practice informs and improves our advising practice toward greater equity and access for our students who have been historically marginalized, particularly students of color. This praxis can be replicated by advisors to solve their problems of practice related to systemic barriers, inequities, and racism and to contribute to the field of advising.

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Appendix 1. First Cycle Process Coding

Doing	Not Doing
providing deposit waivers	not pushing back on distance location not being a fit
offering suggestions	not following up about classes taken at community college
asking clarifying questions	not calling student
meeting about the program application	not encouraging to stay
providing options	not following up
providing contacts	not ensuring students had taken statistics
talking about available student services	not calling the student to follow up
preadvising	not ensuring students reached offices
emailing	not looping student services into advocacy
listening to ideas	not developing conversation
providing instructions	not asking for justification
meeting about registration	not providing suggestions for all missing courses
explaining requirements	not asking for further clarification
tracking applications	not building self-advocacy
discussing student concerns with faculty members	
reiterating	
encouraging to stay	
relaying first-hand accounts	
alerting others to inequities	
advocating for tutoring services	
navigating political systems	
connecting different levels	
providing options for pre-requisites	

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Appendix 2. Second Cycle Longitudinal Coding

Organizing Stage	Doing	Not Doing
Recruiting	preadvising, meeting with students about fall classes, discussing orientation, explaining program requirements, talking about available student services, tracking applications, asking for deposit waivers	not following up after enrolling, not following up about classes taken at CC, not following up about student service connections
Excellence	meeting about program application, offering to meet about program applications, providing information to the department, discussing prerequisites, providing options for prerequisites	not ensuring entering students had statistics, not providing suggestions for all missing courses
Retention	asking faculty members about early concerns, meeting about registration, discussing students with faculty, empathizing, talking about ways to overcome difficulties, reaching out to student services, helping with registration, reminding to register, encouraging, encouraging to stay, reiterating	not following up, not calling the student to follow up, not pushing back on lack of fit, not encouraging to stay
Advocacy	Following up, identifying problems, asking clarifying questions, advocating for tutoring services, alerting others to inequities, relaying positive experiences, offering first-hand accounts, navigating political systems, connecting different levels	not pushing back, not looping student services in advocacy, not asking for justification, not asking for further clarification, not developing conversation, not building self-advocacy

Appendix 3. A Priori Coding Examples

A Priori Code	Example
Quality Time	Meeting with a student multiple times to discuss concerns about program application
Humanizing relationships	Discussing student’s motivation for obtaining a bachelor’s degree and how student felt like they didn’t belong since transferring from community college
Signaling they matter	Empathizing with student concerns about struggles and sharing that I still believed student could overcome early challenges
Identifying similarities	Shared personal experiences of navigating the challenges of a distance education environment from own college career with a student that showed that while our overall experiences may be different, I could empathize with some shared experiences
Building trust	Relaying student concerns to faculty members with permission and advocating alongside them
Breaking down systems of inequity	Relaying student concerns about lack of tutoring and pointing out inequities compared to services offered at the main campus

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