

# SARAH ELLISON, EdD

*University Leader, Higher Education Expertise in Student Success Programming & Services*

---

University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL

Dear Hiring Personnel,

It is with great interest that I am forwarding my resume for consideration of the Senior Director of Advising position with the University of Florida. Given my diverse background and professional experience in university leadership, student success programming, community outreach, professional advising, and career counseling, I believe I would be an excellent candidate for consideration. Please review the following highlights from my resume demonstrating my qualifications for the position:

- EdD, Higher Education Leadership and Management
- Monitor continuous improvement cycles to help ensure student success teams are progressing toward defined goals and meeting key deliverables
- Engage with senior leaders to evaluate institutional progress at key intervals in the continuous improvement process
- Knowledge of the dynamics of academic decision-making and policy development, and extensive experience consulting with university administrators and constituents regarding Education Credential programs
- Successfully increased student engagement, retention, and graduation rates through the implementation of strategic, data driven, and holistic centered advising practices
- Served on multiple university leadership teams & committees to aid in the development and collaboration of campus partners to support the transition and continued success of nontraditional, underrepresented minority, and first-generation student populations
- Productively partners in decentralized models with college leadership, faculty advisors, and professional advisors to execute successful student support programming
- Experience developing and directing policy regarding security, retention, and risk management to better service students of different ability levels and backgrounds

I thrive in challenging and results-oriented environments. It is these qualities that attracted me to the Senior Director of Advising position with the University of Florida. I believe I exhibit the skills needed to contribute to the success of the position goals and objectives.

As a highly motivated, results-driven individual, I have a strong desire to exceed expectations and deliver the effort necessary to achieve organizational goals. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how I can address the unique challenges of this position. Please contact me so we may further discover ways in which I can make a positive impact and find out more about your objectives and goals. Thank you for reviewing this letter and the accompanying material.

Sincerely,

Sarah F. Ellison  
Enclosure: resume

# SARAH ELLISON, EdD

*University Leader, Higher Education Expertise in Student Success Programming & Services*

---

Decisive and engaging higher education leader, focused on relationship driven approaches that maximize student learning by developing positive student culture and structured, supportive environments. Serve as an innovative change agent with notable record of applying creative solutions to improve students' lives and advance institutional services related to student engagement and belonging, academic advising, and career readiness. Serve as a strong, neutral, and skilled facilitator who guides student success teams, university partners, and stakeholders towards consensus and defined shared vision and results.

## SKILLS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

---

Leadership & Organization: Team building | Professional Development | Collaborative Student Success Approach

Fiscal Responsibility: Grant Writing & Management | University Funding Model Knowledge | Scholarship Allocation

Communication: Equitable & Inclusive Culture | Parental Support | Policy Development | Advocacy

Student Success: Holistic Student Support | Student Engagement | Behavioral Management | Character Development

### Professional Highlights:

- Successfully increased student engagement, retention, and graduation rates through the implementation of strategic, data driven, and holistic centered advising practices
- Served on multiple university leadership teams & committees to aid in the support the transition and success of nontraditional, underrepresented, and first-generation students
- Collaborated with senior dean leadership and faculty members to advocate and secure space for a minority student org. office within the academic college
- Monitor continuous improvement cycles to help ensure student success teams are progressing toward defined goals and meeting key deliverables system wide
- Engage with senior leaders to evaluate institutional progress at key intervals in the continuous improvement process. Establish strong external relations to support student success programming and initiatives
- Knowledge of the dynamics of academic decision-making and policy development, and extensive experience consulting with university administrators and constituents
- Experience developing and directing policy regarding security, retention, and risk management to better service students of different ability levels and backgrounds
- Creation and implementation of network meetings, workshops, and professional development for in person, virtual, and on demand opportunities and topics
- Extensive performance history implementing and overseeing programs and policies relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and accessibility
- Consistently seeks and empowers a working environment conducive to innovation and growth. Always looks to partner across all student support offices from Veteran Affairs, Office of Diversity, and LGBTQA+ etc...

## WORK EXPERIENCE

---

### ASSISTANT DEAN OF ADVISING/COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

*University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY*

03/2021 – Present

Serve as senior administrator of student services to include college-level decision making about orientations, college advising and reporting, and review of college probation, suspension, and reinstatement process. Also, operates as senior advisor to the Associate Dean for Instruction in recommending new initiatives regarding academic advising, reviewing the Ag Individualized program, and collaborating with the Office of Diversity to support EDAIB initiatives. Advocate and support a culture of care and concern for students exhibiting signs of distress or concerning behavior. Offer data-

driven recommendations aligned with overall university strategies and initiatives to support student success.

- Coordinate and network with central campus partner offices, college academic departments, and dual reporting teams to lead advisor trainings and streamline college processes to remove institutional barriers impacting student success
- Responsible for managing the hiring, on boarding, and training for new advisors in decentralized model
- Organize and participate in strategy workshops to refine processes and discuss continued growth of advising
- Manage suspension appeal and reinstatement process for the college
- Demonstrate innovation by adapting college petitions to online forms and submissions, and utilize university technology to engage with students via teams instant message
- Develop strategies for support that recognize the needs of underrepresented minority, first-gen, and APP students
- Nominated and selected to serve as Chair for the University of Kentucky Advising Network 2021-2023 and accepted position as part of the University of Kentucky Women's Executive Leadership Development program 2022

**ADVISING CENTER MANAGER, SSP III/COLLEGE OF ARTS & LETTERS**

08/2018 – 03/2021

California State University San Bernardino, San Bernardino CA

Oversaw the College of Arts & Letters Advising Center, supervising and coaching Professional Advisors, Graduate Student Assistants, and Peer Advisors. Collaborated with the Dean and Associate Dean of the college to ensure the advising center was managed efficiently, developed effective advising strategies to ensure the support and success of 3500 CAL students. Delivered professional training and development opportunities for advising center staff. Monitored and reported on the success of advising campaigns to both college and university administration.

- Modeled efficient and effective student success initiatives that were implemented campus wide
- Directed the CAL Advising Center program including annual planning, organization and management of staff, resources, budgets, strategic planning, implementation, assessment, and reporting
- Improved advising center culture and student experience, increasing student drop-ins by 40% and college 4-year graduation rate by 4%.
- Managed orientation program, as well as internship agreements, experiential learning courses, and career planning for college departments
- Communicated and engaged with parents and guardians concerning expectations related to attendance and academic commitment
- Attended case review board meetings, worked with Title IX representatives on investigations and ensured Clery Act compliance
- Served on university committee to oversee production of and updates made to student handbook, monitored reports of student conduct, developed strategies to support students, staff, and faculty
- Coordinated bilingual services for individual and group advising events
- Worked in partnership with university leaders, improving college relations to support student success efforts

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR/ LEAD FOR COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

10/2013 – 08/2018

Brandman University, Victorville CA

Supported students in the development and accomplishment of their educational goals. Designed and implemented supportive student learning systems. Met with human resources managers, career counselors, administrators, and community college counselors to present and provide information regarding university programs and services. Assisted in the development of recruitment strategies for the local campus.

- Directed a team of university staff in planning and managing university events for new program launches
- Advised a caseload of undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of programs utilizing multiple technology platforms including salesforce and degree works.
- Served as expert advisor for all university graduate education and credential programs
- Worked with students on aligning their career and educational goals, developing resumes, cover letters, and presentation for interviews
- Conducted quarterly trainings for advisors, enrollment coaches, and university credential supervisors
- Assisted with recruitment and placement of student teachers within multiple school districts

**MILITARY EDUCATION & CAREER SERVICES SPECIALIST**

05/2013 – 10/2013

Goodwill Southern California, Ft. Irwin CA

Prepared and placed transitioning military veterans into sustainable employment and education programs throughout the Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino County areas. Assisted a diverse pool of program participants with career planning, including intensive career counseling, assessment, and job search assistance. Provided career-advising services and conducted corporate outreach for veteran hiring.

## CIVILIAN ROLE PLAYER

08/2008 – 03/2010

Akima Logistics LLC, Ft. Irwin CA

Performed vital cultural training to assist active-duty soldiers preparing for deployment. Worked with military contractors to develop live-based training scenarios. Participated in Middle Eastern cultural and language classes, to learn basic terms and appropriate cultural customs to be re-enacted. Facilitated creation of scenarios for US Soldiers preparing for deployment and cultivated relationships with associates from diverse backgrounds.

## ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE, COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT, & PRESENTATIONS

---

First Year Experience & Probation Instructor, *University of Kentucky 03/21-present*

Business/ General Education Adult Learning Instructor, *San Joaquin Valley College 05/2016-07/2018*

Student Career Advisor Intern, *University of La Verne 07/2011-02/2013*

Lead Advisor Council, *California State University San Bernardino 2018*

Moving from Advisor to Advising Leadership, *NACADA Annual Conference Oregon 2022*

Advising Culture Impact on Diversity Student Population, *Student Success Symposium San Jose State 2018*

Advisor Burnout, *NACADA Annual Conference Arizona 2017 & International Conference Belgium 2018*

Associate Dean Design Team School of Education, *Walden University 2015*

Professional Development Committee, *Brandman University 2013*

High Desert Education Consortium, *Brandman University 2013*

## EDUCATION

---

<b>EdD in Higher Education Leadership</b>   Walden University, Minneapolis, MN	2022
<b>M.S. in Career Counseling</b>   Walden University, Minneapolis, MN	2015
<b>B.S. in Organizational Management</b>   University of La Verne, La Verne, CA	2012

## CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

---

- Blended Adult Mental Health First Aid | Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) USA 06/2021
- Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities 08/2018
- LA Sparks We Are Women Ambassador 01/2014
- National Career Development Association 05/2013
- National Academic Advising Association 10/2013